

IRON GAME HISTORY

by Osmo "John" Kiiha

Ken Patera, on the right, was the first American to Clean and Jerk over 500 pounds. He Did it in 1972, at the Senior National Championships.

But, who were the first men to lift 400 or more pounds over their heads?

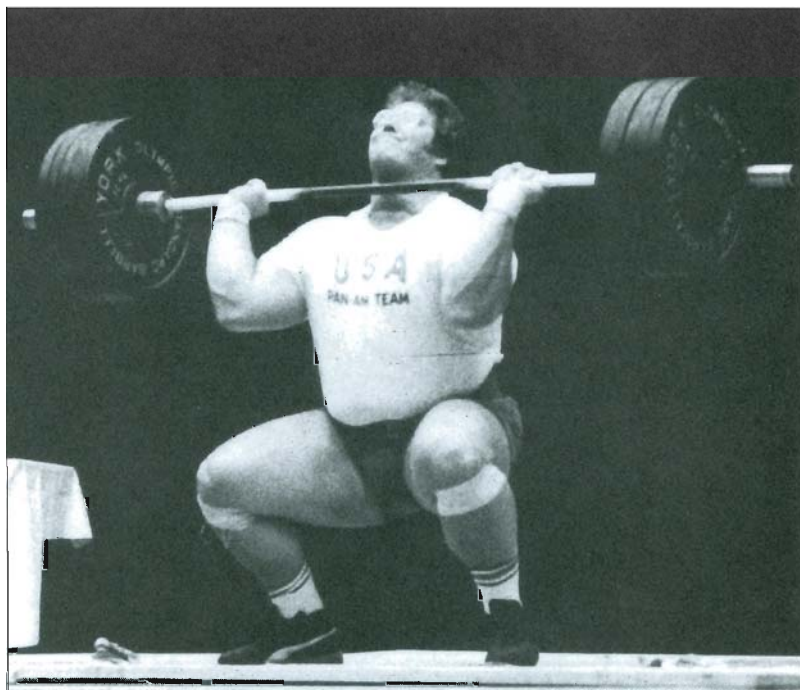
To find that we have to turn the pages of history back many years. The first to accomplish this feat was Karl Swoboda, a giant of a man over 350 lbs. bodyweight. In Vienna, 1910 he did this by doing the Continental and Jerk with 401 3/4 lbs.. The following year in Vienna, Nov. 4, 1911 he broke the record and did 409 lbs.

You may wonder what is a Continental. The barbell is taken to the shoulders in a series of movements and may be rested upon or against any part of the legs and trunk in doing so. A belt may also be worn to support the bell prior to turning it to the shoulders, from whence it shall be jerked to arm's length overhead. It is worthy of note that, in executing his lift of 409 lbs., Swoboda took no less than five movements to get his barbell to the shoulders before jerking it overhead. He also jerked or push pressed 440 lbs. for two reps after the weight was placed on his shoulders by two men in 1912.

The German professional strongman Hermann Goerner did a Continental to the shoulders with 442 lbs. January 10, 1933. No effort was made to jerk the weight. His best official Clean and Jerk was 390 1/4 lbs. made July 11, 1920.

Bill Good (U.S.A.) was probably the first American to Continental 400 lbs. to his shoulders. He did this the summer of 1936. Bill made four successful Continentals to his shoulders with 400 lbs. only to lose the jerks at the last second. His bodyweight was only 185 lbs. Best Clean and Jerk was around 360 lbs. The first man on American soil to Jerk over 400 lbs. over his head was the former German amateur heavyweight champion Josef Manger. He jerked from the shoulders a barbell of 402 1/2 lbs. in New York City on June 25, 1938 on the occasion of the German weightlifting team's visit to America. The bar was listed to his shoulders with the assistance of two other men. I believe Mangers best Clean and Jerk was around 369 1/2 lbs.

Norbert Schemansky, former heavyweight world champion, did a Continental and Jerk with 440 lbs. and a



Bruce Klemens Photo

Continental to the shoulders with 451 lbs., but missed the Jerk, after the competition at the 1954 World Championships in Vienna. His best Clean and Jerk was around 440 lbs., made in the 1960's.

Paul Anderson, former world's strongest man, did a Continental and Jerk with 460 lbs. in the middle 1950's. In training he did 480 lbs. Paul also jerked from the rack 560 lbs. in 1957. His best Clean and Jerk was around 460 lbs., made in training.

The first man to Clean and Jerk over 400 lbs. was Charles Rigoulot (bodyweight 222) of France with 402 1/2 lbs. on February 1, 1929. After eleven attempts he succeeded. This feat was performed on his specially constructed shot loading, spherical ended barbell, over 8 feet in length and in which the handle was exceedingly springy. Unofficially he did 409 lbs. Clean and Jerk. This weight he jerked twice from the shoulders. Although it had been reported that Rigoulot performed unofficially a two hands Clean to the shoulders with 422 lbs., more exact information regarding this lift would appear to be unobtainable. Rigoulot died in Paris on August 22, 1962 following the removal of one of his lungs. He was approaching the age of 60.

The first official over 400 lbs. Clean and Jerk done on a standard Olympic set, was accomplished by the great John Davis, bodyweight 222, at the Senior National Championships in Los Angeles, California, June 16, 1951. He did 402 1/2 lbs. C & J. John Davis was a many time World and Olympic Champion but he never again approached the over 400 lb. Jerk himself. He started the steady climb to the 500 lb. Clean and Jerk, attained by Ken Patera.

