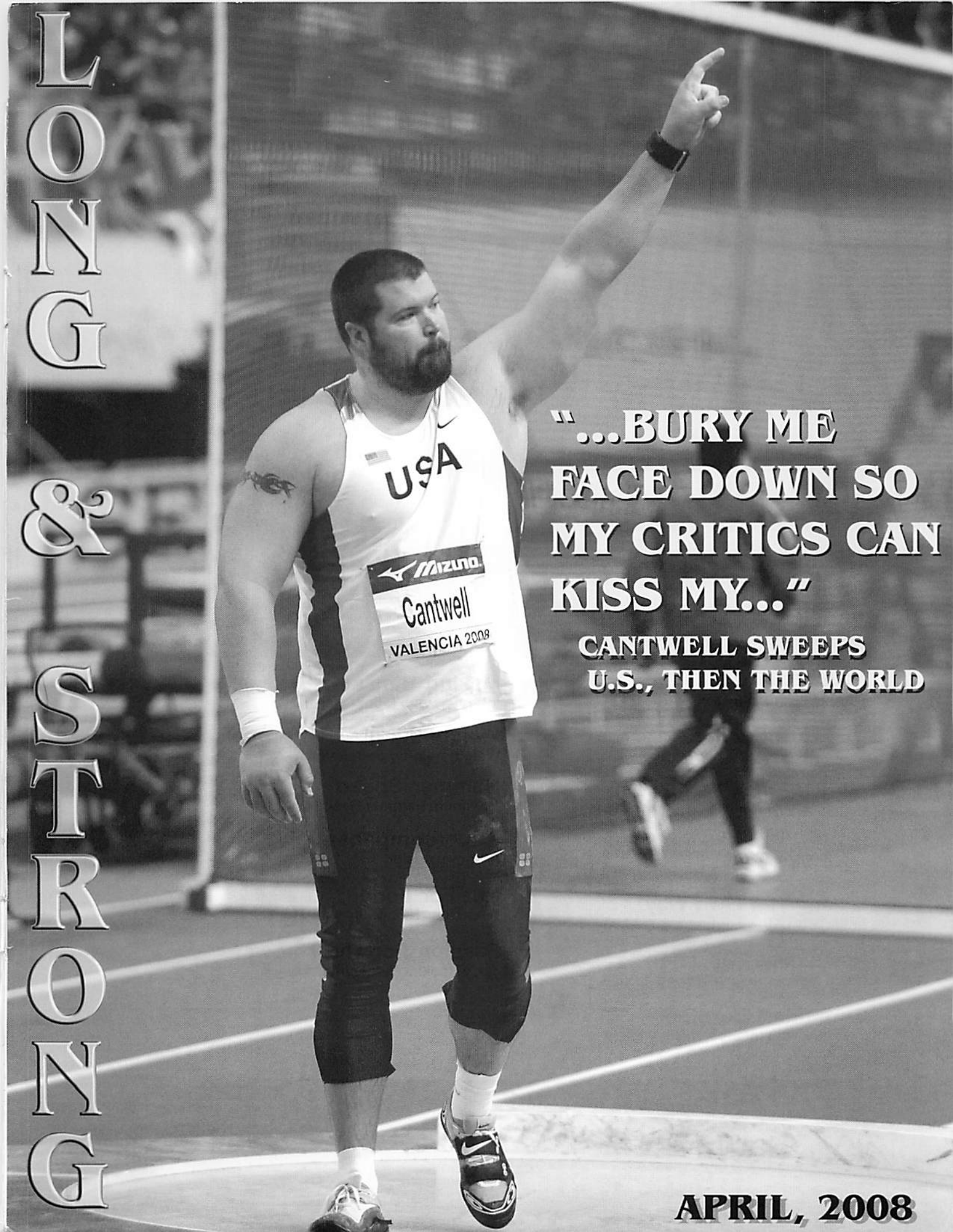
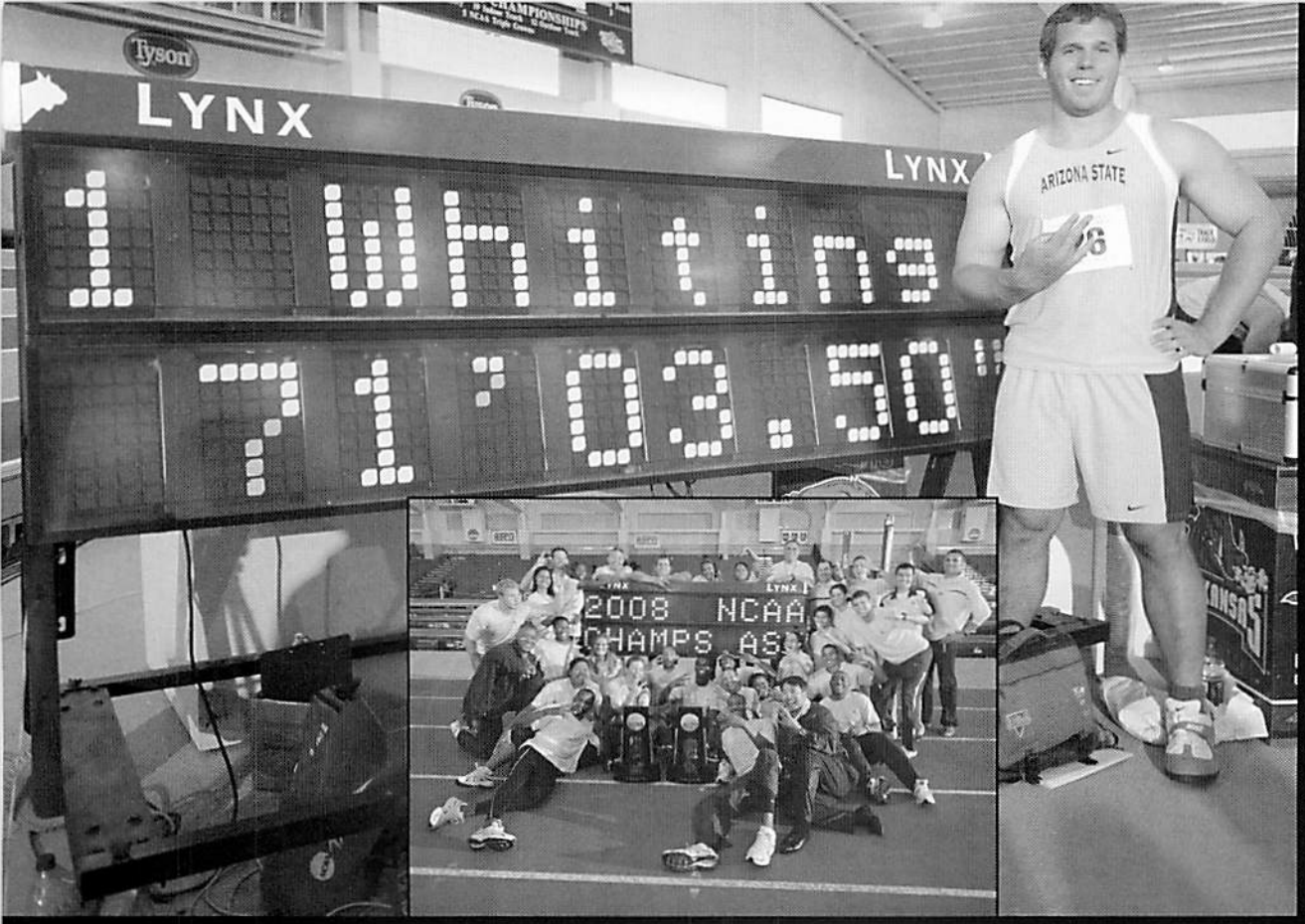

LONG & STRONG
"...BURY ME FACE DOWN SO MY CRITICS CAN KISS MY..."
CANTWELL SWEEPS U.S., THEN THE WORLD
APRIL, 2008
USA
Mizuno
Cantwell
VALENCIA 2008



Correspondents:

- Jeff Gorski
- Brad Reid
- Don Babbitt
- Mark Valenti
- Dan McQuaid
- Lane Dowell
- Pat Corbett
- Don Amini

On the cover: Christian Cantwell reigned supreme at home and abroad. (Victor Sailer) This page: Ryan Whiting's historic heave highlighted a Sun Devil sweep. (Kirby D. Lee)

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Letter From The Editor

The Price of Fame

Glenn Thompson

There are very few individuals who don't enjoy being recognized as they go about their daily business. Assuming the reason for recognition is a positive one, to be acknowledged is a form of validation. We all desire feedback, and quite often its better to the negative type than to not have anyone acknowledge our existence.

Even the very best throwers, at least in the U.S., lead lives of relative obscurity. With media coverage directed anywhere but at javelin runways and concrete circles, a current Olympian could walk the streets of their hometowns without a wisp of recognition from passersby. Large-bodied individuals such as Jarred Rome and Christian Cantwell could probably fund their training if they got a dollar for each time they were asked in an airport if they played for the closest NFL affiliate. And they've probably answered in the affirmative a few times just for kicks, or maybe just to avoid explaining who they are and what they do.

"Norm!"

While the lack of exposure hurts any aspiring Olympian's pocket, being able to live life like a normal citizen certainly does have its benefits.

Camera phones, YouTube and a plethora of celebrity gossip shows are enough to make you wonder if gaining any level of fame is worth the white-hot glare that is attached to it.

Do you ever tire of hearing about 'Brangelina', a.k.a. Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt? The two silver screen megastars are very talented performers and are extremely photogenic. And their color-blind work on behalf of the world's disenfranchised knows few peers. Those stories cannot be told enough.

But do we really need to see Brad riding his bike around the neighborhood or Angelina, know matter how hot (yup, I said it) she is, carting her kids around town running errands?

And what have Britney Spears and Lindsay Lohan done of late. Both had very successful careers at some point, but are now not much more than caricatures of their former selves. The paparazzi stalk the two with the sole intent of recording every blessed second of their private lives. Given that these two entertainment divas are train wrecks waiting to happen, I suppose there is plenty to record for posterity.

And let's not even get started on Paris Hilton, who is famous for, well, being Paris Hilton.

Even generally responsible celebrities are only a camera phone and a moment of indiscretion away from infamy.

Remember the Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant popping off to a couple of guys on the street last summer about his team's personnel, and in particular, his young center, Andrew Bynum? One of the schmucks got his camera phone out and recorded the diatribe, and it was on YouTube in no time, leaving Bryant with a whole lot of explaining to do.

Our communication-driven society has 'evolved' to the point where anyone with access to the internet and a keyboard or video clip is a journalist of some sort.

I marvel that any individual, no matter how gifted or public-minded, would want to subject him or herself to the scrutiny attached to running for a high-profile public office. Long gone are the days when a sympathetic press corps hid from the American public wheelchair bound images of Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Today news communications are virtually real-time with fierce competition to break any story. The more inflammatory or salacious, the better the ratings. Just ask the recently resigned New York governor Elliot Spitzer, a.k.a., Client #9.

That story lasted several news cycles, and took a humorous turn when Spitzer's replacement, David Patterson, decided to make a pre-emptive strike and voluntarily cop to several affairs before the media got a hold of them. Now *that* is being proactive my friends.

Wouldn't it be great just once to be Norm waddling into *Cheers*? *Where everyone knows your name*?

After closer examination, maybe anonymity isn't that bad after all. ***L&S***

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas, March 14-15

SUN DEVILS TWICE AS NICE

By Don Babbitt, University of Georgia

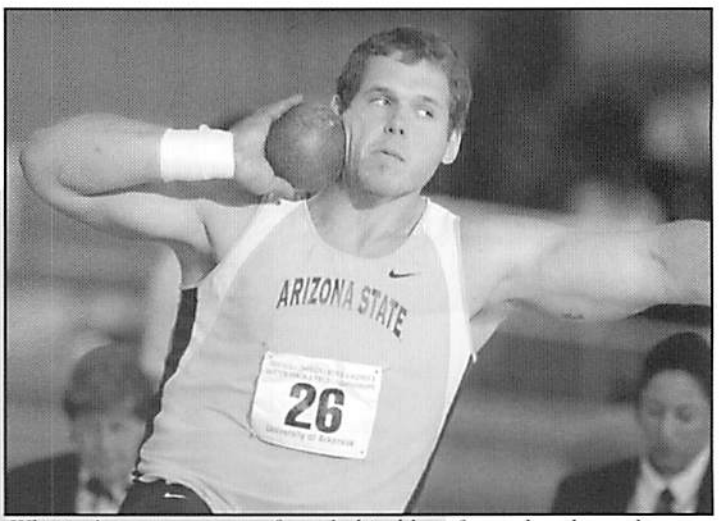
National championships were already becoming routine for the Arizona State women, having nabbed both the 2007 indoor and outdoor champi-onships. The lady Sun Devil roster is full of explosive talent, but is anchored by the throws triumvirate of Jessica Pressley, Sarah Stevens and Tai Battle. And they would again lead the way in 2008, with Pressley and Stevens accounting for 20 of ASU's 51 points in Fayetteville.

On the men's side, ASU redshirt sophomore Ryan Whiting, who was riding a wave of three consecu-tive PR's, made it a fourth in grand style to kick start the Sun Devil men to their own title.

Men's Shot Put

It was a much anticipated battle between two 21m-plus throwers in Russ Winger of Idaho and Ryan Whiting of Arizona State who had yet to face each other in head-to head competition during the regular season. Whiting got the chance to make his mark first as he was seeded in the first flight. After dropping a few warm-ups at the 68-foot line Whiting opened up with a conservative effort of 20.18m. In the second round he blasted fine throw of 21.12m, which surely would put the pressure on Winger since it was over Winger's personal best of 21.00m. You could tell that Whiting was going to go for it on his third throw to further increase the pressure on Winger with his third round throw. It ended up sailing completely over the landing mats at what looked to be 71 feet, however the officials called a slight foot foul.

Now it was Winger's turn. Round one started out with a solid opener of 20.34m. In round two Winger unloaded a high throw down the right sector line for a new PB of 21.29m and the lead. Winger appeared to try a little too hard in round three, but was able to secure the all-important last throw in the final. In the final rounds, both Winger and Whiting threw in the mid to high 20 meter range, but the excitement in the crowd really began as Whiting stepped in

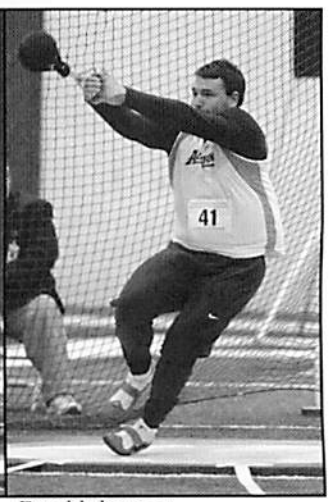


Whiting's monster come-from-behind last frame bomb set the stage for the Sun Devil men while...

for his final throw. With a solid drive out the back of the ring, Whiting threw a huge throw down the right side of the sector. When it landed it looked to easily surpass Winger's best and also appeared to be farther than his third round foul, so the question was whether it would break the NCAA Indoor record. The tape said "yes"; 21.73m. Finishing 3rd at 19.64m was the ever-steady Milan Jotanovic of Manhattan whose swing-kick entry out of the back reminds of his countryman Dragan Peric.

Winger

Agafonov



Dunkleberger

Men Shot Put

1, Ryan Whiting, Arizona St., 21.73m, (71-03.50). 2, Russ Winger, Idaho, 21.29m, (69-10.25). 3, Milan Jotanovic, Manhattan, 19.64m, (64-05.25). 4, John Caulfield, UCLA, 18.95m, (62-02.25). 5, Zack Lloyd, Arizona, 18.63m, (61-01.50). 6, Darius Savage, UCLA, 18.60m, (61-00.25). 7, John Hickey, Iowa, 18.50m, (60-08.50). 8, Auston Papay, Akron, 18.49m, (60-08). 9, Kyle Helf, Georgia, 18.02m, (59-01.50). 10, Beau Burroughs, Florida, 17.95m, (58-10.75). 11, Eric Werskey, Auburn, 17.79m, (58-04.50). 12, Nate Englin, Missouri, 17.58m, (57-08.25). 13, Steve Marcelle, Georgia Tech, 17.56m, (57-07.50). 14, Clendon Henderson, Liberty, 17.26m, (56-07.50). —, Jarred Sola, Arizona, FOUL. —, Rashaud Scott, Kentucky, FOUL.

of reach with his fifth round toss of 22.71m. Big 12 rival Chris Rohr of Missouri gave Agafonov perhaps his biggest scare with a foul throw in round four in the 22.60m range. Unfortunately for Rohr, a pre-meet favorite, he was only able to improve to 21.34m the rest of the way and finish a distant 8th. In the final round, with the title already in hand, Agafonov unloaded a huge throw in the 23.50m range to cap off his very successful NCAA weight throw career, but he was called for a small foul as well.

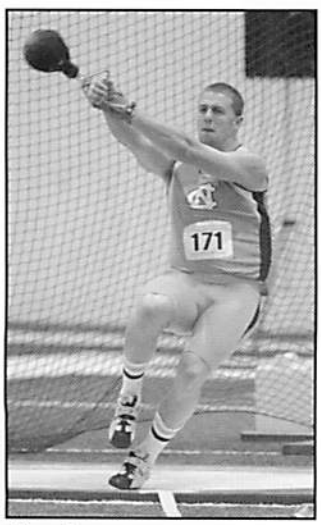
...the ever-reliable Pressley and Stevens anchored thewomen in the weight and shot.

Men's Weight Throw

This was a very even and closely contested competition. Defending NCAA Champion, Igor Agafonov of Kansas, held a slim lead for most of the competition at 22.33m, which was a mark that a few of the other throwers were still capable of reaching.

Eventually, the defending champion put the meet out of reach with his fifth round toss of 22.71m. Big 12 rival Chris Rohr of Missouri gave Agafonov perhaps his biggest scare with a foul throw in round four in the 22.60m range. Unfortunately for Rohr, a pre-meet favorite, he was only able to improve to 21.34m the rest of the way and finish a distant 8th. In the final round, with the title already in hand, Agafonov unloaded a huge throw in the 23.50m range to cap off his very successful NCAA weight throw career, but he was called for a small foul as well.

After Agafonov, the next three spots were separated by a mere 22cm. Jake Dunkelberger of Auburn, the 2007 NCAA Hammer Champion, finished 2nd with a best of 22.24m. Dunkelberger is a tremendous competitor and made his push in the final rounds improving on each throw to move from 4th in the prelims to 2nd after the finals. The battle for third place ended up being decided by a tie-breaker as Walter Henning of North Carolina edged out Jon Pullum of Purdue. Both had a best mark of 22.02m, and Henning won with a second best throw of 21.93m to Pullum's 21.72m. What made it even more interesting is that Henning and Pullum appeared to be complete opposites of each other in terms their size and approach to the weight. Henning, a true freshman, was by far the smallest competitor and employed a lightening fast four turn technique, while Pullum is very large and used only two turns.



Henning

Kevkhishvili

All photos by Kirby D. Lee, Image of Sport

Men Weight Throw
1, Egor Agafonov, Kansas, 22.71m, (74-06.25). 2, Jake Dunkleberger, Auburn, 22.24m, (72-11.75). 3, Walter Henning, North Carolina, 22.02m, (72-03). 4, Jon Pullum, Purdue, 22.02m, (72-03). 5, Simon Wardhaugh, Boise State, 21.93m, (71-11.50). 6, Matthew Wauters, Idaho, 21.56m, (70-09). 7, Boldizsar Kocsor, UCLA, 21.37m, (70-01.50). 8, Chris Rohr, Missouri, 21.34m, (70-00.25). 9, Jason Schutz, Colorado St., 20.98m, (68-10). 10, Lenny Jatsek, Ohio State, 20.77m, (68-01.75). 11, Jake Shanklin, Wyoming, 20.68m, (67-10.25). 12, Dave Ebersole, Ohio State, 20.30m, (66-07.25). 13, Tyler Dailey, Missouri, 20.08m, (65-10.50). 14, Russ Winger, Idaho, 19.94m, (65-05). 15, Jason Lewis, Arizona St., 19.66m, (64-06). 16, Steve Bartholomew, Valparaiso, 19.54m, (64-01.25). 17, Andy Fryman, Kentucky, 19.37m, (63-06.75).

Women's Shot Put
The outcome of the women's shot was one that surprised most people. Many considered Arizona State's Sarah Stevens the odds on favorite, especially after her great performance from last year's meet. In the end, Florida's Miriam Kevkhishvili stole the show with a huge personal best of 17.83m which she threw in the second round of flight two. Kevkhishvili stands almost 6-3 and is a glider from the Georgia (the country). She put together a solid series with all six being over 17m. Stevens looked to be a little off and was searching for her technique the whole competition. She finally connected on her best throw (17.64m) in the last round but it was only enough to move her from 4th place into 2nd place. Patience Knight of Texas Tech turned out to be another surprise as she threw her best of 17.27m not once, but twice. She seemed to get control of her dynamic spin technique as she entered the finals and produced a great series on top of a PR. The next five places were separated by only one foot which showed the depth and quality of the field.

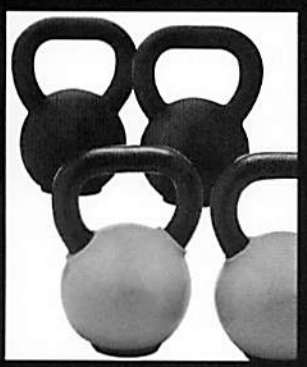
Women Shot Put
1, Mariam Kevkhishvili, Florida, 17.83m, (58-06). 2, Sarah Stevens, Arizona St., 17.64m, (57-10.50). 3, Patience Knight, Texas Tech, 17.27m, (56-08). 4, Susan King, Memphis, 16.91m, (55-05.75). 5, Jessica Pressley, Arizona St., 16.77m, (55-00.25). 6, Shernelle Nicholls, Missouri, 16.71m, (54-10). 7, Brittany Pryor, Virginia Tech, 16.64m, (54-07.25). 8, Stephanie Horton, Kansas, 16.60m, (54-05.50). 9, Aja Evans, Illinois, 16.38m, (53-09). 10, Annie Alexander, Tennessee, 16.34m, (53-07.50). 11, Krishna Lee, Missouri, 16.24m, (53-03.50). 12, Jere Summers, Louisville, 16.08m, (52-09.25). 13, ZeNai Savage, Louisville, 15.89m, (52-01.75). 14, Nadia Alexander, LA Tech, 15.88m, (52-01.25). 15, Jordyn Brown, Texas, 15.71m, (51-06.50). 16, Ashley Muffet, Kentucky, 15.61m, (51-02.75). —, Rachel Jansen, UNI, FOUL.

Women's Weight Throw
There was not as much suspense as to who was going to win this competition as the other three throwing events. Pre-meet favorite Brittany Riley of Southern Illinois put the competition out of reach in the second round of flight two with a throw of 23.31m after opening up with "only" 21.28m. In round three Riley unleashed a throw which almost challenged her world best mark, but it ended up being slightly less at 25.34m. She would go on to win by over 10 feet over what people would consider to be a very strong weight throw field. Second place would go to Jessica Pressley of Arizona State, who produced a personal best of 22.04m on her last throw. Pressley, who employs three turns, had warm-ups in the 75 foot range but could not quite capture the same rhythm in the competition. Third place went to Astin Steward of Purdue who used a powerful two turn technique to register a PR as well at 21.62m. Steward's Big-10 rival, Veronica Jatsek of Ohio State, looked very solid on her way to finishing fourth at 21.43m. Jatsek looked like she could improve upon her best throw which she achieved in the 2nd round at any time, but it never came to pass. Fifth place went to Stevi Large of Akron, who looked impressive with her throw of 21.08m. Large's weight technique looked like it would translate well over to the hammer so she may show some special things come the outdoor season.


Riley

Steward

Women Weight Throw
1, Brittany Riley, S. Illinois, 25.34m, (83-01.75). 2, Jessica Pressley, Arizona St., 22.04m, (72-03.75). 3, Astin Steward, Purdue, 21.62m, (70-11.25). 4, Veronica Jatsek, Ohio State, 21.43m, (70-03.75). 5, Stevi Large, Akron, 21.08m, (69-02). 6, Loren Groves, Kansas State, 20.93m, (68-08). 7, Kristen Callan, Virginia Tech, 20.71m, (67-11.50). 8, Shawneise Williams, Florida, 20.34m, (66-08.75). 9, Sarah Stevens, Arizona St., 20.32m, (66-08). 10, Laci Heller, Kansas State, 19.78m, (64-10.75). 11, Elisha Hunt, Missouri, 19.74m, (64-09.25). 12, Ashley Harbin, Lafayette, 19.68m, (64-07). 13, Jere Summers, Louisville, 19.42m, (63-08.75). 14, Brittany Pryor, Virginia Tech, 19.17m, (62-10.75). 15, Khadija Talley, Miami, 18.72m, (61-05). 16, Tai Battle, Arizona St., 18.30m, (60-00.50).
L&S



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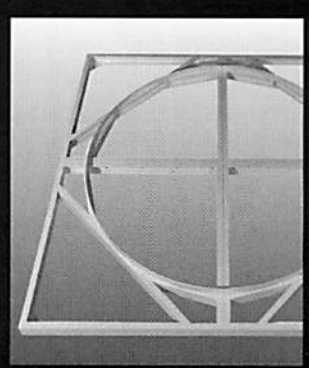

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Reggie Lewis Center, Boston, MA - February 23-24

Cantwell Weathers The Storm

By Scott Alexanderson

The Reggie Lewis Center in Boston hosted the 2008 AT&T USA Indoor Track and Field Championships once again this year, and for many athletes and fans, the trip to Boston proved to be quite the experience. Almost a foot of snow hit the Northeast right before the weekend event causing a two hour delay in Saturday's events and numerous headaches for travelers, including the 2008 men's shot put champion Christian Cantwell who spent a reported 30 hours traveling from Missouri to Boston.

