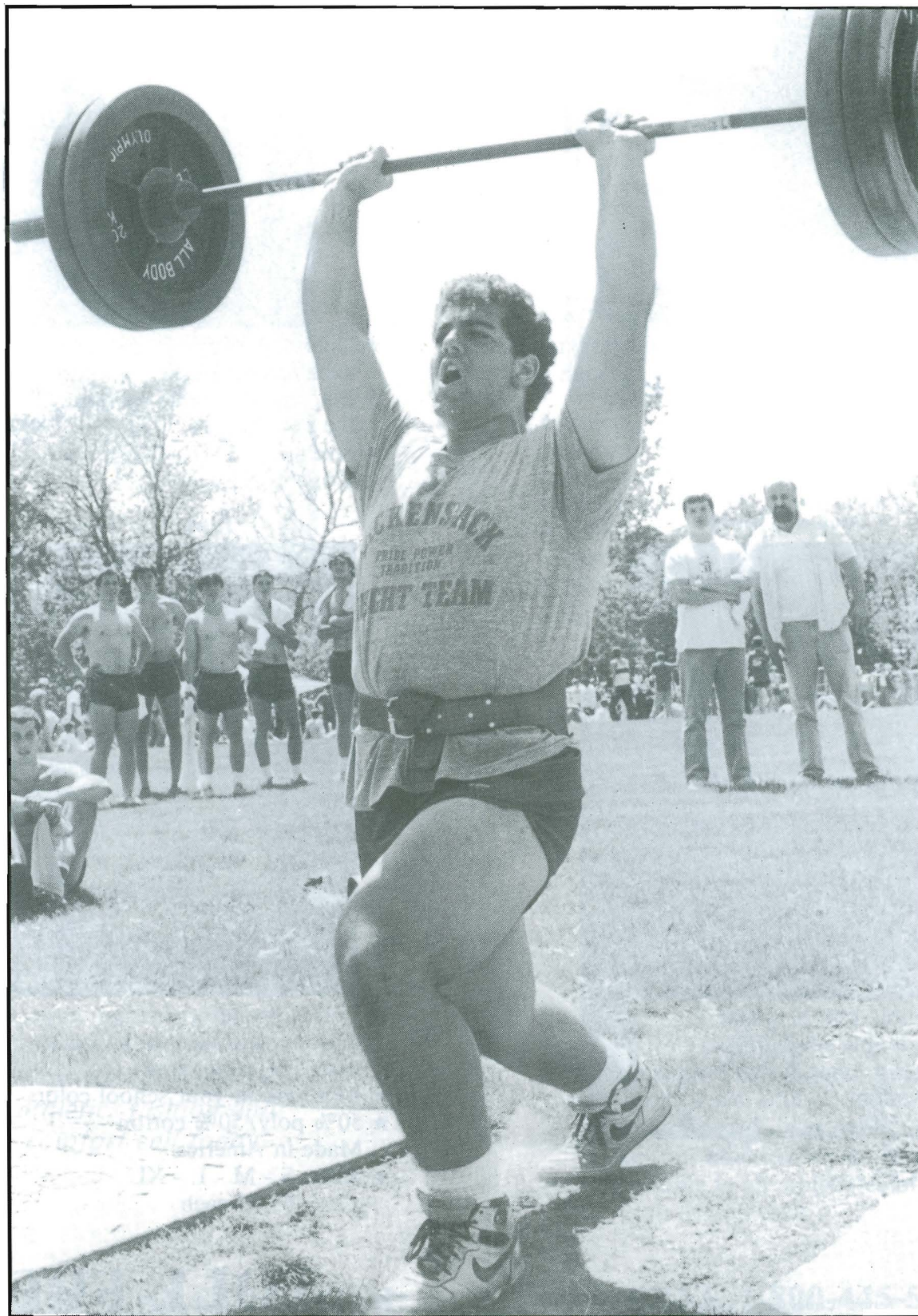


CLEAN AND JERK



Dave Patrella won the Clean and Jerk competition at the New Jersey Bergen County Track and Field Championships. (Bruce Klemens Photo)

IN TRACK AND FIELD

WHY NOT?

By
Justo Bautista

Let's start teaching high school athletes the clean and jerk.

That's what they do in Russia and Bulgaria, says Ron Panissidi, and that's why the Russians and the Bulgarians beat the pants off the U.S. in the Olympics.

Panissidi, the New Jersey chairman of the U.S. Powerlifting Federation, and state chairman of the Strength and Conditioning Association, wants to incorporate the clean and jerk in track and field meets.

This year it happened at New Jersey's Bergen County Track and Field Championships. It was the first time in school-boy athletics.

"It might be the beginning of something big in the U.S.," says Ron, a teacher who lives in Oradell.

