

# Nautilus Bulletin #2

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# Commercial Bias

Prejudice such as that encountered among involved people is a strange factor indeed; many years ago I noted that, ". . . animals seem to survive in inverse ration to the amount of professional conservation attention that they are afforded." And it has long been obvious that professional pilots are actually biased in favor of dangerous aircraft. It is not the purpose of this bulletin to delve into the psychological factors responsible for such inverted thinking; but I do think that this factor – as it is encountered in the field of physical training – must be carefully considered.

Far from advancing, the field of body building has been steadily marching backwards for the last twenty years or more; which statement will be considered outright heresay by most currently active bodybuilders. A biased selection and a distorted presentation of statistics has been used to "prove" points that are actually the opposite of truth – and there has been little if anything accidental about the final results produced by the flood of propaganda so apparent in most publications in this field. In effect, the very people who have been claiming that they are trying to elevate the field have almost destroyed it.

An old saying puts it very well, ". . . figures don't lie, but liars figure." Commercial interests in the field of body building constantly point out a few outstanding examples of muscular development as proof of their claims that great advancements have been made within the last few years –and it is certainly true that there are outstanding individuals on the scene at the moment, men like Sergio Oliva, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Casey Viator; but it is equally true that such men are almost literally freaks –the average man could never hope to duplicate their physical development, regardless of how he trained. Thus such individuals represent nothing apart from expectable deviations from the average.

Out of a group of a hundred individuals selected at random, the average body weight might be 160 pounds – and one or two subjects might weigh as much as 190 pounds. But if the sample was increased to a thousand individuals, then you could reasonably expect to find at least one subject with a body weight of 200 pounds – while the average for the group remained as before. And out of a group of a million subjects, you could reasonably expect at least one individual with a body weight of 250 pounds or more –but again, the average would remain 160 pounds.

Thus proof of improvements in method must come from an increase in the average – and in the field of body building, the average production of results has steadily declined during the last twenty years; the average results being produced today are NOT better than they were twenty years ago – instead, they are worse. And exactly the same thing is true in the fields of Olympic lifting and power lifting – in spite of vast propaganda to the contrary; certainly the records have increased – but that is only to be expected when dealing with a far larger number of subjects. But even that is misleading – because the performances really haven't increased as much as most people think; in the case of the Olympic press, a great deal of the so-called "progress" has been produced by relaxation of the rules, to the point that the press has now degenerated into an outright jerk with little or nothing in common with the press as it was practiced twenty years ago –and at least one man, Douglas Hepburn, was capable of bench pressing near-record poundages over fifteen years ago, and at a body weight far below that of the present record holders. Thirty years ago, Bob Peoples deadlifted well over 700 pounds at a body weight below 180 pounds – today, men weighing twice as much have finally been able to add approximately 100 pounds to his record. Some of Paul Anderson's lifts – performed over fifteen years ago – will probably never be duplicated.

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The really outstanding men of today are exceptions – as such men always were, and as they always will be; there are larger numbers of such outstanding individuals in view at the moment simply and only because a much larger number of men are now training with weights. But what about the average trainees?

The simple truth of the matter is that the average trainee of today could not hope to compete on equal terms with the average trainee of twenty years ago; and it is equally true that most of this decline in the average production of results is directly due to commercial bias in the field of weight-training.

I cannot begin to attack such commercial bias in a bulletin of reasonable length – but at the same time, I cannot just ignore it; so I will refer to specific examples of such bias in the following chapters – but I will not even attempt to go into the length of explanations required to disprove all such myths.