

# THE ACROBAT QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

VOL I NO. 3<sup>RD</sup>

FALL EDITION

TUMBLING &  
TRAMPOLINE

ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS

DIVING

SPORTS ACROBATICS

FREE STYLE SKIING

PROFESSIONAL ACROBATICS



## MEET US IN LAS VEGAS!



BOARD PRESIDENT HOBIE BILLINGSLEY, SOCIAL CHAIRPERSON, NELLE FILLIGER AND 'GO FOR IT CLASSIC' DIRECTOR DON SPENCER STAND OUTSIDE THE LAS VEGAS CONVENTION CENTER WHERE THE FIRST W.A.S. CONGRESS WILL BE HELD ON FEBRUARY 7-8-9-10, 1997



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## **PLEASE NOTE!**

**WE NEED ARTICLES AND PICTURES FOR  
OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER DUE IN FEBRUARY!  
CAN YOU HELP US!**





# **GET A LOAD OF THIS!**

**FIRST W.A.S. CONGRESS & GET TOGETHER  
RESCHEDULED FOR LAS VEGAS ON FEB 6-9, 1997!**



When a small group of twenty three people met in Las Vegas, Nevada last March and officially formed the WORLD ACROBATIC SOCIETY, Bil Copp of North Port, Florida volunteered to allow the First W.A.S. Congress to be held at his 'Florida Work Out' gymnastics classic in Naples, Florida between December 27-30 of this year. It was soon learned, however, that this time frame was not suitable for the majority of W.A.S. members. With sincere thanks to Bil Copp for his offer, it was decided to seek another site and time frame for this all important W.A.S. event.

In August of this year, Bob Bollinger received a call from Don Spencer in Las Vegas, Nevada and an offer to hold the First W.A.S. Congress and social get-together in Las Vegas in conjunction with the 'GO FOR IT CLASSIC' scheduled for the Convention Center on February 6,7,8,9 (Thurs, Fri, Sat, Sun) of 1997. In early October, Board President, Hobie Billingsley and Secretary-General, Bob Bollinger traveled to Las Vegas to inspect the site and confer with Don Spencer in regards to arrangements to hold the First W.A.S. Congress at that time and in that city. As a result of the visit, Billingsley, Bollinger and W.A.S. Social Chairman, Nelle Filliger agreed that both the location and the timing were perfect for this all important W.A.S. meeting and get together.

Upon returning home, Billingsley immediately sent out response cards to all W.A.S. Board Members seeking approval to change the W.A.S. Congress from Naples, Florida in December of 1996 to Las Vegas, Nevada in February of 1997. The response cards have now been returned and the Board voted unanimously for Las Vegas.

The Las Vegas meeting and social get-together promises to be an epic event in the world of acrobatics! The 'GO FOR IT CLASSIC' is the largest single gymnastics, trampoline, tumbling and sports acrobatics competition held every year in the United States. Over 1,500 participants are expected to compete in this year's competition. The 'GO FOR IT CLASSIC' has offered W.A.S. a large meeting room at the

Las Vegas Convention Center, a free booth and table from which to sell W.A.S. memberships, W.A.S. T-shirts and buttons and etc. The 'GO FOR IT CLASSIC' will also provide V.I.P. passes for all Board Members and 1/2 price admission tickets to all W.A.S. members for the three day competition (Thurs., Fri, Sat). Sunday is being set aside for a social get together and golf outing for those interested. Vice President Charlie Pond and Board Member Rob Bollinger will be collaborating to arrange a golf-outing on Sunday morning, February 9th. Nelle Filliger is presently investigating the possibility of holding a W.A.S. Banquet at one of the hotels close to the convention center.

This first W.A.S. Congress promises to be a milestone in acrobatics and certainly an all important and vital step in the growth and development of the WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY. Tentatively, here are but a few of the events that are being planned for this get together:

1. Adoption of a Constitution with By-Laws.
2. Election of Board Members to two-year terms.
3. Videos of important acrobatic events.
4. The possibility of some educational seminars.
5. Opportunity to attend the 'Go For It Classic' competition.
6. Informal discussion groups.
7. Golf Outing
8. Get acquainted banquet
9. Optional shows & theater including "Cirque Du Soleil" (Their program changes every year!).
10. A marvelous opportunity to renew old friendships and make new ones!

## **TO ALL W.A.S. MEMBERS!**

*Plan on attending the First W.A.S. Congress at the Las Vegas Convention on February 6-9, 1997! A complete schedule of events will be sent to all W.A.S. members in early January of 1997!*

**PLAN TO BE THERE!**

# 1997 Las Vegas GO FOR IT CLASSIC UPDATE

Congratulations on getting your deposit in and reserving spots in this great event! We are still adding athletes daily but I wanted to get the second round out ASAP so everyone can get their itineraries set sooner than later. We already have over 1300 athletes from over 60 clubs and at least 23 states signed up and ready to go! You will receive two more mailings before the competition weekend, February 6, 7, & 8. The next round will come to you late November or early December and final information will be sent to you in January. We are still looking for sports acro and tumbling entries so if you can refer our meet to others we appreciate your help.

- ♦ The venue will be one of the most spectacular you have ever attended a gymnastic competition in! We will be using a 70,000 sq.ft. section of the Las Vegas Convention Center. The Center is conveniently located just behind the world famous Las Vegas Strip.
- ♦ Our first host hotel is Circus Circus. We are pursuing other locations but we wanted to get this information out now so you can get rooms booked early if you want to. The phone number is (800) 634-3450 and the code is "XGO4IT". The discounted rates are: \$39 & \$69 and for the new tower that is due to be completed in December - \$59 & \$89.
- ♦ The official car reservation number is (800) 634-6779 and the code is the same, "XGO4IT".
- ♦ Our official event travel agency is Resort Express for guaranteed lowest air fares. Call (800) 798-7500 and give them the code: "CLASSIC 9742". If you purchase tickets through this agency and give me your ticket receipts we can get you a 3% rebate!
- ♦ Every gymnast will receive a special wood plaque commemorative of the meet!
- ♦ We will be preselling event T-shirts and admission tickets, including VIP packages. (more information in next round)
- ♦ A tentative schedule is: Women's Artistic > level 8 - Thursday; levels 9, 10, elite - Friday; levels 4, 5, 6, 7 - Thursday eve. and Saturday; **Optional Event Finals - Saturday (early evening)**. Men's Artistic > Friday & Saturday. Acro Sport > Friday & Saturday. Tumbling > Thursday, Friday & Saturday. Rhythmic > 5, 6, 7 - Thursday; 8, 9, 10-Friday & Saturday. We will showcase the best of the best in **Men's, Acro, and Rhythmic during the event finals Saturday**. There is no competition on Sunday so you can use this as a "fun bonus day" and travel day.
- ♦ We are negotiating with USA Rhythmic Gymnastics to hold their national Re-ranking meet in conjunction with our Go For It Classic. Therefore, the top 18 rhythmic gymnasts in the USA may be present at this event!

## Complete Entry Deadline:

December 16, 1996

Meet Director: Don Spencer

(702) 656-8333 or 658-9003, FAX 658-0598





# THE U.S.T.A.

**UNITED STATES TRAMPOLINE & TUMBLING ASSOCIATION**

**AN ENDURING INSTITUTION FOR OVER A QUARTER OF A CENTURY!**

By  
*Patti Lingenfelter*



## HOW IT ALL BEGAN

It was back in the year 1971 when three dedicated and visionary men met in the worker's cafeteria at the Nissen Trampoline Company in Cedar Rapids, Iowa to form the first **UNITED STATES TRAMPOLINE ASSOCIATION**. George Nissen, Bob Bollinger and Ronnie Munn felt that a Trampoline and possibly, a Tumbling association, was needed in the United States to supplement the programs in those sports that were already being offered by the **UNITED STATES AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION**. The three men agreed to contact all of their friends and hold a meeting at the Nissen Factory in March of that year.

