

WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Vol. 3 Issue 4

Fall 1998

Enhancing Communication Between the Friends of Acrobatics Worldwide

NEWS FLASH!

***IT IS NOW FINAL - TRAMPOLINE WILL BE AN OFFICIAL MEDAL EVENT IN THE
2000 OLYMPICS!***



7 time World Tumbling Champion, Steve Elliott, and 10 time World Trampoline and Tumbling Champion, Judy Wills Cline, take part in the historic USA vote!

In October, the International Federation of Trampoline (FIT) voted to dissolve and merge with the International Federation of Gymnastics (FIG). This was the final step in the process for trampoline to become an Olympic event.

On November 7, USA Trampoline & Tumbling (USATT) voted to dissolve and merge with USA Gymnastics (USAG) - the final step for the United States to become eligible to send athletes to the Olympic Trials for trampoline.

The World Acrobatics Society pays tribute to all the people whose efforts have paved the way towards the international success of trampoline. The "yellow brick road" has reached it's destination -

the Olympic Games!



USA Trampoline & Tumbling's Executive Director, Ann Sims, and National Coaching Coordinator, Tim Schlosser, are all smiles following the vote.



Joining together to celebrate the historic vote of USA Trampoline & Tumbling are (lf. to rt): Ron Froehlich, President of the International Trampoline Federation; Bob Colarossi, Executive Director of USA Gymnastics; Ann Sims, Executive Director of USA Trampoline & Tumbling; and Paul Parilla, President of USA Trampoline & Tumbling

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

-by Don Leas
World Acrobatics Society
President



World Acrobatics Society Members:

Welcome to the many new members who have recently joined our society and who are now reading their first newsletter. Thank you to those members who have renewed their annual membership or have become Life Members.

It is with sadness that I note the passing of Fletcher Gilders on September 1, 1998. You will find elsewhere in this newsletter a tribute to this marvelous acrobat. We give our sincere condolences to Fletcher's wife, his children and grandchildren, and to his sister and Olympic diver Barbara Dudeck.

Congratulations to the sport of Trampoline as it takes its most significant step toward becoming an Olympic event. The final ratification of the merger between FIG and FIT was finalized at the FIT Congress in Sydney on October 6th. Beginning on January 1, 1999, the FIT sports of Trampoline, Tumbling, and Double Mini-Trampoline will be part of FIG. Bruno Grandi, FIG President, stated that "The FIG is happy to welcome Trampoline, Tumbling and Double Mini-Trampoline in the Gymnastics family. Those three sports are indeed gymnastics sports just as our other disciplines Artistic Gymnastics, Rhythmic Gymnastics, Sports Aerobics and General Gymnastics. All our gymnasts train on the Trampoline - and Trampoline athletes need Gymnastics as a basic training. The merger is natural and strengthens the family of Gymnastics worldwide."

I have always felt these sports belonged together. As a trampolinist, tumbler, and all-around gymnast on the Michigan State University Gymnastics Team and as assistant coach at Southern Illinois University and the University of Illinois when they were together in the NCAA and AAU, I believed they had this close relationship and had the kindred spirit of which Mr. Grandi speaks.

My first opportunity to represent World Acrobatics Society as its President came this past July at Camp Woodward in Pennsylvania during ESPN's B3 Tournament of the Extreme Sports which they televised throughout the rest of the summer. I want to thank Ed Isabelle and Gary Reams for their wonderful hospitality toward me and for opening their facility up to ESPN for their production. I also want to congratulate Ed and Gary and their marvelous staff for organizing this outstanding competition. Maintaining the flow of hundreds of automobiles, campers, trucks, and even helicopters, along with thousands of spectators while still conducting their normal camp activities for gymnastics and extreme sports was a sight to behold. If you've never been to Camp Woodward, it's a must on next summers vacation plans. A stop over during your travels through beautiful Pennsylvania to watch hundreds of gymnasts and extremers learn and hone new skills is exciting.

Congratulations to William Walker of St. Petersburg, Florida on his election to the presidency of United States Diving and to

Steve McFarland for four successful years at the helm. I also want to thank USA Diving for accepting World Acrobatics Society's application for membership into USA Diving as an Affiliate Member and granting us one seat on the Board of Governors. USA Diving is the first National Governing Body to approve a membership relationship and we look forward to many years of having the opportunity to be called upon to share our knowledge and experiences to the sport of Diving.

It is with much regret that with the mailing of this Newsletter, Lani Loken-Dahle has asked to be relieved of her responsibilities of Executive Director and Newsletter Editor of World Acrobatics Society. Lani will not be able to provide us with the time and effort which it takes to continue in these positions. I want to publicly thank Lani for the significant time and tremendous amount of energy she has given to these tasks. Those of you who have had the opportunity to read these newsletters over the past two years have had the wonderful opportunity to learn about the many other acrobatic sports. Those of us who were involved in the old traditional acrobatic sports have come to better understand the many sports which have sprung up over the recent years through her succinct articles. We are now able to appreciate the skills and know the athletes involved in the extreme sports of bikes, blades and boards, of wakeboarding and aerial skiing, to just name a few. I certainly have enjoyed the articles about personalities in our various sports whose lives have evolved over the years from being an athlete to being an inventor, motivational speaker, coach, writer, artist, or entrepreneur which has contributed to our society in many ways. Lani, congratulations on a great job done with the newsletters and I know we will all miss you.

With Lani's departure, it is obvious that the World Acrobatics Society is in need of a new Executive Director and a new Editor of the Newsletter. This does not have to be the same person. Our most pressing need is for the Newsletter Editor, and this can even be Co-Editors. If you are interested or know of someone who has the time and talent, please contact me at PO Box 282, Clarion, PA 16214 or 814-227-1923 or dleas1@clarion.edu.

LEGAL STATUS OF THE WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY

The status of our 501 (c)(3) application to the IRS is now complete with the exception of a budget proposal which is under consideration by the Executive Director and the Treasurer. This should not be a complicated matter since we have an excellent group of volunteers and little or no resources. It's a little like breaking into soccer officiating. You need games under your belt once qualified...the trouble is getting assigned. We have completed all forms with the exception of the budget numbers. Once completed, I'll ask the Treasurer for the \$150 to process the application and send it off to Kentucky. I have been in constant touch with the IRS and the people I've spoken with have been very helpful.

-Bruce Frederick

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & NEWSLETTER EDITOR

These past two years have been a wonderful gift to me. I have been richly rewarded by the many people and experiences which have come into my life because of my affiliation with this organization. However, with the publication of this newsletter, my tenure as the Executive Director and Newsletter Editor of the World Acrobatics Society comes to an end. I'm sad to say goodbye, but I simply can no longer afford the long hours of volunteer work. I hope that in the near future, the necessary financial resources will become available to support the continued growth of the organization. Until then, I hope that others will step forth and volunteer their time.

I want to thank all of you for your support. Your words of encouragement, as I produced the newsletters, meant a great deal to me. The articles, biographies, pictures, trivia, etc., which you sent to be used in the newsletters, were appreciated by many. Your open minds, and willingness to embrace the "extreme" sports as equal acrobatic disciplines, was very important to me; for, I have long felt they deserved to be respected as the fine athletic endeavors that they are.

I want to give special thanks to the Board of Directors. It's important to recognize the contributions that every one of them has already made toward the growth and development of acrobatic activities. Their lives have been devoted to sharing their love of acrobatics with others. And, now, they continue to share—to share a vision in which individuals in all acrobatic activities communicate and work together.

I will be in touch with many of you in the future as our lives continue to evolve around the world of acrobatics. The passion I have felt while pursuing the mission of the World Acrobatics Society is still ablaze. There are many paths we can follow to fulfill our visions, and the World Acrobatics Society has been a very special one for me.

Thank you all,

Lani

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

In the very near future, I will be mailing to all members a copy of the first Membership Directory. The initial directory will be in a simple format; will not be an expensive, fancy booklet; but, will be as accurate as our database permits. We plan to include the following information regarding each member: Name, home postal address, home and business telephone number, email address.

If any members choose to not want all of the above information made available to membership colleagues, please inform me of your wishes. Send me your request, in writing or via email. The database of your World Acrobatics Society will not be shared or sold to other individuals or organizations.

You will receive your first membership directory during the month of November, 1998. Should you have constructive criticisms, please let me hear from you. You will also receive an update in November regarding the status of your membership. Many members receiving this newsletter need to renew their annual membership. Please renew NOW! Your World Acrobatics Society does not have an unlimited budget. We have no large benefactors, as yet. Your membership payments are critical to our delivery of services to you. BEST WISHES TO ALL!