We are hoping that other counties in New Jersey and other states throughout the United States will pick up on this perhaps on a college level or in high school and college indoor track (Milrose Games).

Four years ago, Ron spoke to former Olympic weightlifting coach, Frank Bates. Frank stated that the participation in the Olympic lifts was so low that the U.S. had to drag out its old timers to compete in the Olympics.

"Why not try to get it in the schoolboy level in track and field," says Ron. "Finally, I have several people in the county who are ready to listen."

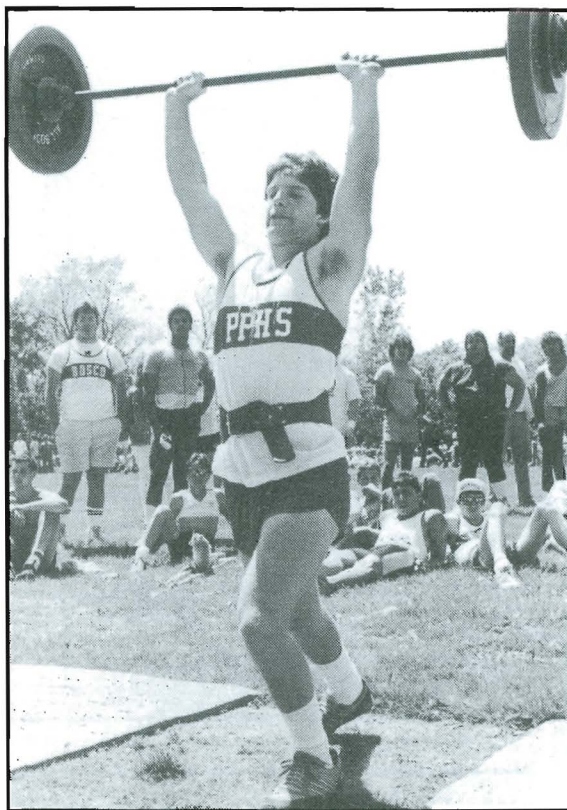
"It's a great lift, and it has carryover value for jumpers and throwers. And sprinters can get a lot out of it, and it is a good lift for potential football players."

Ron's idea is to give kids three attempts at a bar. There would be no weight classes. The strongest kid wins, and there would be five place finishers.

"They'd have to clean the weight and get it over their heads any way they could," he says.

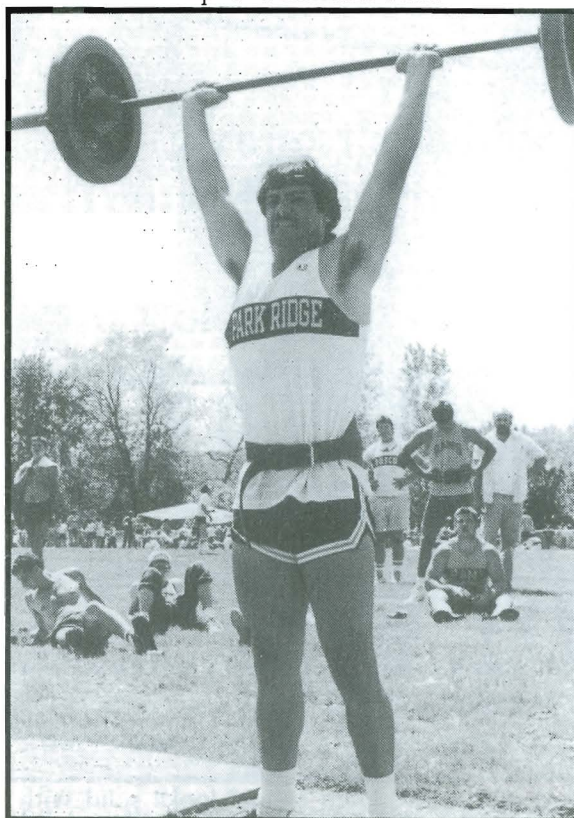
Four years ago at the men's Seniors they thought it was a good idea as did those at this year's Seniors and National Masters. Several people across the country who agree are Johnny Parker, Strength Coach of New York Giants; Dr. Paul Ward, Women's Olympic Track Committee; and Bruce Klemens, Secretary to the New Jersey Weightlifting Federation.