Their efforts were successful. On the 22 of March, a total of 18 people showed up at the Nissen factory. Among these were, Jeff Austin, Vern Dietrich, Larry Griswold, Bil Copp, Jerry Clark, Neil Godbey, Deonne Adami, Nelle Jewett (now, Nelle Filliger), Ronnie Munn, Bob Bollinger, George Nissen, Newt Loken and several others. The idea of establishing the U.S.T.A. was proposed and all agreed that such an organization was needed. Vern Dietrich made the proposal that **TUMBLING** be included as an integral part of the organization, and everyone agreed, making the term U.S.T.A. actually mean the **UNITED STATES TRAMPOLINE & TUMBLING ASSOCIATION**.

At that meeting, Bob Bollinger demonstrated the use of his new **DOUBLE MINI-TRAMP** that George had made at the factory. The group also agreed that this new piece of equipment should also become a competitive event as soon as rules and regulations for competition had been established. A Constitution was accepted and ratified and the first President was elected. It was **JEFF AUSTIN** of Elmhurst, Illinois who, as a former University of Illinois gymnast under Charlie Pond had been the first and only man ever to win both the National A.A.U.

Tumbling and Trampoline titles in the same year. Ronnie Munn was chosen as Vice-President, Jack Castle became the Secretary and Bob Bollinger was installed as Technical Committee Chairman.

Under both the U.S.T.A. and the A.A.U., Trampoline and Tumbling competition, as the well as the new Double Mini-Tramp, flourished during the 1970s. One might say that these were the '**Golden Years**' as much transpired that would bring these events into the national and world prominence that they hold today. The U.S.T.A. '**HALL OF FAME**' was established with George Nissen and Larry Griswold both inducted the same year as its first recipients. In subsequent years, other names were added that included, Newt Loken, Jimmy Rozanas, Bob Bollinger, Jeff Hennessey, Ronnie Munn, Jeff Austin, Ted Blake, Barbara Galleher Tonry, Judi Wills Cline and others.

The first **NATIONAL U.S.T.A. AGE-GROUP** competition was held in September of 1972 at Rockford College in Rockford, Illinois and was followed by a **NATIONAL CLINIC** in Cedar Rapids, Iowa soon afterward. In fact, for several years following, many U.S.T.A. Clinics were held in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Rockford, Illinois, Cleveland, Ohio, Springfield, Illinois, and other locations, all in the Midwest. In 1973, the **FIRST WORLD AGE-GROUP CHAMPIONSHIPS** were held at the Picket-Locke Sports Centre in London, England under the direction of Ted Blake. Subsequent World Age-Group Championships were held in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Toronto, Canada, San Francisco, California and Honolulu, Hawaii. These clinics and World Age-Group Championships were mostly financed personally by **GEORGE NISSEN**, the man who had patented the first Trampoline, named the apparatus and devoted his life to making it into a sport. To honor George Nissen and Larry Griswold (who had introduced George to the bouncing apparatus in the 1930s), the "**NISSEN-GRISWOLD CUP**" was established to each year, honor the U.S.T.A.'s most outstanding athlete.

# **THE UNITED STATES TRAMPOLINE & TUMBLING ASSOCIATION**

## **(Continued)**

Although the performance quality of tumbling during the 1970s, was not as high as it is today, the Trampoline and Double Mini-Tramp competition was absolutely outstanding. **ALEXANDRA NICHOLSON**, from Rockford, Illinois and **WAYNE MILLER**, from Lafayette, Louisiana were two of the greatest competitors of all time, both winning back-to-back F.I.T. World Championships in the trampoline event. Another great champion in those days was an honorary U.S.T.A. member from England, named **PAUL LUXON**. Paul was a World F.I.T. Champion and a recipient of the Nissen-Griswold Cup.

The performance quality of U.S.T.A. age-group competitors was equally outstanding, particularly in the Trampoline and Double Mini-Tramp events. Names like Dian Nissen, Randy Ableman, Ken Kovach, Ronnie Merriott, Robbie Bollinger, Joy Unenhoffler, Jill Holembek, Lori Davidson, Denise Seal, Dian Goldsworthy, Blair and Lynn Adami, Mark Peterson, Marilyn Stieg, Chris Eilertson, Stewart Ransom, Bobbi and Shelly Grant and the Kauffman brothers will long be remembered by coaches and competitors alike who were a part of that era. It is interesting to note that many of these great U.S.T.A. age-group competitors are now either coaching or involved in professional show acrobatics.

### **THE U.S.T.A. SINCE 1980**

Unfortunately, due to insurance problems and other commitments, many of the original founders and pioneers of the U.S.T.A. became inactive with the organization at the end of the decade. Names like George Nissen, Ronnie Munn, Newt Loken, Bob Bollinger, Jerry Clark, Neil Godbey, Milton Davis, Jeff Hennessey, Jack Castle, Jeff Austin, Ted Blake, Bil Copp, Deonne Adami, Cindy Kwick and others disappeared from the U.S.T.A. scene to follow other interests and fulfill other commitments.

But, these people left a legacy of excellence and dedication that has endured with the U.S.T.A. until this day. Although, I personally, became involved with the U.S.T.A. during the early 1970s, it has only been during the past 12 years that I have served the organization as its Secretary. Today, we have over 5,000 active members in over 23 States. Our emphasis is on

developmental training at the various skill levels. In 1974, Bob Bollinger, as Technical Committee Chairman for the U.S.T.A., wrote a book called N.A.P.E. (National Ability & Performance Examinations). This book covered developmental programs for trampoline, Tumbling and Double Mini-tramp. Although no longer in use today, N.A.P.E. has served us well as a guideline for today's U.S.T.A. innovations that we have incorporated into today's developmental programs.

### **THE U.S.T.A. TODAY**

Since the N.C.A.A. dropped the trampoline and tumbling events from its competitive gymnastics agenda in 1964, there have been three institutions that have preserved the integrity of these acrobatic sporting events since that time. They are: The Amateur Athletic Union of the United States, the U.S.T.A. and the more recently formed United States Trampoline and Tumbling organization headquartered in Texas. The later organization has the International F.I.T. sanction for international competition. Readers of this article can be rest assured that all three of these organizations will work cooperatively with each other to guarantee that the integrity of trampoline, tumbling and double mini-tramp will be forever preserved.

***Patti Lingenfelter***  
***U.S.T.A. Secretary***



# THE U.S.T.A.....THEN AND NOW!

## PHOTO POTPOURRI



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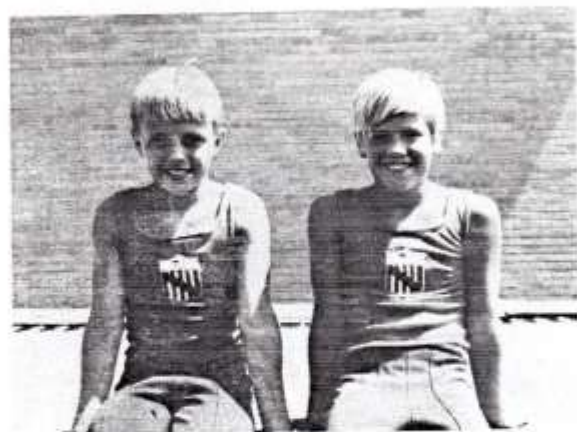
World trampoline champion, Alexandra Nicholson takes time out after prelims, to discuss the U.S.T.A. meet with team mates, Ronnie Merriott, Denise Seal, Cheryl Cooper, Robbie Bollinger and Diane Goldsworthy.



A U.S.T.A. competitor shows beautiful form in a 1974 Double Mini-Tramp competition.



Ann Trudo of the Cardinal Gym Academy in Ames, Iowa won a U.S.T.A. \$500.00 scholarship this year.