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IRON MASTERS OF YESTERYEAR

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Hermann Goerner

Hermann Goerner was born in Haenichen near Leipzig, Germany on April 13, 1891. By 1920 Hermann had become the World's Strongest Amateur Weight Lifter, in the heavy-weight class, by his defeat of Karl Morke, the world's champion. In 1921 Hermann Goerner became a professional strongman. He was probably the strongest man of all time. Some of his lifts haven't been exceeded even today. In a 4-event strength contest (consisting of two hands Curl, one hand Dead Lift, two hands Dead Lift, two hands Clean and Jerk) Goerner would rank near the top even today.

Goerner was capable of 242 1/2 strict two hands curl, no swing, very little back bend, 727 1/2 one hand Dead Lift, 793 3/4 two hands Dead Lift, 390 1/4 two hands Clean and Jerk, 2154 1/2 lb. total. Probably the only person in the world who could approach this total today is Bill Kazmaier, but even he would be hard pressed to beat Goerner's one hand Dead Lift.

Goerner's bodyweight ranged from around 220 lbs. to 290 lbs. during his lifting career. Hermann died in 1956 after a long illness.

Ray Routledge

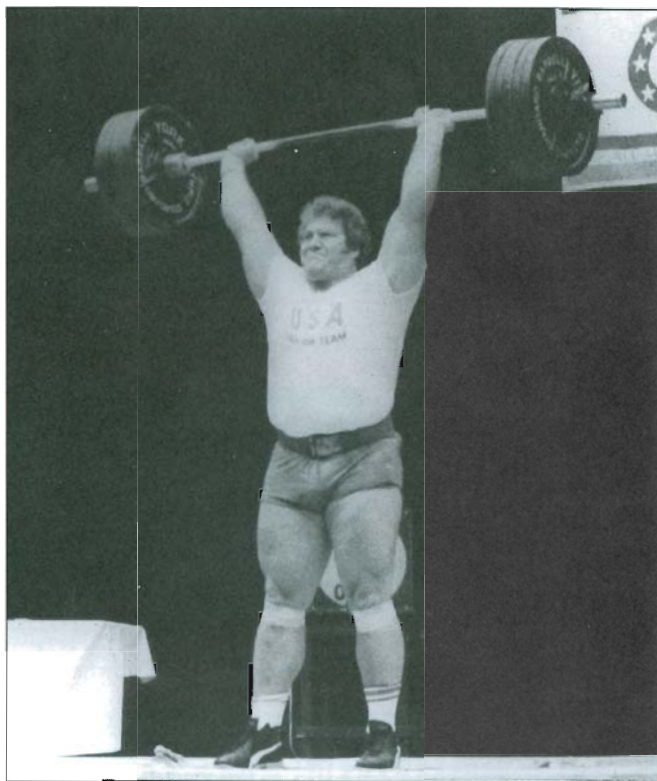
Ray Routledge, 1961 AAU Mr. America and N.A.B.B.A. Mr. Universe, visited me last year. Ray will be 58 years old this year. He is still in great shape and continues to work out three to four times a week. Ray was probably the strongest Mr. America ever. He even defeated Franco Columbu in a ten lift contest. Franco had been hailed as the world's strongest bodybuilder. Ray said he had done close to a 900 lb. Squat when his bodyweight was around 300 lbs. and a well over 500 lb. Bench Press. On the Olympic Lifts Ray did 320 Olympic Press, 280 Snatch, 345 Clean and Jerk at a bodyweight of around 230. In 1958 Ray won the Junior Mr. America.

In 1962 Ray won the European Military Weightlifting Championships in Laon, France and won his height class in the professional Mr. Universe contest in London. He has also Bench Pressed a pair of 205 lb. dumbbells (410 lbs.) for 4 reps. Try that sometime! Truly one of the nice guys of the Iron Game.

THE BENCH PRESS

You'll notice a lot of our BFS High School All-Americans Bench 400 Plus, but who were the first men to accomplish this feat?

Who was the first man to Bench Press 400 lbs.? After much researching of back issues of muscle magazines, I came



Ken Patera, Completing His Historic 501 Clean and Jerk at the 1972 Senior Nationals

Photo by Bruce Klemens

up with three men: Don Arnold, John McWilliams and Doug Hepburn. It seems that all three men hold that distinction.

Don Arnold was probably the first to perform the lift in a manner which would be accepted under today's existing rules. Arnold, a professional wrestler from San Diego, used a shoulder width grip and a very slow movement. He weighed around 230 lbs.

John McWilliams held the heavyweight press record for a time with 408 lbs. There are rumors that he did around 500 lbs. in training years later.

Doug Hepburn was the first to Bench Press 500 lbs. with a two second pause, May 28, 1953. His best Bench was 580 lbs. done with an extreme wide grip and slight bounce at the chest. Doug's best strict Bench with a closer grip and three second pause was 525 lbs. He also did seven reps with 500 lbs.

Who was the oldest man to Bench Press over 400 lbs.? Well, that honor goes to Karl Norberg, who was 74 years old when he made 465 lbs. with a narrow grip and legs held straight out on the bench. Karl also Bench Pressed over 300 lbs. when in his early eighties.

THE FUNDRAISER ON PAGES 52 AND 53 IS BEING DISCONTINUED