

# World Acrobatics Society Newsletter

Issue 2

Fall 1997

*Enhancing Communication Between the Friends of Acrobatics Worldwide*

## Twist, Twist... and More Twist

The World Acrobatics Society's first educational symposium, the "Twisting Symposium," was held May 23-25 in Salt Lake City, Utah. On the first day of the symposium we were given a tour of the 386 acre Utah Winter Sports Park—the site of the 2002 Olympic Winter Games. Our attention was directed to the Freestyle Aerial Ski Jumping site, where the ramps reached a height of 90 feet, above a 750,000 gallon pool of water. Situated adjacent to the park lodge, it is very busy during the summer months while skiers work to perfect their multiple twisting multiple somersaults. At poolside, three in-ground trampolines, each with their own acro bungee system, are actively used in training.

In freestyle aerial ski competition, many skiers now perform a triple somersault with four twists. At a speed of approximately 35 mph, the aerial skiers may reach a height of 50 feet, and jump a length of 80 feet before contacting the water. And now, as training techniques and equipment are improving, we're seeing aerial skiers going for the next challenge - a triple somersault with five twists! Awesome to imagine, and even more awesome to behold!

Exploring the ways that aerial acrobats learn and perfect twisting skills was the theme of the WAS Twisting Symposium. Whether they are aerial skiers, divers, wakeboarders, trampolinists, snowboarders, trapeze artists, gymnasts, or any other aerial acrobat, many of the elements of twisting are the same. Recognizing the similarities and exploring the differences held our attention for three days of discussion and activity.

Held at the home of Frank Bare II, Australian Olympic Team aerial ski coach, the symposium included people with experience



640 years of acrobatic sport involvement  
enjoy plenty of food and conversation.

in many acrobatic activities. A total of fourteen of us, representing an accumulated 640 years of acrobatic sport involvement, gathered to share our knowledge and experience in the twisting domain. Of course, this precise figure was determined by a "scientific" survey on the back of a napkin as we enjoyed food, drinks and lively discussion at a Spanish-style restaurant!

The first presenter was the legendary gymnastics and freestyle aerial ski coach, Charlie Pond. Pond presented a teaching technique, called "Look-In Twisting." With the use of a video, which he recently created, he discussed a means of teaching twisting somersaults starting with a simple cartwheel on the trampoline. While in a twisting belt attached to a standard overhead apparatus or an acro bungee system, single and multiple somersaults with one, two and more twists are easily learned. And, most importantly, they are able to be accomplished with little fear, due to the ability to see where you are and where you're going.

Pond's influence on twisting has been remarkable. While winning eleven consecutive Big Ten titles, and four NCAA titles as the men's and women's gymnastics coach at the University of Illinois, he developed a spotting belt that could be effectively used to teach somersaults with twists. The "Pond Twisting Belt," patented in 1950, is still the most effective twisting belt in the world.

At the end of the day, we all



Twisters attentively listen, as Pond explains Look-In Twisting.



Aerial skiing guru, Frank Bare II



## President's Corner

by Hobie Billingsley, WAS President

Dear WAS Members:

As most of you know, we had a great meeting of the minds in Salt Lake City that concerned twisting somersaults. The symposium offered the potential of what WAS has to offer to those who are interested in acrobatics, for it covered a large area and was most stimulating. Now, with that over, the question that has been asked by many is, "What now?" All of us who have joined WAS agree that it can offer a tremendous amount of information concerning acrobatics to those involved in the various acrobatic disciplines. We who have taken part in its growth up to this point, have really enjoyed the new friends and the exchange of information. So, what, how, when, and where do we go from here?

It was found when forming the World Diving Coaches Association, that it grew universally when we decided to have a big convention for coaches and diving enthusiasts. We met for four days and discussed various topics concerning the sport of diving. Believe it or not, the opening remarks made by the president Hanz Sanheifer, of Karlshue, Germany were "well, what are we doing here and what should we talk about?" Sound familiar? Since we all had similar interests in diving, it wasn't difficult to cover various aspects of the sport over the four day period. Above all, that meeting brought the diving coaches in the world close together which resulted in international meets and friendships that still exist and will continue to exist for years to come.

Keeping this in mind, I believe that it is time for us to start communicating with those in acrobatics who reside in other areas of the world. Our goal should be to stage an international conference for all acrobatic enthusiasts where we can meet, show videos, have panel discussions, and have experts from the various sports give lectures and/or presentations.

Two factors are vital for such an idea to materialize - leadership and a sponsor. Through proper leadership, good communication will ensue with persistency and desire. Through sponsorship, money will become available to keep this communication alive. You can make a dream become reality for all of us, by helping in the quest for a sponsor. Please contact me with any ideas you may have.

### MEMBERSHIP ALERT!!!

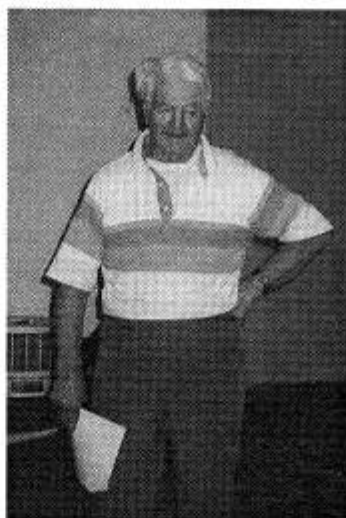
Membership renewal time is here. Within this newsletter is a WAS application form. Please complete the form fully, as some information may need updating in the membership record database.

recognized the importance of what Pond had shared with us. This very effective teaching approach, which he developed 51 years ago, was new to many of us. Pond's response was: "Well, that's because I'm a horse's tail, 'cause I wanted to coach and win and if everybody knew it they might beat the hell out of us. So that was selfish, it was dishonorable, but I did it. But, I sure didn't do it here. It all came out!"

Frank Bare II, who holds a record number of world titles in aerial skiing as an athlete and a coach, gave the next presentation which was entitled "Visual Aspect Twisting." In his presentation, he expanded upon Pond's teaching techniques, specifically addressing aspects of primary concern to aerial skiers. He graphically stated the risks of his sport when he discussed the preparation for landings: "We've had disasters with people trying to bring their feet through and their hip gets heavy and they're toast! And believe me, they're toast!!"

Bare accentuated the visual aspect repeatedly: "I'm a product of Charlie's teaching. The beauty of it that I see right now, and the real applications that work and that transcend all acrobatic sports, is that the student has an awareness and a comfort level by keeping a visual key on what's going on."

In Bare's discussion, the concept of somersault awareness, with which most of us are familiar, was replaced with the concept of apex awareness. Although basically meaning the same, the difference in the use of words evoked new images. Pre-apex, apex (zero point of gravity), and post-apex are words used to define the stages



The guru's guru, Charlie Pond.

of the aerial skier's flight through the air. In addition, when reaching such heights as 60, 70, and 80 feet a critical skill to have developed is vertical point awareness. It's a visual skill, and it shifts from the take-off to the landing, due to the change in the angles.

Bare emphasized developing a transition of learning. "The more levels of transition the more comfort zone you have, the more confidence you get.....It comes back to that very beginning when you take that youth program and say, let's learn a twist. You limit the fear by this 'Look-In Twisting' technique.....I highly recommend that you research it, and just experiment. Take your most advanced athlete and give it a shot. Take your beginner, that doesn't know a thing, and teach him to twist before he does a flip. It'll blow your mind!"

Just like his coach/mentor, Pond, Bare is in the process of developing a new twisting belt. Based on the Pond Twisting Belt, Bare's belt has extensions which lower the center of gravity of the athlete who is buckled into it. It is very applicable to sports such as aerial skiing, snowboarding, wakeboarding, aggressive inline skating - any sports involving equipment that causes the body's center of gravity to change. His present prototype is mounted on a platform at Woodward Extreme Camp, in Woodward, Pennsylvania where it is being actively used.

Hobie Billingsley, President of the World Acrobatics Society, was our next presenter. A former Olympic diving coach, Olympic diving judge, and President of the World Diving Coaches Association,



The Twisters: (back) Jeff Chumas, Craig Peterson, Don Leas, Dick Smith, Charlie Pond, Bruce Erickson, John Wingfield, John Deininger, Matt Chojnacki, (front) Frank Bare II, and Lani Loken-Dahle

tion, Billingsley's contributions to diving and all acrobatic activities have earned him many accolades. Recently, Billingsley began writing a book entitled A Simple and Comprehensive View of Competitive Diving. He shared some of his information, specifically delving into the history and biomechanics of diving. He reminded us that up until 1947, the most difficult twisting maneuver used in diving was the forward one and one-half somersault with one twist in the pike position. Before further progress could be made in twisting somersaults, a greater understanding of the initiation of twist had to be developed. Hobie discussed several of the known methods of initiating twist, and pondered other methods. He talked about velocity, mass, axis of rotation, angular momentum, center of gravity, and resisting force. The result of Billingsley's presentation was a lively debate which produced many questions and answers concerning twisting technique.