-H. Edsel Buchanan, Membership Chairperson

1999 WORLD ACROBATICS CONGRESS

The 1999 World Acrobatics Congress is scheduled for February 18-21, in beautiful Sarasota, Florida. A variety of presentations and social events will take place throughout the four-day event. Following is the tentative schedule:

Schedule of Events

Thursday, February 18:

7:00pm Board of Directors Meeting & Reception at Bil Copp's Residence; 9400 Myakka Dr., Venice, FL 34292

Friday, February 19:

9:00am World Acrobatics Society Meeting (Congress); Mote Marine Auditorium; 1600 Ken Thompson Pkwy; Sarasota (Don Leas Presiding)

11:30am Illinois Gymnasts Luncheon/Reception at Mote Marine Veranda (Hosted by Charlie Pond)

1:00pm LOOK IN & WIN; World Premier Video by Charlie Pond; Roundtable Twisting Discussion

3:30pm Visit to Ringling Circus Museum; 5401 Bay Shore Rd., Sarasota

7:00pm Temple University/Philly Gymnastics Reception; Comfort Inn (Hosted by Jerylin & Joe Schabacker)

Saturday, February 20:

9:00am ACROGYMNASTIC NEWS AND VIEWS; Mote Marine Auditorium; Videos and reports of the latest championships and other events from the World of Acrobatics (hosted by Bil Copp)

12:00pm MEET THE LEGENDS Luncheon

2:00pm ACROBATIC RETROSPECTIVE; The Great Handbalancers - Live and on Video

5:00pm Free time to visit Sarasota Quay and St. Armand's Square

7:00pm Chinese Acrobats; Van Wezel Performing Arts Center; 777 N. Tamiami Trail; Sarasota

Sunday, February 21:

10:00am Executive Committee Meeting; Comfort Inn

12:00pm Lunch at Marina Jack's on the Waterfront

2:00pm Boat Cruise (Optional)

Registration Fee: \$55 (includes receptions, Chinese Acrobats, & Mote Aquarium admission). Send registration fee to Bil Copp; PO Box 7282; Venice, FL 34287

Hotels: Comfort Inn; 4800 N. Tamiami Trail; Sarasota, FL (800) 228-5150

Day's Inn; 4900 N. Tamiami Trail; Sarasota, FL (800) 325-2525

Best Western Royal Palms; 1701; N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL (800) 528-1234

(*There are over thirty other hotels and motels of varying quality in the immediate vicinity and scores more within driving distance)

Make your reservations now, and join in the fun and comraderie!

Events Schedule October 28-February 7

Oct 28-Nov 1	IFSA World Championships in Sports Acrobatics	Minsk, Belarus
Oct 29-Nov 29	<i>Quidam</i> (Cirque du Soleil)	Atlanta, GA
Nov 4-9	Australia Gymnastics Cup (M,W)	Melbourne, AUS
Nov 5-8	USA Trampoline & Tumbling Congress & SuperClinic	Dallas, TX
Nov 6-8	Max-Air Productions	Albany, NY
Nov 12-?	<i>Allegria</i> (Cirque du Soleil)	Frankfurt, GR
Nov 13-15	Max-Air Productions	Dallas, TX
Nov 14-15	FIS Snowboard World Cup	Kaprun, AU
Nov 14-15	Chunichi Gymnastics Cup (M)	Nagoya, JPN
Nov 20-22	USATT 2nd SuperClinic	Lafayette, LA
Nov 20-22	Max-Air Productions	Houston, TX
Nov 20-23	FIS Snowboard World Cup	Tandadalen, SWE
Nov 20-23	Nescafe Pro Jump Snowboard Contest	Geneva, SW
Nov 22	Cirque du Soleil Auditions	Seattle, WA
Nov 27-28	Mega Star Snowboard Contest	Gothenburg, SWE
Nov 28-29	FIS Snowboard World Cup	Sestriere/Bardonecchia, IT
Nov 28-Dec 6	38th International Sports Festival (General Gymnastics)	Blum Gran Canaria, SP
Dec 3-7	USATT National Trampoline Training Camp	Colorado Springs, CO
Dec 4-6	USSA Snowboard Grand Slam	CO
Dec 4-6	Vans/G-Shock Triple Crown of Snowboarding	Breckenridge, CO
Dec 5-6	FIS Snowboard World Cup	Ischgl, AU
Dec 10-13	Whistler Snowboard World Cup	Whistler, B.C.
Dec 12	Scandinavian Open/FIT Trampoline World Cup	Haslev, DEN
Dec 16-18	FIS Snowboard World Cup	Mt. Bachelor, OR
Dec 19	FIT Trampoline World Cup	Antibes, FR
Dec 19	FIT Trampoline World Cup	Antibes, FRA
Dec 26-Jan 1	Max-Air Productions	Cleveland, OH
Dec 27-30	The Florida Workout (Trampoline, Tumbling, Double Mini-Tramp)	Naples, FL
Jan 5-?	<i>Allegria</i> (Cirque du Soleil)	London, GB
Jan 5-7	FIS Snowboard World Cup	Avoriaz/Morzine Les Gets
Jan 7-10	USSA Snowboard Grand Prix	Copper Mountain, CO
Jan 7-?	<i>Saltimbanco</i> (Cirque du Soleil)	Sydney, AUS
Jan 10-17	FIS Snowboard World Championships	Berchtesgaden, GR
Jan 12-16	XIth Diving World Cup	Wellington, NZ
Jan 14-17	ESPN Winter X-Games	Crested Butte, CO
Jan 19-20	FIS Snowboard World Cup	Schonried, SW
Jan 22	FIS Snowboard World Cup	Grachen, SW
Jan 24-25	FIS Snowboard World Cup	Madonna di Campiglio, IT
Jan 29-31	FIS Snowboard World Cup	Mt. St. Anne, CAN
Jan 30	Reese's Gymnastics Cup (MWR)	Phoenix, AZ
Jan (late)	Cirque du Soleil Auditions	Arizona, USA
		Paris, FR
Feb 5-7	FIS Snowboard World Cup	Park City, UT
Feb 5-7	Vans/G-Shock Triple Crown of Snowboarding	

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HAL FREY RECEIVES SERVICE STAR AWARD

Hal Frey, former men's gymnastics coach at the University of California-Berkeley and Secretary of the World Acrobatics Society, received the Service Star Award from USA Gymnastics, at the John Hancock U.S. Gymnastics Championships held in Indianapolis in August. This award was given to Frey in "appreciation for outstanding contribution in the area of men's gymnastics." Frey received the award during a recognition dinner that followed the final night of competition.

Frey, a member of four halls of fame, including the one sponsored by USA Gymnastics, still does some coaching at Berkeley. His main function, however, is to raise funds for a men's program that won the NCAA Gymnastics Championships last season. "I'm still in the gym assisting, but now I'm into the fund-raising, and

that's so important because of Title IX," Frey said.

Frey competed for four years at Penn State and was team captain for three years. The team won two National Amateur Athletic Union championships. Frey won an AAU tumbling title during his stay at Penn State and placed in the medal division in vaulting three times. He twice finished fourth in AAU all-around competitions.

By 1948, Frey was coaching at the University of Illinois-Chicago. He coached the gymnastics team to the National



Hal Frey

AAU championship in 1949, as well as leading the squad to three Mid-West Open titles. Four of his teams were undefeated, with one gymnast winning the Champion of USA all-around, and another the AAU tumbling title two times.

Frey moved on to Cal-Berkeley, and achieved great coaching success there before retiring in 1984. In 26 years as head coach, Frey guided 13 teams to undefeated records. His team once won 89 straight meets and was undefeated for nine years. There was also a 56-meet winning streak.

His teams won 13 Pacific Coast Conference team championships and two NCAA championships. He coached one world champion and many NCAA All-Americans and NCAA champions.

During his career, Frey coached 12 gymnasts who would go on to compete in the Olympics either for the United States or for another country.

Frey, who remains an active judge, was vice president of the National Judging Association from 1994-98. His responsibilities were overwhelming, directing 500 judges with the Junior Olympics. "I directed certification, assignments and was meet director," he said. "I also made assignments for international meets."

Although Frey wanted to decrease his workload, he simply had to remain involved. "I thought I was going to retire and do less, but it's something to do, and I still have my international judging brevet," he said.

Although busy with his fund-raising activities, Frey has no plans to give up judging. "When they start complaining about my scores, I'll stop," he said.

-Excerpts from "The Morning Call"; Lehighton, PA; by Robert Flexer

THE 71ST FIG CONGRESS

The 71st FIG Congress was held in Vilamoura, Portugal May 20-24. Many important decisions were made, including changes in the structure of the FIG. Beginning January 1, 2000, the following changes will take place:

- 1) The Congress (formerly the General Assembly) will be held every second year, with elections taking place every fourth year. Congress will elect the members of the Executive Committee, the Technical Committees and the new Council.
- 2) The new Council, consisting of 44 members including the Executive committee and balanced by Continents, will meet every year.
- 3) The former Technical Assemblies will be replaced by Technical Symposia or Colloquia. These will not be held in conjunction with the Congress, but with other events such as World Championships.
- 4) The Executive Committee, will be enlarged by the Technical Committee Presidents of the new disciplines.
- 5) The Technical Committees, will remain as before, but new Technical Committees will be formed for Sports Aerobics, Trampoline (Trampoline, Tumbling, Double Mini-Trampoline), and Sport Acrobatics.