Robbie Bollinger and team mate Ronnie Merriott spark plugged the boys age-group competition in the U.S.T.A. during the 'golden years' in the 1970s. Both went on to win international titles and recognition in both trampoline, double mini-tramp and springboard diving!



## PHOTO POTPOURRI

(Continued)



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The U.S.T.A. Executive Board includes:  
(L-R) Sue Olson, Dan Galbraith, Dana Johnson, Patti Lingenfelter & Paula Grigsby.  
Missing was President Debbie Moser and David Pollitte when this picture was taken.



Steve Landon of the Tumbling Tornadoes in Canton, Illinois was the recipient of the 'Nissen-Griswold' cup this year.

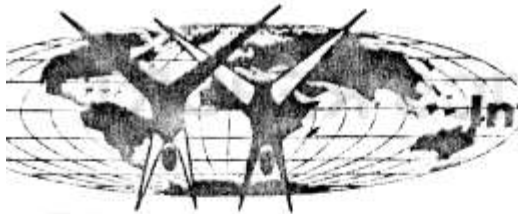


Former U.S.T.A. member, Dr. Lawrence Bestmann, practices 'balanced reading' with one of his many kidnastics students.



Kristia Stroopy of the Oden Gymnastics Academy was a \$500.00 scholarship winner this year!





## International Gymnastics Hall of Fame

120 N. Robinson - East Concourse Oklahoma City, OK 73102  
Tel: 405-235-5600 FAX: 405-235-5678

Few people know it, but the **International Gymnastics Hall of Fame** has come a long way. Geographically and developmentally, **Glenn Sundby**, who began publishing "*International Gymnast*" magazine in California in 1956, always believe the sport deserved a museum to commemorate its past stars.

In 1986 his notion took root, and he began the arduous task of gathering and hunting. He collected memorabilia from past gymnasts and coaches while searching for corporate sponsorship. Although he amassed quite a variety of interesting materials for display, the funds for operation never appeared in the necessary quantity. After 10 years of dedicated work, Sundby realized his 'Hall of Fame' in Oceanside, California had not become what he had hoped, which was an extra stop for tourists visiting Sea World in San Diego and Disneyland in Los Angeles.

Early this year Sundby allowed the Board of Directors to search for a new home for his beloved Hall of Fame. It found one in Oklahoma City, which donated land to Bricktown. The actual building will be erected when funds are secured. Meanwhile, the Concourse of First National Center houses some of the displays, including a smaller replica of "The Gymnast". The original is a 21 foot high sculpture by Richard McDonald that sits outside the Georgia Dome in Atlanta, site of the 1996 Olympic gymnastics competition.

Ironically, Sundby's magazine also moved to Oklahoma when he sold it in 1994 to Paul Ziert, who coached Bart Connor to Olympic Gold in 1984. Now "*International Gymnast*" is published in Norman, next door to the Bart Connor Gymnastics Academy.

It might be a stretch to say that **Frank Bare Sr.** was responsible for the recent success of the U.S. gymnastics team at the 1996 Olympics. Indeed, few of today's gymnasts even know who he is. But his myriad contributions to the sport through the years certainly planted fertile seeds, and now the U.S. is recognized and respected as a world power in gymnastics.

Bare, a Big 10 gymnastics champion in 1952 and 1954 while competing at the University of Illinois, helped found the U.S. Gymnastics Federation in 1963 and served as its President until 1981. During his tenure, Bare started several projects, such as the American Cup, which remains the premier international competition held annually in the U.S., the National Coaches Congress and the Age-Group program. He also served on the Executive Committee of the International Gymnastics Federation from 1972-80.

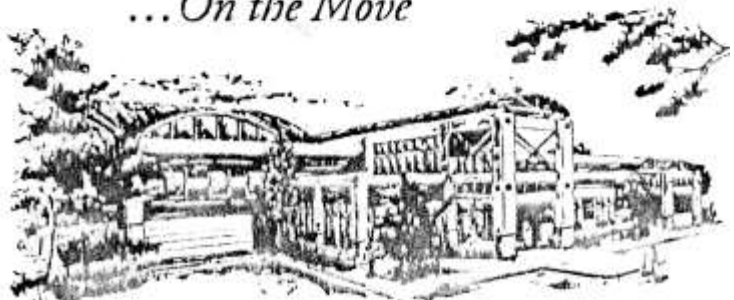
Now retired, Bare and his wife, Lina, have undertaken the task of organizing the relocation of the International Gymnastics Hall of Fame from Oceanside, California to Oklahoma City. As Chairman of the Board of Directors, Bare has been busy preparing the temporary new home for the Hall of Fame in the Concourse of First National Center (120 N. Robinson). Eventually, the Hall of Fame will move to Bricktown. Bare plans to hold the first official induction ceremonies in April 1997. "We'd like to make induction into the Hall of Fame the highest achievement in the sport of gymnastics" Bare said. Considering his background in gymnastics, Bare seems to be the perfect man to put the finishing touches on a long overdue project.

### THERE'S A PLACE RESERVED FOR W.A.S.

The **WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY** plans to hold its first **HALL of FAME** induction no later than the Spring of 1998! We have been assured of a corner in the International Gymnastics Hall of Fame for this endeavor.

*(We wish to thank DWIGHT NORMILE, editor of International Gymnast magazine for this article)*

## International Gymnastics Hall of Fame ... On the Move







# AN OLYMPIC ACROBATICS REPORT

By  
**CHERYL SIEGERSMA**

EDITOR OF "GRASSROOTS GYMNASTICS"



## A SOMI BY ANY OTHER NAME...

The Olympic Games brought attention to the world's most exciting acrobatic sports including: Platform and Springboard Diving, Synchronized Swimming, Rhythmic Gymnastics, and, of course, Artistic Gymnastics. While we are pleased to be reporting the final standings on these athletic activities, we wish to remind our readers that there are numerous acrobatic related sports that are not part of the Olympic festivities.

Acrobatic Waterskiing, Sports Acrobatics, Trampoline and Tumbling, Freestyle Skateboard & In-line, Freestyle Bike, or Skyboarding are just a few that go unreported. We at Grassroots Gymnastics hope to bring some of these to you in the future.

In the mean time, here is our contribution to the Olympic achievements in the acrobatic world. Congratulations to the medalists, and remember that it all started with a sport called Gymnastics.



### PLATFORM DIVING

Men's GOLD - Dmitry Sautin (Russia), SILVER - Jan Hempel (Germany), BRONZE - Xio Hailiang (China). Women's GOLD - Fu Mingxia (China), SILVER - Annika Walker (Germany), BRONZE - Mary Ellen Clark (USA).



### SPRINGBOARD DIVING

Men's GOLD - Xiong Ni (China), SILVER - Yu Zhuocheng (China), BRONZE - Mark Lenzi (USA). Women's GOLD - Fu Mingxia (China), SILVER - Irina Lashko (Russia), BRONZE - Annie Pelletier (Canada).



### RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS

GOLD - Yekaterina Serebryanskaya (Ukraine), SILVER - Ialina Barychina (Russia), BRONZE - Yelena Vitrichenko (Ukraine).