At this year's Bergen County Track and Field Championships, the event took place with 28 participants from Groups 1, 2, 3, and four. Mainly shot-putters participated. It was declared an open event and they waived the three field events, one running event rule allowing a fourth field event, the clean and jerk. Medals, but no points were awarded - five places. Each participant had three attempts at the bar: modified rules. A push out was allowed and a continental clean was also



Ron Arp of Palisades Park

Bruce Klemen Photo



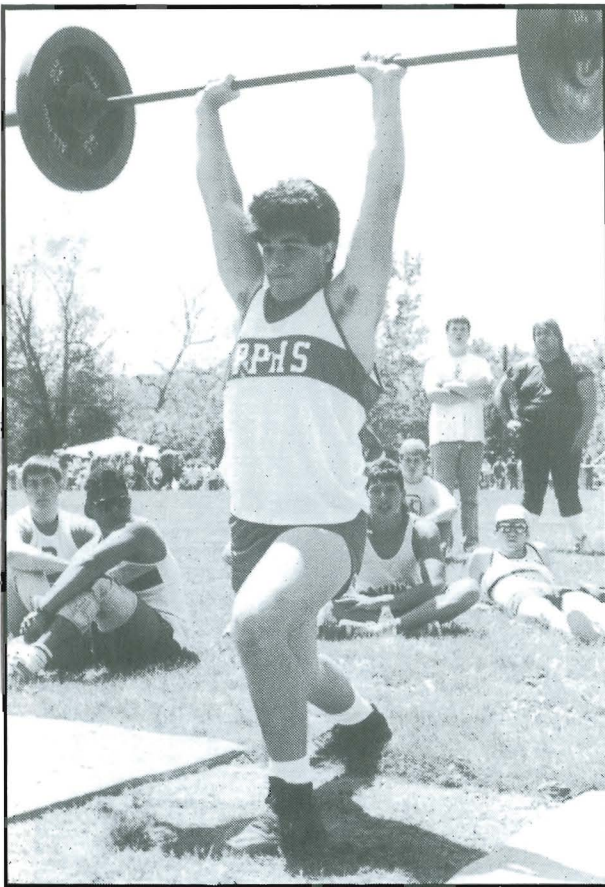
John Turi of Park Ridge took 3rd Place

Bruce Klemen Photo

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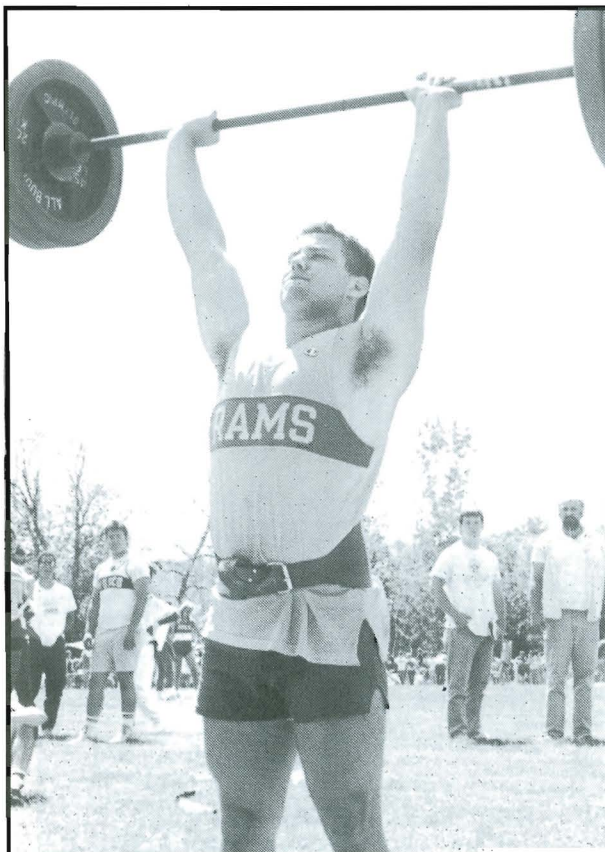
CLEAN AND JERK IN TRACK AND FIELD

Bruce Klemen Photo



Bill DeMarco Palisades Park

Bruce Klemen Photo



Andy Pero of Ramsey High School looks solid with 235 pounds. Andy took 2nd Place.

allowed. Basically, the lifter-athlete gets it from the ground over his head any way he can (the feeling being that coaches pick up on the right technique in the future because it is more efficient). You had to end up with arms locked out and feet in an even position.

We felt that exposure was important. The lift was conducted on the track infield in front of the football bleachers on the 50-yard line. The grass was used as a platform with two old 4 x 6 wrestling mats on either side. One referee (Bruce Klemens) was used.

A brief clinic was given (more time should be spent on this but not too much time) before the event started.

During the warm-up period, we were only allowed to use one bar, however, three is preferable. In the warm-ups, they should use only a light weight (145 would be good) and do 3 cleans and 3 presses or 3 jerks and then come back and repeat 3 times. The competition itself lasted about 30 minutes.

We emphasized to the participants that if they missed the weight not to fight it but get rid of the bar (the clean and jerk is safer than the bench press).

The top six winners were:

Sixth Place – Mike Theuerkauf

N.V.R.H.S. – Demarest football player and the top shotputter in New Jersey who went out with 215.