On Sunday, while gathered around a trampoline in Bare's backyard, Bare provided us with a detailed discussion of the acro bungee system, and it's uses as "a serious acrobatic teaching tool." Bare demonstrated the ease of making adjustments to the system, depending upon the learning stage of the skill. From beginning level movements to multiple twisting multiple somersaults, he showed how you could create the impact that you want in order to use a safe transition of learning approach.

Bare finished his presentation with a demonstration of "perpetual bouncing." Bare often uses such drills to develop vertical point



Hobie Billingsley demonstrates the initiation of a twist.

awareness in his athletes. Starting in a stationary position in the twisting belt attached to the acro bungee system, he performed the following skills in a perpetual motion with no contact with the trampoline bed between skills: Forward SS (straight), Forward SS (straight), Barani, Back SS (1 twist), Back SS (2 twists), Back SS (1 twist), Back SS (straight), Back SS (2 twists), Back SS (1 twist), Back SS (straight). It was an amazing show of acrobatic awareness!

The remainder of the demonstration of the acro bungee system involved Pond taking Lani Loken-Dahle, step-by-step

"...the student has an awareness and a comfort level by keeping a visual key on what's going on."

through the Look-In Twisting method (sometimes referred to as cartwheel twisting). From a cartwheel, Loken-Dahle progressed quickly to a full twisting somersault, a one and one half twisting somersault and a double twisting somersault—effortlessly!

At the completion of the symposium, we did what we had enjoyed doing many times during the three days—sharing videos of aerial acrobatic skills. These final videos, provided by Matt Chojnacki, World Cup freestyle aerial ski champion, included more than we could ever imagine. We saw films of aerial skiers performing multiple twisting multiple somersaults, including the triple somersault with five twists; a trampolinist performing a front four and three-quarter somersaults, and another trampolinist performing a double somersault with five continuous twists; Olympic diving champion, Phil Boggs, successfully completing the first five and one half somersault from the 10-meter platform; Frank Bare II performing a quadruple somersault with three twists from a ski jump in 1983 (the first and only person to have ever performed this skill!); Tito Gaona performing his famous trapeze act; snowboarders, BMX freestyle bikers, and numerous other athletes performing sensational acrobatic skills. Although most of these skills were attempted successfully, Chojnacki did a fine job of including an array of "bloopers." As the laughter reached a high pitch, we suddenly realized that it was time to close this wonderful gathering of acrobatics enthusiasts. Our "air time" had been spent, and now it was time to depart from the "landing." But, as all of us aerial acrobats know, we can't keep our feet on the ground for very long. The calling will come and we'll soon join together again for even bigger air! \*

-by Lani Loken-Dahle

Further information on the following list of resources can be obtained from Dian Nissen-Ramirez; WAS Secretary; 8895 Towne Centre Drive; Suite 105; San Diego, CA 92122-1508; email dnr0097@aol.com:

1. World Acrobatics Society's Twisting Symposium (Video)
2. Charlie Pond's "Look-In Twisting" (Video)
3. Pond Twisting Belt
4. Bare Acro Bunge System (BAB System)
5. A Simple & Comprehensive View of Competitive Diving

-by Hobie Billingsley



Lani Loken-Dahle, in the acro bungee system, learns the Look-In Twisting technique from Charlie Pond.

## Events Schedule July 29th—Sept. 21st

July 29—Aug. 2	Sports Acrobatics: USSAF National Championships	Houston, TX
Aug. 1	Aggressive Inline Skating: Eastern Regional Amateur Final	Boston, MA
Aug. 1—2	Freestyle Skiing: World Cup	Australia
Aug. 1—3	Aggressive Inline Skating: The East Coast Soul	Boston, MA
Aug. 2	Aggressive Inline Skating: The Legacy Tour	Appleton, WI
Aug. 7—17	Trampoline and Tumbling: World Games	Lahti, Finland
Aug. 9—10	Aggressive Inline Skating: ASA Pro Tour	Munich, Germany
Aug. 12—17	Diving: U.S. Summer National Diving Championships	Dallas, TX
Aug. 13—16	Gymnastics: John Hancock U.S. Championships	Denver, CO
Aug. 14—16	Gymnastics: USA Gymnastics National Congress	Denver, CO
Aug. 15—17	Aggressive Inline Skating: ASA Canadian Amateur Final	Canada
Aug. 20—Sept. 1	Gymnastics: World University Games	Sicily, Italy
Aug. 21—26	Diving: World University Games	Sicily, Italy
Aug. 22—24	Diving: Masters Outdoor Championships	Moultrie, GA
Aug. 23—24	Aggressive Inline Skating: Central Final	Detroit, MI
Aug. 24—27	Gymnastics: USA Gymnastics National Gymfest	Orlando, FL
Aug. 28—31	Gymnastics: Junior Olympic National Team Training Camp	Colorado Springs, CO
Aug. 30—31	Aggressive Inline Skating: ASA Pro Tour	Seal Beach, CA
Aug. 31—Sept. 7	Gymnastics: Artistic World Championships	Lausanne, SUI
Sept. 1—9	Trampoline and Tumbling: FIT/IPTF Pacific Championships and Age Group Competitions	Durban, RSA
Sept. 5—7	Gymnastics: GAT Convention	Austin, TX
Sept. 6—7	<b>WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING —ALL WAS MEMBERS ARE WELCOME</b>	<b>Phoenix, AZ</b>
Sept. 6—7	BMX Freestyle: XXX Sports	Nashville, TN
Sept. 10—14	Diving: Diving World Cup	Mexico City, Mexico
Sept. 11—13	Gymnastics: International Jr. Competition	Yokohama, Japan
Sept. 12	Trampoline and Tumbling: Russian Championships	Voronezh, Russia
Sept. 14—21	Sports Acrobatics: IFSA Competition	Manchester, England

## International Gymnastics Hall of Fame

On June 27th, at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma over 300 invited guests paid tribute to nine world-class gymnasts for their contributions to our beloved sport. The occasion was the Inaugural Induction to the International Gymnastics Hall of Fame.

Toastmaster, Chris Schenkel honored Nadia Comaneci, Bart Conner, Arthur Gander, Jack Gunthard, Bela Karolyi, Olga Korbut, Mary Lou Retton, Leon Stukelj (the oldest living medal winner in gymnastics), and Masao Takemoto. The introduction of each of these famous athletes included a video presentation highlighting their careers. It was a magnificent experience.

The reception, the banquet, the entertainment, and of course the awards ceremony itself will long be remembered by the guests. Among those in attendance were board members of the International Hall of Fame, the Lieutenant Governor of Oklahoma, Mary Fallin, civic and professional leaders of the city and state, and other gymnastics and sports dignitaries.

Water-color paintings of each of the awardees, including one of Glenn Sundby, founder of IGHOFF, were beautifully done by Sam Bailie Jr.. A beautiful lapel pin for each inductee was designed by WAS member Don Robinson. The entire affair was a class act for which a word of thanks is due to Frank Bare Sr., Bart Conner, Paul Ziert and their hard-working committees.

The idea of the International Hall of Fame began a dozen years ago in Oceanside, California by WAS board member Glenn Sundby. He implemented his dream by collecting gymnastics/acrobatics artifact and memorabilia from around the world. The location off the freeway in Oceanside proved not to be a viable one. So, after years of dedication, with financial and personal contributions, Sundby and the IGHOFF board sought an alternative venue for the Hall of Fame. With the leadership of Frank Bare Sr. and his board of directors, and the cooperation of Bart Conner, Paul Ziert and Nadia Comaneci, Oklahoma City was selected. A great choice.

I encourage our readers and friends to visit the International Gymnastics Hall of Fame at 120 N. Robinson - East Concourse in downtown Oklahoma City. Our Administrator, Nancy Nortz, will gladly give you a tour of this fine temporary facility. Groundbreaking will soon take place for a permanent Hall of Fame adjacent to downtown and the Convention Center. Ziert, Bare, and Conner have done an outstanding job in bringing to fruition Glenn's dream. Thanks to them and all who took part. \*

-by Joe Schabacker, Ph.D.



IGHOF attendees: Mary Lou Retton, Masao Takemoto, Leon Stukelj, Jack Gunthard, Mary Fallin, Chris Schenkel, Nadia Comaneci, Bela Karolyi, Frank Bare Sr., Olga Korbut, and Bart Conner.