### SYNCHRONIZED SWIMMING

GOLD - Tammy Cleland, Becky Dyroen-Lancer, Heather Pease, Jill Savery, Nathalie Schneyder, Jill Sudduth, Emily Sesueur, Margot Thien, Heather Simmons, Suzannah Bianco. (USA)  
SILVER - Karen Clark, Christine Larsen, Janice Bremner, Sylvie Frechette, Valerie Hould-Marchand, Karen Fonteyne, Kasia Kulesza, Cari Read, Erin Woodley, Lisa Alexander. (Canada)  
BRONZE - Akiko Kawase, Miya Tachibana, Kaori Takahashi, Miho Takeda, Rei Jimbo, Raika Fukui, Miho Kawabe, Riko Nakajima, Junko Tanaka, Mayuko Fujiki. (Japan)



### ARTISTIC GYMNASTICS

Men's ALL-AROUND GOLD - Li Xiaoshuang (China), SILVER - Alexei Nemov (Russia), BRONZE - Vitaly Scherbo (Belarus), FLOOR GOLD - Ioannis Melissanidis (Greece), SILVER - Li Xiaoshuang (China), BRONZE - Alexei Nemov (Russia), HORIZONTAL BAR GOLD - Andreas Wecker (Germany), SILVER - Jair Lynch (USA), BRONZE - Vitaly Scherbo (Belarus), POMMEL HORSE GOLD - Li Donghua (Switzerland), SILVER - Marius Urzica (Romania), BRONZE - Alexei Nemov (Russia), RINGS GOLD - Yuri Chechi (Italy), SILVER - Dan Bărbulescu (Romania) and Szilveszter Csollány (Hungary), VAULT GOLD - Alexei Nemov (Russia), SILVER - Yeo Hong-chul (South Korea), BRONZE - Vitaly Scherbo (Belarus).



Women's ALL-AROUND GOLD - Lilia Podkopayeva (Ukraine), SILVER - Gina Gogean (Romania), BRONZE - Simona Amanar (Romania) and Lavinia Milosovici (Romania), BALANCE BEAM GOLD - Shannon Miller (USA), SILVER - Lilia Podkopayeva (Ukraine), BRONZE - Gina Gogean (Romania), FLOOR EXERCISE GOLD - Lilia Podkopayeva (Ukraine), SILVER - Simona Amanar (Romania), BRONZE - Dominique Dawes (USA), UNEVEN BARS GOLD - Svetlana Chorkina (Russia), SILVER - Amy Chow (USA) and Bi Wenjing (China), VAULT GOLD - Simona Amanar (Romania), SILVER - Mo Huilan (China), BRONZE - Gina Gogean (Romania).

While all of the team standings are important, I must say, as a United States citizen, that I am very proud of the women's Gymnastics Team GOLD! What an exciting first for the U.S., and what an honor to be able to compete on an equal level with the long standing European greats!

Just an editorial note, by the way, it was good to see such support and open affection by all of the women gymnasts during the Olympic competitions. There have been tense, iciness in the past between the female gymnasts, and it seemed that there was an element of respect for one another this time around...at least from the television viewer's perspective. Let's hope that this mutual respect and openness can continue, as it may help to bring even more unity to us as a world community.





# TINY TOT TUMBLING

FOR MEN & WOMEN UP TO SIX YEARS OF AGE!

By  
Lawrence P. Bestmann Ph.D.

## WHEN DO YOU START?

(Home Fun!)

No sense in rushing into a program right away. Wait till you're at least one or one 1/2. At that time, you're still small and light enough for allowing your mother or father to toss you up and catch you. Not only does this feel good (as long as they don't miss), it helps you to develop a little awareness; also not bad exercise for mom and dad. Special note: Mothers usually do not like to toss their children up in the air and catch them. It is not completely understood why. Fathers, on the other hand, do like to do this. So it is likely that dad will be the only one to assist you in becoming air-bourne. Giggle and laugh a lot so dad feels encouraged that you like it. When you get to be around 10, he will have lost interest in tossing you up in the air and catching you. The attention span of parents is not always long. Try to be patient and understanding. They were both small and young once, just like you.

## ON TO MORE DIFFICULT STUFF

1. A little poem to get you started: Reach for the sky, touch the ground. Look at your belly and roll around. Be a ball when you do a forward roll. A little practice and you can do it by yourself. Let mom and dad help you at first. It makes them feel useful. 2. The back roll. You may need your mom or dad to push you over if you get stuck. Hold your hands (all two of them) palms up next to your ears. Squat. Look at your belly, same as before with the forward roll. Doesn't sound or feel right, but it's the only way it works. The principle of the ball states that it will roll best if it's round. Now pull your legs up and roll over. Once you're back on your feet, you can see where you were and are.

## BE A LOG!

(Or a pencil if you don't know what a log is)

3. This is as easy as falling off one, but why would you want to? Although this trick is listed as 3#, it's actually easier than 1# or 2#. You can use 3# as a warm up before you roll over forwards or back. Okay, ready. Lie on your back



or stomach. You have your choice here. Hold all two arms together with the arms straight. Go! Roll over lengthwise like a pencil. Two or three times in succession is enough. Stop before you get dizzy and crash into something hard. Now roll back to where you started from.

## OUCH, THE FLOOR IS HARD!

You can do these movements on the bare floor, but you'll feel better on something softer. A well padded carpet works pretty well. Of course, it would be best if you could persuade your parents to buy a tumbling mat for you. Tell them it will enhance your motor learning and kinesthetic awareness.

## ROCKET LAUNCH

4. By this time, you should have mom and dad fairly well trained. Direct one of them to hold you at the waist. Count to three. On "three" you are going to jump up as high as you can. At the same time that you jump, your assistant (the person holding you at your waist) is supposed to lift you. You will quickly notice that you can jump very, very high if your assistant and you work together. Otherwise, you won't notice much. Instruct your parent to hold on to you to ease your landing.



## HELP THE OLD FOLKS

Heck, mothers and fathers are people too. A little rollin' around will be good for them. Coach them. Encourage them to do these movements too. You can help them with the rolls - forward, back and log. They can do the Rocket Launch with each other. Remember to be patient. Your folks are not nearly as flexible as you are.

## EDITOR'S COMMENTS

The Editor has had both the pleasure and honor of knowing Dr. Lawrence Bestmann for a period of almost 50 years and has followed his career with much interest. He grew up on Chicago's west side during the Great Depression and during the 1940s, attended Lane Tech High-School where he starred on the boy's gymnastics team. In 1949, he attended the University of Illinois, Chicago Branch at Navy Pier and again competed in Men's gymnastics under the expert guidance of Coach Hal Frey. At that time, the U of I at Navy Pier was only a two-year school, and after completing his studies there, he was drafted into the United States Army. He served in Korea for two years. Upon his release from the Army, he enrolled at Florida State University to complete his education. He competed on the Florida State 'Gymkana' gymnastics team under the direction of Dr. Hartley Price. Larry earned Bachelor and Masters Degrees at that institution.

Upon graduation, he emigrated to Puerto Rico where, for several years, he taught and coached men's gymnastics at the University of Puerto Rico. He then returned to the United States and for two years, coached Boy's gymnastics at Hialeah High School in Miami where his teams won local and regional titles. Moving on with his career, he attended the University of Utah where he earned his PhD. Degree in physical education and recreation. After graduating from Utah, he taught physical education, photography and biological sciences at Anaheim High School in Anaheim, California. In 1978, Dr. Bestmann accepted a position with the United States Sports Academy as a faculty member and was sent to Indonesia to develop physical education programs in that country.

In 1988, Dr. Bestmann temporarily left the Sports Academy to direct the physical education program at the King Feisal School in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia for one year. Returning to the United States, he spent three years in Rockford, Illinois where he established his 'Kollege of Kidnastics', an acrobatic school specializing in the teaching of tumbling and other related motor skills to children between ages 2 and 6. He is now back in the employ of the U.S. Sports Academy in Daphne, Alabama and is presently writing a book for Tiny-Tot Tumbling entitled "You Can! You Can!" With such an long and enduring career in acrobatics, Dr. Lawrence Bestmann is uniquely qualified in this vital area of acrobatic education.

## THE 'BESTMANN' METHOD

Dr. Bestmann's unique approach to teaching very young children tumbling and acrobatics is certainly not the only method, but it is surely one of the 'best' methods for the simple reason that it works. Bestmann's approach to Tiny Tot Tumbling and 'Kidnastics', as he calls it, embraces the following principles:

1. Get the children started very early by teaching basic tumbling skills and related motor activities as a game.
2. Employ a process of progression that is consistent with each child's growth pattern and ability level.
3. Get the child's parents totally involved from the very beginning.
4. Always minimize the child's failures and maximize his or her successes.
5. Make the child's safety the cardinal feature of the program.