The big buzz in Boston for this meet was the men's shot put, with Adam Nelson fresh off of his world-leading Tyson Invitational performance, and Christian Cantwell and Reese Hoffa determined to make the team for Valencia, Spain. When word spread that Cantwell had thrown well in a small meet in Missouri on Friday night, track fans ramped up the anticipation for the Boston event. In addition, the $25,000 Visa Championship prize was up for grabs with Nelson and Cantwell within 100 points of each other after the Tyson Invitational. While Nelson settled for third (3rd) in the Boston shot put and missed qualifying for the IAAF World Indoor Championship in Valencia Spain, he did walk away with the men's Visa Championship and a $25,000 paycheck. Cantwell and Hoffa will go on to represent the USA in the men's shot put at the World Championships in two weeks.

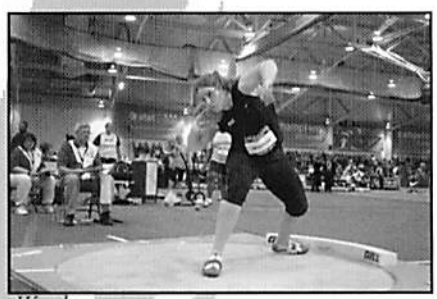
Women's Shot Put

The women's shot put was the first event up for the throws fans. Among the twelve listed entries, most questions revolved around defending indoor champion Jillian Camarena (Rotational, NYAC), Kristin Heaston (Glide, Nike), Abigail Ruston (Rotation, Unattached) and Elizabeth Wanless (Glide, NYAC). Arizona State's Sarah Stephens and Michelle Carter will be factors come the Olympic Trials. The women's field had a good mixture of throwers using both the glide and rotation technique.

Camarena

Despite the two hour delay due to Friday's snowstorm, the competitors got off to a good start. Both Camerena and Ruston announced their presence with solid 17.80 m marks in the opening round. In the third round, Elizabeth Wanless asserted herself into the mix with an 18.01 m effort. While Heaston had some slight foul trouble, Camerena, Ruston and Wanless were able to get marks over the 18 meter line for the top three spots. What made this competition special for the lucky few who got to see it, was Jillian Camerena unleashing a massive 18.11 m effort on her sixth and final throw for the victory. The women's event was also noticeable for the lack of foot fouls or sectional fouls. Other significant factors were the number of women over 50 feet (7) and the consistent marks by the other two competitors.

Ruston


Wanless

Camarena's marks in the meet showed that she is due to break the 60 feet mark soon and could be followed quickly by both Winless and Ruston.

"It took me quite a while to get things together today," said Camarena. "I finally nailed one on my last throw. I came in here trying to have a good competitive session. I've been working on a lot of technique for the past nine months or so. My plan was always to compete indoors this year, especially with the World Indoors."

Women Shot Put

1, Jillian Cam arena, New York At, 18.11m, (59-05). 2, Abigail Ruston, unattached, 18.03m, (59-02). 3, Elizabeth Wanless, New York Ath, 18.01m, (59-01.25). 4, Kristin Heaston, Nike, 17.78m, (58-04). 5, Chandra Brewer, unattached, 16.51m, (54-02). 6, Becky O'Brien, unattached, 15.52m, (50-11). 7, Billie-Jo Grant, Virginia, 15.50m, (50-10.25). 8, Sarah Vance, unattached, 15.07m,

*** All photos by Victor Sailer**

(49-05.50). 9, Kenitra Woods, unattached, 14.81m, (48-07.25). —, Gail Lee, unattached, DNS. —, Adriane Blewitt, unattached, DNS. —, Susan King, unattached, DNS.

Men's Weight Throw

The men's weight throw proved to be just as exciting, if not more so, than the women's shot put, as the top two competitors came down to the last round to sort out first and second place. As expected, it was a battle between training partners Kibwe Johnson ((NYAC) and A.G. Kruger (Nike). Also having a good day were Thomas Freeman (Unattached), Walter Henning (Unattached), Arnaldo Cueto (Unattached), and Kevin Becker (Unattached) who were separated by only 1 meter in the final results.

In the first round, Johnson got off to a bad start with a foul. Kruger, Freeman and Henning quickly capitalized on that with good solid efforts. Kruger had three fouls during the competition, but managed to take the lead in 5th round. Coming into the final round, Kruger managed to hang on to a lead at 24.07 m over Johnson. Freeman only needed one throw to hang on to third place and had 1 foul and 4 passes. Walter Henning, whose tear through the high school record books (along with Conner McCullough) has the hammer world buzzing, posted consistent numbers; all of his legal throws (2 fouls) were over the 21 meter mark. Johnson was throwing in the 23m's until the sixth and final throw, when he rocketed one out to 25.12 m for the win. It was an extremely solid event with 7 of the 8 competitors throwing over the 20 meter mark. Johnson's throw was a PR and the best throw at an Indoors Championship since 1996.

"This is my first Indoor Championship title," said Johnson. "It feels great. It was a huge PR. Going into the last throw, it's pretty common for me that I can muster one up, but I had no idea that it was that far. I was really happy; it was my last throw, a PR and now I'm done with Indoors (for this season).

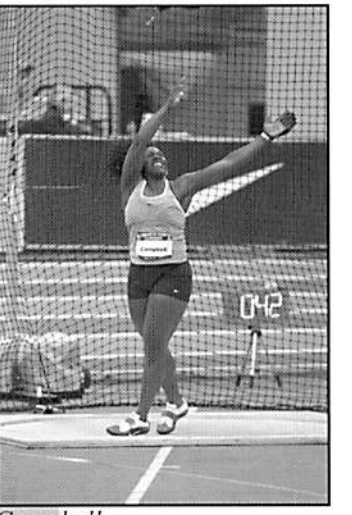
Kruger is also keying on the hammer for this year and felt good about his performance in Boston. Kruger also said that he was using the weight throw as a training tool for the hammer season and was looking forward to the Trials.

Men Weight Throw

1, Kibwe Johnson, New York Ath, 25.12m, (82-05). 2, A.G. Kruger, Nike, 24.07m, (78-11.75). 3, Thomas Freeman, unattached, 22.29m, (73-01.75). 4, Walter Henning, unattached, 21.47m, (70-05.25). 5, Arnaldo Cueto, unattached, 21.27m, (69-09.50). 6, Kevin Becker, unattached, 21.09m, (69-02.50). 7, Bryan Tolcser, unattached, 20.11m, (65-11.75). 8, Brian Krantz, unattached, 18.59m, (61-00).

Women's Weight Throw

Defending champion Amber Campbell (Unattached) was the pre-meet favorite for the women's weight throw at the Reggie Lewis Center Sunday morning. The women treated the small early morning crowd to an exciting event that had plenty of suspense. The field of 12 showed very impressive technical mastery of the indoor weight.



Campbell

Amber Campbell took an early lead in the first round with her 22.53 m effort, followed by Erin Gilreath (NYAC) and Krystal Yush (Unattached). Yush moved up a place in the second round with a 21.71 m effort and would beat out Gilreath based on second best throw. Amber Campbell's victory came in the fifth round as she boomed out an impressive 23.23 m bomb. Kristal Yush finished spectacularly in second place at 74-02.50 feet. Previous champion Erin Gilreath of the NYAC finished with an impressive 71-02.75 effort and season's best in the first round. It was another very strong event with were places 1-5 all being over 20 meters.

Yush

Gilreath

Of her second consecutive USATF weight title, Campbell commented, "Both were great. I can't ever complain about a win. There were some great competitors and it went really well. Everybody brings their 'A' game to Nationals.

Women Weight Throw

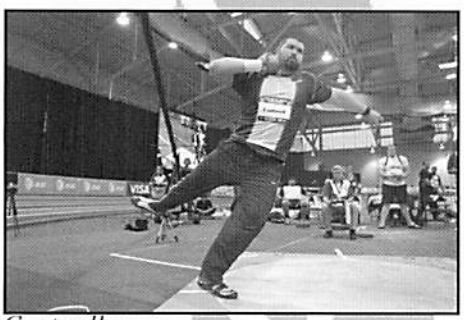
1, Amber Campbell, unattached, 23.23m, (76-02.75). 2, Kristal Yush, unattached, 22.62m, (74-02.50). 3, Erin Gilreath, New York Ath, 21.71m, (71-02.75). 4, Ronda Gullatte, Throw 1 Deep, 21.25m, (69-08.75). 5, Bethany Hart, Shore A C, 20.52m, (67-04). 6, Shannon Popp, unattached, 19.58m, (64-03). 7, Elizabeth Wanless, New York Ath, 19.42m, (63-08.75). 8, Sarah Thornton, Rhode Island, 19.22m, (63-00.75). 9, Amy Parkosewich, Shore

*No photos were available from the men's weight throw

A C, 18.99m, (62-03.75). 10, Jennifer Galvin, unattached, 18.82m, (61-09). 11, Caressa Sims, unattached, 18.46m, (60-06.75). —, Loree Smith, New York Ath, DNS.

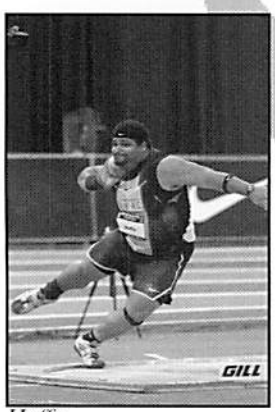
Men's Shot Put

The most anticipated event of the entire program was the men's shot put with the big three (3) Nelson, Cantwell and Hoffa in town again to the delight of a packed house. Nelson's awesome performance at Tyson created a lot of excitement among the local track and field community, given that he is getting close to the world record and it is only February. Added to that was the news that Cantwell had thrown extremely well on Friday in an all-comers meet in Missouri. During the warm-ups, Cantwell showed he was in a playful mood as he chased the ESPN camera out of the back of the circle.



Cantwell

The event would also determine the VISA Championship with Nelson in first in the standings with 1,265 points and Cantwell just behind with 1,179 points. At stake, a $25,000 prize.



Hoffa

During the first round, the athletes got down to serious business as Cantwell launched a massive 21.51 m effort. Not to be outdone, Hoffa and Nelson both started the competition over the 20 meter mark Nelson was in good form with his pre-throw routine providing excitement and entertainment to the entire crowd. The Dartmouth grad seems to have a good following in the New England area given his college years spent in New Hampshire. He had his best effort in the 2nd round with a 21.25 meter throw, and all six of his throws were over the 20 meter mark.

Nelson

Hoffa grabbed sole possession of 2nd place when he reached 21.40 meters. It is interesting to note that out of the big 3, Hoffa seems the most relaxed out of the back. He does not torque up as much as Cantwell and not even close to Nelson. Hoffa only fouled 1 time in Boston while punching his ticket for the World Indoors meet. With both Cantwell and Hoffa over the 70 foot mark already this season, the US should have a good, strong team for the March championships in Valencia.

Even though he threw only two fair throws, it proved to be enough for Christian Cantwell to rise to the challenge laid down by his rivals. Given his travel, equipment and hand troubles, this was an impressive outing of the reigning Indoor Visa series champion. Cantwell had three fouls and passed on his last effort. While Cantwell would walk away with the individual shot title, Nelson would hold onto the Visa lead and get the $25,000 champions check.

While they do not get the amount of press that the big 3 get, the other 5 competitors showed why this is one of America's top events. Steve Manz placed 4th with a 19.94 m effort; Bryan Vickers placed 5th with his best throw in the 5th round; Jon Kalnas placed 6th, Mitchell Pope 7th and Dan Taylor, although plagued with foul trouble, did get one fair throw over 60 feet with a 18.63 m effort in the first round. Given that there are other big names out there like John Godina, Noah Bryant, Garrett Johnson and Russ Winger, this could be America's strongest event at the trials and possibly the Olympics.

Cantwell triumphed despite enduring a 30-hour trip to Boston, partially due to a snowstorm in the Northeast. Cantwell said he "can throw a WR now," and given the push press in the 400-pound range, it's hard to doubt him.

Interestingly, all of the competitors were rotational throwers.

For the time being the American shot put juggernaut will continues its journey on to Valencia, Eugene and Beijing.

Men Shot Put

1, Christian Cantwell, Nike, 21.51m, (70-07). 2, Reese Hoffa, New York Ath, 21.40m, (70-02.50). 3, Adam Nelson, Nike, 21.25m, (69-08.75). 4, Steve Manz, unattached, 19.94m, (65-05). 5, Bryan Vickers, unattached, 19.42m, (63-08.75). 6, Jon Kalnas, unattached, 19.38m, (63-07). 7, Mitchell Pope, unattached, 18.92m, (62-01). 8, Dan Taylor, Nike, 18.63m, (61-01.50).

L&S

Shot Across The Bow

By Glenn Thompson

Track and field controversy is usually the domain of high-octane diva sprinters. The financial rewards are greater and so is the ink and face time they generate.

On the other hand, throwers are generally known to be more low-key and collegial, at least publicly.

So it made big news in the throwing circles, and perhaps a small ripple in the track world, when the post-USATF Championship edition (February 25, 2008) of the Boston Globe ran an article by Shira Springer where the victorious Christian Cantwell took a couple of figurative shots at his two primary rivals over, well, shots.

Cantwell used a 125mm ball in Boston, but it was not his first choice. Cantwell prefers a 128mm implement, and after missing several throws, he had a row of swollen knuckles to bear witness to its affect.

So why wouldn't the world's leading shot putter not have the proper equipment? That's where it gets interesting.

The prior week Cantwell had asked USATF runner-up and the defending IAAF indoor and outdoor champion Reese Hoffa to bring his 128mm indoor shot to Boston. Hoffa told Cantwell that he would not do so.

"For the most part Reese is a pretty good guy, but he pulled a quick one on me this weekend and I'm a little upset with him," Cantwell told the Globe's Shirer. "So, I'm glad he made it, but, in the end, I would have rather had [third-place finisher] Adam [Nelson] make the team for the world championships. Reese has a 128 indoor and he wouldn't bring it.

"I couldn't believe it when I called him and said, 'Would you bring this for me?' He goes, 'Nah, I'm not going to pack it.' I said, 'Well, send it. I'll pay for it.' He goes, 'No, I'm not going to help you. Why would I help you? You're my competitor.' He's a hypocrite."

When Shirer relayed Cantwell's comments to Hoffa, she sensed that he was "genuinely shocked."

Hoffa told Shirer. "My side of the story is that Christian had every opportunity to get his 128 and he decided not to do that. It's putting me in a bad position where he's like, 'I want you to kind of be my mule and carry my shots for me.' That's the way I looked at it. I'm not Christian's mule where I've got to carry his shots for him to track meets.

"Also, he's so good in the shot right now, why would I bring him an implement that's going to give him a greater advantage to beat me when it comes to making a team?", continued Hoffa. "It's winner take all when it comes to trying to make a team. I brought my shot. If he wanted to throw my shot, he's more than happy to it. It's that I'm not going to bring an extra shot for someone else."

Cantwell also asked Nelson to bring his 128mm, but he was already on the way to the airport when he got the request via text message.

"I'm not going to bring two shot puts," Nelson told Shirer. "He's got to take care of his own business. You can't rely on your competitors. In competition, there's a line you have to draw. I draw a line when it comes to bringing an extra 16 pounds in my luggage. The bottom line is, at this level, you need to provide your own implements."

If you're looking for a little extra drama come Eugene in late June, the stage has been set.SM

L&S

Hoffa and Cantwell two weeks later after Cantwell's win in Valencia.

"Bury Me Face Down..."

By Glenn Thompson

The world's best shot putters, or at least a significan portion of them, were on hand in Valenica, Spain vying for the 2008 IAAF Indoor crown and the $40K that came with it. Of course on the men's side, the U.S. left Adam Nelson at home as each country can only bring two representatives and Nelson had finished a disappointing third in Boston at USATF's two weeks earlier.

On the women's side, New Zealand glider Valerie Vili was seeking to solidify her status as the world's best, with everyone else playing catch-up.

Both competitions in this Olympic tune-up would provide decisive winners. It remains to be seen if Beijing will produce similar results.

Men's Shot Put
QUALIFYING
Defending World Indoor shot champion Reese Hoffa led all qualifiers in the opening round with a season's best 21.49m. Hoffa was on a mission to be the first since Ulf Timmerman some 19 years ago to have both the outdoor and indoor titles concurrently.

Christian Cantwell, the 2004 World indoor champion, went 20.91m on his second throw. Australian Scott Martin set an Oceanic record with his 20.83m qualifying effort. Jamaican Dorian Scott was also in a record-setting mood, blasting a PR 20.62m toss to set a national record.

Also advancing were Belarusian Andrei Mikhnevich (20.58m), Rutger Smith of the Netherlands (20.30m), Germany's Peter Sack (20.27m) and Tomasz Majewski (20.23m) of Poland.

There were two notable non-qualifiers. Spaniard Manuel Martinez (2003 champion) could muster only a 19.75m toss (season's best), and Ukraine's reigning Olympic champion Yuriy Bilonog, who could do no better than 19.02m.

FINAL
Hoffa entered the final as the defending champion, yet he has yet to produce in 2008 the magic that generated a PR and 2007 IAAF Outdoor championship.

Hoffa's chief protagonist was his teammate Cantwell, who had beaten Hoffa for the 2008 USATF Indoor title two weeks earlier, and had produced one of the best all-time series ever just a few days before that in a small meet in Missouri. All others appeared to have little realistic hope beyond the bronze medal.

And true to 2008 form, Cantwell produced one of the most consistent series ever in a World Indoor Championship and recaptured the title he had claimed in 2004.

Cantwell set the tone in the opening round with a 21.14m opener. Smith started with a 20.75m to claim second, Mikhnevich dropped a 20.58m, while Hoffa managed a pedestrian 20.31m.


Vili

In the second frame Cantwell improved to 21.19m while Hoffa took control by a mere centimeter (21.20m). Majewski, after a first-round foul, got on the board with a 20.78m toss, which was matched by Smith.

Cantwell improved to 21.59m in the third stanza and Majewski improved to 20.93m to claim sole possession of third-place. Hoffa managed only a 20.74m, and would not register a fair throw during the finals, as did Mikhnevich and Smith. Cantwell added two more 21 meter throws during finals (21.77m and 21.69m). Mikhnevich gave Majewski pause with a 20.82m final effort, just short of the bronze.


Opstapchuk

The Cantwell-Hoffa finish was a repeat of the 2004 final in Budapest.

"This validates all the hard I've been over the past few years," said Cantwell, whose 22.18m PR before USATF's a couple weeks earlier moved him to number 5 on the all-time list. Cantwell became only the second putter to win two World indoor titles, the other being Ulf Timmerman (East Germany) in 1987 and 1989.

But Cantwell saved his best quotes for a track side interview broadcast over the public address system. "I hope that when they bury me they bury me upside down

*** All photos by Victor Sailer**

so all my critics can kiss my ass," he declared before the bemused Spanish crowd.

Later he would explain his comments were directed at people, whom he refused to name, that have noted his long history of mighty throws but lack of medal podium finishes. One could only guess his legion of detractors on *The Ring* (www.effortlessthrow.org) were a primary target.

"Whenever you don't live up to their expectations they are pretty hard on you," he said at the post event press conference. "They can all go to hell for all I care. But everyone who supports me, this (victory) is for them."


Cantwell


Hoffa

1. Christian Cantwell (US) 71-5¼ (21.77); 2. Reese Hoffa (US) 69-6¾ (21.20); 3. Tomasz Majewski (Pol) 68-8 (20.93); 4. Andrey Mikhnevich (Blr) 68-3¾ (20.82); 5. Rutger Smith (Hol) 68-2¼ (20.78); 6. Dorian Scott (Jam) 66-7 (20.29); 7. Scott Martin (Aus) 66-½ (20.13); 8. Peter Sack (Ger) 65-9½ (20.05);

Women's Shot Put
QUALIFYING
World champion Valerie Vili needed only one attempt to post an automatic qualifier, which also happened to be an Oceanic indoor record of 19.72m.

2005 World outdoor champion Nadzeya Ostapchuk (BEL) needed two puts to make the automatic mark, with 18.46m.

Germany's Christina Schwanitz and Russia's Anna Omarova followed Vili at 18.97m and 18.58m, respectively. The German (19.68m) and Russian (19.09m) also had the second and third best marks, respectively, of the indoor season. Meiju Li of China was the fourth best of five automatic qualifiers with 18.55m and Italian Chiara Rosa went 18.38m to advance.

Trinidad's Cleopatra Borel-Brown (18.34m) and Misleydis Gonzales of Cuba (18.32m) rounded out the finals qualifiers.

Notable non-qualifiers were Ling Li (CHN) who had a 2008 indoor best of 18.77m, and Assunta Legnante (ITA), the European Indoor champion.

FINAL
As with the men's competition, the women would be a two-horse race, with all others vying for bronze. The gold medal combatants would be new guard New Zealander Vili on the rise and world veteran Ostapchuk.

The truth is, however, Vili is simply setting herself apart from all of her competition, including Ostapchuk. Her 2007 Osaka crown served notice to her Eastern European foes, and Valencia just served to confirm her supremacy.

Vili settled the day with her opening effort 20.19m. Only Ostapchuk had a seasonal mark better than that (20.35m), but no such power was evident in Valencia. She did manage a solid 19.67 opener, which again, would not be challenged for silver.

In third was Italy's Rosa (18.68m) followed by Schwanitz (GER) at 18.54m.
Vili fouled in the second frame and posted a 20.07m in the third. Ostapchuk moved to 19.74m in the third round, but would generate three fouls in the finals.

Behind them was the battle for bronze. Cuba's Gonzalez improved to 18.75m in the third round with Rosa slipping to fourth.

In the finals, there was little drama until China's Li stepped into the ring for her final effort and launched a PR 19.09m to garner bronze. Gonzalez, Rosa and Schwanitz could offer no serious response.
Vili's dominance was reminiscent of Cantwell's with three of her four measured throws good enough for gold.

"The competition was very tough," said a gracious and perhaps generous Vili, "a very good one. I have had a good time. I feel really glad and satisfied to have come and taken part of this competition. Now I must go on and get ready for the Olympic Games."

One would think she is ready right now.

1. Valerie Vili (NZ) 66-3 (20.19); 2. Nadezhda Ostapchuk (Blr) 64-9¼ (19.74); 3. Meiju Li (Chn) 62-7¾ (19.09); 4. Misleydis González (Cub) 61-6¼ (18.75); 5. Chiara Rosa (Ita) 61-3½ (18.68); 6. Christina Schwanitz (Ger) 60-10½ (18.55); 7. Cleopatra Borel-Brown (Tri) 60-7¼ (18.47); 8. Anna Omarova (Rus) 58-3 (17.75);
L&S

*Continued on pg 47 - Valencia: News & Notes

Kibwe Johnson

Making His Own Way

By Glenn Thompson

Kibwe Johnson has taken a long, sometimes meandering path to completing his undergraduate degree, and in conjunction, hammer stardom. His path as a student athlete has taken him from Georgia to California and finally Jud Logan's program at Ashland University in Ohio.

Johnson has always stood apart from the competition. His pure athleticism and blinding speed make him a unique. Harnessing and molding those gifts into world-class performances have been the charge of his coach at Ashland University (OH), four-time Olympian Jud Logan.

Johnson has settled in well in Ashland, personally, academically and athletically. And he has become a fixture on the podiums at U.S. championships since 2005. Johnson is set to complete his undergraduate requirements this spring. And after capturing his first USATF title in February in the weight throw, could a place on an international podium be in the offing?

Long &Strong: *Where did you grow up?*

Kibwe Johnson: Well, it's a long story! When I was young, I moved around frequently, so when I am asked about it, people say, "Are you an army brat?" I'm not, but my dad is a doctor and we moved a lot. I was born in San Francisco and grew up in Oakland, California. From there I moved to Washington, DC, back to Oakland, to Teaneck, NJ, Aurora, CO, Atlanta, Moorpark, California and finally to where I reside now in Ohio.

L&S: *You are insanely quick. Did you play other sports in high school?*

KJ: I did track and football all four years of high school. I tried basketball in 7th or 8th grade; it wasn't my cup of tea.

VictorSailer

Johnson sees Osaka as a learning experience.

