

*The Roark Report*

# The Need for References

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There is no such book. Therefore, you cannot use it to check references about who was on the cover of which muscle magazine when, or which 1949 magazines covered the World Weightlifting Championships. Those questions, along with thousands of others, are not easily referenced.

If you have a large collection of old muscle magazines, you can generally fumble through them to locate and/or verify certain statements which are presented in the modern muscle magazines when they refer to history. If you have no access to such a collection, you can just fumble.

Recently, Larry Scott was quoted in an interview as having been inspired by a 1955 cover photo of George Payne on a copy of *Muscle Builder* magazine. Now, frankly, the name George Payne is new to me—so I assumed George Paine was the coverperson to whom Scott referred; and, not having the book that doesn't exist, I checked my files...

What I learned was that no one named George Payne ever appeared on the cover of *Muscle Builder* magazine in 1955 or any other year, nor on any of the other thousands of covers I have filed. George Paine appeared on the June 1952 *Your Physique*. So who inspired Larry Scott? Jimmy Payne? His only 1955 cover appearance was on May's *Muscle Power*. Now there are many mags not filed in my system, but it can be ascertained that no one named George Payne appeared on the cover of *Muscle Builder*.

So what? So, it is becoming easier for incorrect references to slip into the current muscle literature because there are so few current writers with access to the resources they need to check dusty facts.

In the next issue of *IGH* this space will present a chronology of when certain muscle magazines began publishing, when publication ended, and how many issues constitute a complete collection of each title. The list will be complete for some titles, incomplete for others, and will begin in the late 1800's.

As I begin this process, I am making an unabashed appeal for your help in composing the chronology. If you have knowledge of any newsletter, magazine, regional lifting report etc.—no matter how small its circulation or how brief its printed life—please share that info with me and I will pass it on, with credit, to the readers of *IGH*. Perhaps in this way a main

body of literature can begin to be catalogued, perhaps even collected into one reference source.

Collecting can be confusing. Some examples: If you have issue 1:1 of Weider's former magazine, *Demi-Gods*, you have February 1966 with Frank Hollfeder on the cover. Or, you have the March 1961 issue with Larry Scott on the cover. *Demi-Gods*, apparently, had two runs separated by five years from beginning to beginning. Can you supply partial or complete info on this title? Also, do you know when the following titles began or ended, or how many issues complete a collection of a title?

—Walt Baptiste and his wife published *You*, according to S&H (July 1955, p. 65). *You* was "a very interesting little newspaper" concerning the spiritual and mental as well as the physical.

—*Iron Man* in January 1950 referred to Chester Teegarden's monthly bulletin from the YMCA in Berkeley, CA.

—Irvin Johnson (later known as Rheo H. Blair) published his own news bulletin and it apparently had two publishing runs - one circa the summer of 1952.

—Dick Fowler published an intermountain newsletter of weightlifting around the Salt Lake City area.

—by 1959 Lew Dick and Steve Rapp planned to issue a newsheet. Did they? Have you any copies? And on and on the list can go.

Now, you may be thinking, why not just contact the persons involved, or their relatives? Sounds easy, and in some cases I have tried. Usually I am questioned as to why I would be interested in such remote knowledge, and rather than being flattered that memories are being revived, the family members meet my efforts with distrust.

On the other hand, some contacts have seemed hopeful, only to prove useless. I have received answers ranging from the fact that a warehouse fire destroyed all stock copies of *Muscle Digest*, to two editors who each promised me sets of their former newsletters—one saying it was on his desk as we spoke and he would mail it (he never did)—to an editor who did not know the history of his own magazines, to an editor who "had all those materials" in storage.

Indeed, sometimes the staff at a magazine does not know the history of that magazine. For instance, *Health and Strength*, in most mentions of its beginnings, is usually referred to as having an early 1890's start, usually 1892. But

*H&S* has offered other starting dates through the years. Historian David Chapman has never seen an issue of *H&S* earlier than March 1900 and that is a volume #2 issue. In my own collection, vol 2:9 is December 1900. Not even the British Museum has an issue earlier than 1900. So perhaps when the June 5, 1947 issue of *H&S* refers fondly to the “Old Mag” being published since 1899, that was correct. But two months later, in 1947, *H&S* refers to itself as having been published for 55 years (1892). By 1953 it still mentions 55 years (1898) and by 1962, 65 years of publishing(1898).

More recently, *Muscle Training Illustrated* has continued to mislabel its issues since the April 1985 number, which was #121 but was designated by *MTI* as #122. The error continues to the present. And collectors are aware that *MTI* published nothing between December 1969 and October 1970. Similarly, *Muscle Mug International* from Canada, which will present issue #100 in September 1990, did not publish be-

tween December 1977 and November 1978.

If you have issue 1:3 of *Muscle Builder* take your pick. Each of the following is 1:3—October 1953, May 1958, June 1958, and September 1958. So you see the difficulty in arranging chronologies for the printed pumping pulp. Will you help?

Send me a postcard or letter at P.O. Box J, St. Joseph, IL 61873, listing the publications on which you can supply information. I will reply to let you know if we have the info already or if we need additional info. Let's pool our references and catalog Dave Hall's *The Barbell*, and both *The Strongman* publications, and the *Trevor Bulletin* and the dozens of other less well-known periodicals that have been a part of our sport's history. And please do not assume we have info on a given title. We would rather have redundant info than none.

Thanks for your help, and the sooner you write, the more complete the chronology in the August issue will be.