*For further information concerning the 'Bestmann Method' feel free to write:*

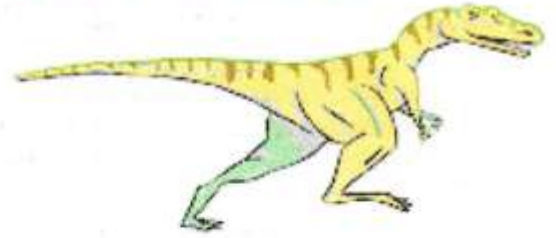
*Dr. Lawrence P. Bestmann  
United States Sports Academy  
No. 1# Academy Drive  
Daphne, Alabama*

# THE 'DINOSAUR' HUNTER!



By  
**Robert F. Bollinger**

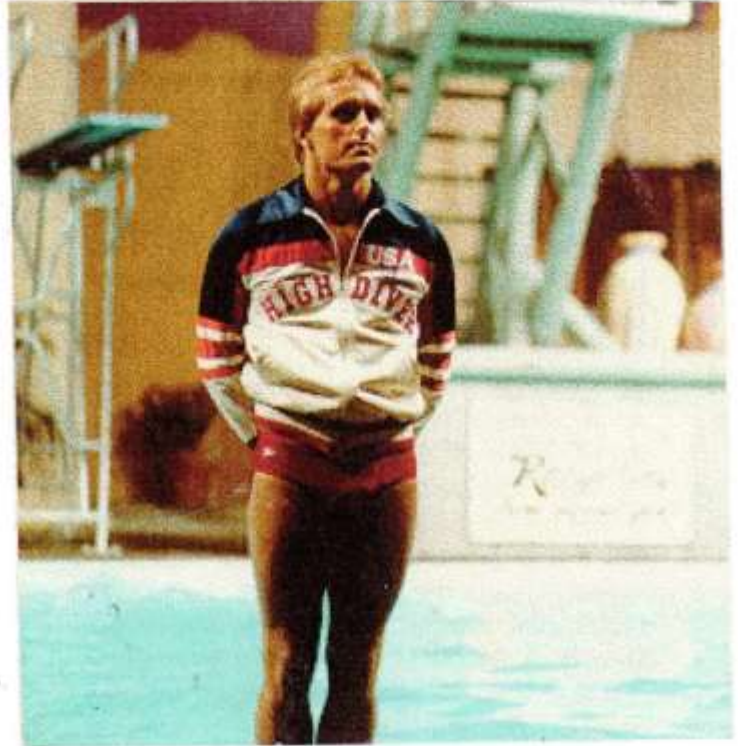
A PROUD FATHER



Apparently, he was simply following an old family tradition. By the time he could stand up, he was gripping the verticle sides of his crib and jumping up and down. At age 2, he could execute swing-time seat drops and a swivel hips on the bed and by age 3, he was executing a 3/4 forward somersault to his back. It seemed like the kid was a 'natural' and his father, who had been an amateur and professional acrobat and diver all his life, was both pleased and encouraged.

At age 6, he began his formal training in trampoline and tumbling at his father's 'Trampoline Town U.S.A.' gym at the Y.W.C.A. in Rockford, Illinois. It was hard to keep the boy off of the trampoline; the kid loved to jump up and down! At age 7, the youngster astounded and scared George Nissen at the Nissen gymnasium in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. While the boy's father and George were discussing business, the lad scaled a 22' climbing rope to the ceiling of the gym and was found there by George and his dad dangling there smiling. At George's urging, the youngster gleefully slid down the rope to the floor safely.

He entered age-group competition in trampoline and diving at age 8 and consistently won first place. He celebrated his 9th birthday in Copenhagen, Denmark at the Tivoli Gardens, won his first National U.S. age-group championship at age 10 and at age 11, became perhaps, the youngest (or, at least, one of the youngest) performers to ever execute a Barani-Out Triffes on the trampoline. He won two gold medals at the First World Age-Group Trampoline & Tumbling Championships in London, England in 1971 and from that time, throughout his high-school years, he won National and International trampoline and double mini-tramp honors at the Nissen Eterna Cup in Switzerland and other places throughout



**ROB BOLLINGER AT SEA WORLD  
IN 1987**

the world including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Hong-Kong, Bahrain, South America, Europe, South Africa and the Soviet Union. He made several trips abroad with George Nissen and Ron Munn and toured with Olga Korbut and the Soviet Women's gymnastic team in the United States with performances at Madison Square Garden and the Chicago Stadium. By the age of 15, Robbie Bollinger had either competed or performed in over 35 foreign countries.

Again following an old family tradition, Rob also competed in springboard diving, winning many regional and national Junior Olympic titles on both the one meter and three meter boards. Trampoline, Double Mini-Tramp and Diving seemed to fit very well together for the young competitor and performer. In 1978, after



## THE 'DINOSAUR HUNTER' (continued)

a year of no high-school competition (Rockford dropped sports in 1977), Rob came from behind in the preliminaries to win the Illinois State High-School Diving Championships, a feat which his father had failed to do by 2 points 30 years before! \*

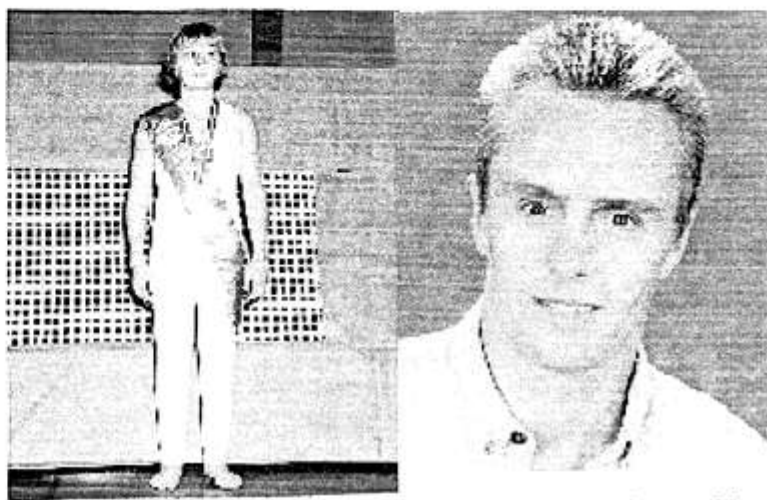
He won a diving scholarship to Indiana University in 1978 and under the expert coaching of Hobie Billingsley, he captured two Big-Ten, Two N.C.A.A. and one National Outdoor Championship in one and three meter diving. In 1982, he placed second to Greg Louganis on the one meter springboard at that year's outdoor nationals. He just missed the Olympics in 1984 when his former team mate and best friend, Ronnie Merriott beat him out in the three-meter competition. Merriott went on to win the Bronze medal at the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles.

With a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Indiana University, Rob went to work for the Sunstrand Corporation in Rockford, Illinois for a year. Soon tiring of that, he sold insurance for awhile, but finally decided that a desk job wasn't for him. He wanted to capitalize on his talents and become a professional acrobat. He and his friend Ron Merriott joined the Maxwell High-Divers at Sea World in Ohio and during this period, Rob met Nathalie Bechard from Canada, a national diving and trampoline champion in her own right. After two years with Maxwell, three years at Cyprus Gardens, Florida and Universal Studios in Orlando, Rob and Nathalie were married. In early 1993, they were both hired by the 'Cirque Du Soleil' and were sent to Las Vegas, Nevada, where they have been to this day.