In addition, the following decisions were made:

- 1) An extraordinary General Assembly will be held in 1999 (possibly in Tianjing, Osaka or Gothenburg) to decide the necessary modifications of the Statutes following the decisions of this General Assembly regarding the new structures and the integration of the new disciplines.
- 2) Definitive acceptance (by 90% of the votes) of the integration of Trampoline and Sport Acrobatics per 1st January 1999 (merger with the International Trampoline Federation (FIT) and the International Sport Acrobatics Federation (IFSA)).
- 3) The "Interpretations of the Statutes and Technical Regulations" for Sports Aerobics, Trampoline and Sport Acrobatics were accepted.
- 4) The participation at the Olympic Games (distribution of the IOC quota of total 304) was accepted as follows:
 - Men's and Women's Artistic Gymnastics (total each 98)
 - RSG (total 84)
 - Trampoline (total 24)
- 5) The 72nd FIG Congress will be held in Marrakech (MAR).

"LOOK-IN TO WIN" TWISTING TEACHING VIDEOTAPE

Presenting Charlie Pond's "Look-In to Win" Twisting teaching videotape for your instructors and coaches. All twisting is taught the same way from the simple CARTWHEEL, up through twisting somersaults and beyond. Triple twists can be taught in the same time period. There is no difference in the method of teaching sideways, backwards and forwards twisting. Additional twists are done merely by speeding up the spin of the twist - not by more or faster somersaults. Charlie Pond has trained hundreds of national, international and Olympic winners using his "Look-In" method of twisting and somersaulting. To order your exciting new videotape or for further information, call Charlie at (520) 772-3872 or email at cpond@bslnet.com. Regular retail price \$39.95 plus \$4.95 shipping/handling. SPECIAL DISCOUNT AVAILABLE FOR WORLD ACROBATICS SOCIETY MEMBERS.

TEMPLE GYMNASTICS REUNION

On August 1, 1998, 24 gymnastics colleagues had lunch at Bentley's near Philadelphia. This group has been meeting each August for more than 30 years. Those in attendance included twelve members of the World Acrobatics Society.



Lf to rt: George Szypula, Herb Litvin, Joe Schabacker, Charlie Houston (Members of the 1941 Intercollegiate Championship Gymnastics Team)

Memories of Temple teams, Philadelphia high schools, and Turners, from the 1930's, were rehashed by the "old-timers." Four of the seven members of Temple's 1941 Intercollegiate Championship team were on hand (George Szypula, Charlie Houston, Herb Litvin, Joe Schabacker). Olympian Lou Bordo and his Penn State teammate, Sol Small, reminded the Temple gymnasts of the meets in

which the Nittany Lions beat the Temple Owls. Northeast High School coach of many athletes in years past, Harry Nelson, looked great at age 92.

Joe Schabacker flew in from Arizona to be with his teammates and with his handbalancing partner, Dick Lobs. Others in attendance included: Hazel and Warren Conrad, Doris and Jim Ellis, Celia and Bill Braverman, June and George Szypula, Dottie Reif, Rae and Lou Bordo, Reba and Harry Nelson, Ruth and Charlie Houston, Woody Platt, Ed Veith, Chass and Herb Litvin and Mrs. and Rabbit Flynn. Schabacker invited the group to join again at the 1999 World Acrobatics Congress in Venice, Florida in February.



Lf to rt: George Szypula, Dick Lobs, Coach Harry Nelson, Joe Schabacker

-by Joe Schabacker

USOC'S OLYMPIC JOB OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM

The USOC's Olympic Job Opportunities Program (OJOP), provides athletes with the opportunity to continue training for their sport. OJOP provides athletes with valuable work experience that will be beneficial after their years of athletic competition.

Currently, Home Depot is the largest supporter of OJOP, with numbers continually growing as the company extends its support to elite athletes who are focusing on the 2000 Olympic Summer Games in Sydney, Australia and the 2002 Olympic Winter Games in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Diver Kent Ferguson, a 1992 Olympian is an example of an athlete who benefitted from the OJOP program. "My OJOP position at Home Depot enabled me to prepare for and accomplish all my goals," said Ferguson. "To be a member of the 1992 U.S. Olympic Team was a dream come true, and being a part of the Home Depot team allowed me to enjoy my last years as a competitive diver." Upon completion of his athletic career, Kent chose to continue working at Home Depot. He now works as a full-time assistant manager at a Home Depot Expo Design Center store in Dallas.

(Inside USA Diving; Summer 1998; Volume 6, Number 2)

DID YOU KNOW...

1998 WORLD TRAMPOLINE & TUMBLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA; OCTOBER 9-11

Results:

Women's Trampoline

1. Irina Karavaeva (Russia)
2. Oxana Tsyhuleva (Ukraine)
3. Anna Dogonadze-Lilkendy (Germany)

Men's Trampoline

1. German Khyntchev (Russia)
2. Nikolai Kazak (Belarus)
3. Emmanuel Durand (France)

Women's Double Mini-Trampoline

1. Kylie Walker (New Zealand)
2. Jennifer Parilla (USA)
3. Teodora Sinilkova (Bulgaria)

Men's Double Mini-Trampoline

1. Rodolfo Rangel (Brazil)
2. Joao Marques (Portugal)
3. Chris Mitruk (Canada)

Women's Tumbling

1. Elena Bloujina (Russia)
2. Amanda Lentz (USA)
3. Chrystel Robert (France)

Men's Tumbling

1. Levon Petrosian (Russia)
2. Daniel Avakian (Russia)
3. Tomasz Kies (Poland)

Women's Synchronized Trampoline

1. Tina Ludwig/Anna Dogonadze-Lilkendy (Germany)
2. Oxana Tsyhuleva/Elena Movchan (Ukraine)
3. Tatiana Kovaleva/Natalia Tchernova (Russia)

Men's Synchronized Trampoline

1. David Martin/Emmanuel Durand (France)
2. Vladimir Kakorko/Nikolai Kazak (Belarus)
3. Olexandr Chernonos/Serhiy Bukhovtsev (Ukraine)

"Lots of people want to ride with you in the limo, but what you want is someone who will take the bus with you when the limo breaks down."

-Oprah Winfrey

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL OPENS NEW SHOW AT WALT DISNEY WORLD

On January 23, 1999, Cirque du Soleil will premiere a new production at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida. A magnificent new theatre, in Downtown Disney West Side district, will be host to more than 1,650 spectators. Performances will take place twice daily. For more information, call (407) 939-7600.

\$\$ U.S. SNOWBOARD GRAND PRIX \$\$

This season's U.S. Snowboard Grand Prix series will include \$370,000 in total prize money, one of the largest prize packages of any snowboard series ever in the U.S. It will also have national network television coverage by NBC, CBS and ESPN. The three-event tour will include competition at Mt. Bachelor, Oregon (Dec. 17-19), Copper Mountain, Colorado (Jan. 7-10), and Sunday River, Maine (Feb. 24-28). The tour is open to all riders with priority for entry given to top U.S. riders on the International Ski Federation (FIS), United States Ski & Snowboard Association (USSA) or International Snowboard Federation 1997-98 season-ending point lists.

(http://www.solsnowboarding.com/compete/ussa_82798.html)

"Mistakes are the dues one pays for a full life."

-Sophia Loren

TRAMPOLINE FOR WAKEBOARDERS

In the October 1998 issue of *Wakeboarding Magazine*, there is a full-page article entitled "Tramp Training." P.J. Marks, a wakeboarding pro and the author of the article states:

"The trampoline is a wakeboarder's version of a flight simulator. It is more economical and usually less painful to get familiar with a rotation, a body position or a handle pass on a trampoline before taking it out on the water."

Marks addresses some basic techniques while emphasizing trampoline safety. He recommends instruction from a certified teacher at a gymnastics center. He finishes his article with the following comment:

"If you've done everything right on land, all you will have to do is get the proper edge and pop off the wake, and your rotation should come a lot easier now that you've done it many times before on the trampoline."

Right on, P.J.!

KYTE-BOARDING

Constantly evolving, the world of alternative sports has a new addition to it. "Kyte-boarding" has recently entered the scene - on beaches, to be precise. A combination of snowboarding, skateboarding and kite-flying, this latest activity has people fascinated. It combines a mountain board, which looks like a small snowboard on 6-inch wheels and is designed for off-road skateboarding, with a large rectangular power kite which is controlled by four lines. The rider is sideways to the direction the 3-foot board travels. It turns when the rider leans forward or backward, as on a snowboard. Says the creator, Steve Fleming: "I get an adrenaline rush every time I do it. The more wind, the more extreme. That's what makes it fun." So Steve, when do we get to see your flips?!

DID YOU KNOW...

