

The President's Message

by Vic Boff

Each issue of IGH will include a report from Vic Boff, founder and president of the Association of Oldtime Barbell and Strongmen. He will use this space to communicate with the members of his association and to inform non-members of the good work he and the association do to promote the ideals of barbell training and healthful, drugfree living. We urge anyone interested in honoring the memories and accomplishments of past strength athletes and bodybuilders to join the Association.

On Saturday, October 7, 1989, the Association's seventh annual reunion and achievement awards dinner was held at New York City's prestigious Downtown Athletic Club, home of the Heisman Trophy. Honored were Dr. Pete George, Marvin Eder, Ed Jubinville and Jules Bacon, who, through their ourstanding accomplishments and contributions, have earned a spot in the history of the iron game.

It was a night to remember, as 150 notables and enthusiasts gathered with respect to hear the beautiful tributes to the honored recipients. Rudy Sablo, coach and international weightlifting official, presented the award to Dr. George, one of the greatest weightlifters in history, a man who was a silver medalist at the Olympic Games in 1948 and 1956 and a gold medalist in 1952. Dr. Terry Todd, a University of Texas professor, presented the award to Marvin Eder, long recognized the world over as one of the strongest men ever, pound for pound Jan Todd, also a faculty member at UT and a former world record holder in powerlifting, made the presentation to Ed Jubinville, one of the foremost modern exponents of muscle control, a man who has given lifelong and outstanding support to all areas of our game. Finally, Joe Abbenda, Mr. America of 1962, made the presentation to Jules Bacon, Mr. America of 1943.

With respect, I read the words on each plaque, which summarized the tremendous role each of the honored guests played in the strength sports. The honorees were also presented with a beautiful painting by the artist and illustrator Jim Sanders, whose artistic talent captures the men as they were in their prime.

I should add that I had a very nice surprise when I was honored with a beautiful plaque for what they called my "efforts and contributions" to the Association. The plaque was presented by Iron Mike D'Angelo, Joe Rollino and Johnny Mandel and I really appreciated this kindness.

For entertainment, the enthusiastic crowd was treated to the Guinness Book of Records performance of Joe Ponder and Galen Shinle. Ponder holds and supports Galen from a high

platform with his teeth while Galen—upside down—shoots 10 arrows. The show also featured rare videos of strength, muscle control, posing, handbalancing, and weightlifting; and such people as Joe Ponder, Milo Steinborn, Eugen Sandow, Pere George, and John Grimek were featured. Additional videos were provided by Al Leroux and showed Jules Bacon, Marvin Eder, Ed Jubinville and Otto Arco. Also, Jan Todd presented slides and a lecture about strongwomen from the turn of the century.

At the dinner, Johnny Mandel, who is a member of the President's Council of Physical Fitness and Sports, called for a moment of silence for our past greats. He then opened the reunion by reading salutations from the president of the Downtown Athletic Club, C. Peter Lambos, and from the general manager, Raymond C. Mott.

Once again, our dynamic emcee was Leo Murdock, a man of memories, who reminisced about the game as he introduced the various people on the dais, including Rudy Sablo, Dr. Kimon Voyages (now deceased), Dr. Terry Todd, Jan Todd, Frank Stranahan, Charles A. Smith, Jim Sanders, Dr. Hy Schaeffer, Joe Abbenda, Johnny Mandel and the legend, John Grimek. In the audience were Bruce Page, Slim Farman, Paul Bruno, Joe Rollino, Carl Linich, Al "Tarzan" Bertrand, Al Thomas, Al Leroux, and many others.

During the program, the talented Ted Keppler read from his wonderful booklet, "Things to Think About". The poem he chose was "Winning Against Stress", about how barbell training can help us overcome obstacles. Dr. Terry Todd told us about the forthcoming publication of Iron Game History and explained that what *IGH* needed were suggestions, information and articles. So I urge you to subscribe to *IGH*. It can be a valuable part of the outreach of the Association of Oldtime Barbell and Strongmen and we need to work with the Todds and the University of Texas to make this new publication a success.

Leo Murdock also introduced the new owner of New York's famed Mid-City Gym, Vinny Consalvo. Best wishes to Vinny and best of luck and health to Tom Minichiello—the longtime previous owner—and to his wife, Eleanor, for their future adventures and retirement.

Also, thanks a million for all those spirited phone calls and letters from around the country and the world, expressing best wishes to our guests of honor and to everyone present. From England we heard from David Gentile and from Scotland, Dave Webster. Other letters came from Tommy Kono (Hawaii); Curd Edmunds (Kentucky); Gene Jantzen (Illinois); Dr. Jack Long (Texas); Sam Loprinzi (Oregon); Bob

Delmontique, Glenn Sundby, Bert Goodrich and Dr. Terry Robinson (California); Cliff Sawyer (Mass.); Dr. Tom Temperely (Saudi Arabia); Reg Park (South Africa); and Donne Hale and Barton Horvath (Florida). I could go on and on so please accept my apologies to all those I failed to cite.

I also want to extend my appreciation to the distinguished staff of the DAC for their professional assistance, especially Rudy Riska and Nick Marricco. And to DAC member Johnny Mandel, without whom I couldn't have put this all together. Thanks as well to my lovely wife, Ann, and to Leo Murdock, Dr. Hy Schaeffer, Mike D' Angelo, Joe Rollino, Keith and Angela Rapasarde, Al Leroux, Gordon Press, the Todds and Joe Marino. The Association also wants to express sincere appreciation and special thanks to Mr. Tom Lincir, of the Ivanko Barbell Company, San Pedro, California, for his participation, support and sponsorship of the dinner. Ivanko is one of the world's leading manufacturers of barbells and weight equipment and Tom hasn't forgotten the pioneers who got things rolling.

The following morning, several notables had a breakfast get-together at the DAC and continued to enjoy a feeling of nostalgia as they shared their thoughts about the old days.

So, let's make every attempt to keep on getting together at our annual banquet reunion so that our ideals will not be forgotten and so we can further the evertrue principles of the iron game and genuine strongmanism. We do hope to see you all at our next big show. One final note. If your membership in the Association has lapsed or if you have never joined, send \$15 to the address below. Your membership fee will be used to support the annual dinner and to recognize those who have made valuable contributions to the game.

[Ed. note: Vic Boff and the Association can be contacted at 2218 86th Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11214. If you are interested in acquiring a tape of the 1989 reunion for your VCR, please remit a check or money order for \$25 to Iron Mike D'Angelo, 18 Colon Street, Staten Island, N.Y. 10310. And for reproductions of the Jim Sanders paintings, write to Jim Sanders, 207 Penny Street, Garner, N.C. 27529.]

Association of Oldtime Barbell and Strongmen president Vic Boff (l) and artist Jim Sanders (center) stand with (l-r) 1989 honorees Marvin Eder, Dr. Pete George, Jules Bacon and Ed Jubinville. Honorees were presented original portraits by Sanders as well as large plaques by the Association. Photo courtesy: Vic Boff