# High Flying Thrill Show

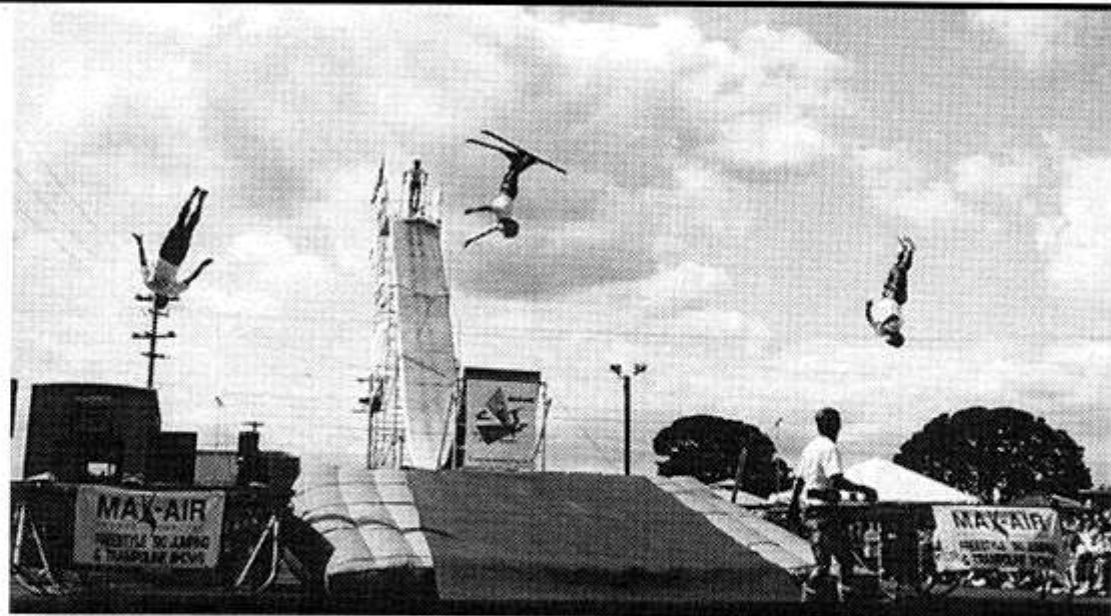
The world's largest portable ski ramp looms before the crowd, stretching upward to where all eyes focus. A smiling man prepares to propel his weight over the lip of the platform. Down he glides, arms stretched forward. Nearing the bottom, the performer extends his arms from his sides. Then, with well practiced timing, he swings his arms back, then down, then up as he takes off from the ramp. These are the last easily observable movements that the captivated crowd can see.

From the point of take off, the performer begins a series of spins and flips. Suddenly, he's not whirling around and he's steadied himself for the landing on the crash pad.

The crowd claps, roars, hoots and whistles, as they should. They have just seen a sample of what MAX-AIR Productions, Inc. has to offer. - and that's just the spring and summer show.

In winter, the group performs on a ski slope, which is easier since the performers can jump higher and farther on a snow ramp than from their artificial ramp. The same tricks are executed from both. However, snow landings entail their own degree of excitement.

As a child, Craig Peterson, president and founder of MAX-AIR Productions, Inc. performed in waterski shows with



his parents. In the winter months, Peterson busied himself by trying to ski faster and jump higher than his friends and family on the slopes around New Jersey, where he grew up.

His acrobatic skills led him to win US freestyle skiing championships and world professional aerial skiing championships. An adept diver and trampolinist, Peterson spent the warmer months performing in diving shows. After a time, his optimism and passion for life sparked an idea that led to one of the best air catching extravaganzas around.

Peterson decided to put his talents and his knowledge of showmanship to use in a new way, as the boss. He and his employees have been catching

air from the USA to Germany, from Brazil to Thailand, from Costa Rica to Canada. The shows stun audiences wherever they go. As the performers strap on their skis, and hurl themselves from the ski ramp or either of two trampolines. The tricks are Olympic level difficulty with professional entertainment quality.

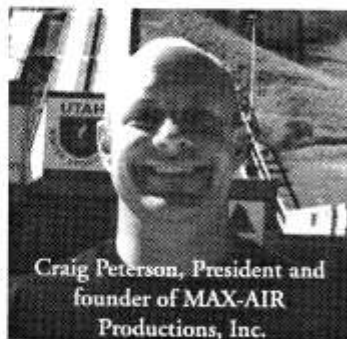
The ceremony announcing the acceptance of Salt Lake City, Utah as the location for the 2002 Winter Olympic Games ranks among the troupe's many prestigious performances. Another one was when they performed during the half time in the third game of the 1997 NBA finals in Utah. It was the seventh time that MAX-AIR has performed before the Jazz's home crowd in Utah, and one of many times they have performed for an NBA Halftime show. In addition, they have performed at several NFL Halftime shows.

Peterson is always looking for new talent. If you have skills in trampoline, aerial skiing, or snowboarding, as well as a sense of adventure and enthusiasm, this may be a professional opportunity for you. Contact Peterson at:

9430 S. Raintree Dr.  
Sandy, Utah 84092  
(801) 944-4849  
email: maxair@aros.net  
Web Site: [www.ddd.com/maxair](http://www.ddd.com/maxair)

This address can also be used for bookings. Peterson has put together a very professional and eye-catching video and information packet. Both items reflect the way he conducts his business: organized, professional, exciting and fun. In the words of the company's slogan: "It's a high-flying, free-styling, record-breaking, ski-jumping, trampolining, nonstop acrobatic thrill show." \*

-by Christopher Harley



The Editor and Asst. Editor would like to thank Craig Peterson for his wonderful enthusiasm and reinforcement while coaching them in aerial ski maneuvers at the Utah Winter Sports Park, in Salt Lake City, Utah. We'll soon be back to fly with you again!

## DID YOU KNOW.....?

### GYMNASTICS

The 1997 NCAA Division I Gymnastics Championships for men were held at the University of Iowa Carver Hawkeye Arena on April 17-19th. Six teams qualified to the NCAA team and individual finals: Penn State, Stanford, Ohio State, Oklahoma, University of Iowa, and California.

The University of California Golden Bears came to the tournament in good health with solid depth on every event. They also had most of the team returning from their second place finish the year before, as well as the addition of two Ukrainians. All of this helped them to capture first place in both the preliminary and final sessions.

With the team scores tight throughout the preliminaries, California managed to build upon a lead gained in the first event. They placed first in this section, with Oklahoma a close second. Iowa capitalized on a few Ohio State mistakes to take third.

The Golden Bears finished the first half of the final three competition with a small lead going into the vault event. The team had been strong but inconsistent in this event all season. This time, however, it would prove to be their best showing all year. In the end, Cal posted a

record setting 233.8 team score.

This was the first national title in gymnastics for California since 1975. The team, coached by Barry Weiner for the past six seasons, was undefeated this year in dual competition. This, and their number two ranking coming into the tournament were major factors in Weiner being named Coach of the Year by the College Coaches Association.

As for the individual standings, Blain Wilson of Ohio State won the All-Around, still rings, and the vault. He was the dominant individual of the competition, and was presented the Nissen Award as the outstanding senior gymnast in the country. Drew Durbin of Ohio State repeated as pommel horse champion. Jeremy Killen won floor, and Marshal Nelson of Nebraska won both horizontal bar and parallel bars. \*

-by Hal Frey

### SKIING/ SNOWBOARDING

The new United States Ski and Snowboarding Association recently named a 21-person board of directors. The board is headed by Jim McCarthy, Chicago, who was named to the position in March.

After more than a year of restructuring from the previous U.S. Skiing, USSA is now the

designated representative for skiing and snowboarding in the USA by the International Ski Federation. And USSA is formally recognized by the U.S. Olympic Committee as the representative for skiing and snowboarding in the Olympics.

USSA is responsible for developing programs which lead aspiring young athletes to the opportunity for athletic success. USSA's six different sport programs, with a total of 14 different men's and women's national teams, make it the most diverse of the more than 40 U.S. Olympic sports organizations. In all, 50% of the Olympic Winter Games events fall under USSA. (<http://cbs.sportsline.com/u/skitem/columns/NewUSSABoard.htm>)

### SNOWBOARDING

Anita Tsuchiya has been named the new director of U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association's snowboard program. A former snowboard competitor and operations manager for the famous Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center in Seattle, Anita will be responsible for development and implementation of all of USSA's snowboard competition and athletic programs.

(<http://cbs.sportsline.com/u/skitem/columns/071197SnowboardDirectorNamed.htm>)

### PROFESSIONAL ACROBATICS

Traveling about the globe in search of performers in Cirque du Soleil are, (pictured left) Benoit Laroche, Line Giasson, and Andre Vallerand. The WAS Newsletter staff caught up with them in Los Angeles. We appreciate the energy and graciousness that these ambassadors of acrobatics shared with us.

### DIVING

U.S. Diving held it's 1997 National Team Training Camp in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, June 12-15. Eighteen divers participated. Senior level divers selection was based on their performance in the 1996 Olympic Trials and Olympic Games, as well as their performance in the most recent national championships. Junior level divers who qualified for the national travel team were also invited to participate.

Eighteen staff members helped to provide an optimum learning environment for the divers, as well as collect scientific information from which the diving community would benefit in the future. Of these staff members, five conducted on-going research projects, three conducted psychological training, two conducted medical evaluations, and the remainder were present as guest coaches/presenters. The camp is a sponsored program of U.S. Diving's Olympic International Committee.