INDOOR SKY DIVING

Did you know that you can experience the feeling of skydiving while indoors? Just check out one of the wind tunnels around the world. These wind tunnels were originally designed for the skydiving enthusiast to test their skills during simulated free-fall. The flight simulators provide a controlled flight space with air speeds of up to 160mph. Here's where to find them:

Germany: Bodyflying Luenen (mobile); Landesgartenschau; 44532 Luenen; 49-2306-943200

Israel: Airodium Eilat; North Beach Eilat; (972) 7-332386

Switzerland: Airodium; Oberglatterstr 35; CH-8153; 41-1-817-02-09

United States: 1) Flyaway Indoor Skydiving; 200 Convention Center Dr.; Las Vegas, NV (702) 731-4768; 2) Flyaway Indoor Skydiving; 3106 Parkway; Pigeon Forge, TN; (423) 453-7777; 3) FreeFlight Skydiving School; Coleman, FL (888) SKYDIVE

Venezuela: Club Zero-g/IBCA; Caracas; 58-14-258996

*If riding in an airplane is **flying**, then riding in a boat is **swimming**. If you want to experience the element, get out of the vehicle.*

Skydive!

(<http://www.afn.org/skydive>)

ASA PRO TOUR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The ASA (Aggressive Skater's Association) Pro Tour World Championships were held October 9-12 in Las Vegas, Nevada. This event featured the top aggressive (trick) skaters in the world who were competing for the individual championships on the prestigious ASA Pro Tour. The ASA Pro Tour is the competitive circuit on which the world's top skaters compete. In 1998, the tour featured seventeen cities.

Approximately 70 skaters, both male and female, competed in this competition. The athletes competed in two disciplines: Vert skating and street style skating. A total of \$50,000 of cash and prizes was awarded.

Over 40,000 spectators came to watch the skaters compete. This event will be televised nationally in the form of five (5) sixty minute shows on ESPN and ESPN2 in the United States. The event will also be telecast internationally to more than 100 countries.

In addition to the Pro Championships, the ASA held it's Amateur Championships during the same weekend. In this competition, the top 100 amateur skaters in the world competed to qualify for just twenty spots on the 1999 ASA Pro Tour.

1998 WAKEBOARD WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

The 1998 Vans WWA Wakeboard World Championships were held in Dallas, Texas, October 16-18. This competition was the conclusion to the Van's Triple Crown of Wakeboarding Series. The series consisted of the G-Shock Pro, the Mountain Dew Nationals, and the Vans World Championships. This series was the richest series in wakeboarding.

Shaun Murray won the World Championship Pro Mens Finals. But, the winner of the entire series, and winner of a \$10,000 bonus for his title, was Rob Struharik. Struharik won this title by accumulating the most total points in the series.

Sixteen year-old Tara Hamilton repeated as World Champion and also won two other titles: The Women's Vans Triple Crown of Wakeboarding Series, and the Women's Wakeboard World Cup, which combines the points of 15 contests from around the world.

Results:

Pro Men Finals:

1. Shaun Murray (USA)
2. Brannan Johnson (USA)
3. Cobe Mikacich (USA)

Pro Women Finals:

1. Tara Hamilton (USA)
2. Marie Botved (Sweden)
3. Dana Preble (USA)

GYMNASTICS LEGENDS CHALLENGE

(BY BRUCE FREDERICK)

*Match the Legend with the Description

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. Francis Allen | 1. Five Years Without a Peer |
| 2. Bart Conner | 2. Art of the Uclans |
| 3. Jacquelyn Klein Fie | 3. Elite Gymnast...Elite Coach |
| 4. Abie Grossfeld | 4. Gold for the Bohemians of New York |
| 5. Al Jochim | 5. "I Never Thought It Could Happen in My Lifetime" |
| 6. Frank Kriz | 6. Seven World Championships & Olympic Teams |
| 7. Lou Mang | 7. Five Consecutive NCAA Men's Team Titles |
| 8. Linda Mulvihill | 8. FIG's First American Committee Chair |
| 9. Mildred Prchal | 9. Most Durable Olympian |
| 10. Art Shurlock | 10. Gymnast, Mother and Most Titles |
| 11. Kurt Thomas | 11. Halk a Century in Solol Leadership |
| 12. George Wheeler | 12. Flair for Gold |

Answers can be found on page 16

ABIE GROSSFELD: FROM CHECKERS AND ST

Abie Grossfeld is regarded as a national gymnastics treasure. He was the National coach of the United States men's gymnastics team from 1981-88, and was the head coach of the US Olympic team three times - in 1972 in Munich, in 1984 in Los Angeles, where he led the US men to their first and only team gold medal in history, and in 1988 in Seoul. He was also the head coach at five World Championships, at two Pan American Games, including the gold medal winner in 1987, and at the 1986 Goodwill Games.

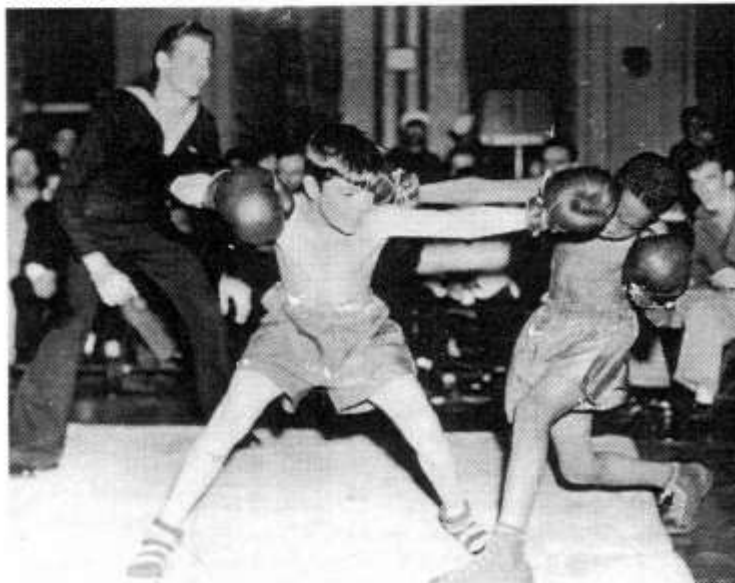
Grossfeld is a three-time NCAA National Coach of the Year and 10-time Eastern Coach of the Year. He was the USA Gymnastics Coach of the Year in 1984.

As an international competitor, Grossfeld represented the US for 15 consecutive years on 26 international teams in 35 countries. He competed in two Olympic Games in 1956 and 1960, two World Championships and three Pan-American Games, where he won 15 medals, eight of which were gold medals and included three consecutive horizontal bar titles. In all, he has won over 100 major championships.

During his 35 years as a Professor of Physical Education and Men's Gymnastics Coach at Southern Connecticut State University, Grossfeld accumulated an incredible record. What makes it even more incredible is that it was achieved without the aid of scholarships. This year for the first time, Grossfeld enters the competitive season with the aid of one partial scholarship - a nominal benefit for a master coach.

In the following interview with Abie Grossfeld, the interviewer has chosen to highlight Grossfeld's childhood experiences, and the influences that they had upon his successful competitive and coaching career.

Abie Grossfeld grew up in a predominantly Irish neighborhood in Manhattan. His parents came to the United States from Poland in 1921. Neither of his parents were educated, and true to their Eastern European roots, they worked long, hard days to take care of the family. As a window washer and store cleaner, his father left home at 1:30am, returning at 6:00pm after an arduous day at work. Throughout the years that Abie lived at home, his father never took a vacation.



Grossfeld boxing, at a hospital on Ellis Island, for our wounded men in the armed forces in 1944



Grossfeld in Cuba in 1957 with Frank Cumiskey (1932, '36, '48 Olympian) and Ed Scrobe (1948, '52 Olympian)

Q: You were very ill as a child. What effect did this illness have on you?

I can remember speaking in a whisper when I was a little kid. My mother took me to doctors to check my voice. They just said I'd probably grow out of it as I got older. I was embarrassed to speak in school because of my voice. I could tell my voice was whispery.

When I was six, I would get winded running about two squares on the sidewalk. I just couldn't run and my friends

could run all over the place, non-stop. Then one of my friends, his name was Mikey, he ran around this big block that we lived on, four times. I could not believe he ran around four times. That seemed impossible to me, because I only ran about eight feet and I was tired. So I started trying to run farther. I was motivated and before you knew it I ran around the block ten times.

Then I learned how to swim. I went to a public pool each summer and watched the lifeguards teach people how to swim. I just imitated them and taught myself how to swim. I remember when I was nine years old I swam 22 lengths or widths of a 50 meter pool, or 1,100 meters. Being just nine years old, the lifeguard was impressed with what I had done. I started taking pride in achieving physical things, especially because I was so weak when I started.

Q: What kind of activities did you do growing up?

A: In Washington Heights after school we played games. When you're little you played marbles, checkers, spun tops in the street. We'd do that for a month and a half or so, and they would call them seasons. It's "Checker Season." You'd take a metal bottle cap and you'd squeeze an orange peel into it. The serrated edge cut it so that it became heavy and it didn't roll. And we used those for checkers. You snapped it with your finger and you went up a chalk line and you tried to hit another person away. Another game was pitching checkers close to a line.

We played marbles. You took a cigar box, and you cut out a little hole, and a real little hole. You drew a line back about 15 feet, and you rolled a marble. If you got it into the hole you got 5 marbles. If you got it into the little hole, you got 10 marbles. The kids generally missed a lot, so the cigar box kids usually cleaned up. We also played cards for match cover "booklets." They had varying values, like oners, twoers, fivers, teners, up to one hundreders, depending on their size and design.