During their stay at Universal Studios in Orlando, Rob and Nathalie became interested in stunt work and both had an opportunity to perform in many movies and T.V. series. In 1994, Stephen Spielberg cast Nathalie for the major stunt roll in his classic movie, Jurassic Park. Both Rob and Nathalie had the opportunity to get to know Stephen Spielberg in Hawaii in the middle of the hurricane that hit the Island of Kauai during the filming of the movie. For both of them, this was a most unique and fortunate experience.

What are Rob and Nathalie doing now? Both are still with the 'Cirque Du Soleil' and plan to be for a long time. The couple are expecting their first child in January of 1997. Both are on a temporary leave of absence. Nathalie, of course, is busy making preparations for the new arrival. Rob is too, but he also has another obligation to fulfill, an obligation that pleases him greatly. Stephen Spielberg chose Rob to be one of the stunt men in his new movie 'The Lost World' (a sequel to Jurassic Park), which will be released during the summer of 1997.

What part does Rob play in this new movie? He's a dinosaur hunter with a small speaking part. He is chased by dinosaurs, jumps on and off trucks and is knocked into a big puddle of water. Sounds like fun. When asked how he liked 'dinosaur hunting', Rob replied - "It's even more exciting than hunting pheasants with my dad back in Illinois.....plus the fact, that the pay is a lot better! Keep up the good work, Rob! You might land that Trianosaurus Rex yet!



A World Age Group Champion at 10    A 'Dinosaur Hunter' at age 35

### PLEASE NOTE!

*Rob plans to be back performing with the CIRQUE DU SOLEIL in late January, after he completes his stunt work for the Spielberg movie, the 'Lost World.' W.A.S. wishes Rob good luck on the movie and with his expected new arrival.*



# THE WORLD OF COMPETITIVE DIVING

## THE TRIUMPH AND TRAGEDY OF BRUCE HARLAN



By  
HOBIE BILLINGSLEY

\*\*\*\*\*

On June 21, 1959, perched atop a 28' scaffold over a small swimming pool at the Fairfield Yacht Club in Fairfield, Connecticut, I watched my best friend **Bruce Harlan** fall to his death! He was prying himself off of some wooden slats which caused him to drop down the middle of the scaffold and land on his head on the cement below. He was no more than 2 feet away from me when this happened. His death was not immediate for he lived until the next morning without regaining consciousness from massive head injuries. The death of the 1948 Olympic three meter diving champion and also holder of 20 national diving titles was a shock to the entire diving world. For me, it was a great personal tragedy and it took many years for me to get over this terrible accident.

And yet, as I look back over Bruce's amazing life, I realize that his existence was one of great personal triumph. Bruce was from Lansdown, Pennsylvania where his family was involved in the carnival business. When Bruce turned 18, he joined the Navy in 1945 and under the tutelage of R. Jackson Smith, took up competitive diving. Being a great talent, he picked up the sport very quickly and competed in the National A.A.U. Outdoor Championships in Ohio where he placed third behind Norman Spar and Miller Anderson. That Fall he was discharged from the Navy and entered Ohio State University where he competed with Miller, Jack Calhoun, Johnny Simpson, Jim Strong, Joe Marino and me when I returned from the Army Air Corps in 1946. Bruce and I eventually teamed up in school and we competed on both the diving and gymnastics teams with Illinois diver and trampolinist, Bob Bollinger. Bruce and Bob also tumbled with me as cheerleaders for the Ohio State Football team in 1948.

Bruce was a brilliant student at O.S.U. and graduated first in his class, majoring in Health, Physical Education and recreation. He and Miller Anderson were recognized as America's top springboard divers and at the 1948 Olympics in London, England, Bruce captured the gold medal on three-meter springboard and Miller



BRUCE & HOBIE  
in 1957



BRUCE HARLAN

was second. Bruce also captured a silver medal in the 10 meter men's platform event, just behind fellow American, Sammy Lee. Bruce was both a highly competitive and innovative person and he invented many of the complex twisting dives that are still in use today.

Bruce and I used to entertain the audiences at both swimming meets and football games with comedy diving and trampoline acts. Upon graduation and neither of us having any money, Bruce asked if I would go professional with him by barnstorming all over the country and doing a seven act show at country clubs and other institutions. We worked such shows as the Minneapolis Aquacentennial and the Seattle Seafair as well as many private country clubs. These shows were performed before audiences of several thousand people, often at night, much like the Ice Follies now seen on television.



# THE TRIUMPH AND TRAGEDY OF BRUCE HARLAN!

## (Continued)

Before turning professional, Bruce had gotten married to Francis Dillon and since they could have no children, they adopted two, Laura and Freddie. After graduating from Ohio State University, Bruce went on to graduate school at Stanford University and I went to graduate school at the University of Washington in Seattle. We both graduated from these respective institutions at about the same time and when Bruce got a job at Sequoia High School in Redwood City, he got me a teaching position at Leandro High School which was located just across the bay from Bruce.

Our close proximity to each other permitted us to continue with our professional diving and trampoline acts and we worked stage shows in the San Francisco area for some time. These shows did not pay much but it did help to pay the rent. During this time, I also got married. Three years later, Bruce was offered a job as Head diving coach at the University of Michigan, making him the first person to ever be hired strictly as a diving coach at any American college or university. When Bruce and his family moved to Ann Arbor, he got me a job at Allen Park High School in Allen Park, Michigan so that we could continue on with our professional act.

It didn't take Bruce long to challenge the great diving dynasty that had prevailed for so long at Ohio State University. For a period of 26 years, Ohio State had Mike Peppe's grip on the event that had held firmly. Two of Bruce's divers at Michigan made the Olympic Team with Bob Webster winning the gold medal on 10 meter platform in two successful games and Joe Gerlach taking a bronze on the springboard. There is no doubt that Bruce Harlan was initially responsible for winning three consecutive N.C.A.A. championships and establishing the University of Michigan as a premier power in United States collegiate diving. Bruce possessed an outstanding ability to both recruit and successfully coach divers.

In the summer of 1959, Bruce and I took our families to Bermuda for a ten day gig, doing basically the same show that we had done there for the past nine years in a row. However, we had to leave Bermuda early in order to do a show in Fairfield, Connecticut for the Editor of Time Magazine. Since George and Annie

Nissen, along with Frank LaDue and Bob Bollinger had performed there the previous two years, it was thought that they might be able to serve as our replacements. LaDue was in Europe, however and the trio of George, Annie and Bob were only doing a trampoline act with no diving involved. We were able to get Juan Capilla, the 1956 10 meter platform champion and another great gymnast and diver, Eddie Cole to take our places in Bermuda while we left for Fairfield, Connecticut without our original equipment.

When we arrived in Fairfield, we had to improvise our equipment by renting a scaffold but we didn't have adequate framing for the small mini-tramp that was set atop the scaffold for platform diving. Since the pool only had underwater lights and the show was staged entirely in the evening, the yachts docked in their slips shined their spotlights on us as we performed. When we finished the show, everyone headed for the bar inside but Bruce and I planned to take down our equipment before joining the group, which we had always done while performing. Fortunately, no one saw the terrible accident that took Bruce's life....except me!

Not only in my mind, but in the eyes of the many who knew him, the legend of Bruce Harlan will live forever. Not only was he one of America's greatest divers, he was also one of America's greatest guys and he will never be forgotten. His life was filled with triumph and his death was sudden and tragic. The W.A.S. Organization is proud to salute the endearing memory of Bruce Harlan.



M

## SOFT SHOES AND SWIVEL HIPPS!

M



## THE NEWT LOKEN STORY

Since it became America's first 'Land-Grant' college over 150 years ago, the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor has produced many athletic heroes in most all sports. One of its greatest 'heroes' has to be **Dr. Newt Loken**, who for 36 years, coached that Institution's Men's gymnastics teams to 12 Big Ten titles, and 2 N.C.A.A. titles, with over 21 individual Big Ten titles. A total of no less than 21 of Newt's trampolinists won national titles in that event, more than any other educational institution in the world. This record has never been surpassed.