### CHEERLEADING

The American Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Advisors has reorganized in an effort to meet the demand for more localized activities dedicated to safety. Establishing and maintaining safety training and programming for coaches and advisors at the state level is the top priority.

Leading this new initiative will be Robert E. Beach, of Hamden, Conn., recently appointed as the executive director. Beach has been very active in AACCA and is considered one of its top safety certifiers.

The reorganization coincides with the production of the new "AACCA Safety Manual," edited by Jerry George, Ph.D., of Lafayette, La.

(<http://www.aacca.com/press970610.html>)



## DID YOU KNOW.....?

### SPORTS ACROBATICS

The Fifth Junior Sports Acrobatics World Championships was held May 27-June 1 in Honolulu, Hawaii. Hundreds of young athletes, between the ages of 12-18, from 18 countries gathered to compete in this meet. Directed by Dr. Richard Criley, a pioneer in the United States Sports Acrobatics Federation, the meet was a success.

When the original designated country was unable to fulfil its commitment, the U.S. agreed to act as host. With six months to organize, Criley and volunteers organized an outstanding meet that the participants will never forget.

Many of the competitors presented exciting exercises with never before seen skills. The most notable of these were executed by the Chinese Men's Pair, Kesheng Huang and Chenghui Zou. Despite their excellent performance, they finished second behind the

Ukrainian Men's Pair.

Women's Pairs were fascinating to watch, performing power skills thought to be done only by men, just a few years ago. The moves were done with expression and in time with the music. The Russian Women's Pair came out on top with Great Britain in second place.

Tempo moves were skillfully performed in the Men's Junior Competition, with the Russians just edging the Polish group out of first place. The women's groups and the Mixed Pairs were both closely contested.

In Tumbling, a couple of the men performed triple saltos, and the Chinese boy did a triple twisting double salto. Dennis Serdiukov, of Russia, took first in this event, followed by Adamenkov, of Belarus, in second place.

The leading women's tumbler proved to be Kristina Zheleznyak, from the Ukraine. Her most difficult skill was a double back pike after working through a double back straight.

In her twisting pass, she did a full-in, straight out.

The Ukraine and Russia tied for first place in the Team Awards, followed by Great Britain in third place, and China in fourth place.

There was excitement in the air, with much talk of the pending merger of the IFSA and the International Gymnastics Federation, by 1998. This merger was approved in Atlanta last year, by the FIG. An IFSA Congress will be held in Manchester, England during the Senior World Championships in Sports Acrobatics, September 15-21. The final decision on the agreement will be made at that time.

*-by Paula Boelsems*

### SKYDIVING

"How do you breathe in freefall?"

One CAN breathe in freefall—if it were necessary. Due to the high speed of terminal freefall (and much higher speeds in vertical freefall dives), the jumper's body is exposed to O<sub>2</sub> molecules at a much higher rate than someone walking around on the ground. The body is able to absorb the necessary O<sub>2</sub> through the skin. This is why jumpers flap their cheeks in freefall, it presents a larger surface area to the airstream for oxygen osmosis. Once under canopy, the jumper resumes breathing normally.

This is also why jumpers do not jump on cloudy days or when they might risk going through clouds. The moisture in the clouds can condense on their exposed skin surfaces preventing the absorption of the necessary oxygen resulting in suffocation. AADs are recommended for jumpers in climates where weather is a factor.

(from <http://www.afn.org/skydive/faq/faq.html#advice>)



Trevor Meyer won the trials for ESPN's X-Games in the Stuntman Flat Pro

### BMX FREESTYLE

BMX Freestyle is divided into several categories:

#### Mini/Street

Mini refers to mini-ramps, ramps used to do small air variations and various technical tricks. Street is just heading to town, and hitting everything possible (handrails, benches, ledges, curbs, drop-offs, walls, gaps, etc.). Hardcore street riding can be quite dangerous, but a ton of fun. Just watch out for cars!

#### Flatland

Flatland takes a lot of time to learn and requires good balance. It's doing tricks on flat ground like spinning in tight circles, gyrating, scuffing, etc.

#### Vert

Vert riding is by far the most hardcore and extreme kind of freestyle riding. Just learning to ride the halfpipe well is no easy task. Learning tricks and executing them at heights that can reach over twelve feet, is a major accomplishment.

#### Dirt jumping

Dirt jumping doesn't really fall into a category. It's both racing and freestyle. It's probably more freestyle than anything, but racing has several similarities as well. Jumping is the reason several people started racing in the first place; there is nothing quite like it.

(From: <http://www.geocities.com/Colosseum/8527/index.html>)



The Ukrainian Men's Pair demonstrating strength and balance.

## LARRY GRISWOLD

later in life, he would hesitate to repeat.

Griswold's active and athletic background led to great success in his athletic endeavors. At Fort Madison High School in Iowa, Griswold was a champion wrestler. When he enrolled at the University of Iowa, in 1927, he capitalized on his athletic abilities by participating on four varsity athletic teams: Diving, wrestling, track & field (he lettered as a javelin thrower), and gymnastics. Eventually, he decided to concentrate within the gymnastics area; specifically, in tumbling.

After his third year of gymnastics competition at the University of Iowa, Griswold took some time off and traveled eastward, enrolling in dancing and acrobatics classes in New York City. After several months, he returned to the University of Iowa to complete his final year of gymnastics competition. He was selected the men's gymnastics team captain, and won the 1931 Big Ten Tumbling Championship.

But, the excitement of performing lured him back to New York City where he was appointed Acrobatics Coach, at Michael's Acrobatic School. During his five-month stay in New York City, he secured his first vaudeville engagements. He was billed at many New York and Pennsylvania theaters in a comedy adagio trio, combining acrobatic dance and clowning.

Griswold eventually decided to leave the big city behind, recognizing his love for teaching, and his desire to finish his degree and become a teacher of physical education. Although returning to the more predictable life of a university student, nothing could have predicted the vast accomplishments and influence that Griswold would have during the next five years in this small Iowa community.

In 1932 Griswold enrolled in graduate school at the University of Iowa, and was appointed as a graduate teaching assistant. His responsibilities included teaching tap dancing, tumbling, and working with the intramural program. At the time, the Department of Physical Education was headed by E.G. Schroeder, a famous name in athletics, as he was the 1902 National Gymnastics Champion. Putting their talents together, they came up with a unique offering for the university students; a circus, to be performed for the entire community, using the talent found on campus.

The First Annual Iowa Circus took place April 20, 1933. Entitled "Rain or Shine," it included performances in tumbling, bicycle racing, roller hockey, Indian clubs, tap dancing, apparatus, flying rings, tight wire, clowning, teeter board, and many other activities. It was an unequivocal success! As the supervisor, Griswold discovered talented university students and developed their talent into outstanding acts. This was the beginning of a memorable period at the university, and the creation of a legendary individual.

As if his expert production of the Iowa Circus was not enough, Griswold's participation in the longstanding "Dolphin Show," was highly acclaimed. The Dolphin Show was one of the oldest traditions on campus, starting in 1919. This amateur aquatic produc-



"I'd better take off my jacket. I said, I'd better take off my jacket." In doing so, the inebriated individual on top of the 10 foot high diving board, gets first one arm, then the other arm caught in the sleeves of his jacket. His final attempt at yanking an arm free sends him flying down the diving board, over the edge of the hand railing. His knees catch on the railing before he plummets to the ground. Pulling himself up to a stand, the momentum sends him reeling farther down the board. When he comes to rest, leaning against the rail, he thumps his hand over his heart with relief. Laughter resounds from the audience!

He smiles at the crowd. Relaxing, he leans forward onto the other hand rail. It breaks away under his weight, and he tumbles downward, only to find himself hanging from the supports. With an arm wrapped around one pole and his foot wrapped around another, he discovers that his right index finger is caught in a supporting shock cord. In attempting to free his finger, he throws his body into a series of spastic gyrations. The non-stop laughter reaches a deafening pitch. There is no question that this agile performer is very special. He is the "Diving Fool," the greatest acrobatic clown in the world. He is Larry Griswold.

Like so many youngsters of his day, Griswold grew up dreaming about becoming a professional acrobat. When the circuses came to town, he was captivated. He was enthralled with the high trapeze performers, promising himself that he would one day perform in such an act. When his family moved from Arkansas to Chicago, the first step in making his dreams become a reality took place as he participated in tumbling classes at the local YMCA. His strong, compact body became adept at developing specific skills out of typical childhood gyrations. But, it was at his grandparents farm, in Iowa, that he developed his extra special sense of awareness and timing. It was here, during the summers, that he cavorted in the barn. He threw tricks into the hay that, even as a skilled performer



"Just hang"

## THE DIVING FOOL

tion, held in the fieldhouse pool, had many exciting, funny and skilled acts. It became one of the most highly touted amateur productions in the country with Larry's high trapeze act, and his "Drunken Clown" act. Swinging from a trapeze hung 42 feet above the Iowa pool, Griswold performed such tricks as a full-twisting triple somersault, and a quadruple somersault. But it was his Drunken Clown act that really brought the house down. As Griswold explained, the act "is not just a string of tricks....it is the story of an eccentric gentleman who is attempting to conquer the diving board. But the board is vicious to him - it's mean. Finally, he conquers the board at the end." It was this act, which he developed during his years at the university, that he eventually made into his life-time professional career.