As we got older we played sports more. I started playing all kinds of sports and started doing pretty well. I started playing hockey on roller skates when I was six. Eventually, I was considered one of the best players. We also had free for alls where we spread out these cardboard boxes on the gutter in the street and wrestled. We also had a variety of relay races, and had high jump contests where 2 guys or girls would hold the rope and we'd jump over it. I got to be a pretty good high jumper.

We frequently had throwing contests for distance, and I had the second best arm next to Billy Ryan. In New York we had these sewers in the middle of the block, so that's how we measured distance. I threw a ball a sewer and a half, or something like that. We hit a ball two sewers, and three sewers - that was a big thing in stickball. Stickball is

a game we played with a broomstick, and a soft, rubber ball we called "spaldeens" (Spalding). So if you hit the ball 3 sewers, that was a big shot. And on our block we had a big tree that was about 3 sewers away. The tree was probably four or five stories high. And, you were like a monster if you could hit it over the tree. If you hit it into the tree, it was considered a great shot.

I boxed from about 10 to 12 years old, and swam. I was on the high school swimming team. Swimming was the sport I wanted to really be good at. In high school we used to go to a bathhouse in Harlem. It was public, and we could only swim there twice a week. I wanted to get a place where I could practice more, so I joined the YMCA. But, when I joined the YMCA there was a water shortage in New York, and the pools were closed. So, then I walked in the gym and I saw all these guys doing gymnastics. I could not believe people could do that with their bodies. I was always fascinated by the circus and went religiously every year to the Ringling Brothers Circus. I was so impressed with their feats of skill. So when I saw them doing gymnastics, I couldn't believe how good they were.

Q: Do you think the diversity of physical activities during your youth contributed to your success as a gymnast?

A: Well, it certainly helped. But I think what happened with me was that everyone played, so you tend to do what everyone does. The idea



Abie Grossfeld in 1957

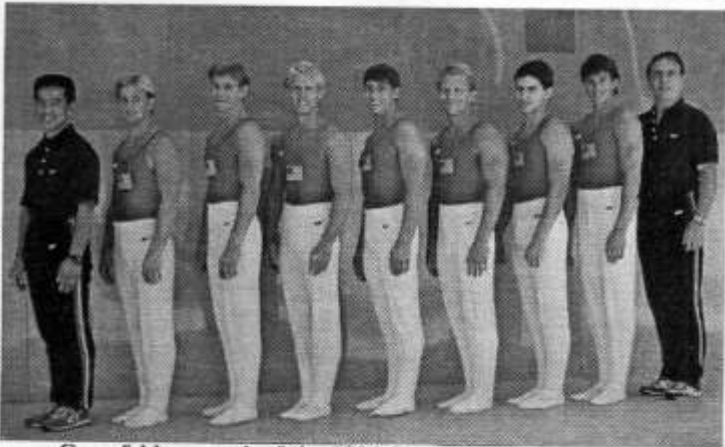
is to make it fun for kids, and keep them interested. If it becomes drudgery, where you have to grind away, you'll quit early. It depends on how it's presented and if it's fun.

I think if you can attain excellence in something, it gives you a sense of satisfaction.

And that made me feel better than being a jack of all trades. I think doing other sports helped - we'd kid around to see how many chin ups we could do - we'd just have contests - no one guided us. There was a bar that held a fence up over a basement cellar into a building, and we used to jump on it and see how many chin ups we could do. I remember that I could do more than the other guys. So I was strong in a certain way. I had those illnesses when I was a kid, but playing a variety of games improved my strength a great deal. By the time I started gymnastics, when I was 16, I was quite strong.

Q: Tell me about your start in gymnastics. You went to the gym because the pool was closed...

A: I went to the gym as I was waiting for the pool to open. It was the West Side YMCA in New York City. I joined a beginning class. They had three coaches and the coach in charge of the beginning class, was Serge Souto. They were volunteers - all three coaches - and they were wonderful. The head coach was a guy named John Van Aalten. John had come from the Netherlands in 1947 after World War II. He was a Commando in World War II for the Dutch. He was a top gymnast for the Netherlands in the '30's. He had beautiful style and was really a great gymnastics model for us. The third coach coached us on rings and pommel horse. He



Grossfeld as coach of the 1984 Olympic gold medal team

was Bill Buffa. He was a two-time national champion on rings. They were guys in their 30's when I started at 16 years old.

The coaches came in on Monday and Wednesday for a couple of hours and that was it. We worked out two times a week. I did that for the first two years I did gymnastics. Then I saw the 1952 Olympic Trials (also the national championships). I competed on floor since that was my best event. I felt that in the meet I did the compulsory floor routine better than most of the eight guys that made the Olympic team. As it turned out, it was cheaper to compete in an event than it was to pay the admission fee.

Q: Did that show you that you could have a future in gymnastics?

A: I came home from the Olympic trials, and I was inspired. And I said, "I'm going to try to become as good as I can now." So I joined the men's division at the YMCA, and that cost me \$18 a year, which was a lot of money then. So now I could go to the YMCA every day, even though the coaches only came in twice a week. I went in there five days a week, including Saturdays. On Saturdays I would organize my day from 10:00am to 10:00pm, 12 hours a day. I'd organize the whole day. I'd say, this hour I would do this, and I kept going. About 2:00 or 3:00 o'clock, some of the other guys from the team came in, worked out with me for a couple of hours, and they'd leave. I'd stay and continue doing stuff. I did this for a year.

Q: Where did you get that kind of focus?

A: I wanted to be as good as I could. It didn't take a genius to figure out that every time you practice you can always do more. I mean I was a healthy kid. As I worked out, you know, maybe I'm out of breath or something...10 minutes later I'm in breath, so I go, "wait I can do it again right now. Why waste time?" I could work out all day, and I did that. I just felt I wanted to be as good as I could. I figured out the hardest tricks that were done. For example, on high bar (like eagles and Germans) and tried to learn them. And, I did this with every event. The coaches, of course, helped me, but I did a lot on my own. I just figured out ways to learn them. I started doing an eagle giant, a seat circle, a dislocate.



Grossfeld at the 1998 Goodwill Games

(continued on p. 10)

I would do each skill 3 to 5 times, and go on to the next trick. This resulted in my acquiring many skills in a short period of time. I started going from club to club in New York. Besides the YMCA, I worked out at the Turnvereins, the Sokols, and a recreation center in the Bronx. Ed Scrobe, an Olympian, was one of my mentors at workouts. Eddy helped a lot. From March of 1952 to that September or October I went from a junior level to a senior level gymnast.

The Senior Metropolitan Championships were held in November 1952. Historically, that was won by guys that were on the Olympic teams, like Ed Scrobe and Frank Cumiskey. Guys used to say that meet was just about as hard to win as the nationals. I went in that meet and wound up winning five first places. Surprisingly, I won the all-around by quite a bit.

Q: So between April and October, the real gain was shown. What happened after that?

A: In April of '53, Roy Moore, George Gulack, my coach Bill Buffa, and I went out to the nationals by train. They were held in Chicago, at Navy Pier. Hal Frey was the coach at Navy Pier. Many college guys were entered, as well as a number of guys not in college, like



Grossfeld in his prime

Bill Roetzheim, and most of the Olympic guys from '52. So I competed and wound up 10th, out of 35, in the all-around. I took 6th on floor, and 8th on high bar.

I never really considered that much of an accomplishment until a few years ago when I realized that I had started gymnastics in April 1950, and exactly three years later I was 10th in the nationals. Obviously, it is harder now, but even for those days that was a considerable achievement.

Q: During that time, you had graduated from high school

and you had started to work....

A: I figured I'd become a mechanical engineer since I went to a technical high school and enrolled at CCNY. After two months I withdrew because I didn't know what I really wanted to do. I got a job at a testing laboratory and worked in the metallurgy lab. I'd prepare and take photos of metal samples and things like that. I worked at the testing laboratory for three and a half years.

Q: What made you decide to return to college?

A: When I went to the '54 gymnastics clinic in Sarasota, Florida, I was a demonstrator for Frank Cumiskey and Ed Scrobe. I remember Newt Loken, George Szypula, Otto Ryser, Ralph Piper, and Charlie Pond being there. When I'd demonstrate - here I'm an unknown kid to them, and they've got all these college stars - I could do tricks that the college gymnasts couldn't do. For example, I remember someone asking, "how do you do German giants on the high bar?" And Frank Cumiskey saying, "well, we probably have someone here who can show any trick. Can any of you college guys do a German giant?" No one answered. So Scrobe goes, "Abie, show them a German giant." So I went up and did a German. Next, they asked for eagle giants. So, I demonstrated those. No one else could do them. Coaches asked me how I did those and other skills I had demonstrated. Well, I said, "I do this, and I do that." And, I remember one of the coaches explaining his way, which I thought was dumb, and I was surprised that he didn't know better. I was a kid and here's a guy that's a college coach. That's when I decided

I'd go to college and become a coach. When I walked away from that session, I thought, if those guys coach college and asked me those questions, I could be at least as good as them.