Football was always my favorite in high school, even when it became apparent that track was going to pay for my university education. I started track in 8th grade as a sprinter. Lots of people in my family did track so it has always been a part of my life. My grandparents have been to every Summer Olympic Games since Montreal. I started throwing one day because I had a hip injury and sprinting was not going to happen that day. I discovered the shot put, and then the discus. I continued to sprint and throw until I went to college where throwing took precedent.

L&S: *Tell us about your long and winding journey (after high school) to Ashland.*

KJ: I started college at the University of Georgia. It was my first time away from home, with little rules, and that landed me right out of university due to poor academics. Athletically, it was great. Don [Babbitt] is a great coach and the training group was phenomenal. I couldn't have asked for anything better as a college freshman. Since I was no longer at Georgia, I had to make a pretty serious decision. I worked the summer while I figured out what I needed to do. I basically decided that I needed to go back to school or join the military and get my Associates that way. The four-year requirement was too much for me to commit to because my plan was to earn my Associates and transfer to another school to continue throwing. I met the MacKay family my senior year of high school at the Arcadia Invitational in California and decided to take the step and make the call. Within two weeks of that first phone call, I moved to Moorpark, enrolled in classes, and began training with Coach MacKay. I completed classes, gained success at the junior college level, and accepted a scholarship to Ashland. I loved Jud's intensity and believed he could develop me as a top hammer thrower in the United States.

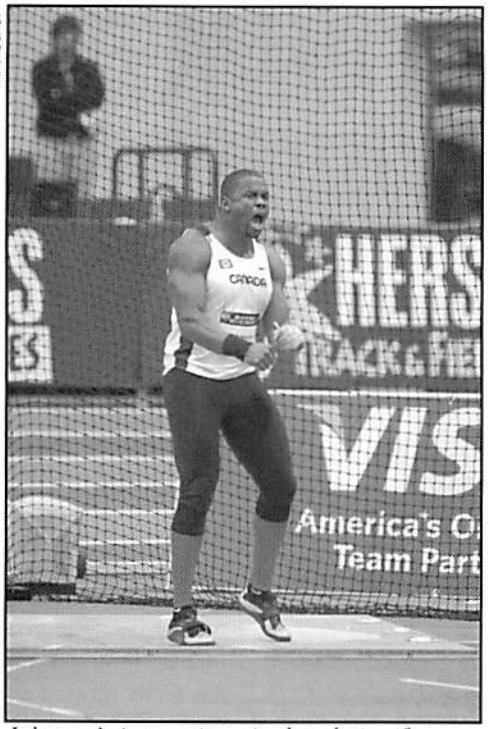
Thankfully, the rule in Division II for eligibility is that you have ten full time semesters to compete. I moved to Ashland with four semesters of eligibility left. After my own mishaps, and some major academic advising mistakes, I was left with one season of eligibility. I made the most of it, claiming three national championships, and a National Collegiate All-Division Record. I enjoyed every moment competing for the Eagles and I am so appreciative for the opportunity to help Jud take the Eagles to their highest placing in his tenure at Ashland.

So, the moral of the story is, If I had to do it all over again, I wouldn't change a thing. I believe that my life experiences, good and bad, have made me the man I am. I have met many people, coaches and supporters that I will take with me for all time.

L&S: *What was up with that Canada singlet a couple years back at USATF Indoors?*

KJ: Funny you should ask. My fiancée Crystal had just come off of a Canadian National Team. Like most of us on national teams, she traded to get some sweet stuff. Among some of the things she got was a large men's Canada singlet that she gave to me as a gift for Christmas. I thought the shirt was sweet and it looked good on me so I wore it. That's pretty much it. I wish more people had asked me about it then. It was really innocent, but in hindsight, I would not have worn it at a national level meet.

L&S: *I'm sure you had hoped for better results in Osaka. Can you share your experience there?*



Johnson's interesting singlet choice from 2006 USATF Indoors.

L&S: *I've been to Ashland and it's not exactly a diverse, vibrant metropolis. What's to do when you're not training?*

KJ: Well you are right about that. But what Ashland does have is the training group and the fact that everyone shares the same common goal at being the best we can be at our events. So, when not training, we watch a lot of movies on our sweet new flat screen. Crystal and I joke that we treat the TV like our kid. We also play a lot of Guitar Hero and Rock Band. Most of the time when I'm not training, I just find myself daydreaming about the hammer. I think I have a problem....

L&S: *If you could be Olympic gold medalist in either the disc or hammer, which would you pick, and why?*

KJ: Osaka was absolutely amazing. I was extremely proud with how I competed. I was unlucky on my two slight toe fouls but hey, stay in the ring, right?! In the last month of season I grew to become a better hammer thrower than I had the last season or so. My spring season competing for Ashland wasn't as good as I wanted it to be. I was a little let down in my performance and I used that to prepare for USA Outdoors. I was happy with my performance there where I had seasonal bests on my first and last throw of the meet. From there I was going through some technical changes and that led to a personal best about a week later. That personal best led me into a silver medal finish at Pan-American Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Being that it was my first international competition ever, I was really pleased, although I knew there was more in the tank. So, I was throwing really well going into Osaka. Three-fouling wasn't exactly what I had in mind. I took it as almost destiny. Everything happens for a reason. We protested my last throw because I didn't feel the foul and our staff didn't see it. So they measured it and reviewed it later (to no avail). The throw was 74.53m. This throw would have ranked me 13th, one position out of making finals, which would have been the highest placing by an American at a major world event since Lance's silver in Atlanta. So when discussing my experience with Jud and the staff in Osaka, I was happy and ready to tackle my fall training! I also had some very kind words of encouragement from Tore Gustafsson and Koji Murofushi. They gave me additional technical expertise and just overall advice. I used this along with Jud's critique for the base of my fall training. My experiences in Osaka led me to my best fall training yet and put me on track for some big throws this Olympic season.

KJ: I'm pretty sure I would pick the hammer. Discus is my first love, but I am just in love with the hammer lately. I love the history of it and I especially love the challenge that we face as Americans in today's track scene of producing guys who can compete on the world level and push for medals. I like, and can really appreciate, where our discus guys are going right now. I want to lead the way to take U.S. men's hammer where discus is now, and eventually for both to dominate on a world level as the shot does. The groundwork has been laid with our youth, juniors and me personally, I'm still pretty "young" in this hammer game. I got my first taste of being on a podium in front of a packed stadium in Brazil. I want that Olympic medal!

L&S: *Do you have a preference between the weight and hammer? What do you consider to be the major technical differences between the two?*

KJ: My preference is the hammer. I am personally not that big a fan of the weight. I had never thrown it until I moved to Ashland. I never liked it because it hurt my body too much to throw it, and I threw it poorly. It doesn't hurt my body anymore, so now instead it is a reminder that it isn't outdoor season yet and its 0 degrees outside for the hammer, which is always fun. The weight can be a vital tool in training for the hammer, but it must be thrown like the athletes' hammer technique. I trained in practice with four turns this last season but just couldn't get my timing down once the adrenaline got going on meet day. This bodes well though because I threw the weight much farther in training off of four turns than I did off of three.

L&S: Can you give us some specs on yourself?

KJ:

6'2" 232/105k
Bench – 390/177k
Back Squat – 595/272k
Front Squat – 425X3/192k
Dead Lift – 655/297
Push Press – 315/143k
Behind Neck Jerk – 390/177k
Clean – 385X2/175k
Incline Bench – 325X2/147k
Snatch – 286/130k

Quad test:
3 Hop – 9.90m
Overhead shot – 19.94m
Standing long jump – 3.44m
30m – 3.54

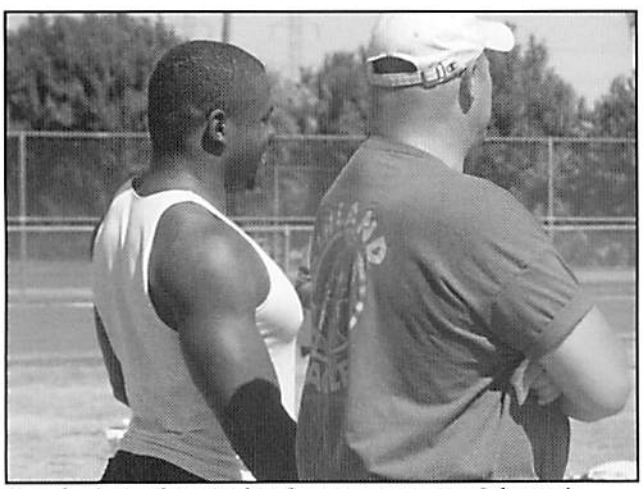
Johnson in Osaka with fiance Crystal Smith.

L&S: *What does/would a perfect hammer throw feel like?*

KJ: The perfect throw as I see it in my head 30,000 times a day starts with the hammer feeling super light on my cast going into the winds. The rest would be kind of a blur. I would have an easy, solid first toe turn with a smooth transition to the heel and the ridiculous counter accelerating the ball at stupid speeds for four turns until it just "leaps" out of my hands and I yell for about seven seconds before the ball hits the ground. P.S., seven seconds would be like a 94 meter throw. No big deal.

Of course, this is all totally hypothetical, I'm not sure what it would feel like, but it's something that I strive for everyday.

L&S: *Name three things a throws fan wouldn't know about you.*


You don't need to see his face to recognize Johnson's mentor, Jud Logan.

KJ: I try to be as open as possible so I think the only things most people might not know are what my name means. Kibwe is Swahili for "stone". However, a couple years ago Crystal found out from her cousins' Kenyan wife that in a different dialect of Swahili it meant "big fox". My favorite band is Outkast. The majority of my immediate family all graduated from California-Berkeley. Go Bears!

L&S: *Who's currently training in Ashland besides yourself and A.G.? What is the training environment like when your biggest competition is training right beside you?*

KJ: Currently, our post collegiate training group consists of Canadian hammer record holder, a.k.a. my fiancée) Crystal Smith and shot putter Steve Manz. Steve moved to Ashland last summer to prepare for the coming Olympic year. Having Steve here has really infused an excitement into the training group this year. And I cannot forget the other important part of the training group, which is the college team! Jud has assembled such a great group of athletes, they're a hoot to hang out with and train just as hard as we do. Laughs abound, there is never a dull day. (shout out!)

The training environment is a good one. A.G. and I throw together on days that we work with Jud. All of my lifting is done with Crystal and Steve because A.G. is on a different training plan. I have been privileged to learn from some of the best coaches and athletes in the world. Before I moved to Ashland, I had developed the core of the type of athlete that I am striving to be. That being said, my competition lies within myself. I don't concern myself with things that I can't control. (I can thank Coach Mac [Bob Mackay] for burning that one into my brain!!). One of my favorite quotes from Yuri might say it best, "I watch no one in competition... everyone watches me." My interpretation of this is that if I focus on what I'm doing and handle my business, that's the way it ends up. How someone else is training or competing doesn't affect how I prepare and carry myself. I definitely think that I might not be in the same position I am in today if it wasn't for all aspects of the training group.

L&S: *Who do you think are the most technically proficient throwers (past or present) and why?*

KJ: My favorite throwers of the past to watch have been Sedykh, Litvinov, and Nikulin. These guys were just so powerful and impressive to watch. More recently, I like to watch Koji and Primoz throw. I feel like I can relate much better to the throwers of today. It is so hard to pinpoint favorite throwers though. In general, I am a huge fan of all

throws; I just like to see throwers do what they do best. As a discus thrower, I didn't really have any specific technical throwers I tried to model after. I just appreciated them for making the darn thing go far.

L&S: *You never touched a hammer until college, correct? If you were starting a novice thrower, what would you emphasize to them initially?*

KJ: Correct, I never threw the hammer until I went to Georgia. And I never trained it seriously until Moorpark. At Georgia the hammer was thrown about once a week to break up the monotony of my discus days, as I was a main event discus thrower.

If I were starting a novice thrower I would start with A LOT of turns, and focus on the importance of the entry. I think the younger the athlete is, the less the specific lifting needs to be. Throws and abdominal work are supreme until well into high school. That's how I'll train my kids. But if they end up race walkers, I'm outta luck!

L&S: *What are your major technical deficiencies and how do you address them?*

KJ: I have been told and still believe that my greatest strength and weakness is my speed. This is something that I am continually working on. This gets better yearly as I get a better "feeling" for the hammer. I have gotten better at "poooshing" the ball this last half year and it has shown in my distances in training.

L&S: *Are you a full-time thrower, or do you work also? What are your long-term plans, athletically and otherwise?*

KJ: Yes and no. I am not a full time thrower in that it isn't the only thing I do…..I wish. I am currently in my last semester of school here at Ashland and I will finally be graduated. When I say finally, I mean finally! I'll be getting a job after I graduate, but the main focus is most certainly my throwing career. My plans athletically are to respectfully overtake the American hammer record. Another dream I have for my career is to be a 70m/80m man in the discus and hammer. To my knowledge, it hasn't been done. That would be a great way to cement a legacy.

When I do enter the real world job market, I want to be a throws coach, and eventually work my way to a head coach position. ****L&S****

Logan On Kibwe

Kibwe has had the benefit of three quality programs and even though he has been here at Ashland the longest, each program has left a great impression. Don Babbitt saw the talent and Kibwe talks of his style of coaching fondly. Georgia was just too big of school and even with one year, Kibwe saw how top level athletes trained. The move to Moorpark was a great one where Coach Mac had a chance over two years to refine athletic skills, and more importantly mold Kibwe as a person and point him in the right direction to a program that could push him to his genetic potential.

Jud Logan

Kibwe only had one full year of eligibility for Ashland and set two national records and won three national Championships. He is in his 5th year in our "training group" and has benefited from many great training partners, but none more important than Canadian record holder Crystal Smith. The two of them have balanced each other out and provide for each other what the other aspires to be. Crystal is the "Fire" and Kibwe is the "Ice", and it just works. They are getting married next fall!

After the Olympics of 2008, I have encouraged Kibwe and Crystal to move on and get in the coaching profession. If they do, some University is going to be very lucky and ultimately very good. I can say that both have driven me to be a better coach and that ultimately has a positive effect on my collegiate program.

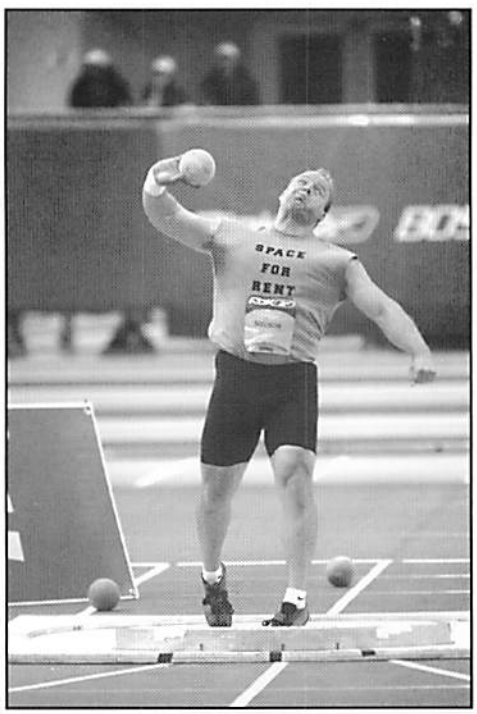
Adam Nelson has a...

NEW LEASE (ON LIFE)

By Glenn Thompson

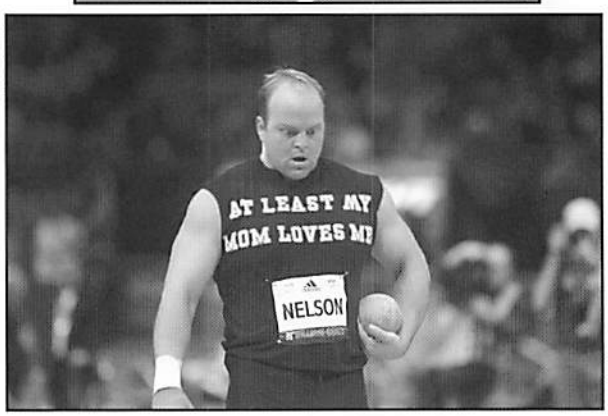
There's something familiar, yet very different, about shot veteran Adam Nelson's competitive apparel this winter. Gone are the plain sleeveless tee's with 'SPACE FOR RENT' in bold white letters across the chest. In its place, Nelson is sporting Nike togs, and more notably, is back in the Nike Camp.

Yes, this is the same Nelson who declared his independence from the shoe and apparel giant after the 2004 Athens Olympic Games. The same Nelson who has railed against the financial status quo in track and field. The same Nelson whose upper torso appears to be the width of a billboard, and used that space to boldly protest what he saw as financial and athletic disrespect.



VictorSailer

Remember it was Nelson who took the innovative approach of putting his sponsorship rights up for bid on eBay. The winner was "Rex, The Talking Bottle," an orange prescription bottle that has arms and legs and wears a big smile — and was the mascot for the company MedivoxRx. The small public company submitted the winning bid of $12,000 after a week-long contest that generated 104 bids from more than a dozen bidders.
So what happened?



VictorSailer

"I'm older now," he reflected. "I passed up a lot of money by going sponsor-free. I passed on an offer because I thought I had something else lined up. When that didn't materialize, I thought as long as I could win something would come along. It didn't. I had a lot of opportunities for smaller contracts of $5-$10k. Again, the problem goes back to the number of sponsors. By signing a sponsor for $5k-$10k, I'd risk losing out on a much more lucrative deal later on. Forced exclusivity is a HUGE barrier that every athlete should fight. Unfortunately, I'm at a stage in my career and my life that I have to maximize all the opportunities I have. I like Nike products, have always thrown in their shoes, and so it was no-brainer this time around."

"USATF and the IAAF need to change the rules that limit the size and number of sponsors on competition uniforms," said Nelson. "These rules have no merit and benefit no one. If athletes could have more sponsors, it might draw more corporate sponsors into the sport. This would benefit everyone. In the current state, the barriers to enter into sponsorship of USATF or the IAAF or even higher profile athletes are too high for local sponsors. Imagine if an athlete could solicit local sponsors for $100 to $500 per month and still have the opportunity to pursue apparel or other sponsors as they progress through the ranks. It would be a pretty sweet deal."

Nelson is also the benefactor of a non-title sponsor, Gray Television, a media/communications company that owns approximately 40 television stations in smaller markets across the U.S.

"I have the utmost appreciation for their generosity and continued support," says Nelson.

Although the singlet and tights are the most visible, there have been other changes in the 2005 World Champion's life, including moving to Charlottesville, Virginia to work on his Masters at the University of Virginia.

"In Athens I trained full-time. We would throw at 10am and usually lift in the early afternoon. I would stretch my training out over the course of the day in order to keep busy. Now, I'm much more efficient and a heck of a lot more adaptable. Often I have to put school before training or even abbreviate or miss workouts because of school. I work out when I can. I don't waste time. Oddly enough, the chaos I live in now has greatly enhanced my training and enjoyment. I rarely grow bored and I'm a lot more productive."

When you think of Nelson, it's almost reflexive to associate him with University of Georgia throws coach Don Babbitt who guided most of his post-collegiate career. But the relocation has brought change there as well.
"Don and I have a great relationship," says Nelson. "He was a great coach and friend for 5 years, but he's in Athens and I'm in C-ville. Carrie Lane (University of Virginia throws coach) is my new coach. She's been a great influence on my training."

Nelson was the buzz of mid-February in track circles. Two huge efforts at Millrose (world-leading 22.07m /72-5) and Tyson (#3 mark of all-time just one week ago at the Tyson Invitational in Fayetteville (22.40m/73-6) put him atop the Men's Visa Championship Series standings and set the table for what could be a huge 2008 campaign.
"I only had about six weeks of healthy training last year," Nelson recalled. "I was in phenomenal throwing shape at [2007] Worlds, but lacked competitive timing. I underperformed. I learned a lot about how I need to adapt my training to school and to accommodate for my age - I am beginning to feel my age. That said, I changed my training to reflect the new knowledge. I started working with an old friend of mine, Rob MacIntyre. He's writing my lifting programs. Carrie has been a great help too. She's helped me remember that throwing should come first. Throwers usually focus on the strength programs and then build their throwing programs around them. I flipped it this year. I'm designing my throwing programs, and then building my lifting program around them."

Nelson is thankful for his first healthy campaign since 2005 and says, "I feel better than I've ever felt before."
Nelson also credits an indoor ball "that I can actually throw."

When asked about his third place finish in Boston (only the top two, Cantwell and Hoffa, got tickets to World Indoors two weeks later in Valencia, Spain) at Indoor Nationals, Nelson responds flatly, "Very disappointing. I'm in great shape right now, but these things happen for a reason."

There was one consolation: $25,000 from Visa, a sum that Nelson can appreciate more than ever.
L&S

VictorSailer

Nelson and hurdler Lolo Jones pose with their awards and one helluva debit card.

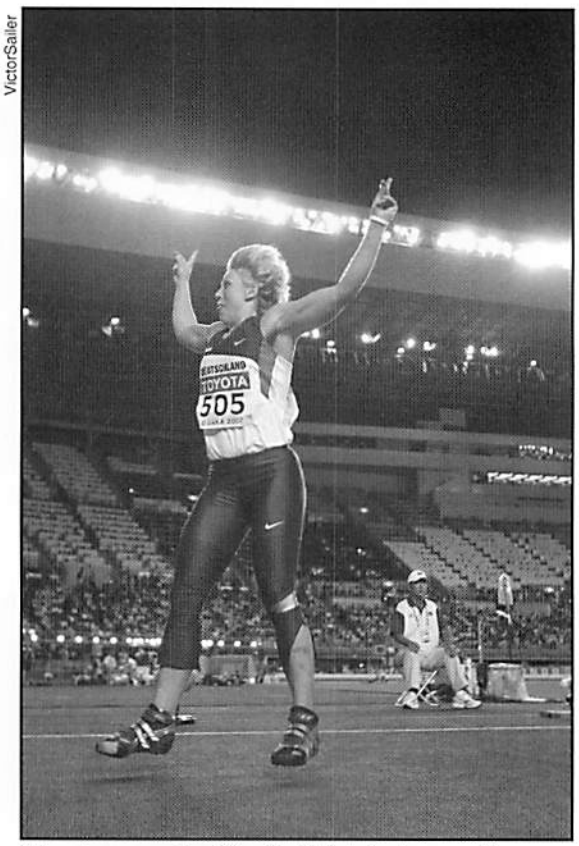
Interview with...

Christina Obergfoell

By Kurt Dunkel

Christina lives in Offenburg,Germany where she is coached by her long-time coach, Werner Daniels. As you will see, they have worked closely in order to have Christina reach the status as one of the greatest javelin throwers of recent years. Christina Obergfoell embodies many of the most positive aspects of what a track and field athlete aspires to be. She is humble, hard-working, and clearly has a passion for her livelihood. It seems that Christina approaches the javelin throw with exuberance and a very positive mindset. In that regard, it is more than a livelihood; it also symbolizes sport in its purest form. It is hard to miss Christina's enthusiasm and smile at major meets and championships. She has a great deal to smile about.

Although she has not yet graced the top of the podium at a major competition, Christina is still regarded as one of the elite throwers in the world. This is a testament not only to Christina's accomplishments, but also to the strength and depth of the women's javelin scene as a whole. Some of her accomplishments include: European Record (70.20) set last July in Munich, Bronze Medal at the 2007 World Athletics Final (62.47), Silver Medal at the 2007 World Championships in Osaka (66.46), fifth place at the 2006 World Athletics Final (60.63), fourth place at the 2006 European Championships (61.89), and the Silver Medal at the 2005 World Championships in Helsinki (70.03). Christina has endured major injuries; she has balanced the demands of school and athletics, and has forged a productive working relationship with Werner Daniels, who previously had little javelin coaching experience. In Beijing Christina is hoping to earn the gold to round out her silver and bronze medals.



The charasmatic Oberfoell finished second in Osaka last summer.

***L&S:** Tell us about where you are from and how you became interested in the javelin.*

CO: I live in the Southwest of Germany. The city I live is Offenburg. I started with track and field when I was 6 years old. As everyone does, I competed in all events, and later focused on the heptathlon. Finally at the age of 16, I competed in a javelin competition. It was the first time I wore javelin spikes, and I got second at the German junior championships and then decided to focus more on javelin than on heptathlon. That was the time when I got really interested in javelin.

***L&S:** What has your progression (i.e., personal bests at various ages)?*

CO:
1997 49,20m; 1999: 50,40m; 2000: 54,50m; 2001:56,83m; 2002: 60,61m; 2004: 63,34m; 2005:70,03m; 2007:70,20m

***L&S:** You often seemed animated and excited during competitions. Is that a reflection of your personality in general?*

CO: That's definitely a reflection of my personality. The way I behave during a competition is my mentality.

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

CO: 175cm height, and 80kg competition weight

***L&S:** What are your weight room bests (i.e., power clean, snatch, back and front squat, dead lift, push press, pullover)?*

CO: I only do maximum in push press 120kg, and in the bench press I do 95kg. All the other things I do in series, so I back squat 130kg 3 times and pullover of 47kg for 3 times.