During the next five years, Griswold became a hero at the University of Iowa. His Annual Iowa Circus, collected accolades from around the country. It was said to be the foremost collegiate event in the entire nation in the entertainment field. An Iowa newspaper wrote: "The rise of this event to its present status in the brief period since its creation in 1933 is nothing short of phenomenal. Credit

for the success of the big Iowa show must necessarily be given to Larry Griswold who introduced it to the Iowa campus and who nursed it in its infancy and guided it in its youth."

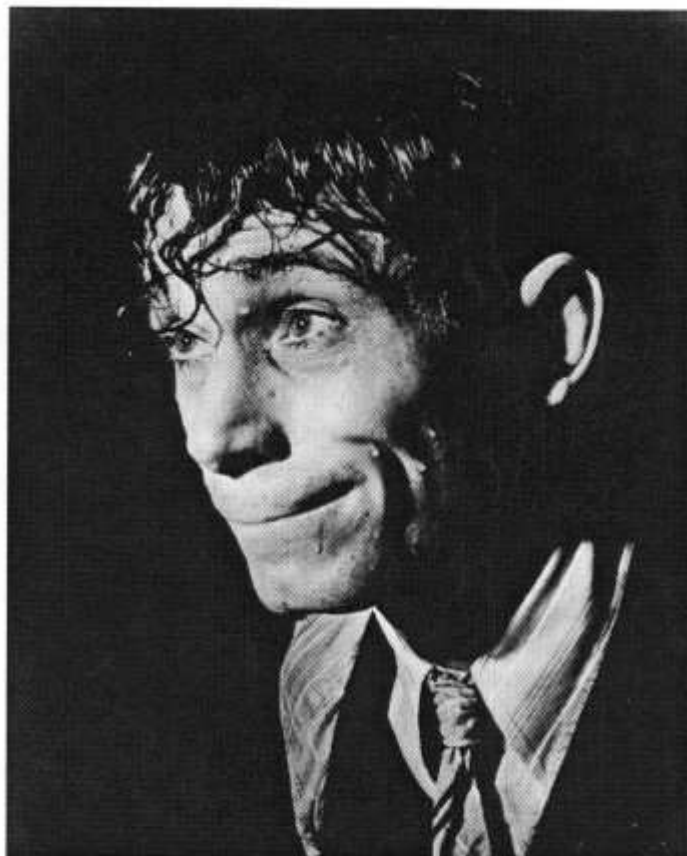
The success of the Dolphin Show continued as well, giving Larry ample opportunity to experiment with his clown act which was to eventually make headlines around the world. Outside of the academic arena, he also found opportunities to try out his entertaining skills. For 17 weeks, during the summer of 1934, Griswold became the lead member of a comedy diving trio that proved to be one of the biggest attractions at the Chicago World's Fair. It was evident from the start that he had the talent for show business.

Step by step, Griswold was developing a level of distinction which was not only being recognized, but was being lauded. The personal side of Griswold's life was shining, too. On April 23, 1934, Griswold married Susanna Wilson in Iowa City, Iowa. In the ensuing years, it was she who provided the love and support that made it possible for

Griswold to achieve eminence.

In 1935, Griswold was officially appointed the assistant gymnastics coach, working with head coach, Albert Baumgartner. Griswold's excellent coaching influence had already been felt by many on the university gymnastics team. Among them, one of his proteges, George Nissen, went on to win the National Intercollegiate Tumbling Championship three years in a row.

During this period of time, Griswold and Nissen made regular jaunts to Bloomington, Illinois where numerous circus people had their winter homes. Among them were the "Flying Wards", some of the finest trapeze performers in the world. Griswold and Nissen worked out with them at the local YMCA, and frequently helped them make or mend their large trapeze nets. Nissen remembers the hours they spent in the basement of the YMCA, threading the long



Larry Griswold 1905-96

cords of the nets, using large javelin-head needles. This experience was one of several that led them to the idea of creating a trampoline.

One day, with the help of the wrestling coach at the University of Iowa, Griswold and Nissen bolted together an angle iron frame. A piece of canvas, in which they had inserted grommets along each side, was then attached to the frame by using springs. This was the first trampoline.

Since Nissen was still training for tumbling, they decided to move the trampoline to a YMCA camp where he was an instructor. There, during his free time, Nissen used it for his tumbling training. Immediately, he found that the children loved it. This was the first realization that the trampoline could be more than a piece of equipment to use when performing, or seriously training. It was something that many others could enjoy.

At the University of Iowa, Griswold continued to teach activity classes through the Physical Education Department. One of the most popular classes on campus was a tap dancing class which he taught. His enthusiasm and teaching skills drew 116 students into the class. Another very popular class was entitled "Stunts." This class included learning skills in trapeze, juggling, rope spinning, tight-wire walking, barrel walking, revolving ladder, tumbling and trampoline (this was the first time that a trampoline class had ever been taught).

Finally, as if Griswold didn't have enough other responsibilities, he worked, under contract, for the newly created "Silver Shadow," the first university night club in the country, located in the Iowa Memorial Union. As the floor show director, he had the task of selecting and coaching entertainers and organizing the program. There was tap dancing, blues singing, swing music, and other suitable nightclub acts. One of the most popular acts was a hand balancing trio consisting of Jack Brown, George Nissen and Xavier



around..."

Leonard, attired in black trunks with gold lacings!

By 1937, Griswold's fine reputation in acrobatics and clowning had spread far. The famous "Water Follies of 1937" made him an offer that he could not resist. As he said, "I decided that instead of running into debt during the winter and crawling out of it via show business during the summer, I'd go into show business with both feet." So, Griswold set off for Chicago, where he joined with other nationally known swimmers, divers and acrobats in presenting a water show "much" larger than the Iowa Dolphin Show. This show was performed in the largest portable pool in the world. At 75 feet long, 25 feet wide and a depth of 6 1/2 feet, it held 80,000 gallons of water.

More aquatic shows offered him work, and within a year he was being billed as the "World's Greatest Comedy Diver." A professional breakthrough came in 1939 when Mr. Billy Rose hired him for twenty-six consecutive weeks performing in Billy Rose's Aquacade at the New York World's Fair. Aquatic greats, Johnny Weissmuller and Eleanor Holm, headlined the show, while famous diving stars included Pete Desjardins, Sam Howard, Jack Sullivan, Charlie Diehl, Alf Phillips, Jim Patterson, Tommy McKee, and, of course Griswold himself.

Billy Rose's Aquacade was so successful that, following the New York World's Fair, it went on a tour of North America. In every city in which they performed, Griswold stole the spotlight - on the diving board, in the water, and even in the audience. Griswold's feigned inebriated state was so convincing that, several times, he almost ended up in the city jail. Planted in the audience in Oklahoma City, he purposely caused a disturbance. Dutiful, but uninformed ushers escorted him outside, where the justice of the peace was waiting to see that the drunk had a proper place to sober up. And, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, his staggering through the crowd led to the bouncers getting rough with him. He was taken to the Milwaukee police station before talking his way back.

In 1941, due to a faulty springboard, Griswold suffered a severe knee injury during a performance and was forced to rest for several months. It was during these months of recovery, that Griswold made history by writing Trampoline Tumbling, the first textbook ever written on the sport of trampoline. Published in 1942, this 120-page manual of instruction, included contributions by many of Griswold's colleagues, including George Nissen. Detailed diagrams showed each phase of the numerous movements that could be performed on the trampoline. At the same time, Griswold and Nissen decided to formalize their small operation of making trampolines. They created the Griswold-Nissen Trampoline & Tumbling Company, and history was made once again.

By 1942, the Griswold's had four children; Sandra, Victor, Mary Jane and Donna. During the summer time, Griswold insisted the whole family travel together. The children remember staying in a big family tent from the 1st of June to the 1st of Sept. They grew up thinking that their family was nothing out of the ordinary. When they got older, and realized that their father was famous, they knew they had grown up in an incredible family.

In 1945, a major change took place in Griswold's professional clown diving act, and therefore his opportunities for entertainment. Due to acute sinusitis, Larry's immersion in water had to be lim-



Leapin' Larry

ited. But Griswold used this hindrance to avail, and created an act even more marketable than it's forerunner. Rather than diving into water, Griswold now became a "dry diving clown." A trampoline, erected at the end of a portable, three-meter, springboard, was camouflaged to resemble a pool of water. Griswold performed his usual comic spills and falls on the springboard, interspersing them with antics on the trampoline. As a dry diving clown, Griswold was no longer dependent upon performing at aquatic shows, but could broaden his base to include a much greater variety of entertainment. Business boomed—he performed at all the leading sport shows from coast to coast. He performed in Shrine Circuses and Police Circuses. He performed at corporate shows for Phillips Petroleum, Continental Steel, Hiram Walker & Sons, Ford Motor, and United Steelworkers. He performed in the famous Hippodrome of 1954, a traveling show patterned after the massive productions staged in the old Hippodrome in New York City during the first part of the century. And to top it off, he became a television star. He performed on the Ken Murray Show, the James Melton Show, the Frank Sinatra Show, the Jackie Gleason Show, and the Ed Sullivan Show.