So then, I let it be known I wanted to go to college, and numerous college coaches started sending me their stuff. I got a letter from Hartley Price from Florida State. I got letters from USC, West Point, Syracuse, UCLA, and, I think from Newt Loken. Gene Wettstone came to New York and met with me. And

then, Charlie Pond came to New York. His forte was tumbling. I liked him because he kidded around and was jovial. He had me come out to Illinois, and I was set up with a date with the homecoming queen. They picked me up at the airport, and had a tuxedo for me with them. As I'm walking through the airport terminal, they're taking off my shirt and putting me in the tux. I went to the formal and, fortunately, impressed the girl with my dancing, having cut a rug since I was young. So, I could hold my own that way.

When I saw the gym at Illinois, there were three pieces of everything. Charlie Pond told me before I went home, he says, "I'll give you a key to the gym and you can go in any time you want." I said, "that's what I need." Cause I felt, I didn't need a coach, all I needed was a gym. One thing Charlie knew was that you should do routines. I already had that training from John Van Aalten. John was a top trained gymnast, and he gave me excellent basics. The reason I consider John my real coach was because under John I had already made the Pan Am Team and was the National High Bar Champion before going to Illinois. I was in Illinois only 6 or 7 months when I made the Olympic team. Actually, I had four coaches in my career - there was Serge Souto, Bill Buffa, John Van Aalten and Charlie Pond.

Q: Since those days at Illinois, you have unlocked the gym door for countless young men who have shared similar ambitions to your own. Where does your dedication come from?

A: I just think it's what I know best. I've been in this most of my life and continue to be in it because I enjoy it. If you win two or three championships, it stamps you as better than winning one. It's like you write a song, and you write another song. You hope it's a little different and hopefully, a little better.

Q: You've coached at Southern Connecticut State University for 35 years. Beyond your coaching, what are your plans for the future?

A: Possibly write a book. Probably more than one book. I do have plans to do that. I'll still stay involved in gymnastics judging and attending competitions. Most of my friends are in gymnastics and it's nice to see them. A lot of people are far away so when I go to various competitions I usually have a good time with them.



Grossfeld at 4 months



Grossfeld with Jack Dempsey

FLETCHER GILDERS DIES

On September 1, 1998, Fletcher Gilders died unexpectedly in Ontario, Canada, from a heart attack brought on by a blood clot that ascended from his leg.

Born on February 22, 1930, Gilders was one of those rare individuals who was able to develop his outstanding athletic ability and acrobatic skills into national prominence. He is the only athlete in modern Ohio State University history to earn varsity letters in four sports and the only athlete ever at OSU to earn 10 varsity letters, and this was during the time when freshman were not allowed to compete. Fletcher competed in gymnastics (trampoline, tumbling, and all-around), track, soccer, and diving where he was two time NCAA champion on the one-meter springboard and six time All-America. "Fletch" was an alternate to the 1956 Olympic Diving Team which qualified him for a 42 nations tour which took him through Melbourne, Australia, where he was able to watch his sister, Barbara Gilders Dudeck, compete for the USA on the three meter springboard. On September 18, 1998, seventeen days after his death, Gilders was inducted into the Ohio State University Athletic Hall of Fame.

Gilders also had a distinguishing career at Northwestern High School in Detroit where he was a highly touted gymnast and diver. The highlight of Gilder's high school career came when he set the national high school indoor pole vault record at 14'10" which stood for 20 years.

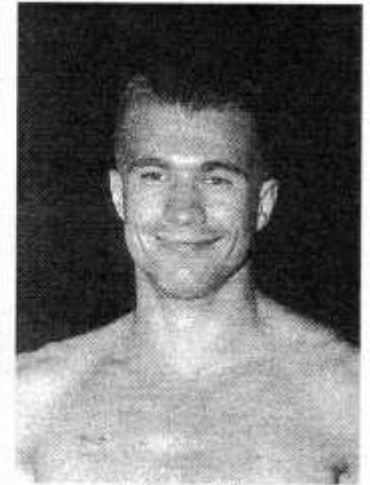
Gilders also had an outstanding coaching career. Upon graduating from Ohio State in 1958 he taught Physical Education and helped coach diving at Ohio State University for one year before going to Ohio University in Athens to become head diving coach. When the head swimming coach left, Gilders became the head swimming coach. He held this position for 23 years. During his tenure, OU Bobcats won eight Mid-American Conference swim-

ming titles, including three consecutive crowns in 1969, 1970, and 1971. Two head coaching positions were not enough for Gilders at OU so he also provided his coaching talents to Tennis and Track.

After retiring from Ohio University, Gilders found that he still had a love for coaching and offered his talents to the outstanding NCAA Division III Kenyon University swimming program. While coaching the divers at Kenyon, Gilders produced numerous national champions and All-Americans.

Gilders will be dearly missed by his family, including his wife, four children and nine grandchildren, his sister, and his many friends in the swimming and diving world. Truly, we have lost a great athlete and coach.

-by Don Leas



Fletcher Gilders

BRIAN BABCOCK DIES OF CANCER

Champion gymnast, Brian Babcock, has died of complications after having a bone marrow transplant. Earlier this year, Babcock learned he had a leukemia-like cancer called myelodysplasia. This type of cancer hampers the body's ability to produce blood and fight infection. He received a bone-marrow transplant on Aug 14, then died in his Houston-area home with his family at his side. He was 38 years old.

Babcock just missed a spot on the 1984 Olympic team, after recovering from his third knee operation. The next year, he came back to win the national all-around title.

LESSONS FROM GEESE

Fact 1:

As each goose flaps its wings, it creates an "uplift" for the birds that follow. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew alone.

Lesson:

People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

Fact 2:

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of flying alone. It quickly moves back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front of it.

Lesson:

If we have as much sense as a goose, we stay in formation with those headed where we want to go. We are willing to accept their help and give our help to others.

Fact 3:

When the lead goose tires, it rotates back into the formation and another goose flies to the point position.

Lesson:

It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership. As with geese, people are interdependent on each other's skills, capabilities and unique arrangements of gifts, talents or resources.

Fact 4:

The geese flying in formation honk to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

Lesson:

We need to make sure our honking is encouraging. In groups where there is encouragement, the production is much greater. The power of encouragement (to stand by one's heart or core values and encourage the heart and core of others) is the quality of honking we seek.

Fact 5:

When a goose gets sick, wounded or shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow it down to help and protect it. They stay with it until it dies or is able to fly again. Then, they launch out with another formation or catch up with the flock.

Lesson:

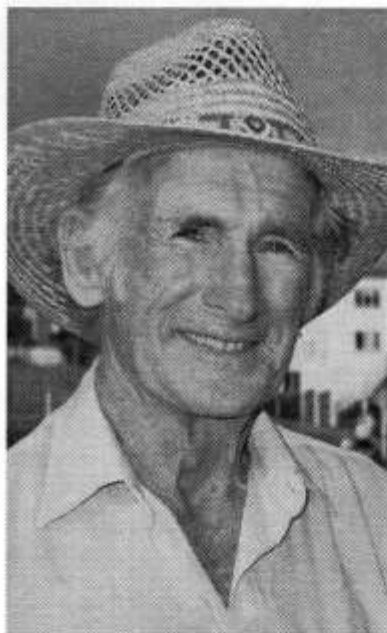
If we have as much sense as geese, we will stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong.

RUSS SAUNDERS: PIED PIPER OF MUSCLE BEACH, THREE MUSKETEER,

Russ Saunders grew up in Winnipeg, Canada, the youngest of a large family with 8 children. He was very active in gymnastics and acrobatics. Russ always gives credit to two of his coaches, Wally Kaczor, gymnastics coach, and Tommy Walker, Canadian Olympic Diving Coach. With the help of these two coaches, he won Canadian National Championships in gymnastics and in diving.

Saunders brother Ray, says of him: "He had so much confidence in his dare-devil attitude. Fortunately he had the ability and nerve to go with it. He was the inspiration of our gang. Once when he was really young, Russ jumped off the barn holding on to chickens thinking he could fly. We made our own teeter-board, like at the circus, and put up a safety belt using the telephone poles in our backyard. We would try the darndest things, even did front somersaults and adagio on snow skis, 360 degree turns and held 3-highs on skis. This was long before anybody thought of what they now call 'hot dog skiing'."

Saunders eventually moved to California and heard about Muscle Beach in Santa Monica. He casually dropped by, and was immediately hooked. There he saw Pudge Stockton, Bruce Conner, Relna Brewer, Glenn Sundby, Wayne Long, Deforest Most, Ran Hall, George Cameron, Johnnie Collins, Lee Thompson, Helen Smith Carole Rutledge, Jack Marlowe, Ralph Wilson and all the other regulars of Muscle Beach at the time. It was more talent than he had ever seen in one place.



Russ Saunders at Muscle Beach

bridge while handcuffed and swam a hundred yards in the Kern River. He also doubled for Alan Ladd in the movie, *This Gun for Hire*. Saunders doubled Ladd in all his pictures until Uncle Sam called him up for the army in November, 1942.