***L&S:** What are your training bests in the 30/ 40 m., overhead shot (forward/backward), standing long jump, standing 3 jumps? Have you done any other track events? What are your personal bests?*

CO: I don't know my 30m best at the moment. Overhead shot forward (4kg): 15.80m; backward: 17.10m. We don't do any standing jumps or stuff like that. I have a personal best in high jump of 170cm and long jump 5.4m which are both very old records of mine. I often practice hurdles in training, but just as a training method and not any competitions.

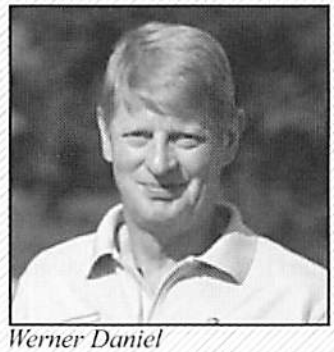
L&S: *Tell us about your coach, Werner Daniels.*

CO: My coach is a long jump and sprint coach and has recently become a javelin coach because of me. But I think he does the best job of all, because he hardly knew anything about the javelin event and has now become a real expert. He thought a lot about training methods, technique and stuff like that. The way he is coaching me is definitely different from the way other German javelin athletes are coached. He/we have our own opinion of what is definitely needed to throw far, and what is something you have to do because all the others do it!

What I can tell you is I practice a lot of sprint and specific jumps and that we do a few different things in weightlifting, but on the whole it still remains a javelin training as it is usually known.

Werner Daniel: On-The-Job Training

Werner Daniels may seem like an unassuming personality. The 58-year-old coach, who resides in the Southern German town of Offenberg, may not be one of the first names that comes to mind when one thinks of the top throws coaches in the world. However, he has developed a wonderful working relationship with Christina and in the process, has done something from which all coaches of track and field could learn. When Christina's father approached Werner about coaching his daughter when she was 15 years old, Werner Daniels had no pedigree and nearly no experience as a javelin thrower. He also had very little significant experience coaching the javelin. Previously, Werner had primarily been a sprints and jumps coach; coaching long jumpers Jochen Verschl (PR - 8.19m) and Uli Meier (1980 Olympic Team) as well as 400 meter runner Sylvia Steimle (U20 World Champs silver medalist in 4x400). However, as many coaches have found, experience is not always necessary in a particular event because 'expert' coaches often become stuck in a one size fits all, cookie-cutter approach and fail to learn from the athletes they coach.



Werner Daniel

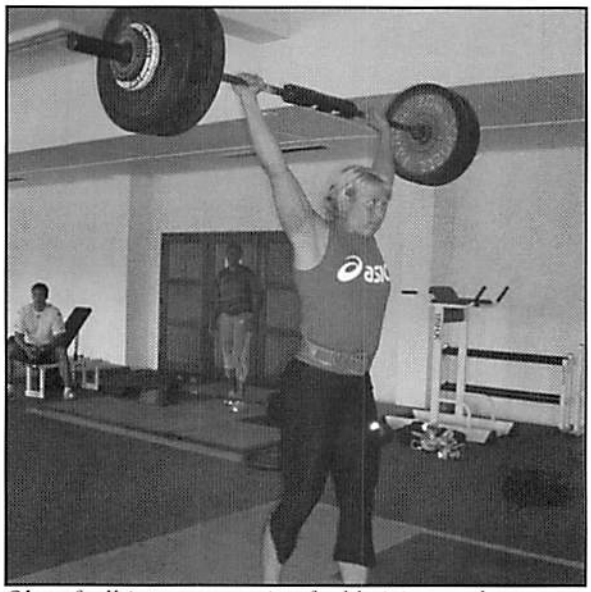
Shunryu Suzuki, in *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind,* states that in the expert's mind there are few possibilities, but in the beginner's mind, there are infinite possibilities. Werner took a beginner's mind approach with Christina. He integrated his personal philosophy, methodologies, and approaches with Christina's feedback and athletic ability in order to develop a world-class coach-athlete partnership. As a former sprints and jumps coach might tell you, Werner feels that speed is the name of the game in achieving exceptionally far throws. Werner studied Sport at Karlsruhe and has been coaching athletics for 39 years, so he does know a thing or two about athleticism, physics, leverage, speed/power development, and maximizing potential. Werner states that he has been as much of a student of the event as he has been a teacher and a coach. He states that first and foremost, he observes the reaction of the training. He combines this with Christina's feedback in order to finely tune the approach. In these regards he is a scientist - always watching, always learning, always adjusting. He says proudly that he has always had his eyes and ears wide open to improve himself. When asked what he would consider the keys to throwing the javelin far, Werner responds tellingly. He states that the javelin is far too complex an event to make generalizations about keys. He does state confidently, however, that the event is most basically about transferring speed into the throw.

Werner has a good grasp on the history of the javelin however. He states that in earlier times, javelin throwers threw too much. Whereas a high volume of throws is important for improvement, he recognizes that injury can be devastating and even counterproductive. This is why he plans Christina's training step by step to avoid injury. He asserts that an individualized training plan is critical; always monitoring and adjusting. Christina and Werner understand injury. As Christina discusses in the interview, 2002 was a loss due to injury. For over one year, she attempted to train through a very serious hip injury. Doctors struggled to diagnose the injury. During this period, Werner and Christina learned how to mindfully watch and monitor. Plus, it was a valuable lesson in patience and resilience.

When asked what advice Werner might have for American javelin throwers, he humbly states that he is not in a position to tell them what it takes to throw farther. It is clear that he believes in his approach. Athlete and coach must forge an approach that is individual and takes advantage of the coach's and athlete's unique abilities, skill sets, knowledge, and circumstances. Who will carry the torch in the world of German javelin throwing? Werner mentions a handful of young, promising, German javelin throwers. He states that Linda Stahl, Stephan Steding, Matthias de Zordo, and Alexander Viehweg all show great promise.
L&S

L&S: *You appear to be an excellent athlete. Did / do you play other sports? What other sports do you enjoy watching?*

CO: Aside from the javelin throw, I am studying physical education at the university and when I get some free time I enjoy skiing and inline-skating. I like watching the biathlon and of course all kinds of track and field events.



Obergfoell is a potent mix of athleticism and power.

L&S: *Have you been relatively healthy throughout your career? How do you maintain your health in such a demanding event? How do you stay psychologically motivated?*

CO: I had a hip injury in 2002 which was diagnosed after 18 months!!! In 2005 immediately after Worlds, I injured my knee. I maintain my health because I revitalize a lot and go to the osteopath regularly.

On the psychological level I work with the former javelin thrower Tanja Damaske who is a psychologist now, but not because of motivation problems. I am highly motivated on my own, but I think she can help me in particularly difficult situations during competitions.

L&S: *Please tell us more detail about your hip injury. What specifically was the injury? How did it affect your training? Why was receiving a diagnosis so difficult? Are you fully recovered?*

CO: My hip injury happened in July, 2002, two months after my first 60m throw. At the National Championships I hurt my left leg so much that I was not able to feel it for a few seconds, and even worse, I could hardly walk for a week. Then the odyssey began. We went from one doctor to the next and nobody could really help. Finally, after 16 months and less and less training because of too much pain, we found a doctor who was able to help. With a specific examination at the specialist, he diagnosed pieces of bone in my hip joint. Using arthroscopy, he operated in October, 2003. After the operation I recovered very fast. We started with training in January, 2004 and I qualified for the Olympics. I don't know why it was so difficult to diagnose this injury, but all I remember is that I wanted to stop throwing! Sometimes I still bless God that I found this doctor.

L&S: *Tell us about your huge throw at the World Championships in Helsinki. Did your training indicate that you would throw that far?*

CO: No, absolutely not that far. I felt in a real good shape before the Worlds and my one and only aim was to throw in the final. But when warming up, I already felt really good. So I went into the stadium and told myself to have fun inside there because I didn't have to lose anything on that day. And then in the second throw I gave everything I could, and then it happened and I was not able to realize the result on the screen. This was definitely the most surprising and unbelievable moment in my life.

L&S: *Tell us about your European record in Munich (June' 07).*

CO: Munich was different from Helsinki in the way that I

CHRISTINA: BY THE NUMBERS

PROGRESSION

Year	Distance
2007	70.20
2006	66.91
2005	70.03
2004	63.34
2003	57.40
2002	60.61
2001	56.83
2000	54.50

MAJOR PLACINGS

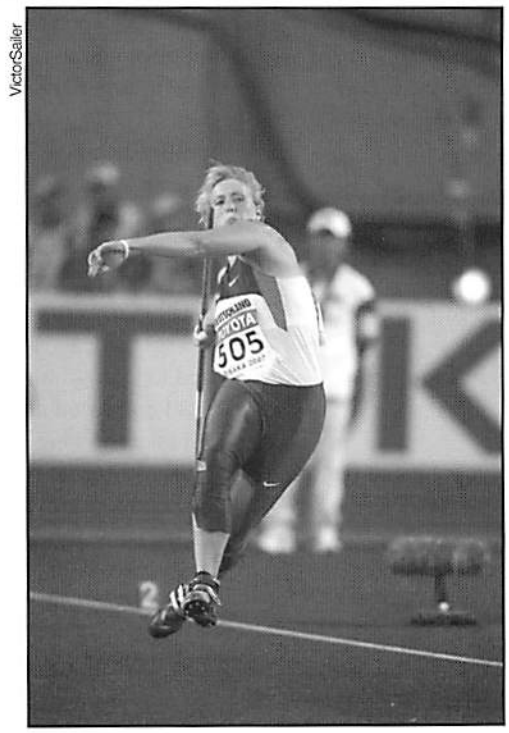
MEET	LOCATION/DATE
5th IAAF World Athletics Final 3 f 62.47	Stuttgart 22/09/2007
11th IAAF World Championships in Athletics 2 f 66.46	Osaka 31/08/2007
4th IAAF World Athletics Final 5 f 60.63	Stuttgart 09/09/2006
19th European Athletics Championships 4 f 61.89	Göteborg 13/08/2006
10th IAAF World Championships in Athletics 2 f 70.03	Helsinki 14/08/2005
28th Olympic Games 10 q 60.41	Athina 25/08/2004
IAAF/Coca Cola World Junior Championships 8 f 50.23	Santiago de Chile 20/10/2000

Source: www.iaaf.org

already had good results in training and competition before. So I knew about my good shape and that it would be a question of time until another 70m throw would happen. Nevertheless it was an absolutely great feeling.

L&S: *Technically you seemed to have made huge strides between 2005 and 2007. To what do you attribute this?*

CO: In 2006 I had a really inconsistent season with real big problems concerning my technique. We finally decided to work on these problems during the winter and went to Portugal in January to practice with the javelin there because at home we have no possibility to throw in the winter!



L&S: *What athletes do you admire and why? What javelin throwers do you admire and why?*

CO: I do not really have something like a model now. In previous times I always watched Tanja Damaske

L&S: *Your shoulder strength seems phenomenal. Do you focus on specific exercises for the shoulder?*

CO: No, I suppose the exercises I am doing for my shoulder are the same as the others do.

L&S: *I understand you study English and sport. How do you balance the demands of being a student and athlete?*

CO: Well, to be honest I rarely concentrate on my studies at the moment. Basically, I focus on my sports and try to finish my studies.

L&S: *Was the third place in Stuttgart disappointing?*

CO: I had the flu last year in Stuttgart, and I would not have started if the competition had not been at home. So under those circumstances the result was satisfactory.

L&S: *With your charisma, playful demeanor and potential for big throws (sometimes unexpectedly), do you put a lot of emphasis on specific goals (i.e., distance or place), or do you take an 'in the moment' or a 'wait and see' attitude?*

CO: Of course I put a lot of emphasis on specific goals, but I think all the others do so as well. So I think I don't have to tell you about my emphasis this year (laughs).

L&S: *What will it take for you to challenge the world record?*

CO: I think I can throw the world record when I stay healthy, get a competition with real great conditions and a day where I feel totally perfect. But I can't tell when this day will come, but I don't have any doubts that this day will come!!

L&S: *Tell us what you do for fun when you are away from training and school?*

CO: I meet with friends and enjoy my great flat with a glass of wine and a good book to read!

L&S: *What are your plans after you are done competing?*

CO: Don't have any detailed plans so far. I can imagine becoming a coach or working somewhere in the sports business. ****L&S****

Libor Charfreitag

Making Himself At Home

By Glenn Thompson

American hammer heads came to know Slovakian export Libor Charfreitag from his outstanding run at Southern Methodist University. Charfrietag came to Dallas off of a 13th place finish in the hammer at the 1996 World Junior Championships.

A Mustang from 1997 to 2001 he participated in epic weight and hammer duels between with the University of Georgia's Andras Haklits, the two often alternating championships. He graduated third on the all-time NCAA list (78.58/257-10), behind leader Balaz Kiss and a scant centimeter behind Haklits.

Since completing his collegiate career, Charfreitag has stayed in Dallas under the tutelage of the coach who brought him stateside, SMU's Dave Wollman. Their relationship is built on athletic, and more importantly, personal trust. That trust and mutual respect paid off last summer as Charfreitag grabbed a spot on the podium in Osaka at the IAAF World Outdoor Championships.

Charfreitag took some time for a very entertaining chat with L&S about coming to America, hammer technique, Osaka, and much more.

L&S: *Tell us about Slovakia, and in particular, your hometown.*

Libor Charfreitag: Slovakia is a young country in the middle of Europe. It was created by splitting of Czechoslovakia into the Czech Republic and Slovakia on January 1, 1993. As I found out, Czechoslovakia is more known amongst the U.S. citizens. I was born in Trnava, a town that lies about 30 miles northeast from Bratislava, Slovakia's capital. It is a very old town; in fact, it became the first royal town in the territory of today's Slovakia in 1238. The city has a historic center with many historical buildings and attracts many visitors every year. Because of the many churches within its city walls, Trnava has often been called "Little Rome" or more recently "Slovakian Rome."

L&S: *What sports did you participate in as a youth? How did you get involved with track and field and the hammer?*

LC: I was always a very active child and participated in almost every sport that was available to me growing up in a communist country. As far back as I can remember I started with swimming in my kindergarten. As I got older, I played basketball, volleyball, table tennis and ran track. In high school I was on the basketball, volleyball and track and field teams. My parents were both track athletes. They loved the throws. Dad was a discus and hammer thrower and my mom was a shot putter and threw the discus. They told me that they used to bring me to their practices when I was still in my crib. When I got older, I started throwing as well. Dad made me a small 3k hammer on a short wire, and I started to learn to turn with it. Although my first track events I competed in were 60m sprint and long jump, it didn't take too long before I started competing in the shot and discus. At that time I was not old enough to compete in the hammer throw. But two years later I started competing in the hammer as well.

Charfreitag hopes to improve in Beijing on his seventh place finish at the Athens Games.

L&S: Why did you decide to come to the United States for college, and SMU?

LC: I made the decision to come to the U.S. in 1996. That year I participated in the World Junior Championships in Sydney, Australia. I finished in 13th place with 61.52m. After I returned home, I received several offers from universities all across the U.S. I was learning English at that time and thought it would be a great idea to come here and try it. And so I did. I chose SMU because of its location and the fact that at that time the SMU track team had a very strong throwing squad. I really liked the small campus in a big city, the fact that the university had a great academic reputation and an excellent throwing coach, Dave Wollman.

L&S: What were the biggest adjustments you needed to make when you came to Dallas? Contrast Slovakian and American cultures.

LC: There were some, definitely. First it was the language, of course. I only studied English in grammar school at home for four years. At that time I was fluent in German. When I first came, it seemed like everybody was speaking too fast. I needed to ask them to repeat it but slower and then I got it. My English was better every day and about 3 months later it was totally fine.

Next thing I noticed was how everything is bigger here compared to Europe: cars, beds, parking spots, roads. I always like the positive thinking here in the U.S. Everybody is encouraging you. Even if you have a terrible meet they come up to you and say, "Good job"or"I am so proud of you." Or when you go compete and you're ranked eighth and the coach tells you that you are going win and you can do it. It is way different at home. Coaches there look at what kind of shape you're in and your ranking before the Championships and will tell you that you'll be lucky to qualify. They don't look at what you're capable of. It is really de-motivating if they talk to you this way right before a big meet.

Europe is so much older than the U.S. There is more history wherever you are. Slovakian churches, castles or old historical centers of cities are something you never find here.

Also life seems to be moving faster in Slovakia. People look busier and not as relaxed. Always in a hurry to go somewhere. I wonder why that is so. And lastly some of the ridiculous laws you have in this country. What's up with that?!?

L&S: What was the highlight of your collegiate career?

LC: Even though I broke the Indoor NCAA Record in the 35 lb. weight throw in 2001, I think my best achievement came at the Outdoor NCAA Championships at Duke in 2000. I came to the meet after a few really bad weeks of training in hopes to win and qualify for the Olympics in Sydney. My personal best coming into the meet was just over 74m, not to mention I was competing against my biggest rival, Andras Haklits from Croatia. But it all went really well. After a disappointing third place finish at NCAA's the previous year, I regained my hammer title from 1998 with a throw of 77.22m and qualified for the Sydney Olympics. It was a big win for me and I will not forget how good it felt.

L&S: Can you share with us some of your favorite remembrances of being a member of the SMU track team?

LC: There are many great remembrances from those times. One of the biggest would be the friendship we had here on the team. There were quite a few throwers from all around the world here at that time and they would never let each other down. We would encourage and push each other every day, and that's how we improved so much. The favorite time I had was when Janus Robberts was with me on the team, and we would go to meets around here and just destroy everybody. Our trainer never saw us throwing before and then went to one of the track meets where we threw and he was blown away. He kept screaming, "Jesus Christ!, did you shoot it out of a cannon?'

And all the trips we went on. I saw America for the first time and it was a great adventure. Those were the best times in college and many times today I wish I could be back in school. Even going to classes was fun, but doing homework and studying - not as much!

And I can't forget our coach Dave Wollman. He taught us so much and without him we would not be where we are now. He really made our experience at SMU a lot more pleasurable.

L&S: What decisions did you have to make after finishing up your eligibility at SMU regarding your throwing career?

LC: Good question. I had to make several decisions at that time. For one, I did not want to leave this environment and especially coach Wollman. Second, I wanted to get into grad school and continue my academic career. Things turned out great; I was able to become a grad assistant and enrolled in grad school at SMU studying economics. But after a year, things went from great to just terrible. The athletic director at SMU decided to cut the men's track program which hurt a lot of people. Not only did SMU lose the best team at that time and one of the top five track teams in the country, but many student-athletes had to leave for other universities around the country. I could not continue in my studying but decided to stay anyway because I needed this environment for my athletic career, and didn't know of any better coaches in the world than

Dave. I have no idea how anyone in their right mind could drop the best athletic team at the school. A world-class coach, world-class athletes, and a team winning top four trophies every single year. There is nothing like it left at the University. I think Coach would have gone elsewhere; however, I really believe he has it in his mind to fix the injustice. He has a tremendous desire for each of his athletes to succeed. He is as passionate about this sport and his athletes as anyone I have ever met. He never stops searching for technical solutions. He is unique in that he builds the technique around the skills of the athlete. If I know anything about him after all these years, it is that he will not give up the good fight until justice has been served and the program has been reinstated.

L&S: *Do you make your living as a thrower? Do you work? Have subsidies from your country or other sponsors?*

LC: I am employed as a sports instructor in Slovakia at the National Sports Center and receive a regular salary. But I don't show up for work. It is a way of supporting talented athletes all around the country. Our job is to train and produce good results. We get quite good support from the Center including medical needs, places to work out, rehab, equipment and others. I'd say my real job is hammer throwing. Going to practice every day is like going to work. It is not a great job, but one that I love. I also receive great support from Mizuno, the Japanese clothing company. They provide me with clothing needs and recently also made custom made hammer shoes for me. It is really hard to make a living from throwing unless you are in the top ten in the world. That is the only way.

L&S: *Share with our readers some of your physical attributes, such as your height, weight, running speed, jumping ability, personal bests in the major lifts, etc.*

LC: I am 6'3" tall and weigh between 260-270 lbs. I am pretty quick in short sprints which I use in the ring as well and my feet can turn really fast. I have developed a good sense of how to accelerate during the hammer turns. I love the jumps and used to do tons of them when I was younger, but we are being very cautious with them. We do not want to jump too much since I am pretty heavy and it could cause some injuries.

We put the most emphasis on hammer technique which will probably never be perfect, but is definitely improving over the years. It is not an easy task since every person is unique and needs different technique in order to reach his max distances. Seems like we will never be satisfied with

Wollman On Libor

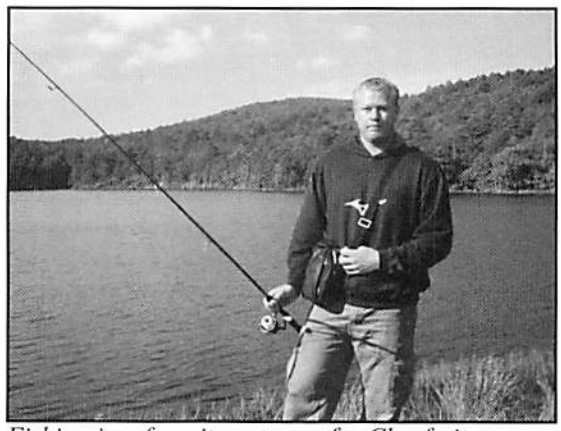

Dave Wollman

This will probably sound corny to this new generation and a little bit of a throwback to the old days, but Libor is and has always been, a candidate for the old definition of 'Sportsman of the Year.' Back in the day when not only the end result mattered, but also the way in which success is achieved. A standard of behavior was not based on 'everyone else is doing it' or 'if I get away with it, any behavior is therefore somehow justified.' It used to be that it meant something to the athlete to achieve great results because of the hard work, intelligence, natural athletic ability and adherence to the moral and ethical code inside a person. Right is right, wrong is wrong. Anything achieved outside of this was not worthy of recognition. This code of conduct was not adjustable. It just was. This is Libor.

I remember a NCAA Indoor Championships with the weight throw. A manufacturer had come out with a ball set in a netting. The netting would stretch when it was thrown and would create a bigger radius and therefore farther results. It was approved by the NCAA for the competition. We saw one of these weights prior to the competition and that someone had weighed it in and then cut three of the strands around the ball thus enabling the radius to stretch even farther. Libor decided before the competition began that any throw with this ball would not have value regardless of whether it was legal or not. He stuck with the Sector weight and broke the 20-year-old collegiate record. His competition used the net weight, and won the competition. The weight was measured after the winning throw and the record was disallowed because it had stretched the netting 3-4 inches long. Libor lost the championship, but maintained the record. To him, this was not very difficult to accept because he would not have valued the distance thrown or championship achieved with the other weight. To me, as his coach, I could not have been prouder of this young man. It truly exemplifies the kind of man he has become.

He has his sights now on Lance's [Deal - weight throw] record. He is kind of like the Rottweiler that grabs hold of something he wants. He won't release his hold on it until it is his. He has gained great respect for the record and the athlete that threw it. If and when it is broken, Lance can be assured that it fell with great resistance but an honest effort. Libor is a dedicated sportsman. He treats all of his competitors with respect. Most importantly he treats his event and sport with respect. He is willing to accept any result he achieves as long as it is done the right way. I admire Libor, the Sportsman. I respect him. I am proud of him. ***L&S***

the technique and will always look for new ways to improve it. We put less focus on lifting. It doesn't mean lifting is not important. But it is second to technique in our approach. My lifts include front and back squats, clean and snatch and dead lift. I squatted 130kg for 5 in 2005, front squatted 200 for 5 in 2000, snatched 145kg for 1 in 2005 and cleaned 175kg for one in 2007. My best in dead lift was in 2007 and it was 230kg for 5. We also spend a lot of time on core/torso exercises.



Fishing is a favorite getaway for Charfreitag.

L&S: *Where there certain hammer throwers you admired as a youth? Who, and why so?*

LC: I admired most of them, but don't think I had one in particular I would admire the most. Everybody is different and it wouldn't work for me if I tried to simply copy someone's technique. I need to find ways that work best for me. Guys I like to watch throw the most nowadays are Ivan Tikhon and Koji Murofushi.

L&S: *What do you think are the key components of your hammer technique? What happens during a perfect throw?*

LC: We think it's the initial winds with the entry into the first turn. It could be done in many ways and we strive to find the best way that works for me. We change the winds every year because that's where we believe the extra meters are hidden. The start of the hammer throw is the most crucial part. If you do the entry wrong, you can not expect the throw to be good. We never work on the finish because it is just a natural continuation of the throw. Once you get a good start, the rest of the throw develops automatically. It creates its own rhythm and speed and all you have to do is to relax as much as you can. A perfect throw would feel effortless. It would feel like you didn't really do anything, just hang on to it and let it ride. Let the throw develop on its own!

L&S: *What elements of your technique do you most need to improve?*

LC: My biggest problem is when my right foot comes down in the 3rd and 4th turn I catch it too late and the finish is shorter than I'd like it to be. But again the problem is at the start. I can not do anything in the 3rd and 4th turn to change it because those happen in fractions of a second, and I can't react at such speed. I still allow the hammer to trail the system. I will fix this and hit another level when I do.