At the age of 50, Griswold had become known as a top draw in the entertainment industry. Working an average of 44 weeks of the year, he was a smash hit wherever he performed. Not only did he draw a greater crowd response than any other performer, but he drew a greater entertainer's response. An Iowa newspaper wrote: "Other entertainers come out from their dressing rooms to watch Larry Griswold's act. That's a rare show business tribute. It stamps a performer as an entertainer's entertainer."

Many people are close to retirement at this point in their lives. But Griswold felt that he had many more years of performing in him. He once remarked, "I'm afraid I'll fall off the board before I climb off. I've been thinking of retirement for seven years, but I never seem to get around to it. I love this life too much."

In 1958, a new stage opened up for Griswold—the international stage. He was one of the stars of "Pardon My French," an exciting Parisian Revue. Unsurpassed in the variety theatre anywhere in the world, it featured some of the world's greatest comedians, a leading lady direct from Paris, ten top variety acts and, "thirty

of the world's most beautiful girls in twenty-one glittering scenes," wrote a New Zealand newspaper. But it was Larry, billed as "The Clown Prince of the Diving Board," who left the audience breathless.

The international circuit was big and spectacular. No money was spared to put on the most lavish of shows. There was Le Theatre De L'Etoile, the Blackpool Opera House, Royal Albert Hall, the Alhambra Theatre in Glasgow, Le Moulin Rouge, and the Mikado, in Tokyo. There was London, performing for the Queen of England. There was Monte Carlo, performing for Prince Ranier. "Comedy of the lofty, noble, philosophic sort of which only great clowns are capable," is how a Glasgow newspaper described Griswold's act.

The discovery of the foreign market, its long engagements and lucrative pay, dismissed any thought of retirement for Griswold. He had spent years traveling and performing one-night stands. He had worked long and hard to develop his act to be seen and heard, meaning that he put as much emphasis on the gab as on the acrobatics. Neither the sight nor the language barrier deterred people from enjoying his performance. It was once reported that even a blind man in the corner was applauding after Griswold's third "fish dive." Griswold had found that he could be just as entertaining without being as energetic and without doing as much strenuous work as he had once done. He was funnier, yet exerting himself less. His act had become richer to audiences. With maturity, he had become a master of timing and humor. As Newt Loken, one of Griswold's friends and colleagues, says: "Larry Griswold's sense of timing and comedy while he performed on his unique trampoline and diving rigging was truly superb."

At the age of 59, Griswold was ready for some well-deserved golden time. A four and one-half year contract with the Folies Bergere in Paris, highlighted this period. Now that his children were grown, his wife, Sue, was able to be by his side, enjoying a rich and resplendent Parisian lifestyle. Still in excellent shape, his wiry, well-developed 140 pounds had seen more than their share of injury. Yet always the entertainer, Griswold continued to unfold a variety of whirlwind gyrations, acrobatic stunts and comic turns.

In Feb. 1969, Griswold departed the Parisian scene and returned to the United States. Although he was 63 years old, he was still intent on performing. So, it was back to the more rugged entertainment life which he had left years earlier, touring the country and entertaining people at popular sport shows.

In 1973, Griswold performed his act at Shea Stadium in Chicago. Gravel on the stage caused him to lose his footing, and he hit his head on one of the diving board supports. Unbeknownst to him, he had suffered a serious injury. The next day, while practicing his routine in his back yard, he lost consciousness and fell from the trampoline. Rushed to the hospital, the diagnosis was clear. Griswold had suffered a subdural hematoma. There would be no more entertaining for "The Greatest Acrobatic Clown in the World."

Griswold felt a tremendous loss. Performing was his life. Each time he walked on stage he actually became the Diving Fool. Like other great entertain-

ers, he was totally engrossed in the moment when performing. As George Nissen said, "Griswold lived the act. He was one of the great performers of our day. When performing in front of an audience, he was so intense that he was almost oblivious to reality. Sometimes, he didn't even realize that he was hurt." Now, without the act, Griswold's life was empty.

Griswold knew that at some point in his life he would retire. In preparation he trained several people who performed his act under contract. They included Bob Parry (1947-58), Willy Keough (1955-75), Don Dunfield (1975-87), and Don Zazadny (1983-present). But, when Griswold's career ended so abruptly, the training of Dunfield took on a special purpose. It gave Griswold an opportunity to feel alive again. Still enmeshed in the character of the Diving Fool, he lived through Dunfield's performances.

Dunfield traveled internationally, performing the act for 13 years. He kept Griswold well informed, sending him newspaper articles regularly. This helped quench Griswold's thirst for entertaining. Nothing could replace doing it himself, but at least Griswold knew that his famous act would survive, and he could share in the excitement and glory of it.

In 1982, the Clown Prince of the Diving Board was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Two years later, he underwent heart bypass surgery. Then, in Dec. 1986, yet another blow struck. Griswold suffered a stroke severe enough to make it impossible for him to live at home. From 1986 until his death on Aug. 24, 1996, Griswold lived in a nursing home, visited frequently by family and friends.

Griswold was proud of his contributions to gymnastics, which were many. He helped create the first trampoline; he wrote the first textbook on trampoline; he co-founded the first trampoline company; he was one of the first to be inducted into the Trampoline Hall of Fame; he was inducted into the Diving Hall of Fame; the list goes on and on. But, Griswold preferred to be remembered for his one-liners and hilarious routines. "As I got older, I wondered why people kept hiring me," he said. "It wasn't because I was a gymnast, or an acrobat—even a funny acrobat. It was because I was a comedian."

WAS is very pleased to pay tribute to this great comedian; a hero to his immediate family, and a true legend to his acrobatics family.

\* -by Lani Loken-Dahle



Larry and Sue Griswold

he's the oldest man I know, but he's just my age. he's the only grown-up who has time when everyone else is too busy. he's the only baby sitter who can break the "bed by eight" rule. he is brave — he once gave us ice cream and peanuts ten minutes before Mom served Sunday dinner. his love transcends long hair and sandals and dirty jeans. When I win I tell everyone; when I lose, I tell him. I love him!

-by Mary Jane Griswold

The author would like to express a special thanks to the Griswold Family for providing her with all the family's scrapbooks, in which most of the information for this article was found.

## There's Magic in the Air

Over 1,200 participants, ranging in age from seven to 56 years old, competed for national and international titles at Disney's Wide World of Sports Complex, in Orlando, Florida. From June 4-11, USA Trampoline & Tumbling hosted the International Federation of Trampoline & Tumbling World Cup, the USATT Senior & Junior National Championships, and the USATT Jr. Olympic National Invitational.

The competition was excellent. It demonstrated the depth of talent attained by U.S. athletes, young and old. While al-



Ryan Weston displaying his perfect form.

ready recognized for its international success at the age-group level, the US is now becoming a strong contender in all events at the elite level.

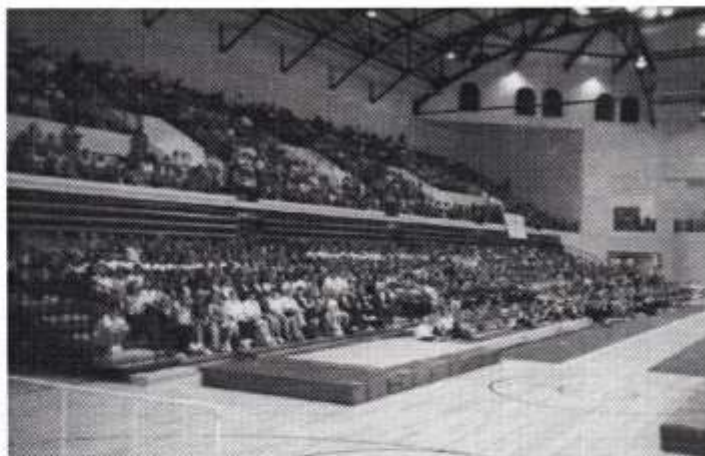
In the FIT Tumbling World Cup, Chrystel Robert from France took the gold medal in the women's competition. In the men's competition, the United States' Rayshine Harris (present World Champion) took first place. Competing against representatives from Australia, Canada, France, Poland, Portugal, South Africa and the US, Rayshine demonstrated his superior level tumbling skills. His final and winning pass included a double backward somersault

with two twists (straight position), and concluded with a double backward somersault with three twists (straight position)!