Newt Loken was born in Breckenridge, Minnesota in 1919 and at a very early age showed an interest and talent in gymnastics, cheer-leading and tap dancing. In 1938, Newt entered the University of Minnesota, whose gymnastics team was coached by Dr. Ralph Piper, one of the early pioneers of American gymnastics. While at Minnesota, Newt won two Big Ten All-Around titles, one N.C.A.A. Horizontal Bar and one N.C.A.A. All-Around title. He also served as Captain of both the U of M's gymnastics and cheer-leading teams.

Upon entering the United States Navy in 1943, Newt went to Officer's Candidate School and was assigned as an athletic instructor in the Naval Pre-Flight Training Program in Iowa City. It was there that he and Joe Giallombardo helped Commander Hartley D. Price write the U.S. Naval Training Guide. Newt would be responsible for much of the trampoline portion of the book, but only after he had received a few lessons from the Trampoline master himself, George Nissen.

After his tour of duty with the Navy, Newt would become the Head Men's Gymnastics Coach at the University of Michigan where he would secure a Doctoral degree in 1955. Although Newt was a great gymnastics coach, his favorite piece of apparatus was always the trampoline. Newt's bouncers won 11 N.C.A.A. titles, 13 Big Ten titles, 9 National A.A.U. titles and 6 world titles.



**Dr. Newt Loken**

*(Now retired, often serves as a speaker for the University of Michigan's Alumni Association.)*

The list of Newt's great trampolinists reads like a 'Who's Who?' in a Trampoline Hall of Fame. They include such names as Edsel Buchanan (the first college competitor to perform a trampoline routine in swing-time), Bob Schoendube, Ronnie Munn, Eddie Cole, Dave Jacobs, Gary Erwin, Wayne Miller and George Huntzicker. Dick Kimball, Michigan's great diving coach also studied trampoline under Newt Loken and has used the trampoline extensively in coaching some of the nation's top divers, including his own son, Bruce.

Newt's expertise, however, also extends into many other areas. Always the 'ham' one of Newt's favorite stories was when he attended the 1973 World Trampoline Championships in Stuttgart, Germany with Bil Copp and Bob Bollinger. There at the 'Barth Musik Haus', the trio put on a performance that drew over 300 spectators into the music store. Copp played the piano, Bollinger played his chromatic harmonica, the owner of the music store played the flute and Newt tapped danced! Some of the spectators even danced to the strains of an old German beer drinking song - "Wir kommen Alle in Den Himmel!" Those were the days! W.A.S. takes this opportunity to salute one of its Life-Time Charter members, Dr. Newt Loken!





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MID - DECEMBER 1996 IN SANTA MONICA

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# "THE ONLY THING 'NEW' IN THIS WORLD IS THE HISTORY YOU DON'T KNOW!"



HARRY S. TRUMAN  
*A SPECIAL EDITORIAL*  
By  
BOB BOLLINGER



## WHY HISTORY?

Many of you are probably wondering why an article expounding the values of 'knowing your history' should appear in a Newsletter for acrobats. Since assuming the position as Secretary and Newsletter Editor for the W.A.S. Organization, I have been urged by many of you to write an article on a subject that is not only dear to me, but one which could have some value for all of you. With this in mind and since the 'preservation of history' is clearly part of the W.A.S. Mission Statement, I have chosen the subject of history for this editorial.

I am now sixty-seven years old and look back at a lifetime of involvement with history. Over the decades, it has surrounded and engulfed me. It is, perhaps, the most integral part of my life and I realize that if I didn't have those memories, good and bad, that I would have nothing. I firmly believe that to understand and make sense of one's present is the only way a person can anticipate and plan for the future. But, in order to know where we are and where we're going, we need to know where we've been and how we got where we are!

In the mid 1940s, when I began to feverishly pursue tumbling, trampoline, diving and gymnastics, I realized even then, that these wonderful sports had a history, a history to which I and others could contribute and which, at all costs should be preserved. In the past 40 years, I have seen that history develop and progress and that development and progression has provided both meaning and substance to my life. History is the process of cause and effect. It is both pendular and cyclic. Although history never repeats itself exactly, in some cases, it appears to do so. It is always subject to one's own interpretation and as time progresses, it is always subject to both objective and subjective revisionism.

Take for example, three acrobatic disciplines that historically, have always had much in common; tumbling, trampoline and competitive diving. What major changes have occurred in these disciplines over the past 40 years? Why are trampolinists, tumblers and divers now executing skills and routines that back then, were deemed to be impossible? Who were the competitors and coaches that were responsible for these changes and improvements? What about gymnastics equipment and new competitive events? What caused this evolution to take place? How does it affect all of us today? In what direction is all of this change and evolution heading and what (from a historical standpoint), might be its implications for our future? Perhaps, more importantly, is the question: "What changes and aspects of evolution have been beneficial from a utilitarian standpoint and in what areas has it been detrimental? For example, is 'intense' training in women's all-around gymnastics at the earliest possible age, beneficial or detrimental to the overall health of the individual? Is supreme emphasis on the perfect No. 10 performance worth the effort and sacrifice it so often requires? What about the 'commercialization' of competitive acrobatic disciplines? Should McDonalds, Burger King, Budweiser, Pepsodent, Speedo and a host of other sponsors be as involved with our sports as they are? Can we live and progress without them? Is money everything or is the sheer enjoyment of participation also important? Where is the synthesis? Isn't it vitally needed? We can only understand and hope to answer these questions intelligently if we are imbued with some sound and accurate historical perspectives.

And yet, facts are facts and the acrobat (or anyone, for that matter), who seeks to make sense out of these facts and make them relevant to his or her own existence must recognize them for what they are and utilize them as milestones



# ON THE SUBJECT OF HISTORY

## (Continued)

and guideposts in life's seemingly endless, but rather brief journey. What should history mean to you? It should mean the same thing it does to me. At the risk of being labeled as an anachronism, it should mean everything! It is worth the risk. As an acrobat, young or old, ask yourself the questions, "What is my life all about?" "What was my life all about?" While doing this and grappling for an answer, apply the words of the philosopher George Santayana. "Those who fail to heed the lessons of the past, are bound to repeat them!"

### WE ALL NEED TO BUILD BRIDGES!

Not everyone totally agrees with Santayana's pronouncement. Ted Blake, the brilliant English educator and past President of Nissen Trampoline Ltd. in Brentwood-Essex, England, was often fond of saying - "The only thing we learn from history is that we don't learn from history!" Fellow Britisher, Winston Churchill would probably have agreed. He would have cited the experiences of both World War I and World War II as concrete examples of our failure to learn and profit from history. In 1919, at the Versailles Peace Conference, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson accurately predicted that if we did not learn from the political and diplomatic mistakes leading to World War I, that within twenty years, we would again be embroiled in another World War. Only a strong 'League of Nations' could prevent this. World War I cost 10,000,000 lives. World War II cost 50,000,000 lives. How prophetic were Wilson's words.

Santayana's words, as well as Blakes, have value and significance for us only if we realize that we can profit from history, but we must apply the lessons that history teaches us in the everyday conduct of our affairs. How can we, in the acrobatic world, best do this for both ourselves and those who follow in our footsteps?

We must build 'bridges' that link the experiences of our past with those of the present. We need to know where we failed and why as well as where we succeeded and why. This bridge linking the past to the present must serve as a blueprint for the bridges we build for the future. By realizing that the 'history' we create today, is based in large measure, on the history that was created by others yesterday, in all cases,

traveled by way of a historical bridge. The history that we create today is, indeed, the legacy that we leave for future generations. Few can deny that we owe them something. With our dedication and honest efforts, let's leave future generations of acrobats a sound and secure legacy. Let's build them a bridge for all to follow in the future.