L&S: *Can you tell us about your training program, both*

LIBOR: BY THE NUMBERS

PROGRESSION

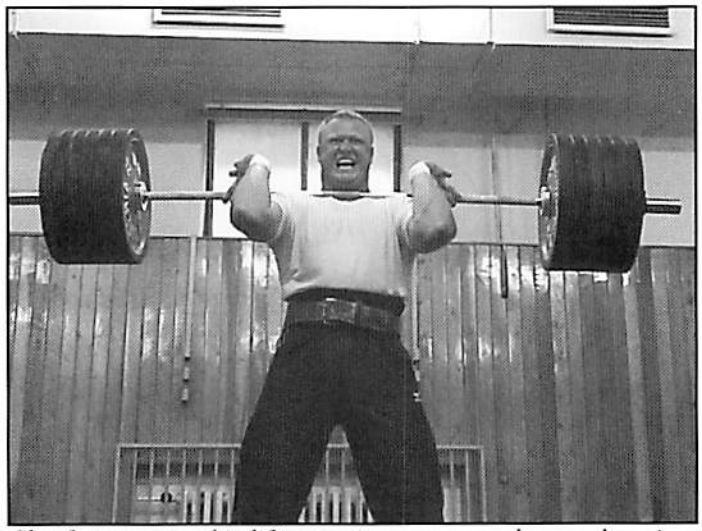
Year	Distance
2007	81.60
2006	78.04
2005	80.85
2004	79.84
2003	81.81
2002	79.20
2001	77.65
2000	77.22
1999	75.18
1998	72.30
1997	66.44
1996	66.82
1995	56.90
1994	54.32
1993	49.42

Source:
www.iaaf.org

MAJOR PLACINGS

MEET	LOCATION/DATE
5th IAAF World Athletics Final	(Stuttgart 23 09 2007)
11th IAAF World Championships in Athletics	(Osaka 27 08 2007)
19th European Athletics Championships	(Göteborg 09 08 2006)
European Cup Second League Group	(Banská Bystrika 17 06 2006)
3rd IAAF World Athletics Final	(Szombathely 03 09 2005)
10th IAAF World Championships in Athletics	(Helsinki 08 08 2005)
European Cup First League Group	(Gävle 2005)
2nd IAAF World Athletics Final	(Szombathely 05 09 2004)
28th Olympic Games	(Athína 22 08 2004)
1st IAAF World Athletics Final	(Szombathely 07 09 2003)
9th IAAF World Championships in Athletics	(Paris Saint-Denis 23 08 2003)
18th European Championships in Athletics	(München 07 08 2002)
21st Universiade 10	(Beijing 28 08 2001)
8th IAAF World Championships 10	(Edmonton 04 08 2001)
27th Olympic Games 16	(Sydney 23 09 2000)
7th IAAF World Championships in Athletics 17	(Sevilla 21 08 1999)
2nd European U23 Championships 5	(Göteborg 29 07 1999)
Universiade '99 (Athletics)	(Palma de Mallorca 10 07 1999)
6th IAAF World Junior Championships	(Sydney 1996)

in the weight room and otherwise?



Charfreitag views his lifting regimen as secondary to throwing.

LC: I start training in October or some years in November. We do tons of conditioning and drills in the fall. I use heavier implements and work on being really athletic. We do a bunch of other throws such as overheads and underhands, kettle bells or med balls. There is no serious lifting ever at this time, mostly the boring loads of work with many reps. Spring time is more fun. It is a very technique specific time and we slightly increase the lifting. But still continue working on being really athletic. Then the season starts and we need to learn how to compete again and see if we are able to bring the good stuff from training into the competition. I like to compete quite a lot and always try to confront the best guys as many times as possible before any major championship.

L&S: *In America, even the very best throwers can walk the streets of any major city and go unrecognized. Are you commonly recognized in Slovakia?*

LC: I think I am, especially since I won the bronze medal in Osaka. Lots of people recognize me now; it was a big accomplishment for someone from such a small country (about 5 million). But I don't need to worry about it too much since I spend half a year in the US and only spend a few months at home.

L&S: *Can you recollect your bronze medal-winning performance in Osaka?*

LC: It was a great competition and the toughest one in history. Seven athletes threw over 80m at the World Championships. I came to Japan in great shape and it was greatly improving up to the Championship. The fact I liked and remembered the most was how I was reacting in such a big competition. I was able to keep my focus, never got nervous and was able to believe in myself. It is so much easier once you have high confidence. My best throw was not perfect, but turned out to be enough to win my first big medal. It was a great experience that I hope will carry over to future seasons.

L&S: *What is your most exciting athletic accomplishment thus far? How about your biggest disappointment?*

LC: It is definitely the bronze at the World Champs in Osaka. It was my first medal at a major championship. It felt really good since my 2006 season was just terrible.

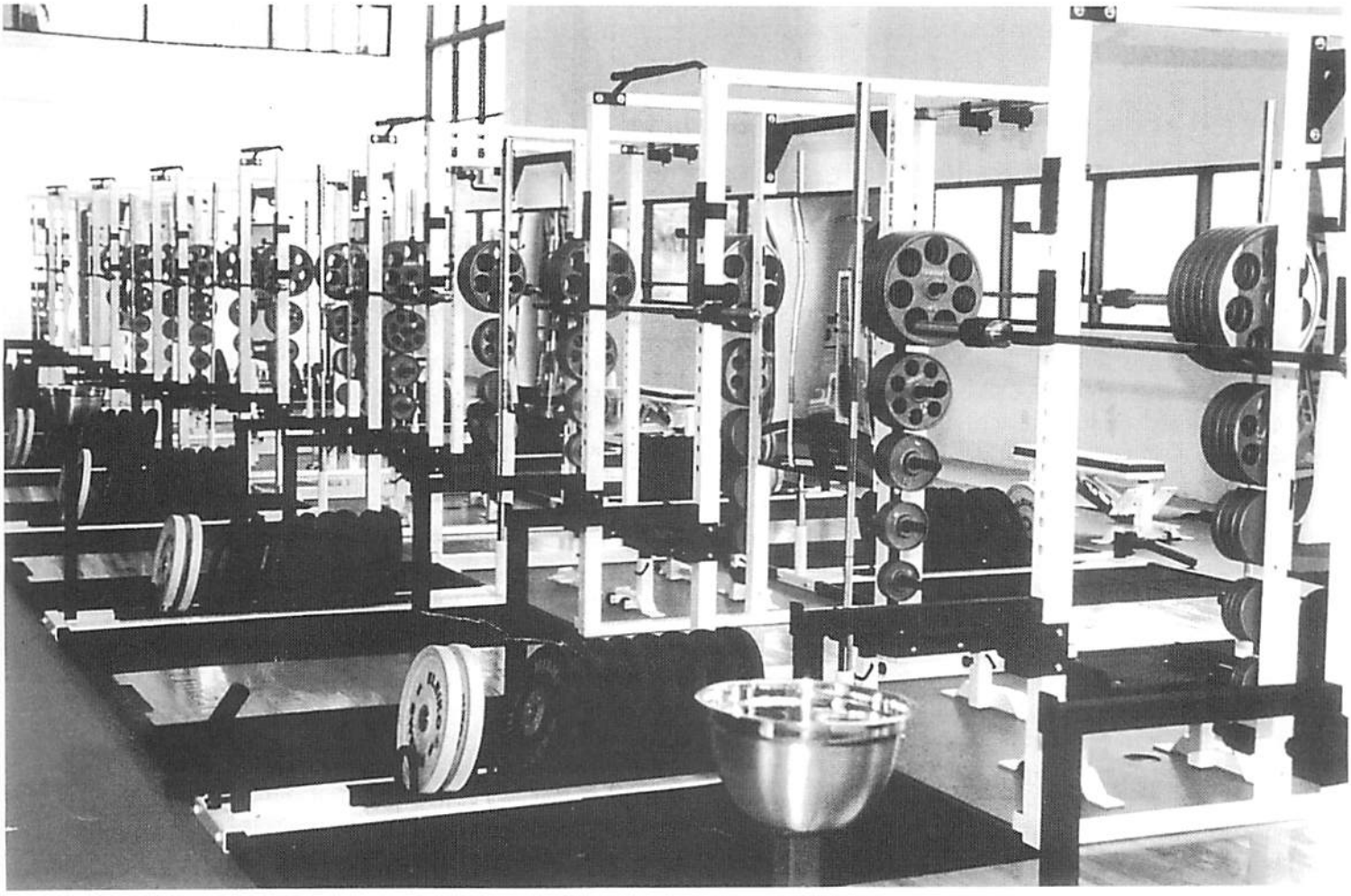
The biggest disappointment was at the World Championships in Paris in 2003. The last thrower of the qualifying group B eliminated me from the finals by just 4cm. I was in great shape and had medal thoughts. Two weeks later I beat the world champion from Paris at the Grand Prix Finals in Hungary with a throw of 81.22m. And even though the World Champs were really disappointing, I am taking it as a lesson learned.

L&S: *What are your favorite pastimes when you are not training?*

LC: I love traveling. I have been to many places all around the world. I still haven't seen South America. I'd love to go there someday. It is really great to see other places and people. It will make you appreciate what you have at home. I like movies, either watching them at home or going to theaters. One other thing I love to do is picking mushrooms. My parents and I go always during the fall months in Slovakia. It is the time of the year when the weather is just spectacular. There are beautiful forests there and the walk is just amazing. Even if we don't find any it is still worth going. We then cut them up, let them dry and later use them for cooking which is another thing I enjoy doing in my free time.

L&S: *What are your future plans?*

LC: My future plans are simple. I want to continue throwing for as long as possible. I plan to make it to the 2012 Olympics in London. I don't make any other plans. As soon as the time to decide what to do after my athletic career comes, then I will decide what is next. Until then I will keep on training and throwing, and I think I'll be able to do just that for as long as I am capable of competing with the world's best hammer throwers. ***L&S***



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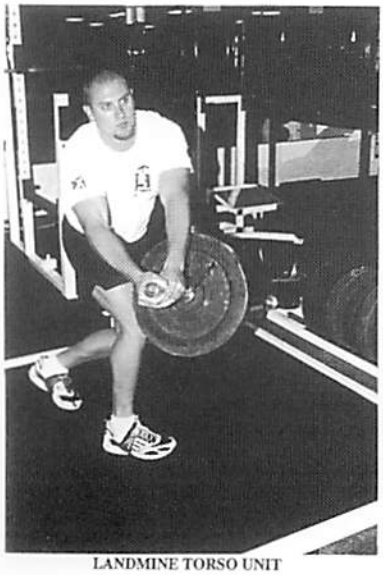
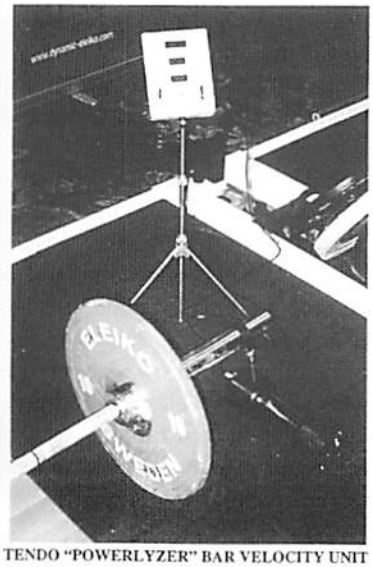


LANDMINE TORSO UNIT



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The Non-Correlation of...

WEIGHTLIFTING STRENGTH & PERFORMANCE

BY PAT CORBETT, B.S.- KINESIOLOGY, CERTIFIED STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING SPECIALIST [NSCA], USA WEIGHTLIFTING SENIOR COACH

Throughout the history of man have come incredible stories of strength. Some of the first known civilizations painted these stories on walls and also through the spoken word these stories were passed down to become myth and legend. These ancient stories have shown and tell of athletes lifting incredible amounts and throwing a multitude of objects great distances.

Today we still hear these stories but now they are not so much myth and legend as they are reality. The athletes of today can lift incredible amounts of weight and throw distances that were unimaginable just 50 years ago.

But, is there a connection?

Most coaches will concede to the idea that greater strength, power and speed can lead to better throws, but is there a limit or a point to where added strength or power (we will concede "speed" as a component of power for the remainder of this article) is no longer productive or supportive of better throws?

There are many models, standards and tests that set the bar on how strong a thrower needs to be in order to throw a specific distance. These parameters usually include measurements of the limit strength of specific weightlifting exercises. These include the Bench Press, Back Squat Deadlift, Power Clean and Snatch among others.

While the maximum weight lifted in these lifts is great, what, if anything do these maximum efforts measure other than how much an athlete can lift? How do these numbers relate to farther throws? If we break down a throw to its core physics, we can understand it a little better and maybe see a correlation between lifting strengths and throwing distances.

The physics of the throw are quite simple to understand (although difficult to master). During the execution of a technically sound throw, the athlete who produces more force and can put that force into the implement for the longest amount of time will in theory have a longer throw. Then, it would make sense that the stronger athletes could produce more force and hence throw farther.

While there are thousands of examples of how younger athletes became stronger in the weightroom and then threw farther, it is not the same for the elite thrower. A young athlete may experience gains in all areas of strength and throwing simply because they are still in the growing stages of their training and competitive careers. They have nowhere to go but up. But the elite thrower has in many cases reached some peaks in both lifting strengths and throwing distances. In this instance (especially in a sport that can be won or lost by inches) will an extra 5 or 10 pounds more on any lift add inches or feet to a throw? Or has the thrower reached his limits in the weightroom and throwing distance? What is their relationship between weightroom strength and throwing distances?

Here are some numbers from throwers past and present that represent a definite conundrum for any relationship or correlation between how strong an athlete is and how far they throw.

*The information on the opposite page should be understood with the idea that the technical prowess of some throwers is certainly superior and that some of these athletes are still in college and early in their careers, as well as the mechanical advantages some throwers have because of height, weight, wing span, etc... and also that today's throwers through advances in training techniques, sports science and nutrition, certainly have an advantage.

** Authors note: Notice that each thrower does different lifts and stresses different lifts (some of their personal comments have also been added).

The athlete information certainly holds a clue or two as to the correlation of how strong a thrower is and how far they throw. First; there is no correlation. Second; the distance thrown when compared to amounts of weight lifted, the types of lifts chosen by each thrower along with each thrower's unique physical characteristics cannot be determined.

To qualify the statement of the non-correlation of strength to distances thrown take a look at Gerd Kanter (discus). His lifting prowess is not what would be called stellar, yet he has the third best throw in history! Casey Malone (discus) is currently one the top 10 American throwers, but his weightroom numbers are modest at best.

With the javelin throwers, you will notice that the only lift they have in common is the BSQ and they were all very close in strength. But what does this mean? Should all javelin throwers concentrate on their BSQ strength? While their BSQ strength is good, it is far from outstanding and by many measures for throwers in the other events very average. Javelin throwers often mention doing heavy pull overs as one of their main lifts and stress it as a key component in their training. Can we then say that to be successful as a javelin thrower it is important to do BSQ's and heavy pull overs?

Key:
BP = Bench Press
IP = Incline Press
BSQ = Back Squat
FSQ = Front Squat
SN = Snatch
CL = Clean
PCL = Power Clean
HCL = Hang Clean
DL = Dead Lift

Hammer Throwers:
Lance Deal: HT 6'2" WT 255 lbs
PR's Hammer: 270-9, Indoor Weight 84-10.5 (Current World Record), Shot 60-2, Discus 202-2
BSQ 595 lbs
BP 395 lbs
IP365 lbs
CL 355 lbs x3
FSQ 495 lbs x4
Note: Silver Medal 1996 Olympics: Hammer 266-2, BP 315 lbs x5, CL 310 lbs x4,
** **"No Back Squat, very little Snatch"**

Koji Murofushi: HT 6'2" WT 220 lbs
PR Hammer 278-4.5
CL 429 lbs
SN (narrow) 292 lbs
FSQ 529 lbs
Note: No Bench Press or Back Squat

A.G. Kruger: HT 6'4" WT 260
PR Hammer 260
BP **"Who cares" 345 lbs
IP **"Don't care" 325 lbs
BSQ 550 lbs
SN 275 lbs
FSQ 500
PCL 370
HCL 402
DL 605 lbs x2 **"Could not walk for two days"

Brittany Riley: HT 5'10" WT 275 lbs
PR's Hammer 217-6, Discus 152-7, Shot 49-9
BSQ (safety squat) 670 lbs x3
BSQ (box) 600 lbs +16" box
BP 315 lbs
CL 290 lbs

Joe Woodske: HT 6'4" WT 280
PR's Hammer 217-5, Indoor Weight 70-1
BP 405 lbs
BP (close grip) 385 lbs
BSQ 600 lbs
DL 610 lbs
CL 341 lbs x2
SN 275 lbs x2

Derek Woodske HT 6'1" WT 260-290 (depending on season)
PR Hammer 240-9 Indoor Weight 78-0.5
BSQ 675 lbs x3
SN 275 lbs
CL 400 lbs
Jerk 353 lbs
BP 455 lbs

Shot Putters
Colin Anderson: HT 6'4" WT 275
PR Shot 69-3
BP 530 lbs
BSQ 675 lbs

Dan Taylor: HT 6'7" WT 325
PR's Shot 70-1, Hammer 227-8, Discus 193-7
HCL 451 lbs
BP 550 lbs
BSQ (safety) 880 lbs

Rolf Oestereich: HT 5'11" WT 250
PR Shot 67-3
BP 517 lbs
BSQ 638 lbs
SN 357 lbs
C&J 451 lbs

Jill Camarena: HT 5'10" WT 280
PR Shot 63-2.5
CL 285 lbs
BSQ 500 lbs
SN 200 lbs
BP 250 lbs

Neil Steinhauer: HT 6'5" WT 280
PR Shot 68-11.25
DL 715 lbs
BSQ 650 lbs
BP 400 lbs

Javelin
Duncan Atwood: HT 6'2" WT 210
PR Javelin 285
BP **"Never"**
Behind Neck Press 200 lbs
BSQ 425 lbs
CL 340 lbs x2
SN 210 lbs
Pull Overs (high bench) 225 lbs
Straight Arm Flies 55 lbs

Andreas Thokildsen: HT 6'3" WT 200
PR Javelin 300-5
BP 402 lbs
SN 281 lbs
BSQ 396 lbs

Tero Pitkamaki: HT 6'5" WT 203
PR Javelin 300-3
SN 264 lbs
Jerk 335 lbs
BSQ 407 lbs
BP 352 lbs

Discus
Dan Austin: HT 6'5 3/4" WT 250
PR Discus 208
BSQ 380 lbs
BP 330
SN 210

Casey Malone: HT 6'9" WT 240
PR Discus 218-5
CL 386 lbs
SN 240 lbs
BP 365 lbs
BSQ (safety squat) 625 lbs

Gerd Kanter: HT 6'5" WT 264
PR Discus 240-8
CL 375 lbs
BP 429 lbs
SN 259 lbs
BSQ 440 lbs x3

Summer Pierson: HT 5'10" WT 190
PR Discus 195
FSQ 270 lbs
BP 140 lbs
DL (hex bar) 330

Jarred Rome: HT 6'4" WT 295
PR Discus 224-3, Shot 66-2
FSQ 500 lbs
IP 500 lbs
PCL 440
Push Jerk 475 lbs
BP 550 lbs

Ian Waltz: HT 6'2" WT 265
PR Discus 226-9, Shot 62-11 ½
HCL 428 lbs
BP 540 lbs
BSQ 600 lbs BSQ (? safety squat) 715 lbs x3

Shot putters are known to be big lifters (this makes sense considering the horsepower it takes to heave this cannon ball) and the shot putters mentioned in this article are no different. They all have big BP's with the exception of Neil Steinhauer's 400 lb BP, but he had a huge DL. The other shot putters didn't even do DL's. And they all had monster BSQ's. What conclusion from this can be formed?

Now consider the relative strength of the hammer throwers. What if anything do they have in common as to their weightroom strength? Their strengths and choices of lifts are as varied as their height and weight and distances thrown. A correlation between how far these athletes threw and their relative weightroom strength cannot be drawn.

Worth mentioning are also two athletes who attended Ironwood Throwers Development Camp in the summer of 2006 who might throw off any explanation as to the correlation of strength to distances thrown. Although there are no weightroom numbers for either of these athletes, their size and age alone would indicate that their lifting strengths were not off the chart compared to the incredible distances they threw.

Luke Bryant, High School Senior 2007 HT 6'1" WT 170 (maybe)
PR Discus 203-plus
Eric Flores, High School Senior 2006 HT 5'9 WT 225
PR Shot 67-4.5

These are huge marks by two athletes who do not fit any mold. Maybe they are anomalies but as far as any correlation of strength as a predictor of distances thrown these athletes throw (pun intended) that correlation a serious curve.

To put further pressure on the correlation of strength as an indicator of success are two athletes who are not throwers but also defy the logic or box that we have made for predicting success by measuring strength. As with the BP, which is often used as a measuring stick for success in the throws, the BSQ has sometimes been used as a measurement for success in the Olympic lifts. If that is true, these two athletes are not following the predicted outcomes or they are again anomalies.

Shane Hammon HT 5'9" WT 360
PR's SN 434.5 lbs C&J 522.5 lbs
BSQ 1008 lbs **(yes, 1008 lbs!!!)**
Yuri Vardanian HT 5'8" WT 181
PR's C&J 495 lbs
BSQ 480 lbs

As these two weightlifters demonstrate, there is a little discrepancy between their BSQ strengths and their C&J strength.

To be fair to the performance predictors who believe that there is a correlation, it should be noted that a group of throwers could be gathered (there have been studies conducted to support this) who fit into the mold of training the same way and lifting a specific way and then performing at a certain level with a very specific correlation then being found. But it is also possible to find the same number of throwers who don't fit that mold. As indicated by the numbers related in this article, there seems to be ***no correlation*** between weightroom strength and distances thrown.

There is, however, a correlation between the force put into a throw, the length of time that force is maintained and the distance of the throw. But does that force come from the relative strength that is gained in the weightroom, or does it come from the speed an athlete can generate, or does it come from the neuromuscular abilities nature has given each athlete, or does it come from the leverage each athlete has and who best utilizes it, or does it come from the precision technique some athletes have over others, or does is come from the thrower who has the best combination of these?

In the end, maybe all we can do is train each athlete to reach his peak in all areas of athleticism and let nature do the rest. While weightroom strength may play a role in the psychology of a thrower, it is not the measuring stick by which all throwing success can or should be gauged and all coaches know that the best psychology comes from throwing far. By using the weightroom as a tool and not a means to an end, a thrower may be less prone to becoming a weightroom athlete and thinking that they have to lift a specific amount to throw a certain distance.

As the wise man once said, "The secret to better throwing lies in better throwing."

Author's note: Since the advent of the strength coach, there have been many ideas, tests, studies and experiments conducted by top sports scientists, kinesiologists and exercise physiologists from around the world to prove one theory after another. And the so-called training gurus who profess that this is the best way to train, or that way will solve all of your training and performance problems, and of course, selling and promoting the latest fad, gimmick or gadget that is going to increase your strength by 50 lbs. and your throw by 20 feet. Still others want to standardize training and put all their throwers into a nice little package and train them all the same way. However you choose to look at it, none of these people have come up with the answer and as long as humans continue to be the incredible and unique creatures with diverse physiological and psychological differences we will continue to search for the answer... I hope we never find it...

The journey is the thing, eh... ***L&S***

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Minister of Propaganda

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SPEED GENERATION IN HAMMER THROWING

By Andreas Maheras, Ph.D., Fort Hays State University

Hammer throwing involves the execution of two or three winds, which are followed by three or four turns during which the thrower rotates with the hammer in a synchronized fashion. During the winds and the subsequent turns, the speed of the hammer increases progressively until the moment of release following the last turn. The plane of the hammer itself is rather flat in the early part of the throw;however, it becomes steeper as the throw advances and that plane reaches a slope of approximately 40 degrees during the last turn (Dapena, 1989).

As the thrower moves across the circle with the hammer, three separate motions can be observed: a) a circular motion of the hammer around the athlete, b) a gradual change of the slope of the hammer plane, and c) a horizontal translation of the whole system across the circle. The thrower keeps the hammer ball in its circular path by exerting a centripetal force, which is a force pointing towards the center of the circular path of the ball. The hammer wire transfers that force to the ball and it can reach a large magnitude (over 700 lbs) during the last turn of a world record throw (Dapena, 1989). In turn, the wire exerts an equal and opposite force on the hands of the thrower and it tends to pull the latter forward.

Hammer Throw vs. Tug-of-war

As the hammer thrower system advances across the circle, one may think that the thrower uses forces resulting from the friction between his feet and the ground to resist against being pulled forward as it may happen in tug-of-war (Woicik, 1980). However, the dynamics involved in hammer throwing are quite different from those involved in a tug-of-war. In hammer throwing, the reactionary forces that are involved to keep the hammer ball in its circular path, also serve to keep the thrower in his own circular path. This implies that in hammer throwing, the thrower in order to stay in place does not push forward on the ground with his feet.