In the Senior National Championships, gold medal performances were turned in by the following contestants: Ryan Weston (Men's Trampoline), Kimberly Sans (Women's Trampoline), Ryan Weston and Brian Beech (Men's Synchronized Trampoline), Courtney Smith and Kim Poline (Women's Synchronized Trampoline), Rayshine Harris (Men's Tumbling), Amanda Lentz (Women's Tumbling), Ryan Weston (Men's Double Mini), and Jennifer Sans (Women's Double Mini). Jennifer Parilla, another one of the United States' top trampolinists, was sidelined by an ankle injury. Although unable to compete in this meet, she will be ready to represent the USA at the World Games in Finland, Aug. 7-17. There was also an exhibition performance by Sue Challis (Great Britain), one of the most beautiful bouncers of all times.

For the first time, Masters competition was held in trampoline. The timing for the introduction of this event was very appropriate, as this year celebrates the 50th year of national trampoline competition. To compete in Masters you must be 30 years of age or over. There are four levels of competition. Levels A and B require one 10-skill compulsory routine. Levels C and D require one 10-skill voluntary routine. A total of six participants competed in this first Masters competition. Based on the fun, spirit and camaraderie demonstrated during this event, Masters trampoline is sure to grow quickly.

Many people contributed to making this meet a true success. The task of managing over 1,200 competitors, a record number for a USATT National Championships, was challenging indeed. Add to that the multitude of competitions that took place, and



1,200 USATT National Championships participants fill the Fieldhouse.

you have a task that seems daunting. But, the energy and experience of the USATT administrative staff prevailed, and the meet was a fine demonstration of skillful organization, and respectful involvement with all participants, parents and friends. Ann Sims (Executive Director) and Tim Schlosser (Head of Marketing & Promotion) deserve praise, along with their enthusiastic staff. In addition, the presence of Paul Parella (President) and Bil Copp (Master of Ceremonies), contributed to the stylish presentation of the competition.

For complete competition results, contact USATT; PO Box 306; Brownfield, Texas 79316; (806) 637-8670; website: [www.geocities.com/colosseum/9196](http://www.geocities.com/colosseum/9196)

### The Disney Sports Complex The Disney World Sports



The Masters: Larry Gleason, Ron Smith, Donald Lee, Celeste Rekieta, Paul Armour, and Rick Lane (front)

Complex was, unquestionably, a wonderful place to stage "There's Magic in the Air!", the theme of the USATT's national and international competition. The complex is situated on 200 acres with 9 venues, including the state of the art Fieldhouse. The foundation was set for a meet done in style. As Bonnie Davidson, the recipient of this year's USATT Lifetime Member Award, so aptly stated in reference to the facility and the competition, "It gave the competitors a sense of dignity that they deserved."

### Air-Time at Disney World

Disney's Wide World of Sports Complex in Orlando, Florida was the setting for some exciting aerial acrobatic competitions. The Aggressive Skater's Association Pro Tour/ ESPN Extreme Games Trials were held here, May 6-8. The picturesque



Aggressive inline skaters get a feel for the street course before competing.

fieldhouse, with 34,000 square feet of competition space, was the sight of constant, nearly chaotic, movement as the aggressive inline skaters, skateboarders and BMX freestylers performed their aerial maneuvers over and off ramps and in half pipes. The air was saturated with excitement as these athletes jumped, turned, twisted, balanced, slid, and somersaulted to the sound of hard rock music!

A month later, the fieldhouse projected a different aura—one more disciplined and controlled, yet none the less as vibrant and thrilling as during the previous event. In place of the ramps and half pipes were trampolines, double mini-tramps, and tumbling runways, and the athletes that go with them.

In a 2-month period, Disney hosted six major aerial acrobatic competitions (the Jr. Olympic

Women's Gymnastics Championships, the ASA Pro Tour/ESPN Extreme Games Trials, the Jr. Olympic Men's Gymnastics Championships, the USA Trampoline & Tumbling Championships, the AAU Gymnastics Age Group National Championships, and the U.S. Trampoline & Tumbling Association/AAU National Championships. Perhaps, sooner than we think, we may be ready for an exciting integration of these aerial acrobatic activities. Envision a trampoline next to a half pipe; a tumbling runway alongside ramps; and an aerial ski ramp with an airbag for landing adjacent to a high bar. Most importantly, envision the participants and coaches sharing the joy and excitement that comes with catching air. Now that's Magic!!! \*

-by Lani Loken-Dahle



Competitors warm up for the half pipe competition in the field house.

## Events Schedule Sept. 20th—Jan. 24th '98

Sept. 20—22	Trampoline and Tumbling: Georgian National Championships	Tbilisi, Georgia
Sept. 25—Oct. 1	Gymnastics: Junior Pacific Alliance Championships	Colorado Springs, CO
Oct. 5	Gymnastics: USA vs. Germany Jr. Dual meet	Colorado Springs, CO
Oct. 11—13	Aggressive Inline Skating: ASA Pro Tour Championships	Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Oct. 11—13	Aggressive Inline Skating: ASA North American Amateur	Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Oct. 18	Trampoline and Tumbling SSC Cup	Berlin, Germany
Oct. 20—21	Gymnastics: FIG Symposium—Development of Junior Talent for Artistic and Rhythmic Gymnastics	Berlin, Germany
Oct. 20—26	Trampoline and Tumbling: 15th European Championships	Eindhoven, NED
Nov. 8—9	BMX Freestyle: Stone Edge	Daytona Beach, FL
Nov. 13—16	Diving World Junior Championships	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Nov. 15	Trampoline and Tumbling: 3rd World Cup Final	Dessau, Germany
Dec. 5—7	Freestyle Skiing: World Cup Competition	Tignes, France
Dec. 12	Freestyle Skiing: World Cup Competition	Kirchberg, Austria
Dec. 17	Freestyle Skiing: World Cup Competition	Piancazallo, Italy
Dec. 18—20	Trampoline and Tumbling: 2nd Eurocup of Paris	Villepinte, France
Dec. 19—20	Freestyle Skiing: World Cup Competition	La Plagne, France
...1998...		
Jan. 8—18	Diving: World Aquatic Championships	Perth, Australia
Jan. 24	Gymnastics: Reese's Gymnastics Cup	TBD

### Attention:

There will be a WAS Board of Directors meeting in Phoenix, Arizona on Saturday, September 6. All WAS members are encouraged to attend. Contact Joe Schabacker for details. (602) 786-6184



**Christopher  
Harley**

**Bil Copp**



*In an effort to help WAS members stay abreast of new information which will play a role in the achievement of the goals of WAS, all issues of the newsletter will include:*

- 1) A book or video review by WAS Education Director, Bil Copp.
- 2) A discussion about computers, and the means of accessing information and communicating with WAS members by WAS Newsletter Assistant Editor, Christopher Harley.

## **-VIDEO REVIEW- BOARDING SCHOOL #1 & #2**

- Hyperlite Inc.

Produced by Eddie Roberts

Directed by Tony Klarich

This pair of half hour videos is intended to teach wakeboarders basic through advanced skills in this exciting new sport.

For these productions, Hyperlite assembled a team of experts including World Champion "Clean" Dean Lavelle, Andy Lazarus, Jeff Herr, Shaun Murray and Chet Raley to demonstrate proper progressions, terminology and safety rules.

Basic carving to advanced tricks like flips and the Mobius are shown along with how the experts do them. It's obvious that practical learning tips given are the result of experience in snowboarding, surfing and water skiing as well as direct practice on a wakeboard.

Not everyone in BOARDING SCHOOL #1 is a world-class wakeboarder. This video is particularly interesting and encouraging as it includes demonstrations of basic skills by a young beginner as well as veteran water ski legend George Blair.

Safety rules regarding the wearing of wet suits and life vests and proper bindings come early on but tips on warmups and using a non-stretch rope appear later in the video, perhaps a little out of order.

This reviewer would also liked to have seen perhaps something more about proper safe landing of the various tricks. A brief sequence of wipeouts is VERY entertaining leaving the audience wanting more.

BOARDING SCHOOL #2 has more high-level skills. The performances are truly spectacular, the videography is impressive. Again, the relationship between wakeboarding and it's kindred sports are shown. Proper tips and progressions are presented in a logical, easy to understand style.

One aspect of the sport that isn't addressed are the rules of competition. Perhaps Hyperlite intends to include this in a separate production.

Overall, these are fine videos. Production quality is very good, and content is exciting. There is some repetition between the two videos, but anyone watching them will certainly learn more than enough to get started in this sport.

As one who is a wakeboarding novice, I felt that I learned a great deal from watching BOARDING SCHOOL #1 & #2. I can't wait to try my first cuts.\*

-by Bil Copp

## **What is Email?**

Email is a communications tool; like a fax machine, telephone, radio, or set of cans with a string attaching them. There

are problems, as with any technology, but it is the best thing out there for fast, complete communication. However, as is always the case in new technology, there are a few different kinds of email out there.

I just lied. There is only one kind of email, the type sent from computer to computer. What I mean is, there are a few different ways of doing this. The importance of this is that you will need to know what is available in order to make an informed decision.