Starting in the M.P.'s, Saunders volunteered for the Paratroopers. Before going overseas, he was assigned to a special unit and ended up being on the general's staff as a war correspondent. He managed to keep up his acrobatics by teaching buddies hand balancing and entertaining the troops. He was also chosen to dive with international diving champions in a special Armed Forces Aquacade in England. He is proud of the fact that while in London at the U.S. Embassy on New Year's Day, 1944, he was naturalized as a U.S. citizen. He continued to serve in England, Ireland and

France and was among the first troops into Berlin. While there he attended the Potsdam conference, where he was decorated by President Truman as an outstanding Army war correspondent.

Returning home after the war, he headed back to Hollywood and Muscle Beach. Everyone knew Saunders at the beach. He participated in so many of the activities and was such a driving force that some people occasionally called it "Russel Beach."

Sometimes they had contests at Muscle Beach to see who could do a front somersault over the most people. Usually, it was Saunders who won (his record was 14 people standing side by side leaning over). Saunders was also known as one of the best spotters around. Everyone knew that his reactions were very fast. He did excellent adagio work with many of the fine female acrobats who came to the beach. He also helped organize and set-up for photos and movies.

Harold Zinkin said: "If I had to sum it up in my mind, I would say that Russ was the most creative innovator and motivator at the beach, way ahead of his time....He was most generous with his teaching and helping. When I think of the beach, I see long lines of little kids waiting their turn to do a trick with him and how patient he was with them....In the middle of all his activity, he would spot even the poorest participants in order to keep from having accidents.

"He used to do all kinds of fun things. I can remember walking on the pier and he would run and dive off the pier right in front of some stranger to do a front flip with a half twist so he would be facing the pier (a drop of about 20 feet) and run underneath it. When the tourist looked over the edge there would be no one there. We'd get a great laugh...

"He was the strongest influence in my doing acrobatics. I really got started doing more than just hands to hands with his encouragement and teaching on the platform. His skills were phenomenal along with his ability to teach...."

Although Saunders was never a serious bodybuilder or weightlifter, he had many friends among the regulars such as Vic and Armand Tanny, Steve Reeves, Ed Fury (Hollochek), Dave Sheppard, George Eiferman and Irwin Paris. He often would get them to come onto the platform and do a little adagio or balancing.

To quote Armand Tanny, author of physical fitness articles: "...what an outstanding guy! ...he always had such rapport and admiration for people in other sports. He was a real instigator of



Saunders modeled for Salvador Dali's "The Christ of St. John"



Saunders with Salvador Dali

& MODEL FOR SALVADOR DALI

activity at the beach. I saw him grab more than one strong weightlifter and get them involved on the platform....I can remember once at the beach his doing a one hand handstand on top of this 4x4 pole (the city had put in) that was sticking up about 10-12 feet in the air. I don't know how he could get up there, much less know how he did the one arm. Yea...I've always said that Russ was one of the world's great athletes and acrobats."

Jack LaLanne, one of the more well-know fitness and body builders among the beach participants, is a good friend of Russ' and has stated, "Russ is one of the finest gentlemen and all-around acrobats and athletes I have ever known. He is very unselfish and is always trying to help people...A great human being...A role model for young people..."

Russ' fame grew internationally as he continued to do shows and work with professionals from around the world. He could jump higher and farther than most anyone. His reactions were very quick and he kept his wits about him while performing stunts. He participated in over 500 films. He did many notable stunts, some of which are considered movie classics: The fight scene in *Shane*, as well as



Saunders holding Paula Boelsems while standing on Johnnie Collins head

scenes in *Three Musketeers*, *7 Brides for 7 Brothers*, and *Singing in the Rain*. Although not the most dangerous, the stunt that gave Saunders the most concern was when he used a fencing foil just inches from Alan Ladd's face.

Saunders is known for making acrobatics a real part of stunt work. Many famous directors, producers and well known actors have asked for him throughout the years knowing they could rely on his ability and creative ideas. In the special *Great Moments*

of MGM, he is the only stunt person given credit. Doubling for Gene Kelly in one of the scenes in *Three Musketeers*, he jumps from roof top to roof top. Then, he catches a waving flag which rips and he swings to land in a window. Fay Alexander, a legendary trapeze and circus performer and Circus Hall of Fame recipient, helped Saunders rig for this stunt and has said, "This stunt took the most coordination, timing and ability for anything I've ever seen. It sure equals any aerial circus act. Russ, without a doubt, is the best all-around acrobat I have ever known. He's one of a kind."

Of all of his many notable activities, Saunders is most proud of being chosen by Salvador Dali to be his model for the painting of "The Christ of St. John" which now hangs in the Glasgow, Scotland art museum and the fact that he is given credit for doing this in a book by Robert Descharnes, *Dali, the Man and his Works*.

Saunders last big movie was *Mississippi Burning*. He also has done other work such as music videos and television shows and is called on as a consultant. He worked 12 years on the TV show, "Circus of the Stars," and has helped train many stars for different acts

Events Schedule cont.

February 5-April 12

Feb 6	Go For It GymFest (GG)	Lech, Austria
Feb 10-13	USA Gymnastics Winter Cup Challenge (M)	Las Vegas, NV
		Las Vegas, NV
Feb 12-14	FIS Snowboard World Cup	Asahigawa, JPN
Feb 12-14	Pan Am Games Trials (Women's Gymnastics)	Spanona, CA
Feb 18-20	FIS Snowboard World Cup	Naeba, JPN
Feb 26-28	FIS Snowboard Junior World Championships	Alpe de Siusi, IT
March (early)	Cirque du Soleil Auditions	San Francisco, CA
		Amsterdam, Holland??
March 4-6	VISA Gymnastics American Cup (MW)	St. Petersburg, FL
March 5-7	FIS Snowboard World Cup	Kreischberg, AU
March 7	Internatl 3 on 3 Gymnastics Championships (MWR)	St. Petersburg, FL
March 11-14	FIS Snowboard World Cup	Olang, IT
March 18-?	<i>Saltimbanco</i> (Cirque du Soleil)	Melbourne, AUS
March 26-28	Internatl Gymnastics Team Championships (MW)	Richmond, VA
April 6-12	1999 USASA Snowboard Nationals	Telluride, CO

such as Arabian pyramids, risley, teeterboard and being shot out of the cannon. One of the most delightful stars he worked with was Brooke Shields. Saunders taught Shields how to do the Spanish Web.

Bob Yerkes, former coordinator of the Circus of the Stars and well-known circus performer as well as stunt man states of his mentor and friend: "Russ is very imaginative with the talent to back it up. There is no end to the variety of the stunts he has done and coordinated...more than most of the stunt people. He could do it all...teeterboard, risley, rings, adagio, fights, dive...the list is endless....I'm fortunate to benefit from the knowledge he has...He really trained a lot of people, got a lot of kids started...So generous with his knowledge and talent."

After the platform was taken off the beach in 1959, Saunders was the main hub in keeping acrobatics going on at the beach. His enthusiastic personality kept people enjoying their workouts and participating in acrobatics. He brought his own equipment, teeterboard, risley roll, trampoline, pedestal, mats, etc., for years down to the beach for all to use. Not only did some of the old-timers continue to work out but new people came and participated. Saunders taught thousands of children and people acrobatics. He named his group "Muscle Beach AcroBrats."



Saunders doubling for Gene Kelly in "Three Musketeers"

(continued on p. 14)

He got some of the young people jobs in the movies and did charity shows with others. They all loved and respected him. He was the Pied Piper of Muscle Beach.

Over the years, Saunders and Paula Boelsems traveled the world together, performing many acts, including a duo adagio and teeterboard known as Russell and Paulette, and a trio teeterboard act known as the Russ Saunders Trio. In 1975, Saunders and Boelsems



Saunders doubling for Alan Ladd

went to Germany, as the U.S. representatives at the first international rules and judges course in the new competitive sport of acrobatics. They became the first accredited judges in the USA for the International Federation of Sports Acrobatics.

Saunders continues to be active in promoting the sport of acrobatics. He has been working with the City of Santa Monica helping to plan a rehabilitation of the beach south of the pier, which is the original Muscle Beach.

He still goes there to chat with the old-timers on the benches and teach a few children acrobatics. Most of all, he likes to show his photos of the old days and reminisce of those great days when the beach was full of activity; when he and Bill Petty, Moe (Deforest Most) and George Paul were organizing the Muscle Beach shows; and when he was helping the Santa Monica Recreation Director with improvements to the platform. Saunders states: "There were at least 50 good acrobats, gymnasts and coaches in those days, plus the weightlifters. People were diversified. We had the best of

equipment and so much knowledge being exchanged. Each person that came to the beach contributed something different. There was no other place in the world that had a concentration of people with such great talent and ability on a public beach. They were the pioneers of gymnastics, acrobatics, and physical fitness in the U.S. I sure enjoyed and am proud to be a part of it. I received so much from my participation there, I wish it could continue."

Last February, for their 50th year anniversary as partners, Boelsems surprised Saunders with a small dinner party which included a few old-time beach participants as a small tribute to celebrate all the unusual and fantastic things they have gotten to do. She feels a lucky person to have shared in so many of Saunders accomplishments. Boelsems says, "It was just hours after I first met Russ Saunders on February 29, 1940, that I was being tossed through the air for him to catch me. I am still working with him now, over 50 years later. Working with him has brought me a great many adventures and successes I don't think I would have had otherwise."