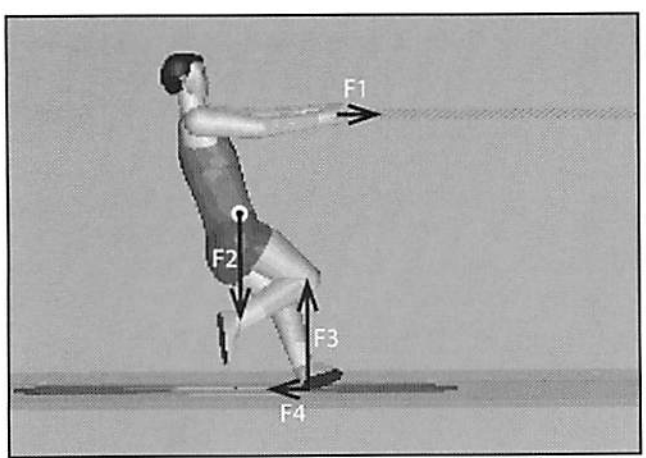

Figure 1. *Forces made on the athlete in a tug-of-war (adapted from: Dapena, 2007, reprinted by permission).*

Figure 1, shows what happens in a tug-of-war scenario (Dapena, 2007). Here F1 is the forward force made by the wire on the hands; F2 is the weight; F3 is the vertical force made by the ground on the foot; F4 is the horizontal force made by the ground on the foot. F2 is about the same size as F3, so they essentially cancel each other out; F1 is about the same size as F4, so they also cancel out: The sum of all the forces made on the athlete is approximately zero. The athlete is not moving at all, he is in a static condition, and the forces exerted on him add up to zero. The body of the athlete experiences no linear acceleration.

Figure 2, shows what happens in hammer throwing. Here,

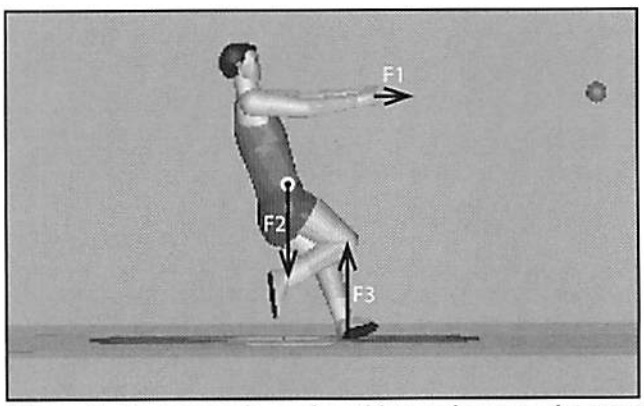

Figure 2. Forces made on the athlete in hammer throwing (adapted from: Dapena, 2007).

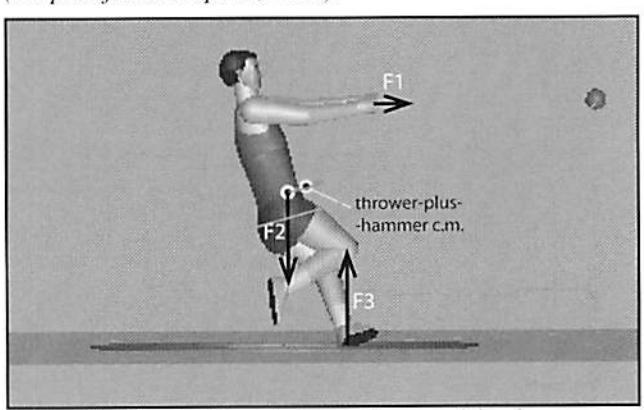

Figure 3. *The combined center of mass of the thrower-plus-hammer system (adapted from: Dapena, 2007).*

force F4 is essentially missing. So forces F2 and F3 essentially cancel each other out, leaving us with force F1, which indeed accelerates the body forward. But this forward acceleration will not make the athlete actually translate forward and fall flat on his face. That will not happen. The reason is that the athlete (like the hammer) is rotating about the combined center of mass (c.m) of the thrower-plus-hammer system (see figure 3). His body center of mass (yellow dot) is very close to the combined c.m. (green dot), so the radius of the path (violet

line) followed by the thrower's c.m. about the whole system c.m. is pretty small, the distance between those two dots. But the thrower's c.m. is indeed rotating about the thrower+hammer c.m., and such a rotation (like any other rotation) requires a centripetal acceleration, it requires a centripetal force to keep the body c.m. following that short-radius circular path. And that force is the force that we have called F1 in figures 1, 2 and 3. It's the force exerted by the hammer on the hands through the wire.

In the same way, the reaction to F1 is the force exerted by the hands on the hammer ball through the cable, and this reaction force (which we could call force F5 for example, but it is not drawn in the figures), is the centripetal force that keeps the hammer ball rotating about the thrower+hammer c.m. (the hammer's orange path). This phenomenon shows that some of the forces required to maintain the static balance of the tug-of-war athlete are not necessary for the dynamic balance of the rotating hammer thrower. It also shows the need for a distinction between static and dynamic balance when dealing with hammer throwing.

The "Long Double Support" Model

However, keeping the hammer in a circular path will not suffice. The thrower also needs to increase the speed of the hammer. According to many authors (e.g., Bondarchuk, 1977; Black, 1980; Woicik, 1980) hammer speed in general can be increased most effectively during the double support phases of the throw. It has been observed (Dapena, 1984) that hammer speed increases between the high and low points of its orbit, which roughly coincide with the beginning and the end of the double support phase respectively. It seems logical then to assume that it is easier to produce a rotation about the vertical axis when both feet are in contact with the ground than when only one foot is in contact with the ground. It also seems logical to assume that the single support phase is a recovery phase as the athlete prepares for another double support phase.

It follows then that maximizing the double support phase and minimizing the single support phase is a prudent way to go about maximizing force output in hammer throwing. One action that has been used to achieve that involves keeping the right leg close to the body. This action will enable the thrower to speed up during single support and thus it will also enable him to plant his right foot sooner. Another movement involves the landing of the right foot pointing towards the 270° azimuthal angle instead of the 0° angle. This will also allow the thrower to plant the right foot earlier and therefore it will shorten the single support phase while it will lengthen the double support phase. The effectiveness of those movements is based on the simple model: double support = when the athlete can increase hammer speed and, single support = a waiting period. However, no direct cause and effect link has been shown between the double support phase and the increase in hammer speed (Dapena, 1989) and, film analysis data may not fully support this theory (Gutierrez, Soto & Rojas, 2002). Just because two quantities coincide in time does not mean that one causes the other. It is possible then that the association between hammer speed increase and the double support phase may be spurious and coincidental and that there may be other factors involved.

Such a factor may be gravity. As the hammer moves upwards and downwards in its sloped plane, gravity naturally will affect the speed of the hammer. Yet another

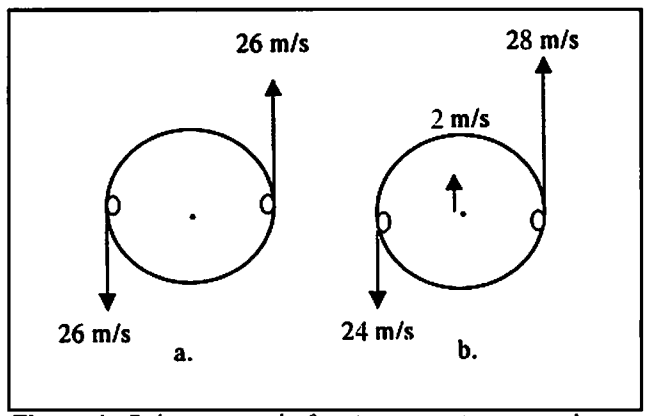

Figure 4. Relative speed of an item rotating around a circular path (a) without and (b) with horizontal translation.

factor may be the horizontal translation of the thrower+hammer system. In figure 4 (a) we assume an item attached at the edge of the circular table that rotates counterclockwise around itself (vertical axis). Due to that rotation, we also assume that the linear speed of the attached item is at a constant 26 m/s. Subsequently, in figure 4 (b) if we push the table horizontally at a constant speed of 2 m/s, the instantaneous speed of the item itself will now be at 28 m/s relative to the ground (26+2) when the item reaches the 90° azimuthal angle, because the item is moving in the same direction as the system's center of mass, and 24 m/s relative to the ground (26 – 2) when the item reaches the 270° azimuthal angle, because the item and the system's center of mass are now moving in opposite directions. The speed then will fluctuate between 24 and 28 m/s., throughout the turns and this occurs because there is a combination of rotation at a constant angular velocity and, forward translation at a constant linear velocity. A similar phenomenon may occur during hammer throwing, with the hammer ball being the item rotating in a circular path while simultaneously there is a horizontal translation of the system across the circle. Such a combined movement will affect the speed of the hammer.

These two factors can be mathematically accounted for and subsequently removed from consideration when the hammer speed is calculated (Dapena, 1984). Under these circumstances, in some athletes, the fluctuations in the

speed of the hammer disappeared. Yet in others there was still indication of that fluctuation. It is also possible that other additional factors may be affecting hammer speed in various throwers.

Horizontal and Vertical Speed Generation

In addition, the "long double support" hypothesis considers rotation about the vertical axis only (figure 5), which actually implies motion of the ball on a horizontal

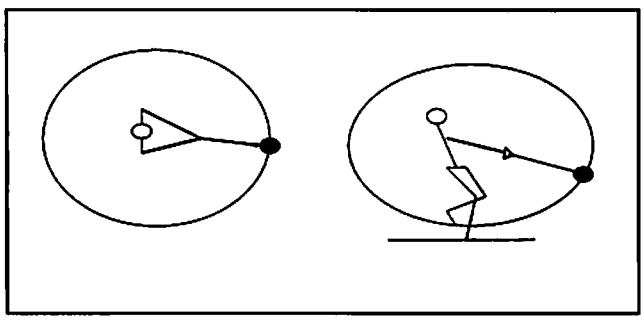

Figure 5. *Rotation about a vertical axis (left), view from overhead, and rotation about a horizontal axis (right), view from the 0° azimuthal direction-front .*

plane only (Woicik, 1980). However, in reality the motion of the hammer also takes place about the horizontal axis, which in turn implies motion of the ball on a **vertical** plane (figure 5). It is clear then, that to increase the speed of the hammer, a thrower should obtain a torque not only about the vertical axis, but also about the horizontal axis. What makes this last statement even more important is the fact that the majority of the increase in speed during the turns is associated with generation of torque about the horizontal axis, that is, the majority of the speed increase during the turns is **vertical speed** and only a small part of the increase is horizontal speed (Dapena, 1989).

It is also true that the horizontal velocity of the hammer can be increased much better during double support than during single support. However, this is only the case when the person is rotating very slowly. When the athlete is already rotating very fast, it is impossible to increase **horizontal** velocity in either one of the two kinds of support (Dapena, 1989). Instead of thinking that double support = good, because only in double support can a thrower exert torque and, single support = bad, because in single support a thrower cannot exert any torque, one may need to modify this thinking accordingly (Dapena, 2007). The "big picture" of what happens in hammer throwing is that during the winds (when the speed of rotation is slow AND the athlete is all the time in double support), the athlete increases the horizontal speed of the hammer. But by the time the turns start, the hammer is turning fairly fast (just for reference here, at 15 m/s), and the body of the athlete is also turning pretty fast. As a result, during the turns no more horizontal speed of the hammer can be generated, regardless of whether it is at an instant in which the athlete is in single support or at an instant in which the athlete is in double support. If the athlete were forbidden to produce any vertical velocity, the speed of the hammer at release would be 15 m/s, the same as the speed of the hammer at the start of the 1st turn. But the athlete is not forbidden to generate vertical velocity.

Let's say that the athlete during the turns generates 14 m/s of vertical velocity. This would be the vertical velocity at the steepest point of the path, and it would increase gradually from one turn to the next, for example from 0 m/s to 4 m/s to 8 m/s to 11 m/s to 14 m/s in the 4 successive turns. So at the end of the last turn, the hammer would have 15 m/s of horizontal speed and 14 m/s of vertical speed in this example. The total speed would be equal to the square root of ($15^2 + 14^2$), or 20.5 m/s. What we see in this example is that the hammer indeed gained speed during the turns, but it did not gain any horizontal speed, all the gain was in the vertical. And this gain of VERTICAL speed had nothing to do with being in double support or in single support. Being in single or double support applies to gains of HORIZONTAL speed, and then it would apply only when the horizontal speed was not very large yet (i.e., during the winds, not during the turns). So the gains in total speed that occur during the turns are linked to changes in the VERTICAL velocity, and therefore they can be produced when the athlete is in double support or when the athlete is in single support.

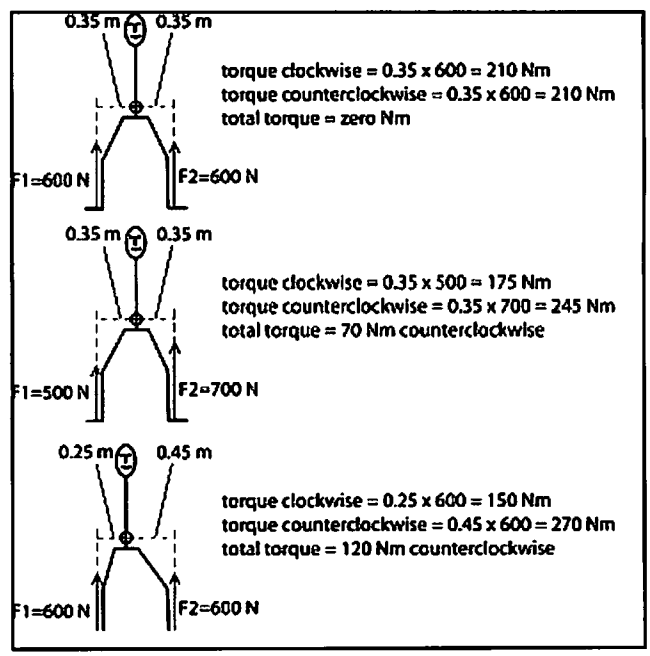

Figure 6. *Torque generation during double support (adapted from: Dapena, 2007, reprinted by permission). The terms "torque clockwise" and "torque counterclockwise" refer to those directions from the reader's point of view not the athlete's point of view. Therefore, a "clockwise torque" refers to a tendency for a rotation towards the thrower's own left and "counterclockwise torque" refers to a tendency for a rotation towards the thrower's own right.*

The torque in the vertical direction (about the horizontal axis) is generated as follows (Dapena 1989; 2008): During double support, torque can be generated in two ways. First, the thrower presses harder on the ground with the left foot than with the right foot and/or second, the thrower generates vertical forces on the ground with both feet, but he keeps the center of mass of the thrower+hammer system closer to the right foot than to the left foot, instead of halfway between them. In figure 6 on top, when the center of mass is half way between the right and left leg and both feet exert the same forces on the ground, the amount of torque produced in the counterclockwise or the clockwise direction is the same and the total amount of torque produced equals zero. In the middle of figure 6, the center of mass is still halfway between the two legs, but the left foot exerts a larger torque and the net effect, the difference between the two directions, is a total torque pointing clockwise, from the thrower's own point of view, which effectively tends to cause the thrower to rotate in that direction (towards his own right). From this position if the thrower accidentally let go of the hammer, he would fall towards his own right side. However, the thrower does not let go of the hammer. By pulling on the hammer through the cable, he will give the hammer an upward acceleration. In turn, the cable will make a reaction force on his hands (figure 7), and this reaction force will exert a clockwise torque on the thrower, and it would normally make the thrower rotate toward his own left (or forward if the thrower is already facing toward the 90-degree azimuthal angle). However, as discussed earlier, the forces made on the feet are such that they produce a net counterclockwise torque (towards the thrower's own right) about his center of mass, and the clockwise torque exerted by the hammer on the hands about his center of mass (towards the thrower's own left) simply cancels out the counterclockwise torque exerted through the feet. So the thrower manages to give the hammer an upward acceleration without losing his balance, because the total torque on him will be zero.

The eventual practical benefit of the left foot pressing harder on the ground is that the thrower will be able to pull harder UPWARD on the hammer during the upward part of the hammer trajectory resulting in an even greater upward acceleration due to that pulling. On the other hand, if the thrower were to press harder with the right foot (instead of the left as we have discussed so far), this would result in a tendency for the thrower to rotate to his own left, and the reaction cable force (which makes the thrower rotate towards his own left also) will add to the forces made on the feet, and the thrower will lose his balance and fall to his left. A detail that needs to be mentioned here is that, during most of the time when the hammer ball is traveling upward, the athlete will be not in double support but in single support. The hammer's uphill motion will occur approximately between the 0-degree and 180-degree azimuthal positions of the hammer. During that ascent of the hammer, the thrower will be in double support from azimuthal angle of 0 degrees of the hammer to azimuthal angle of 50 degrees or so (very rough value), and from there all the way to 180 degrees in single-support. So during most of the uphill travel of the hammer, the thrower will be in single-support. Finally, at the bottom of figure 6, the combination of the location of the center of mass, which is now more towards the right foot, and the amount of torque generated by the feet, produce an even greater net counterclockwise torque.

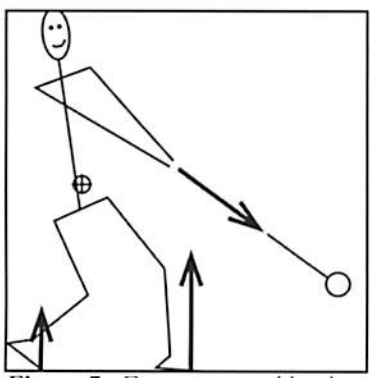

Figure 7. *Forces exerted by the feet on the ground and reactionary force exerted on the hands by the cable during double support (adapted from Dapena, 2008)*

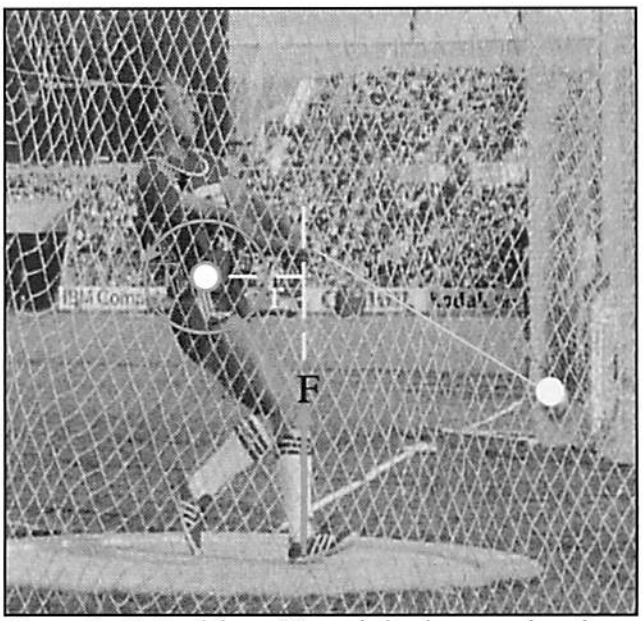

Figure 8. *Vertical force (F) made by the ground, and counterclockwise torque (T) produced around the longitudinal Y-axis during single support. This axis would be perpendicular to the page and is passing through the center of mass (white dot at the right hip area). The torque about the center of mass would be the product of (r) x (F), and the torque itself would be as indicated by the curved red arrow. The torque vector would be pointing along the Y-axis, from the page toward the reader (adapted from: Dapena, 2008).*

During single support the torque is produced automatically because the point of support, which is the left foot, is not directly under the thrower, and the reactionary vertical force generated by the ground on the left foot exerts a torque about a longitudinal axis passing through the center of mass (figure 8). To better picture this effect, if a person

who is standing with both feet on the ground were to remove the right foot without making any other changes, he will fall toward the right. However, this is not the case during hammer throwing. This is because the torque that the thrower receives from the ground is transmitted to the hammer. This way the thrower does not fall despite the fact that his point of support (his left foot) is not directly beneath his center of mass while at the same time the hammer speeds up. Another point to add here is that the athlete can (and normally does) also reduce somewhat the radius of rotation of the hammer ball as the throw progresses from turn 1 to turn 4. And this will also produce some increase in the total velocity of the hammer ball. So the total velocity of the ball at the end of the last turn won't be 20.5 m/s, but (for example) 24 m/s.

Conclusions

It may be a simplification to consider that in hammer throwing there is rotation about a vertical axis only. The rotation occurs about an inclined axis, which implies rotation about both a vertical, and a horizontal axis. The rotation about the vertical axis (horizontal velocity) can best be produced during the double support phase. The rotation about the horizontal axis (vertical velocity) can be produced both during the single support and double support phases and thus, the single support phase does not have to be a "recovery" phase.

If we assume that the forces generated in hammer throwing (dynamic balance) were similar to those observed in a tug-of-war (static balance), then in the double-support phase in hammer throwing it would be possible to push forward on the ground with the left foot and pull backward with the right foot, and as a result there would be an increase of the angular momentum of the combined thrower+hammer system about the **vertical** axis. From this, one could further infer that, in single-support it would be much more difficult to increase the angular momentum. Therefore, **under those conditions**, to generate the maximum possible amount of angular momentum about the vertical axis during the throw, a thrower would want to maximize the time in double-support within each turn. As explained earlier, to do this, he would need to minimize the time in single-support. This means that he would want to take off late (for example at the 90-degree azimuthal angle) and land early (for example at the 220 or 230-degree azimuthal angle).

However, **in reality**, in hammer throwing the forces generated are not similar to those of a tug-of-war (as discussed earlier). The "long double support" model places the emphasis on the wrong concept. The wrong concept can be found in the sentence in the previous paragraph where it says: "*to generate the maximum possible amount of angular momentum about the vertical axis during the throw, a thrower would want to ...*" This is because it turns out (Dapena, 2008) that generating the maximum possible amount of angular momentum about the vertical axis is NOT the main goal of the hammer thrower. During the turns the athlete is turning so fast already that it is nearly impossible to push forward on the ground with the left foot and pull backward with the right foot, and therefore the angular momentum about the vertical axis increases very little during the turns. Therefore putting the emphasis on how to maximize the gain of angular momentum about the vertical axis during the turns is putting the emphasis on the wrong thing, it is putting the emphasis on something that is going to be of a small value no matter what. That is, the GAIN in the angular momentum about the vertical axis during the turns will be small; the actual value of this angular momentum will be big, but it will have been generated, almost all of it, during the winds, with very little of it being generated during the turns. So the most important thing that is happening during the turns is NOT the change in the angular momentum about the vertical axis, it is the change in the angular momentum about the (Y) axis which is the axis aligned with the midline of the throwing sector. In turn, this is linked to the changes in the VERTICAL velocity of the hammer.

Again, we are not saying that a thrower cannot increase hammer speed in double support. What we are saying is that a thrower can increase hammer speed BOTH in double support and in single support. In every one of the single support phases, the thrower can increase hammer speed. It will be an increase of the VERTICAL component of hammer speed.

Other Considerations

As mentioned earlier, one may implicitly tend to think in terms of "distance of force application" and that, force application can only occur in double support. By the same token, if maximizing double support may not be the best way to go about in hammer throwing, then what may the alternative be? We don't know (at least experimentally) what the optimal pattern in regard to double support versus single support may be. In the final turn of a hammer throw, it is possible that the thrower does not increase the hammer speed much during the downward part of the hammer's path (from, say, the 240^0 azimuthal angle to the 0^0 azimuthal angle), and that the only hammer speed increase occurs between the 0^0 azimuthal angle and release (at the azimuthal angle of 70^0 or 90^0 or something like that). In such case, earlier landing of the right foot would not contribute to an increase of the hammer speed. We cannot be sure about this part because here we may be getting near the limits of applicability of the theories and data to actual throwing, but it is perfectly possible. It is also perfectly possible that maximization of the double support phase may indeed be the correct way to go about in hammer throwing, but for reasons other than those many have been thinking thus far. Ariel (1980) proposed one such reason by stating that the action of "placing of the right foot down early and further back than the left foot,

increased stability and balance while maintaining the desired effect on the center of gravity," an action that produces a positive transformation of the center of mass. Ariel (1980) also described this positive transformation of the center of mass to be of utmost importance.

What has been observed is that the increase in the speed of the hammer ball during the turns is due mainly to the addition of vertical velocity, and in part also to the shortening of the hammer radius. But it is NOT due to a horizontal pull-push mechanism of the feet against the ground. That was something that stopped happening with the end of the winds. Neither the increase of vertical velocity nor the shortening of the hammer ball radius are favored by being in double support. That is why, from this point of view, the achievement of a long double support during the turns may not be as important as many think. It is not needed for the kind of speed increases that occur during the turns. That is, speed increases that are based on the generation of vertical speed and, to a lesser extent, on shortening of the hammer radius.