First, a little basic vocabulary and information. To use email you will need access to a computer. You can buy one, use one at your office, or borrow time on a friend's computer. If you have affiliation with a school you can use its computer lab, or go to your local library. If you are buying one, I urge you to shop around and ask every question that comes into your head. Pretending to understand when you are confused could be very costly. As for the other methods, it should be fairly straight forward what approach to take, and what program to use, since that choice is not up to you, but rather what the equipment you have can handle.

Email is possible because of servers. A server is like a post office, it sends mail out and stores mail delivered to it in special places called accounts. To use email, you will need an account. That means you need to contact a server and get one. You can access this account from any computer with a modem (the device the computer uses to make phone calls and send information with). Good servers will have local phone calls you can make with your computer so that you don't pay long distance phone charges. You can go to a local computer store or library, and ask about literature on the best servers. If you have affiliation with a school or large business, you can simply inquire at the proper department as to what

they offer, and how to access them. Remember, ask questions.

One important thing should be mentioned. When you are all set up, and you begin sending messages and receiving them through your server to your computer, you should know that they are not secure. Just as a phone call can be monitored, so can email. Also, since the servers store the information being sent, they have to keep back up records for many months; the reason being, if the system shuts down for whatever cause, they can re-boot and not lose anything. This helps you, but it also means that your email is being stored someplace for many months. Nobody can read it, legally (except law enforcement agencies with probable cause), but not everyone is honest. Basically, I'm saying don't use email to convey sensitive information.

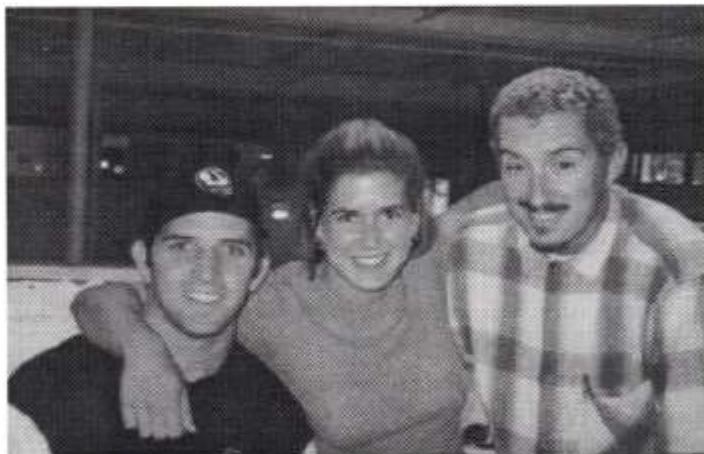
As for the uses of email, there are three main ones. You can send mail, receive mail, or access the internet (World Wide Web). When sending mail, you can send just text, text and images, text and sound, sound and images, etc. The same is possible with receiving email. However, you will need the required software programs to have all of these capabilities. Most people just send text. In the case of the internet, it is possible to access web pages using email, and vice versa, but only the textual information will be conveyed. The amazing graphics and easy point and click aspects of real web browser software will not be available.

To conclude, I stress the importance of getting out there and asking your own questions and finding your own answers. Computers are about learning and communicating effectively. As everyone knows, the best way to accomplish this is not to be told what to say and think, but to find out for one's self and speak up when questions are presented.\*

-by Christopher Harley

### Steve Black Get's More Air Time

WAS member, Steve Black, has caught even more "air time" with NIKE. After just one year as NIKE's Developmental Coordinator for Aggressive In-Line Skates, Black has been promoted to the position of Snowboard Developer. This position entails full responsibility for the development of NIKE's snowboards and bindings. Black will continue working on a variety of mechanical testing projects, as he has done this past year. We congratulate Black, and applaud his expertise in diverse acrobatic activities.



### WWA Has New Executive Director

Congratulations to Scott Roberts who was recently appointed the Executive Director for the World Wakeboarding Association.

He is pictured above with Heather Lee (center), Managing Editor of Wakeboarding Magazine, and Seth Olsen (right), Art Director of Wakeboarding Magazine.

### From One Extreme to Another

Scott Mineo, former outstanding BMX Freestyler, is taking his "extreme" act to the next step. Recently hired as the BMX Park Coordinator for the Washington Bike Center, Mineo will

be using his expertise in the development and promotion of a 65 acre BMX Park in Manassas, Virginia. The park will include a BMX & Mountain Bike Track, a Velodrome Track, an Inline Skate Track, a Skate/Hockey Field, a 35,000 square foot Indoor Ramp facility and many other areas for entertainment, service, sales, etc. We look forward to the completion of this park, and wish Scott the best.

### Jenkins Makes a Splash in *Men's Health*

The August '97 issue of *Men's Health* magazine contains some expert diving advice from Ronn

Jenkins, former Olympic diving officials coordinator and head diving coach at West Chester University in Pennsylvania. He offers a breakdown on how to perform the one dive that will make people notice you at the pool. It contains no twists or flips, and anyone can do it with practice.

What is it? Why, it's the ever classic can opener. For Jenkins' full explanation for perfect execution, pick up a copy of the magazine.

### Leas Inducted Into Clarion Hall of Fame

Don Leas, member of the WAS Board of Directors, was recently inducted into the 1997 Clarion Sports Hall of Fame.



Don had a 24-year diving coaching career at Clarion University in Pennsylvania, where he is an associate professor in the Health and Physical Education Department.

Leas (pictured below) continues to be active in diving on an international scale. He was in charge of the 1996 Olympic Diving competition in Atlanta, Georgia, and has been International Chairman of Diving for the World University Games since 1981.



### Three USATT Championship Medals for WAS Member

John Smith, WAS member and former Diving Coach at the University of Maryland, won two first place medals, and one fifth place ribbon in the USA Trampoline & Tumbling National Championships at the Disney World Sport Complex in Orlando, Florida. Competing in three events in the 18 & Over Division, John placed first in Double Mini-Trampoline, first in Synchronized Trampoline, and fifth in Individual Trampoline.

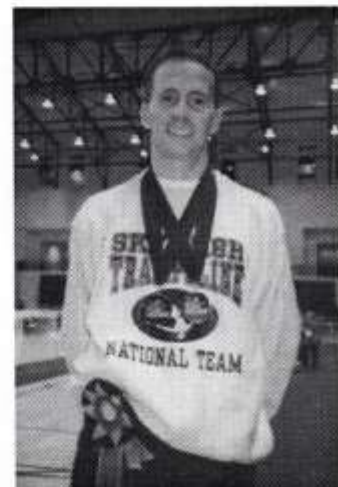
On the right is a photo of him wearing his two gold medals.

### Big Air Down Under

Frank Bare II, Australian Olympic Aerial Ski Coach and WAS member, has been selected as Australia's Ski Coach of the Year by it's national governing body. Frank has produced tremendous results in his brief one and one-half years of coaching Australia's team.

He's pictured above with his pupils (from left to right: Kirstie Marshall, Bare, Jonathan Sweet, and Jacquie Cooper).

Marshall won the gold medal in the World Championships held in Japan, and finished second in the World Cup Grand Prix, placing in five World Cup events. Cooper finished second and third in World Cup events, and Sweet, performing his quadruple twisting triple somersault, turned in solid performances.



## Letters to the Editor

The staff of the WAS newsletter thank everyone who, by written or spoken comment, offered feedback on the newsletter. The constructive tips were well received. The advice was taken to heart, and we hope the improvements to the newsletter are evident. Keep the comments coming, and we'll keep improving. (A special thanks to Dave Shatkowski, editor of *Inside USA Diving*, for his extensive review.)

Excerpts from some letters we received:

Paula Boelsems writes:

Congrats on the newsletter - It's a job well done!

H. Edsel Buchanan writes:

CONGRATULATIONS on your first issue of the WAS Newsletter. It is an excellent issue. I commend you and those who worked with you.

John Deinenger writes:

Last week I got your World Acrobatics Society Newsletter. Congratulations on a fine production! The form looks very good (layout, text, pics, calendars). And the content was excellent too! Such beautiful variety! And all those people still going so strong!

Patti Lingenfelter writes:

I just received the WAS Newsletter and I thoroughly enjoyed reading it. It was very informative - you did an excellent job.

Dan Millman writes:

Congratulations - a stellar issue!

Joe Schabacker writes:

Congratulations on your first WAS Newsletter - we enjoyed it. Keep up the dedicated labor of love.

After three drafts, the W.A.S. Constitution and By-Laws have been submitted to the Board of Directors for review. The final draft will be presented to the members for approval at the next annual meeting. Respectfully submitted by  
**A.B. Frederick,  
and J. Schabacker**

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*The World Acrobatics Society Newsletter is published quarterly in winter, spring, summer and fall. It is the official publication of the World Acrobatics Society (WAS); c/o Dian Nissen-Ramirez, Secretary; 5155-D Renaissance Ave.; San Diego, CA 92122; (619) 558-0495(o); (619) 558-0097(fax). All members of W.A.S. receive the Newsletter as a membership benefit. All editorial and advertising material, or questions, should be directed to:*

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