### THE WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY SEEKS TO PRESERVE HISTORY!

One of the fundamental values of the WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY is found in its Mission Statement.

***"A WORLD-WIDE FORUM DESIGNED TO ENHANCE COMMUNICATION, COOPERATION, EDUCATION AND FRIENDSHIP AMONG ALL INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN PRESERVING ACROBATIC HISTORY, PLUS THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE VARIOUS ACROBATIC DISCIPLINES."***

Throughout history, many cultures without a written language have preserved the history of their culture and traditions by word of mouth from generation to generation. Examples here in the United States adequately illustrate this. The Plains Indians (Lakota Sioux, Cheyenne, Commanche, Kiowa, Blackfeet, Crow, Arapaho) did not let their traditions or culture die at the Battle of Wounded Knee! Neither did the other great tribes that once roamed this continent. Stories of the great Chiefs and their exploits survive today!

We acrobats have both a written language and a group of old timers who love to tell stories. Our newsletter also seeks to provide profiles of our 'Great Chiefs!' We, in the W.A.S. Organization do not intend to let our traditions die. As long as there is someone to write or tell an honest story, the history of acrobatics will survive!



## SPORTS ACRO UPDATE

### 1997 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The USA Delegation officials included Tanya Patterson, Head of Delegation, Head Coach, Craig Patterson, IFSA Representatives, Paula Boelsems (Executive Committee), Dick Criley (Chairman of the Technical Committee) and Jola Jones. Judge's Committee and Mixed Pair Judge, David Graham served as the official video photographer. Also attending were A.R. 'Smo' DiDomenica from Los Angeles as possible sponsor for the 1998 World Championships in the United States and Dr. Joe Schabacker, former President of the USSAF and charter member of W.A.S. with his wife, Jerylyn, who were touring Europe for three months and who had stopped to renew old acquaintances and enjoy the sport he loves.

The IFSA honored Konrad and Giescia Zielinski of Warsaw, Poland during the Awards Ceremonies for their outstanding contributions to the Federation. They have both been active in the organization since 1973. Konrad was a champion trampolinist and tumbler and has coached many champions. He has served on the IFSA Technical Committee and is now a member of the Executive Committee. He spent a few years teaching gymnastics and tumbling in France and Sports Acrobatics in China. Gisela has been the mainstay in the drawings for the Table of Difficulties, arbiter and judge and consistently coached many champions from the Club Targowerk in Warsaw. She also accompanied her husband to France and China where she voluntarily taught pair/group skills. Because of her ability to speak several languages (Polish, Russian, English, French and some German), she is constantly asked to serve as translator for the many committees and she gladly helps. The two of them have given many many hours to the Federation's advantage and they certainly deserved this long overdue recognition.

This meet was one of the most closely contested championships ever with the most entries in the history of the sport. Team Champions, Russia just barely captured the Team Title from the highly skilled Chinese Team by the close score of 133 to 132. Ukraine came in 3rd, followed by Bulgaria, Great Britain and Poland in that order. Dropping China for the European Championships Awards and since the scoring system is based on the number of teams entered (European Teams only involved), Belgium tied with Poland for 5th place.



Above: Mixed Pair Champions / China  
Below: Mixed Pair Runner Ups / Bulgaria  
(Photographs by Paula Boelsems)

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In 1997 the World Championships will be held in Manchester, England between September 15-21, 1997. We sure hope that some of you who are members of the **WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY** can not only attend the First W.A.S. Congress in Las Vegas on February 7-10, 1997, but will be able in the future, to become familiar with the amazing discipline of Sports Acrobatics. If you like gymnastics, cheerleading, diving, circus work or acrobatics of any kind, you will especially love this unique sport!



# WORLD SPORTS ACROBATICS UPDATE



By  
**PAULA BOELSEMS**  
W.A.S. VICE-PRESIDENT



A large group of dedicated spectators and supporters from the United States observed the World Championships in Sports Acrobatics recently (September 30th to October 7th) in Reisa, Germany. Most of these enthusiastic supporters were in their second week of Sports Acrobatics activity in Europe as they had come from a minor competition in Switzerland where most all of the U.S. competitors had garnished a medal or two. Among these observing competitors were the 1996 National Mixed Pair Champions, David Arthur and Natalie Baeza, who, unfortunately, were too young to qualify for the World Competition. Other American competitors representing pairs and trios were: Aimee, Broncatello, Kelly Keefe, Lauren Dudujian, Hannah Ures, Adrienne Solo, Laila Haddad, Ashley Maclean, Deanna Kolke, Jenny Graham and Linda Meier, accompanied by coaches David Reiakvam and Sheri Villanueva from California. It was pretty frustrating for them to sit in the stands but what a great learning opportunity it was for them. They showed real enthusiasm and loyalty for their fellow American athletes. The rest of the supporters included parents and friends, Kathy Dupree, USSAF Regional Directors Chairperson, Vivian Piazza Sr., Jennifer Pilske, Nick Orick and Roy Carson.

The official USA Delegation competitors included Megan Pilske (Nevada) Women's Tumbling, Sabina Knight and Krystal Scott. Women's Pairs, Gwain Dupree and Vivian Piazza, Mixed Pairs, Monica Mahasmiti, Kathy Dougherty and Reisi Buell-Size. in Women's Group. Although all of them performed well and were a credit to the USSAF, none of them made the cut-off for finals. In the Individual Exercises and in the Event (overall) placement, the Mixed Pair placed the highest at 9th. They all contributed to the team score placing the U.S.A. Team in 12 place in a field of 28. Not bad when you consider there were only four events contributing to that score.



**Dr. Joe Schabacker and Wife, Jerilyn  
greet the Head of the Chinese Delegation.**

There were a lot of familiar faces from the gymnastic and trampoline communities too besides the officials of the International Federation of Sportsrobatiks. They all seemed to enjoy the hospitality of their German hosts headed by Oberburgermeister, (First Mayor) of Riesa, Dr. Horst Barth and Kurt Becker, President of the German Federation. Seen around at different times among the many were, Hazel Carstensen of Carita House Leotards, Paul Pendergast, Director of Milano International Leotards, Ulrich Spieth and brother owner of Spieth Gymnastic Equipment of Germany. Andre Vallerand, 'Cirque Du Soleil' talent director from Canada, the German Ministry of Sport and Tuomo Sormunen, Venue Supervisor of the 1997 World Games in Finland, President of the International Federation of Sports Acrobatics, Stoll Sotirov were also in attendance. Sotirov was pleased to see the support of so many important people there and he is very proud of the growth that has occurred in the world of Sports Acrobatics. He feels confident that by 1998, the final organizational plans will be approved and the merger of the International Federation of Sports Acrobatics with International Federation of Gymnastics as voted and approved last summer in Atlanta will become a reality.



# TOMORROW YOU CAN WIN!

\*\*\*\*\*

*Today, you're tired and weary and you feel a sense of shame;  
You're also sad and dreary because you lost that game!  
You strived hard to win the gold, you ran a worthy race!  
But, you were shut out in the cold and didn't even place!*

*Now, you're left with several choices of where to go from here—  
And you'll hear despondent voices that will whisper in your ear!  
Some will say..."Why care so much? Be more sublime!"  
"There's other things in life than such, why even waste you time?"*

*Others will say—"Give it up! It's time that you retire!"  
"You no longer hold the victor's cup! You've lost your spit and fire!"  
But, a deeper voice within you will ring out loud and clear...  
And that voice will tell you..."Stick it out and persevere!"*

*So, take fresh heart! Be sure to stay! Your defeat was not in vain!  
The battle you lost yesterday will be tomorrow's gain!  
With courage you will find a way to play the game again.....  
Because tomorrow is another day...and tomorrow you will win!*

*By*  
**ROBERT F. BOLLINGER**  
*April 12, 1980*





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