Recommendations

Based on the aforementioned information, the hammer thrower cannot afford to take it easy in the preliminary phase (winds). The thrower needs to produce a lot of hammer speed already in the winds. Of course, the thrower also has to stay under control, but he still needs to be very dynamic in the winds. Also, although the "flatness" of the plane of the winds has been addressed before (e.g., Eberhard, 1990) still, from a mechanical point of view, the thrower needs to keep the hammer ball in a very flat path during the winds, as flat as possible winds because it is during the winds that most of the horizontal speed of the hammer is produced. There will be time later (during the turns) to add vertical. Horizontal motion is what the thrower cannot add in the turns (or he can only add a little bit), so horizontal speed is what the thrower needs to concentrate on getting during the winds; it is where he has the opportunity to do so.

In summary: (1) During the winds (which are all in double support), the thrower can increase both horizontal speed and vertical speed. The thrower needs to concentrate on increasing horizontal speed during this period. (2) During the single support phases of the turns, the thrower can increase vertical speed, and he needs to do so. (3) During the double support phases of the turns, he can also increase vertical speed, and he needs to do so.

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Supercompensation

PROGRAM DESIGN

By Michael Conroy, USA Weightlifting Coach

"Rest and Recovery": Why can't I train at a heavy load during every training session? Or how important are they? Or why back off my training?

It has been said that experience is the best teacher but it seems that this lesson is lost on many an athlete. Time after time I witness athletes blowing up just at the point of a big break through. These athletes get to that high point where they are stronger, faster and better than at any previous time. This new found success goes right to their head and they continue loading their system thinking that the extra loads are what have created these new levels of strength, speed and performance so, why stop. What happens next? The athletes keep pushing the limits without backing off and then, "Whamo"! The big blow up, performance suffers and strength and speed decrease. While overloading the system has been proven to produce great results, continued overload without proper rest and recovery will ultimately lead to plateaus and a measurable loss in strength, speed and performance. The athlete is then left wondering what happened. More often than not, the root cause is not enough rest and recovery. That is she/he kept the training level high and didn't give their body a chance to recover from the heavy loads and high intensities of training and/or competition. This becomes an experience that many fail to recognize and it is repeated over and over again. Even veteran athletes at the highest level are seduced by training gains because of higher loads and without knowing it or remembering past experience they continue on the path of overloading and then the inevitable crash leaving them wondering once again.

The following information will shed some light on why rest and recovery are as important as the training itself. It was originally submitted to MIKE'S GYM | USA Weightlifting Regional Training Center by Mike Conroy, who is a USA Weightlifting Internationally Certified Coach.

—— Pat Corbett ——

In researching this topic it seems that Soviet Physiologist Dr. Ivan Beritov gets the initial credit for the idea of *Supercomensation* in an article he wrote in 1959. In the article he states, *when an athlete is training, his body undergoes stimulations which traumatize it, wear it down, tire it out, and even destroy it. If a recovery period follows these training sessions, then the tissues will be restructured and the athlete's body will come back, not only to its former level, but even surpass this level in the case of a sufficient stimulus. If appropriate control measures are not used, such a preponderance of break-down and build-up leads rapidly to injuries.*

Overreaching versus over*training* was now the focus of how to create the proper relationship between work and rest.

Dr. Michael Kellmann (GER) made the following observations:
In the real training world the concept of less is more seems to be hard to sell. Most coaches feel that coaching is their job, and it is the duty of their athletes to follow their regimes. In addition, when coaches back off too much, performance may decrease. This shows that there is a careful balance between practice and recovery. ***Practice is important to improve performance, but the focus should be on the quality rather than on the quantity of training.*** *During long and hard* training sessions athletes tend to take "hidden rests," for example, by going at a slower pace during the exercises. A thoughtful variation of the training exercises includes a recovering element. An increase of the overall quality of training occurs when the standard regular training routine is modified, when new exercises are introduced, or simply when different types of training are applied.

Underrecovery and overtraining: Different concepts—similar impact? This question can clearly be answered with a yes and a no. Yes, they have the same impact—performance declines; No, they are not similar—***underrecovery is the precursor/cause of overtraining***. Consequently, the key to prevent overtraining is an active and proactive enhancement of recovery. Coaches and athletes need to be educated about the importance of optimal recovery and its impact on performance.
When athletes understand that a weekend without training is part of the planned training schedule, which implies that they should not train on their own or go for a heavy bike ride with friends, they take a huge step toward adequate recovery. In addition, the multilevel concept of stress and recovery emphasizes that physical training is just one part of athletes' lives. Emotional worries outside of the training environment may disturb the recovery process as well. Consequently, athletes' self-initiated activities and coaches' knowledge about individual preferences for recovery strategies are important elements to avoid overtraining.

In general, overtraining is described as *an imbalance between training and recovery* (Kuipers & Keizer, 1988). However, according to Lehmann and colleagues (Lehmann et al., 1999), overtraining is due to an *imbalance between stress and recovery*, that is, too much stress combined with too little regeneration. Both descriptions sound similar, but the definition by Lehmann and colleagues explicitly asserts that stress includes all training, competition, and additional *non-training stress factors*. Social, educational, occupational, economical, nutritional, and travel factors; time stress; and the monotony of training act to increase the risk of developing an overtraining syndrome.

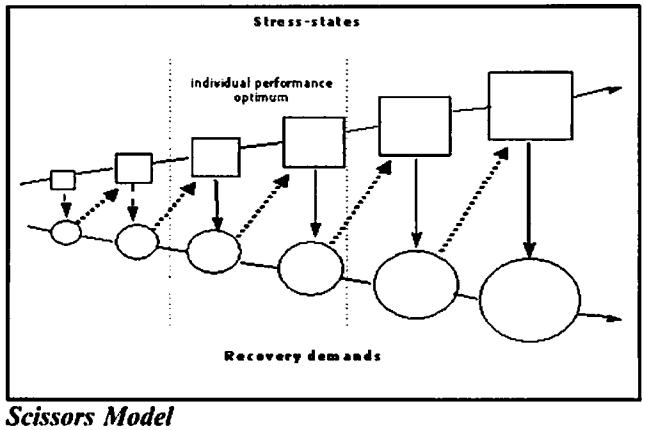
Individual differences

Athletes in general are likely to not only differ from the general population but also show a broad range of inter- and intra-individual differences. This also applies to the training load. "Thus a particular training schedule may improve the performance of one individual, be insufficient for another, and be damaging for a third" (Raglin, 1993, p. 842). The different effects of the same training stimulus may be explained by the individual *recovery-stress state*. The recovery-stress state represents the extent to which someone is physically and/or mentally stressed as well as whether the person is capable of using individual strategies for recovery and which strategies are used. The recovery-stress state can be changed positively either by stress reduction or, more important, by *self-initiated recovery activities.*

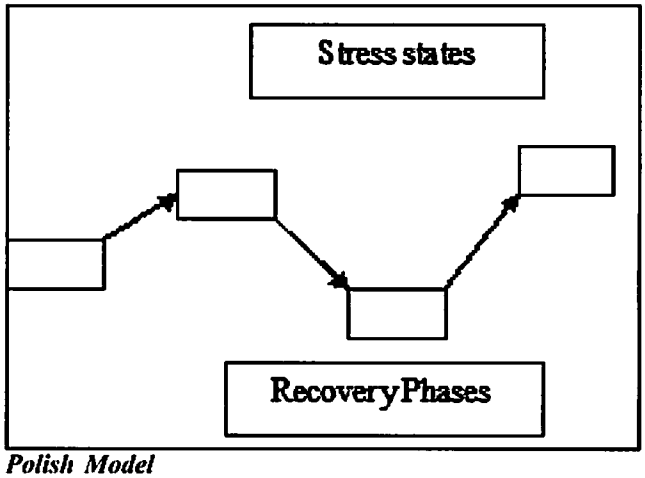
I was first introduced to *Supercompensation* in 1990, by Lyn Jones (AUS) when he was USA Weightlifting's National Coaching Director and was mentoring me as I was preparing to become an Instructor in the USAW Coaches Certification Program.

When I first saw Lyn's concept of the training, I immediately noticed a similarity to a training program developed by USAW Senior International Coach John Thrush (Calpians WLC) in 1986. I had been fortunate to be a Calpian and had trained on this particular program with good results.

There were two, distinct differences between the programs. First. Lyn's program had what was known as a *Scissors* approach, the weeks would alternate between loading and unloading, while John's program had, what would be later known as the *Polish* approach. Two loading weeks followed by an unloading week. (The *Polish* approach came from a comment made by Polish coaches that when they train their athletes *"we take two steps forward and then one step back").* Shown below is how the two concepts differ.



Scissors Model



Polish Model

The second difference was in the amount of recovery. Thrush's program had the athlete *backing* off only 2.5 kilograms on each lift, while Jones' program had the athlete *backing off* 10%.

It was at this time that I came across two articles that would convince me that I could *combine* the best ideas of both models into a *functional* and *effective* program. (NOTE: IN NO WAY am I suggesting that I am the author of any original training concepts. Only that I was trying to find a way to incorporate, what I felt were, two, very good ideas into one practical model for the level of athlete I was coaching.)

In 1990 Dr. Michael Stone and Dr. Jay Kearney, with the assistance of John Thrush and the National Junior Squad, held a 26 day long camp on *Overtraining*. The final comments. *On the basis of the information available, it is cautiously suggested that short-term overreaching of five to seven days may cause an increase performance two to five weeks after returning to normal training. Furthermore, this short period of overwork does not appear to cause any detrimental effects beyond what is normally expected of weightlifting training.*

The second article was from Dr. Pat O'Shea (Oregon State University) in his book *Quantum Strength Training* and the *S.A.I.D.* principle of training. SAID stands for *Specific*

Adaptation to Imposed Demands. In this training the relationship between frequency, duration and intensity is examined. In other research it seems that the *overreaching window* is no longer than 11 days. At that time if recovery is not introduced, *purposefully,* the athlete will be in a state of over*training* and will go into a depressed condition that will last until the hormone levels return to normal. (One study suggested that this depressed condition can last anywhere from 3 days to 6 weeks, depending upon the intensity of the overreaching.)
NOTE: The practical consideration here is that all coaches and athletes have experienced the *Private Hell* of leaving your best lifts in the gym, prior to an important competition, because we missed the *window of opportunity.* i.e., "Man. Two weeks ago I was doing a PR, in everything, and now I can't do anything."

As head coach for the Club *Idaho Weightlifting,* you may go to our site and "click" on the *Programs* icon and you'll see all the programs I have used with my athletes.
http://www.eteamz.com/idahoweightlifting

I am a *true believer* in *Supercompensation,* and I have built it into EVERY program I use. No matter how I train my athletes, I use the concept of *Supercompensation.*

At my site you will find some program that have 'macros' built into them so that you can entire your 'maxes' and get actual weights, in kilograms, for the entire 13 weeks of these programs.

What I have done is to take the *Polish* model, using the 3rd week as the compensation week, and combine it with the *Scissors* model percentages. In this modification the third week has the least amount of BOTH volume and intensity. NOW the rational for how the other 3 weeks of each of the 3 cycles came to be.

Once again I returned to Pat O'Shea. O'Shea, an Olympic weightlifter himself, had devised a *scale* of what types of repetitions could be performed with what percentages of weights in order to bring about over*reaching* but not over*training.* Lyn Jones and John Thrush had developed the number of *sets* that could be performed at each of these weights and percentages. Now it was a matter of *putting it all together.*

Working with Lyn it was decided that the exercises needed to be placed into 3 (and even 4) main groups.
"A" lifts: The competition movements and their related movements
"B" lifts: Squats
"C" lifts: Pulls
"D" lifts: Remedial movements.

Now the Cycles had to be given their emphasis. Cycle One would be the Preparation Phase (As USAW Senior International Coach Leo Totten would say "Get fit, THEN train Hard.) Cycle Two would be the Strength Phase and Cycle Three would be the Competition Phase (sometimes referred to as *neural* training)

Here is what Supercompensation training looks like as an Overview

	Cycle One				Cycle Two				Cycle Three			
Wk	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
%	70	75	65	80	75	80	70	90	85	90	80	100

In Cycle One the *Target Sets(for the "A" lifts)* are 3 in Week One, Four in Week Two, Two in Week Three, and Two in Week Four. For the "B" and "C" lifts they are 3,4,2,3. The repetitions are for the "A" lifts, 3 and the "B" and "C" lifts, 5.
In Cycle Two the sets stay the same but the "A" lift reps are now *doubles* with the "B" and "C" lifts being *triples.*

In Cycle Three the sets are again the same, with the "A" reps being *singles.*
And the "B" and "C" lifts being doubles.

SCISSORS MODEL

	Cycle One				Cycle Two				Cycle Three			
Wk	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
%	75	70	80	75	80	75	85	90	85	95	90	100

In the Scissors Model each *compensation week* follows the model for the compensation week in that cycle (so it *may* be a repeat) and each *load* week follows the model for that particular week for the same week in the *Polish* Model.

MODIFICATIONS OVER THE YEARS
When this model was first developed, the weeks received the names; BASE, LOADING, CUTBACK and PERFORMANCE. The *base* week has both a *moderate* volume and load. The *loading* week has the largest *volume*, but only the second highest amount of intensity. Once again the *cutback* week has the lowest amount of both volume and intensity. Finally, the *performance* week has, usually, the second lowest amount of volume but the highest level of intensity.

(NOTE: A coach, and athlete, actually can use any *performance* week as a *test* week. When I am training athletes, other than weightlifters, I will actually use the performance week to do a *relative max*. In other words I will have the athlete, in Cycle One, *see* what they can do for 3 repetitions in a clean or 5 repetitions in the back squat. This *madness* can be applied to cycles two and three as well and can be used as a *goal set* for future training. An example. If the first time though a football player did a back squat for 5 at 150 kilograms, at the end of Cycle One, then the second time he went through Cycle One, he would try and *do more* than the 150.)

Originally, the Loading week had 5 target sets, but we found that to be real difficult on our *heavyweights and*

superheavyweights. Also the Performance week had 3 sets in it, and we found that to have a negative effect on the next cycle so we adjusted that to the current model.
In Cycle Three we also made the modification to include John Thrush's concept of *Segment* training (which will be presented in a future article and can be viewed on Idaho Weightlifting website, complete with an explanation.)

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS. If you ask my athletes, they will *never* say that the 3rd week is *easy.* In fact a lot of the time they struggle through it because the second week has been such a challenge, but in the 4th week they come through *like champions.* (Anyway most of the time.)

This is an example of the *rep count* for a completed Cycle Two for one of Idaho Weightlifting's athletes

Week One: 344 (80%)
Week Two: 405 (85%)
Week Three: 286 (75%)
Week Four: 324 (90%)

We make modifications along the way, as all coaches and athletes do. If you would like to see what we are doing, currently, just go back to our website and 'click' on the *This Week's Training* icon and you'll see where we are and what we are currently doing.

SUPERCOMPENSATION FOR STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING PROGRAMS

To be honest, very little changes when dealing with Strength and Conditioning Programs. In fact the sets, reps, and percentages DO NOT change, at all. The only changes are the EXERCISES and their PLACEMENT.

The "A" lifts are the major movements (Sometimes called the *Core Lifts,* although recently *Core* training has come to mean the training that focuses on the abdominals, lower back, and other trunk and support muscle groups.)

The "B" lifts are the primary *auxiliary* movements. The "C" lifts contain the remedial movements and the "D" lifts are *secondary* auxiliary.

NOTE: The coach may select to divide up their exercises in any format that they choose. A common dilemma is where to place the Bench Press and or Incline Press. (Personally I place them as "B" lifts but that is because I am a weightlifting coach. The could easily be placed as an "A" lift, especially if they are a *tested* lift.)

As always, I hope that this article is of an assistance to both coaches and athletes in their training, and I invite the reader to both visit the Idaho Weightlifting Website and to contact me if there are any questions or comments.
L&S

What Does 'N.F.L.' Really Stand For?

Not For Long

A one-year journey into the heart of America's Sunday love affaire.

By Derek Woodske

It was just over a year ago that my wife and I finished the treacherous journey from the west coast to the east coast in the midst of a winter storm on Interstate 70. It was all for a prospect that had risen out of a short but enticing conversation with Cleveland Browns Head Strength coach Tom Myslinkski. He asked if I would be interested in a position for one season, no guarantees for renewal. I would spear head a sports nutrition program for the team with emphasis in supplement education, and spend my working hours on the floor as strength and conditioning assistant. With no long-term guarantees, the opportunity was still too much to pass up and the U-Haul and the dog would be packed for the thirty-hour trek east…

I arrived in Berea, Ohio on the seventh of March 2007, to begin the introduction process and meet some of the staff that I would be working with for the next eleven and a half months. On my initial visit I was greeted by offensive Tackle Ryan Tucker, whom I had met a couple years prior while competing at the Baldwin Wallace track and field meet. Ryan and then head strength coach Buddy Morris had made the trip across town to watch the hammer throw competition. He made small talk for some time and all the while I was reminded by the sheer mass of the man in front of me that I would be working in the land of giants. Ryan was in fairly good shape for that time of the year. He is six feet six inches tall and I would say that he weighed around three hundred and twenty pounds at the time. Ryan is incredibly strong with career high lifts of five hundred and fifty pounds in the bench and seven hundred pounds in the squat. Needless to say, Ryan falls into my ten percent club; but I will get to that in a minute.

The remaining players would not start to trickle in for about ten days or so depending on their contract agreements for off-season camp, while the others were still living the good life in a place much warmer than Cleveland, Ohio. The few guys that are present are mostly the multi year contracts. They have made their life in the area so that they can keep consistency in their children's lives. The other athletes that are there early are usually healing from an off-season surgery and need to come back in pre-surgery condition to start the season. When I arrived two weeks before camp, I was instantly put to work on the floor with Ryan Tucker, Ethan Kelly, Steve Heidien and Joe Andruzzi. All of them had undergone surgery which required additional care during the off season. However, as busy as I was, the real work was not going to start until the mid point of March. Now let me tell you, when it starts, it rolls like thunder! Players arriving early to get a jump start, others because they have to attend or they'll lose their place at the table, and some it is a financial agreement. Wish I could get into that more, but I can't. Let me just say that if I had made a bonus of a few grand an hour to lift weights… I would be a happy thirty-one year old athlete.

Rear Row (L-R): Chuan Thompson(LB-Browns), Simon Fraser(DE-Falcons),Derek Anderson(QB-Browns), Derek Woodske(miss placed hammer thrower), Ethan Kelly (NT-Browns),Cory Undlin (Coach-Browns). Front Row: (L-R): Phil Dawson(K-Browns), Umberto Leone(Coach-Browns), Nick Sorenson(S-Browns),Ben {Rosella front man}. Some random dude?

March 15th 2008

I arrive early for work around six in the morning. This became my routine for the next ten months, that along with leaving late. The first groups would arrive at six thirty in the morning and start promptly at seven. This would continue every hour on the hour for the remainder of the day. One group followed by the next until all eighty off-season players made their way through a workout. Each group was made up of twenty or twenty-five men. The first hour of our system would emphasize conditioning and general preparation, following the template of Charlie Francis and vertical integration. In fact, Charlie's template would become the spine of our conditioning system for the entire cycle of the year. Working with such efficiency, I have come to believe with one-hundred percent confidence that coaches who gas their athletes

with any training distance in football over 150m in total length should be shot out of a cannon. We broke our athletes in to 'BIG' and 'LITTLE' and the distances balanced appropriately. Once players were categorized, they would then train accordingly. There were two days of the week designed for sprinting and two days of the week spent running longer tempo for recovery purposes. Every group would begin their warm-up with a 25-30min dynamic session to prepare them for the day. Strangely enough, the seven a.m. group was always the most enjoyable to train. I think it was due to the fact that they are usually the most 'Type A' personalities: the type of personality where you better have some really thick skin if you want to be around them and you better be able to give it as you take it, but you better not be disrespectful or you will get your ass kicked. The morning group would come in ready to roar at seven, and it was a sight to see especially if they had been out into the wee hours of the morning and still feeling the effects of the local pub! The reminiscing about the night before is often what led to the disrespect issue and the occasional seven-thirty a.m. argument. These arguments were always interesting; they seemed to be brought on by the need of some of our larger players to relive their college doorman days? I would say if there were awards for bouncer of the year, J'vonne Parker would win hands down! I once saw him pick up a 325 lb. nose tackle with one arm as he held his morning protein shake in the other.

Once we get through the morning session of cardio and conditioning, it is into the weight room for one of four workouts for the week. A schedule that would last the next ten weeks before the athletes get a second break before the start of the preseason. This Ten week is not mandatory for all athletes, but we still had a consistent class of fifty or more ready to train. The head strength coach uses a Westside template with a lot of attention to the box squat and bench press. Initially, it was hard for me coming from a track background because I wanted to do more in the weight room, but when you have the lowest injuries at the end of a season you did something right. Now let me talk about the rule of ten percent that I alluded to in the initial paragraph of this story. In the NFL there are some very big and athletic guys doing some incredible things on the field, but that doesn't always carry over in to the weight room. The most common question that I would get in regards to working as a strength coach in the NFL is whether this athlete or the other was really strong or a hard worker. I can say that in my limited experience with the NFL, there are about ten percent of the players on any given team that really love the weight room and love being big and strong. The remaining ninety percent treat the weight room like going to meetings {yawn}, but they understand that they have to work out. So, when I initially started training the players I was confused. Some of the players were not only very weak, but they also carried a lot of body fat in relationship to their lean muscle tissue. It took me about a month to reeducate myself with the fact that the weight room plays a very small and backstage role at the highest level in football. The reality is all that really matters is the athletes' ability to go out on the field and get it done. Now with that being said, I can tell you that the 'freaks' of the NFL are as freaky as any athlete that I have every experienced in any sport. For example, a couple players that I became very close with Ethan Kelly and LeCharles Bentley were incredibly strong. Ethan was out for the better part of six months following a severe knee injury and after only five weeks of exercise he put up 505lbs in the bench with a 14" hand grip. The thing that made this so impressive to me is the fact that he had been up almost all night playing PS3 and he did this at eight a.m.! LeCharles is perhaps one of the most powerful athletes that I have ever trained. Before his knee injury his power clean was 425lbs for four reps! Post knee surgery I measured his atrophied quad at twenty seven inches, and I have his post injury test video where I had the pleasure of taking his pass blocking hits full force!

August 2008

Once the season got into full swing, the training must and will take a back seat to all other things that are of importance at that level. On average the players will arrive at the facility early in the morning. They would often train before they have their first meeting, but that spot was usually reserved for the practice squad. Once they arrive they are required to be either in meetings, practice, the weight room or therapy until they leave ten to fourteen hours later depending on their schedule. Typically, the quarterbacks will be there the latest watching and breaking down both offensive and defensive film from the other teams and preparing the plays for the weekend. The group that spends the most time working on fundamentals of their game is the Special Teams. I would relate their sport much more to the world of throws in track and field. They are also always in the weight room, due to the fact that they have the lightest meeting schedule and heaviest practice schedule. Let me tell you this, if you train with these men, you better like country music on Friday because that is when Phil Dawson comes in to train guns before the weekend.

The hardest part during the season is keeping athletes healthy off and on the field, because it is truly a brutal game. The hits are ten times worse than anything that you think you saw on television and all the players are beat up on Monday. If they played at all in the game on Sunday; they are hurting somewhere on Monday. The number of training sessions is cut back to two days a week when we're winning and up to three days a week when we lost. Tuesday is a mandatory day off as outlined by the collective bargaining agreement and the only people we would see were practice squad and that magical ten percent that loved the weight room! This would often become the day that I would be spend working with veterans with injuries due to the fact that I had a great rapport with the old guys, and we would be able to do a lot of different

things that didn't fit well in the workout when there were athletes lining up to use your equipment. Tuesday also became the day that Anderson, Fraser and Quinn would come in to the office so we could look up a Canadian television show on Youtube that would put you on the floor, and design ridiculous ways to mess with the head strength coach next door. In fact, there still might be some chicken bones in a cup hidden behind the couch!

Game Day

When you arrive for a Sunday game, you arrive early and you are there for the remainder of the day. No complaints here though, this is the best part of the job. This is the part that you look forward to all week when things get hard and tiring; it is games that bring it all together. The locker room is a special place at the NFL level and the energy pre-game is electrifying to say the least. The nerves, the different routines that the players have to get ready for the game; from a thirty minute soak in the hot tub to Jamal Lewis and few others spending forty five minutes out on the field going through dynamic routines to optimize their performances. The locker room is a bustle of activity from the owner and general manager being there to past legends like Jim Brown and Kevin Mack. My job on game day was simple: stretch out Willie McGinest, Joe Thomas, and Jason Wright and then to make sure that all the athletes are hydrated and ready to play. Once we are on the field I am issued the position of sideline control to keep the players and the coaches off the field. Sideline control may sound easy, but it is less fun than you could ever imagine because coaches and players are always moving onto the turf and it was my ass if it cost us a fifteen-yard penalty due to one of our guys running into the sideline judge.