Fifth Place – Roosevelt Smith

Don Bosco football player; track; credited with 210; and went out with 240.

Fourth Place – Chris Schneider

Indian Hills football player, shotputter, discus; credited with 215.

Third Place – John Turi

Park Ridge; credited with 220, gave a nice try at 260; football player and outstanding discus and shotputter.

Second Place – Andy Pero

Ramsey; got 245 over his head; football player and shotputter.

First Place – Dave Petrella

Hackensack; squat cleaned 255 and split it over his head. Dave is an outstanding student and played football (all County Guard) and is a shotputter. He will play football at Columbia University this fall.

Hopefully coaches throughout the U.S. will give the event their fair consideration. In doing so, they may save an outstanding Olympic event, and they may also enhance and highlight an already successful sport in track and field.

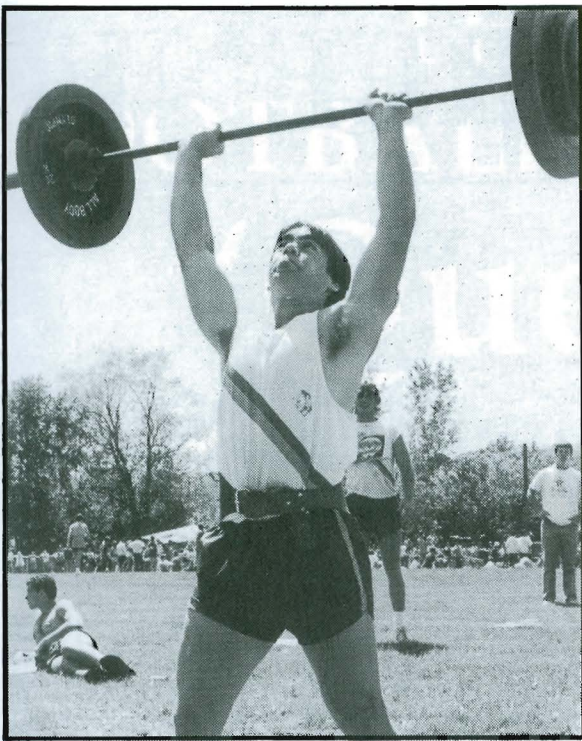
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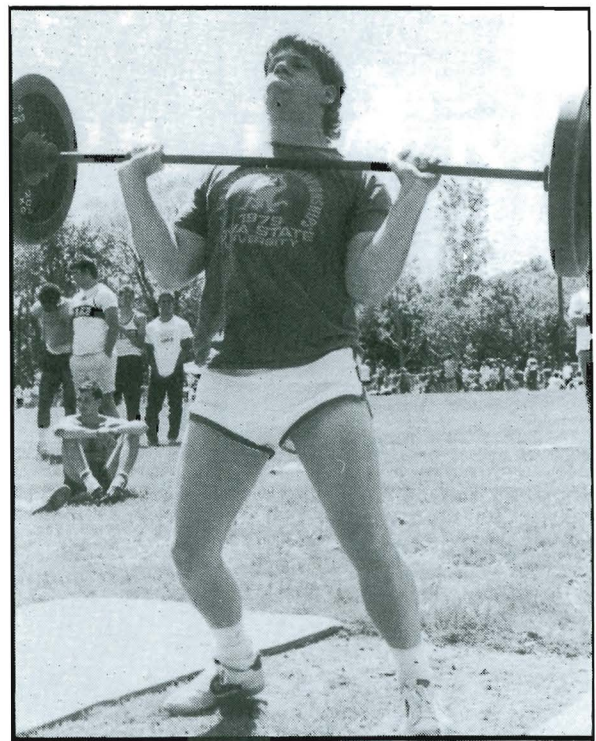
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Bruce Klemen Photo

Chris Schneider of Indian Hills blasting 215 overhead. Chris placed 4th.



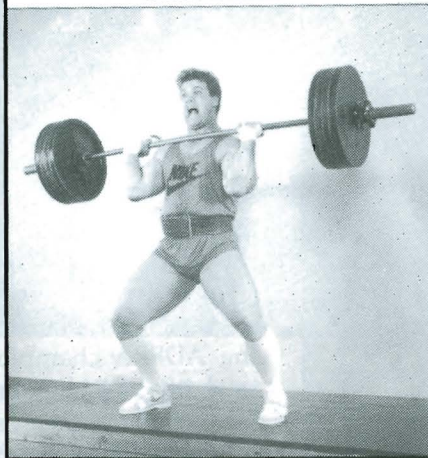
Bruce Klemen Photo

Mike Theuerkauf New Jersey's top shot putter got sixth place in Clean and Jerk.

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