Saunders balancing high at Muscle Beach

-by Paula Boelsems

USA TRAMPOLINE & TUMBLING VOTES TO DISSOLVE AND MERGE WITH USA GYMNASTICS

A historic vote took place at 9:32pm on Saturday, November 7, 1998 in Dallas, Texas. USA Trampoline & Tumbling (USATT) voted to dissolve and merge with USA Gymnastics (USAG). This vote followed an even more historic vote that took place in October



Steve Elliott & Tim Schlosser

in Sydney, Australia - the vote to dissolve the International Federation of Trampoline (FIT) and merge with the International Federation of Gymnastics (FIG). This was the first time in the history of the International Olympic Committee that two international federations have merged.

These mergers have a huge impact on the sport of trampoline, both nationally and internationally. On the international level, trampoline will be an official medal event in the 2000 Olympics. 24 athletes, 12 men and 12 women, will compete in individual trampoline competition.

On the national level, the following ramifications will take place:



(l to r): Larry Gleason, Pat Henderson, Judy Wills Cline, Jennifer Parilla

1. USAG, with 90,000 members, over 50 employees, and an annual budget of \$12-\$13 million will be the national governing body for trampoline and tumbling as of January 1, 1999. USATT, which presently has 5,700 members and 3 employees will be under the umbrella of USAG.

2. Marketing of trampoline will become the responsibility of USAG's in-house marketing agency, designated the "Properties Division." This division includes a public relations department, a merchandise department, and a commercial department (corporate sponsors, licensing, promotions, special



Bil Copp and Connie Mara

events, television, and internet).

3. Members will receive the same benefits as USAG members. There are six different membership affiliations, each one providing benefits based on specific needs of their diverse members.

4. Trampoline will be treated, within the USAG Bylaws, the same as the other three existing programs (Artistic Gymnastics, Rhythmic Gymnastics, General Gymnastics).

People from all over the country gathered for the first meeting of the USA Trampoline & Tumbling Alumni Association.



BILL WALKER - NEW PRESIDENT OF U.S. DIVING

Bill Walker was recently elected as the new president of U.S. Diving. Walker has been involved with U.S. Diving for over 22 years at the national level. He has served in numerous positions, including Chairman of the Law and Legislation Committee, Vice-President Junior Olympics, Vice-President Senior Diving, member of the Board of Directors for 14 years, and most recently, Vice-President of Administration. Walker has also been appointed US National Diving Team Manager/Leader five times, and has judged over a dozen international diving competitions.



Bill Walker

A former diver, Walker was coached by Pete Desjardins at the University of Miami. In 1973, he received his law degree from Stetson University College of Law. He has specialized in business/commercial litigation and transaction areas.

In addition to his law practice responsibilities, Walker coached diving at the local level in St. Petersburg, Florida for many years. He has served as president of the Florida Association AAU Diving, and the Florida Association of United States Diving. He is presently the diving coach at St. Petersburg Catholic High School.

Congratulations to our new World Acrobatics Society member!

WORLD PREMIER OF "O"

The world premier of "O" took place on October 16 at the luxurious Bellagio resort in Las Vegas. "O" is the French word for water (spelled "eau"). This newest, of Cirque du Soleil's shows, features 75 international performers performing in, on and above water.



(l to r): Lani Loken-Dahle, John Deininger, Carol-Ann O'Mack, and Judy Wills Cline

Several members of the World Acrobatics Society were present at this impressive world premier, which included an all-night celebration, in "Cirque" style. The next morning they were treated to a special tour of the incomparable stage of "O". They would like to express special thanks to Rob Bollinger, Andre Vallerand, Line Giasson, and Don Dunfield for the part that they played in this incredible weekend experience.



(l to r): John Deininger, Judy Wills Cline, Don Dunfield, Frank Bare II

The stage is a 1.5 million-gallon pool, 25 feet deep and measuring 150-by-100 feet. The Russian Swing, Washington Trapeze, Aerial Cradle, High Dive and Synchronized Swimming are just a few of the many spectacular acts.

CHRISTIE HAYES - STUNTWOMAN SUPREME!

Six-time national trampoline champion, Christie Hayes, has taken her skills into stuntwork. Hayes recently completed an episode of "Baywatch," the popular television show. In the episode, Hayes drives a motorboat 65 miles an hour, sends it out of control over a wake, and jumps out. The male star of the episode, David Hasselhauf, rescues her.



Christie Hayes

This is not the first time Hayes has been featured on television. Some of you might have seen her flying through the sky in the Serta mattress commercial. On the big screen, Hayes has performed stuntwork in the movie "Spitfire," as well as doubling for Nicollette Sheridan in "Spy Hard."

Hayes just completed her law degree at UCLA, and intends to continue competing in trampoline and pursue further stunt jobs. Congratulations to you, Christie!

JIM LORD: NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF AACCA

The American Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Advisors (AACCA) recently selected Jim Lord as their new Executive Director. Lord has experience as a National Safety Certifier for AACCA, Director of Instructional Programs for Universal Cheerleaders Association (UCA), and Assistant Spirit Coordinator at Sam Houston State University.

AACCA was formed in 1988 with the goal of promoting cheerleading safety and the education of cheerleading coaches.

DICK MULVIHILL RECOVERS FROM HEART OPERATION

Well known gymnastics coach, Dick Mulvihill, recently survived his third heart operation. Going into the operation, Mulvihill's doctors gave him only a slim chance of survival. As they told Mulvihill after the operation, they were truly surprised, and infinitely pleased when he started breathing on his own again. Mulvihill is now recovering nicely, and is even spending several hours in the gym each day.

Mulvihill and his wife, Linda, are the founders/owners of the National Academy of Artistic Gymnastics located in Springfield, Oregon. They have coached countless Olympians, and this past March they celebrated the 25th anniversary of the academy.



Dick Mulvihill and his family

Mulvihill would like to express thanks to his many gymnastics friends who called and wrote during this difficult time. Their support provided him with the necessary strength for survival.

The World Acrobatics Society wishes you the very best in your recovery, Dick.

While I always look forward to your newsletter, I was saddened to learn of Steve Johnson's demise. I helped and observed him when he was a high school gymnast and diver in Denver, CO. That was a long time ago and brought back many memories. Also, being of Bob Clotworthy's era it was nice to see his letter to the editor. I have not seen Bob since the Olympic Diving trials in 1952. All of this brings up a request. Would it be possible for you to disseminate a World Acrobatics Society membership directory to members enabling us to get in touch with old ties?

-Winston M. Allen
(former Denison University
Men's Diving Coach)

This is a quick note to say hello and to congratulate you on your great job with the WAS newsletter. I know it takes a great deal of your time, but the coaches do appreciate your efforts.

Dick Kimball
(University of Michigan
Men's & Women's Diving Coach)

Many thanks for your article about Larry Griswold. I knew Larry casually and am the proud owner of both of his books on trampolining, one of which he autographed for me.

In reading your article, I'm left with the impression that Larry and George Nissen invented the trampoline. This is

Letters to the Editor

not so, but they may have sophisticated it and by making it foldable and portable, it became commercially viable. Enclosed is a copy of a letter and a couple of photos I received from Bill McAlister expressing his thoughts on the subject. The photos were taken around 1928. Bill said that Captain Loop had his trampoline at Long Beach around 1927-28 and that the trampoline existed long before Captain Loop's contraption.

In his book, Larry mentions a professional performer Du Trampoline (no date) who "developed the earliest form of the apparatus..." He also said that "many coaches of diving and tumbling used trampoline tumbling in their programs as early as 1926." Apparently a trampoline type apparatus was standard in circuses long before the 1930's.

I don't mean to be so picky, but as I work on my book, I find that my efforts at complete accuracy become standard practice. This is not to say that my book will be mistake free, but I'll make it as accurate as I can.

Thanks again, for the article, and for keeping me informed about the World Acrobatics Society.

-Bob Clotworthy
(1956 Olympic Diving Champion)



Bill McAlister, World Masters Diving Champion, performing a forward 1 3/4 somersaults on a trampoline in 1928. The trampoline was owned by Captain Loop. The bed was made of cotton rope. "Cap" rigged catching nets and side aprons around the trampoline for added safety.

Correction:
In the last issue, Bob Clotworthy was identified as having won the gold medal in diving in the 1952 Olympics. Rather, Clotworthy won the bronze medal in 1952 and the gold medal in the 1956 Olympics.

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World Acrobatics Society
Newsletter
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World Acrobatics Society Newsletter is published quarterly in winter, spring, summer and fall. It is the official publication of the World Acrobatics Society; c/o Hal Frey, Secretary; 5720 Olinda Rd.; El Sobriante, CA 94803; (510) 223-3427; halfrey@uclink.berkeley.edu. All members of the World Acrobatics Society receive the Newsletter as a membership benefit. All editorial and advertising material, or questions, should be directed to:
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