Derek Woodske

In the end, the routine and watching players get cut was the hardest part of the NFL. I was in the office six to seven days a week and sometimes there from five forty-five in the morning until eight or nine at night. I will promise you that even with those hour requirements you will not be the first one at work in the morning, or even the last to leave, but nothing is more heart-wrenching than watching a player lose his opportunity. You try not to become emotionally involved in every situation, but when you see the sight of a player walk to his locker and thirty minutes later walk out of the building with a large black garbage bag, you know that it is over and maybe forever. We started the off season conditioning with almost ninety athletes and the season begins with the NFL roster of fifty-three. That is a lot of garbage bags and broken dreams. This also holds true for the coaching staff and in the end one of the players made this statement to me and you can take it how you please, but the player is a decade veteran and Pro Bowl player. "*Big D, if you stay in this business, don't change. You have the players' respect because they trust you, and in this business the only people that you can trust are your teammates because there isn't any loyalty from above. It's all money and business; everybody is looking out for number one. That is why they call the NFL, Not For Long.*"

That has stuck with me for a long time and I would say that if you are interested in pursuing the NFL, remember that that you are only as good as the season that your team has. And if you do your job well, and the players trust you, and you improve everyday, that is all that really matters in the end because that is the only thing you can control.
L&S

VALENCIA: NEWS & NOTES

By Rob Lasorsa, USATF THROWS COACH (VALENCIA)

Christian [Cantwell] had planned to arrive to Valencia on Thursday, the day before the competition. It turned out that his flight was delayed and he missed one of his connections. He did not arrive in Valencia until about 9:00PM on Thursday night and his luggage was missing. Remember, they were due to throw at 10:00 AM and had to be in the call room at 9:00AM. On top of everything else, Christian had the flu.

Two of the team managers, Manny Bautista and Tim Weaver, picked Christian up at the airport. Aaron McGuire, the Assistant Team Leader from USATF, got Christian a uniform.

The next problem was getting Christian his credentials. Credentialing had closed at 8:00PM on Thursday night and was not to open until8:00AM on Friday morning. On Friday morning Christian, Tim Weaver, Manny Bautista, and myself went to the credentials area. Manny speaks Spanish, which was very important in this situation. Christian got through the credential area at about 8:15 AM and got to the warm up area at about 8:30 AM.

The warm up area had a circle with a memory foam landing area. The memory foam was very difficult to walk on, especially for 330lb-plus shot-putters. We retrieved the shots for Reese [Hoffa] and Christian after each warm up throw and were able to bring the shots to the side so that they did not have to walk on the memory foam, which we thought could really drain energy from their legs. All the other throwers were walking on the foam to retrieve their shots.

Reese, always the ultimate professional, looked tremendous in warm-ups prior to the qualifying round. Christian, going on only a few hours of sleep and being sick, also looked good in warm ups.

After Reese hit his big qualifying throw, he stated that it "was the easiest 21 meter throw that he has ever felt." After a timing problem on his first throw, Christian easily qualified on his second throw.

We talked to the officials in the days leading up to the competition about this whole "back of the circle foul controversy" that various blogs and web sites were suggesting about the American throwers. The shot officials were tremendous. We were assured that if there was a "doubt in their mind" about a foul, the benefit would go to the thrower; basically they were not going to call anything that they "thought they saw."

We also told the officials that any foul calls in the back of the circle would be immediately protested by the athlete. In such a case the athlete has to immediately file a personal protest with the lead official and, most importantly, the throw has to be measured. Therefore, if the protest was upheld then there would be a measurement to go to.

To the official's credit, no such fouls occurred and no such "phantom" fouls were called. ***L&S***

Jerry Bookin-Weiner

Passion For The Throws

By Glenn Thompson

Jerry Bookin-Weiner has a passion for the throws. Does that mean he is a fervent competitor? Certainly. But his commitment to throwing, and in particular Masters throwing, runs much deeper. He serves as a meet organizer and administrator.

Last fall Bookin-Weiner organized a series of fall throws meets in Maryland area, allowing many throwers to extend their seasons a few extra weeks. He is active in the Potomac Valley Track Club, which sponsors bi-weekly meets from the late spring into the fall.

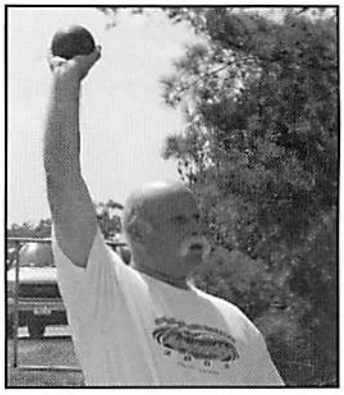
And more recently, Bookin-Weiner has perhaps taken his most important role, that of USATF Masters Throws Chair, a position of great responsibility.

Jerry took some time recently to inform Long & Strong readers about his background, his USATF responsibilities, and the issues that are most important to Masters Throwers.

***Long & Strong:** Jerry, tell us about your throwing background, from high school through to the present.*

Jerry Bookin-Weiner: I actually got started in junior high, when I was in 8th grade. In those days everyone (in my school at least) tried all the track and field events during gym class. I was pretty close to the same size then that I am now, so I was pretty big for my age, and the teacher said to me before we even started that he thought I'd be pretty good in the shot put (the only throwing event they had in junior high back then). He was right. I was the best in my school and finished third in the county (Montgomery County, Maryland) junior high championships. I was hooked.

Back then (1960) there was a fair amount of indoor track and field on TV and so I had seen the best (Parry O'Brien, for example) and had an idea from that how to throw (or rather how to put) the shot. I had no coaching in the first year, but in 9th grade a shop teacher who had been a shot putter in college helped me out and I won the county championship. When I went to high school the next year, the coach there introduced me to the discus (which was the only other throwing event in Maryland high schools then and now). By the end of 10th grade, I was throwing in the 120s. I must have been something of a natural, because the coach could only show us the basics and had relatively little time for the throwers (he was the only coach for a team of about 60 and we were on a field pretty far removed from the track). By the end of my senior year, I had broken the school record a couple of times (the record I set in 1964 still stands), won the Maryland state championship and was named to the Metropolitan Washington Track Coaches Association All-Metropolitan Team.



Jerry Bookin-Weiner

To show what a different era that was, after the state meet the coaches association organized a "meet of champions" bringing together the best track and field athletes from DC and the Maryland and Virginia suburbs. The night before the meet was to be held, I got a call from my coach telling me the meet had been cancelled. It turned out that the reason for the cancellation was that the Virginia High School League, which ran the athletic programs in Virginia's all-white schools, refused to allow the meet to go forward by saying that Virginia athletes would have to forfeit their state meet titles if they competed against the integrated teams from DC and Maryland.

That summer I joined the American University Track Club, coached by Brooks Johnson, who is now the USATF High Performance Committee Chair. We competed in the series of all-comers and championship meets held all summer long in the Baltimore-Washington area – AAU meets like the DCAAU Junior Championships, Olympic Development meets, and an all-comers series at AU every Wednesday that continued throughout my college years.

I went to Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, a school I picked in part because it was small enough that I could compete on the varsity as a freshman (in those days there were separate freshman teams at schools with more than 750 men). We were in the Middle Atlantic Conference College Division, a massive conference with about 20+ schools in our division and another 10 or so in the University Division (schools like Delaware, West Chester, St. Joe's, LaSalle, etc.). I medaled in the MACs (as we called the conference meet) in the discus and broke the school record my freshman year and won the MACs and NCAA College Division East Regional Championships my junior year. I repeated in the MACs my senior year and the school record I set that year still stands.

While I was at Dickinson, my career in Middle East studies began when I studied in Jerusalem, Israel the summer and first semester of my junior year. On the flight over I carried two discs in a carrier bag over my arm and found meets to compete in with the Israeli national team that summer as they trained for the Asian Games.

While I was in graduate school at Columbia University, I trained with their team and took up the hammer throw with help from their throwers. The summer of 1970 while I was in an Arabic language program, I took the subway up to Baker Field early most mornings to train with a Columbia alum who had been their school record holder. During the summers I competed in meets around New York and when I was back in the DC area.

In 1971 I went to Morocco, originally for a summer Arabic language program, but with the intention of staying to work on my language skills and do the research for my doctoral dissertation on Moroccan history. This time I flew with both my discs and a hammer. Within a week of arrival, I had tracked down an AU Track Club teammate who was coaching with the Moroccan national team as a Peace Corps volunteer. Through that contact I joined a local club and competed in the 1971 and 1972 Moroccan National Championships where I won the discus both years and placed in the shot and hammer – all of which was more a commentary on the state of the throwing events in Morocco at the time than a reflection of my abilities.

I lived in Morocco for a little more than two years, joining the Peace Corps myself while I was there. I continued training and competing the whole time I was there and recently learned that the hammer thrower who beat me in every meet some 35 years ago was agitating for Morocco to start a Masters track program up until his death two years ago. I assisted my club team with a home and home series of meets with the Gibraltar Athletics Association and served as interpreter when we went there for a meet on the eve of my departure from Morocco in 1973. I've been back to Morocco repeatedly over the past 35 years professionally and am now working with the Minister of Youth and Sports (1984 Olympic gold medal winner in the women's 400m hurdles Nawal El-Moutawakel) to try to get Masters track started there.

After leaving Morocco in 1973, I took a 23-year break from throwing, interrupted only by a series of meets in the summer of 1979 while I was living in Norfolk, Virginia. I wanted to continue after that summer, but life got in the way – a summer-long trip through Africa in 1980, summer-long workshops on the Middle East for teachers the next two years that had me working 18-hour days, trips with teachers to Africa and the Middle East the next two summers, the birth of my daughter and a move to Boston. But the bug never left me and I kept up my subscription to *Track and Field News* for all those years. In the early 90s when my daughter and I got locked out of our house one winter day, I found myself throwing flat pieces of ice across the street like a discus as we tried to keep warm. That told me that I really wanted to throw again, but I only very vaguely knew that something called Masters track existed.

Two or three years later I saw a notice in the *Boston Globe's* community sports calendar that the USATF New England Championships included Masters events, but I had other plans that weekend. In 1995 I finally took my discus out of the closet and went to a local high school and threw for about 15 minutes, injuring myself in the process! The next year, as I was turning 50, I decided it was now or never and made it a point to go to the New England Championships, where I learned that as a 50-year old, I no longer had to throw the 2 kg discus and 16# shot. I also signed up for one of the MF sponsored throws camps at the University of Rhode Island that summer. My adidas throwing shoes from the early 70s were older than about 95% of the other participants. Later that summer I competed at the Maine Association championships where I met Carl Wallin. Through him I began to meet other Masters throwers in New England and learned about the breadth of the Masters scene. The rest, as they say, is history.

L&S: *How did you become the USATF Masters Throws Chair, and just what are your responsibilities?*

JBW: Towards the end of 2006, long-time Weight Events Chair Dick Hotchkiss resigned at about the same time George Mathews resigned as Masters Track and Field Chair. At the Convention in Indianapolis Rex Harvey approached me to ask if I would be interested in taking over the position. When Gary Snyder was elected Chair and asked people to step forward if they were interested in any of the vacant positions, I did so. A few weeks later he appointed me.

The responsibilities were vaguely stated in the USATF Masters Committee Operating Rules, and I didn't actually look at them carefully until last summer. Now they have been made somewhat more specific, but there is still a lot of leeway. Essentially the explicitly stated responsibilities are to solicit bids for the stand-alone throws championships (Weight Pentathlon and Weight/Superweight/Ultra Weight Pentathlon) and to assist the Games Committee with the conduct of the throwing events at the indoor and outdoor national championships.

Soliciting bids for the stand-alone throws championships is a very major responsibility. The Operating Rules refer to a Throwing Events Subcommittee and MTF Chair Gary Snyder formally appointed one last November. Its duties are to assist in soliciting bids for the stand-alone throws championships (including participation in site visits as part of the bidding process), to approve guidelines for the use of Masters Committee-owned implements, and to serve as a channel for input from throwers into the USATF governance processes. The Subcommittee was created to reflect the diversity of the throwing community on a number of levels – age, gender, geography, event specialization and race.

In addition to those explicitly stated duties, there are a number of other areas in which I see the Throws Chair making a contribution. The most important among them is to be a channel for communication between Masters

throwers and the overall Masters community – making sure that the throwers' voices are heard. Very closely related to that is to talk to throwers about proposed rules changes that would have an impact on us. For example, this year at the World Masters Athletics Assembly in Italy, they were supposed to consider proposals to change the W80+ shot and hammer from 3kg to 2kg and the M80+ discus to .75kg. I learned about these while we were in Orono for the outdoor championships and tried to talk with as many of the throwers as I could in those age groups to get their input. I then passed their largely negative views on to the US delegates at the WMA Assembly. As it turned out the Assembly never took up those proposals, but at least we did get the throwers' views to the delegates.

Another way we are gathering input from throwers is by conducting surveys. The first one was conducted this year to solicit opinions on some ideas for the future of the ultra weights, and the weight and superweight championships, on name changes for the weight pentathlon and for my position, and on proposals for changes in the weights thrown for different age groups. Together with the Throwing Events Subcommittee we'll be conducting similar surveys in years to come.

But soliciting bids and making sure we have good sites and well-run throws-only championships is the most important task. One of the first things I noticed was that the bid forms and guidelines were not really relevant to those events. The bid forms themselves were (and as we talk now still are) identical with those for the indoor and outdoor Masters track and field championships. Many of the requirements to be met and questions to be answered by prospective meet sponsors are frankly irrelevant to the throws-only meets. I've been working for several months with the USATF staff in Indianapolis to revise the forms and create new guidelines for bidders to make them appropriate for our championships. I'm told by the national office that we should have finalized bid documents ready by the time this article is published.

At that point the Subcommittee members and I will begin to actively solicit bids for the meets in 2009, 2010 and 2011. It is my hope that we can make recommendations for the 2009 meets to the Executive Committee fairly quickly and have bids ready for 2010 and 2011 by the time of the Convention in Reno next December. Last summer's survey revealed that the throwing community, by an overwhelming margin, wants to see those meets move around the country and that will be an important consideration for us moving forward. Paramount however is finding sites that have the right facilities. For the Throws Pentathlon (even though the Weight Pentathlon name hasn't been changed in the US yet, it has changed internationally) that means having sectors for each of the 5 events that do not overlap with each other and having circles and safety cages that meet or exceed standards. For the Weight/Superweight/ UltraWeight Pentathlon, it means having two cages and a throwing area for the ultra weights that can be configured for throwing either from a circle (without the implements landing on the concrete pad) or from a scratch line. Many Masters athletes, including many throwers, are not really aware of the difficulty involved in finding appropriate facilities, whether for the indoor and outdoor championships or for our throws-only championships. It's much more complicated than most people realize.

Assisting the Games Committee with the conduct of the indoor and outdoor championships is also an important responsibility. Safety is a major concern, particularly at the indoor championships where space is always a constraint and very few potential facilities have room for the two circles that are required. We've been spoiled in Boston because the throws can all be conducted outside the infield of the track. There are no other facilities I am aware of that have that configuration. Planning for the 2009 National Masters Indoor Championships at the Sportsplex in Landover, Maryland is a real challenge in that regard. Because I am a member of the Potomac Valley Track Club that is organizing those Championships I have been very actively involved in coming up with solutions to the problems posed by the configuration of that facility and it has not been easy.

L&S: *What are some of the major initiatives underway that impact Masters throwers?*

JBW: There are a number, some of which I've already alluded to in my earlier comments. For example, at the 2007 Convention in Hawaii, we managed to get the Ultra Weight Pentathlon approved as a national championship event after four years of trying. The first National Masters Ultra Weight Pentathlon Championship will be contested in Seattle next September.

Another is to encourage more meets to include the hammer and weight throws, particularly at the Association and Regional levels. We are making progress, but there is still work to be done. One of the problems is finding facilities that have appropriate cages for the hammer. High school discus cages are frequently all that are available and they pose problems (they don't really protect spectators; the posts sometimes are too close and athletes complain that the handle hits the cage; if the circle itself is painted, an insert cannot be used easily; the landing area is often on a football or soccer field and the athletic department isn't thrilled to have hammers and weights "destroying" their fields). There is very little we can do other than trying to identify facilities that are appropriate and making meet organizers aware of them.

One positive step we have taken is to acquire a complete set of hammers and weights (including both indoor and outdoor superweights) that are available to be loaned for use in association and regional championships. The Masters Committee pays to get the implements to the meet organizers who sign an agreement that includes repairing damage and returning the implements at their cost.

I'm quite sure that the Australians who proposed the changes in hammer and shot weights for older women and men will return with those proposals at the WMA Assembly in 2009 in Finland. We will need to collect as much input as we can from throwers (particularly those who will be affected immediately or in the near future) so that our delegates to the Assembly in Lahti are able to reflect those views. I strongly suspect the opposition will be quite strong, in part because of the diameter of the lighter shots. One piece of unsolicited feedback we got to last year's survey was strong dissatisfaction among 80+ women to the 0.75kg discus – not because it is too light but because it is too small. That happened because the specifications for the 0.75kg discus were set for young children (bantams in the rest of the world) whose hands are much smaller than adult Masters throwers.

L&S: *What do you see as the critical issues facing Masters throwers over the next three to five years?*

JBW: The most important issue is maintaining and increasing the number of Masters athletes, whether in the throwing events or generally. In the 12 years I've been involved I've seen the number of entrants in many meets flat-line or even decline. The only way I can conceive of growing the sport is through intensive efforts at the grassroots level. Unfortunately, USATF has not shown itself to be terribly successful in that realm, but the initiatives being promoted by Masters Chair Gary Snyder are promising – particularly the idea of putting resources behind grassroots level clinics to be held around the country.

There has already been some discussion about allying with the National Senior Games. I don't pretend to know how such an alliance could work in practice, or if it is advisable. However, one needs only look at the numbers to see there is an issue. Many more track and field athletes participate in the bi-annual National Senior Games (which are restricted to those over age 50) than in the USATF National Masters Championships (which include athletes beginning at age 30) each year. I don't think we've ever even tried to determine why that is the case. While it is true that at the state level many senior games are subpar in terms of conditions and adherence to the USATF Rules of Competition that is not the case for the National meet. At the very least, we need to do some research to figure out why NSGA attracts so many more participants than USATF does. Some kind of a genuine alliance (whatever that means) needs to be explored as well.

L&S: *Is it important for Masters athletes to involve themselves in USATF processes?*

JBW: Yes, it is, for a number of reasons.

1. First and foremost, if you aren't involved, you will not have a real voice in how our sport is organized and governed. There are many Masters athletes who seem to think they have all the answers to issues such as where to have the National Championships, why entry fees are too high, etc. They sound off quite frequently on Ken Stone's blog and on the Forum section of the Masterstrack.com website. However, most of them are in no way involved except as competitors – they aren't involved at the association level; they never attend athletes meetings at the National Championships; they never attend the Annual Convention. By getting involved (at whatever level their resources and other commitments allow) will give them both a voice and an opportunity to learn exactly what is involved in making meets happen. In my experience, the loudest complainers seem happiest in that role and don't make a real contribution to improving our sport.

2. Becoming an official is perhaps the easiest and most important contribution any of us can make. Without officials, most of them working purely as volunteers, we would not have meets in which to compete. In my view it is incumbent on all of us to take the trouble to become certified officials and work meets whenever we can. Getting certified is not difficult. It only involves taking an open book multiple choice test based on the USATF Rules of Competition and certification is valid for an entire Olympiad (if you get certified in 2008, it will be valid until 2012).

   If it weren't for officials, we would not have had meets when we were younger. Officiating youth, high school and college meets is a way of "giving back" and promoting the sport. Occasionally, it is a good idea to pass on competing even in a Masters meet to officiate and make a competition possible for others. If all of us did that, there would be more meets for everyone.

3. By getting involved, Masters athletes, who do not lack for ideas about how to change/improve the sport, can have their ideas heard. Some will be good and will be adopted. Others will be challenged – sometimes because they are faulty and sometimes initially because "it's not the way things are done." Getting involved in the work of USATF at the association, regional or national level is a good way to have your ideas heard and challenged. You won't always succeed in getting what you want, but being involved in the process is the best way I know to accomplish anything.

4. Just as we all create friendships with our fellow competitors in our events across the age groups, involvement in USATF processes leads to valuable relationships with people from around the association, region or nation in other events as well. ****L&S****

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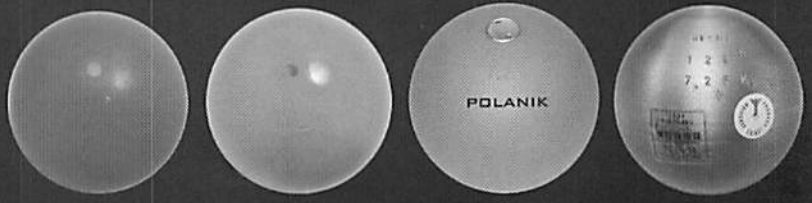

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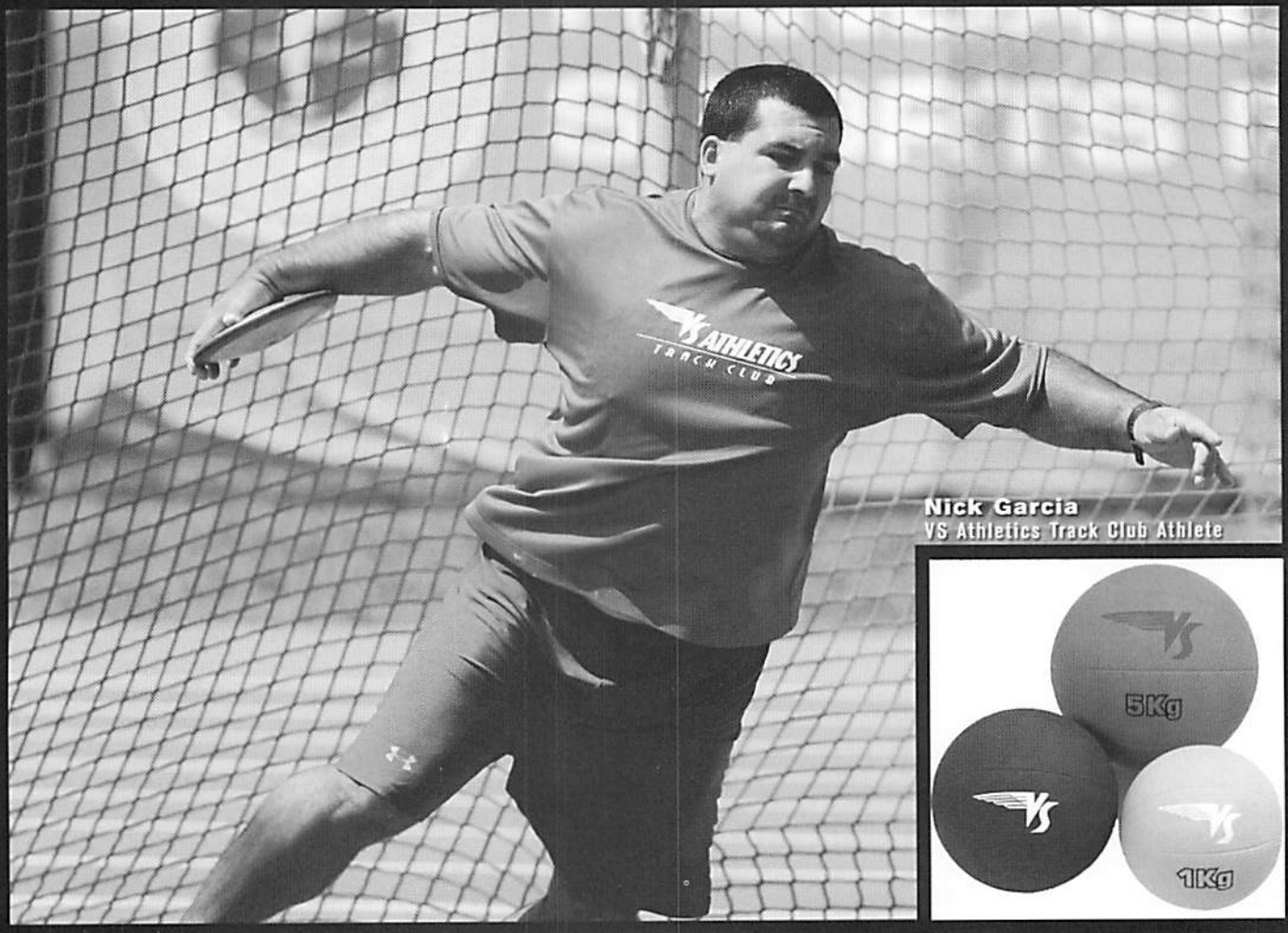

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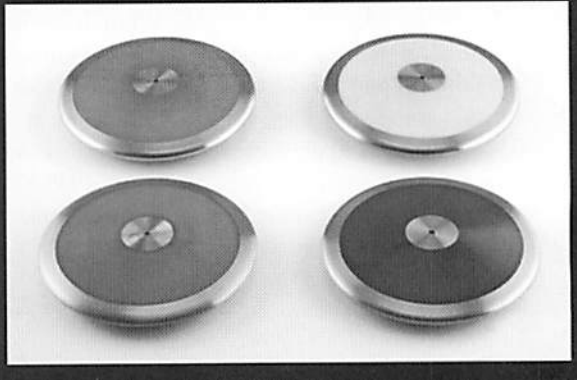

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