

AMERICAN SOKOL



Christmas Past, Present, Future
Holiday for those of Good Will

AMERICAN SOKOL

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Our Sokol Credo:

To build a healthy and beautiful human body —
To cultivate a harmonious and total person —
To develop firm character, a well rounded disposition and
A love of truth and justice —
To produce strong, lovely and honorable people,
That is the goal of a "Sokol" education.

What is a "Sokol"?
"Sokol" is falcon in Czech language,
it is our symbol of swiftness,
courage and strength.



"Zdravé a krásné lidské tělo — souladné vypěstění celého člověka,
povahy ucelené, neobložené, pravdivé a spravedlivé —
lidé silní, krásní a dobří — to je cíl sokolské výchovy."

CHRISTMAS - A HOLIDAY FOR THOSE OF GOOD WILL

{We share a few Christmas customs with you and hope you, in turn, will share yours with us for future publications}

The first recorded Christmas tree in America was in the German Moravian church's communal settlement at Bethlehem, PA. on Christmas Day in 1747. The "tree" was a wooden pyramid covered with evergreen boughs. It held apples, small gifts, pinecones, pastries and candles or light-sticks, from which the tree derives its' German name (The Lichstock).

The first evergreen Christmas trees were found in Pennsylvania among the Germans, Moravians and Dutch. Although decorated trees were not welcomed in New England in colonial times, they were found in the new republic by the early 1800's. Boston was proud to have its' "first" Christmas tree in 1832 when Charles Follen, a German refugee, "dressed" a tree for his son. This tree was to become the great-grandparent of the "traditional" American tree.

Contributor- Sokol Minnesota's SLOVO, Dec. 1989 ·

CHRISTMAS IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Traditionally, the Czechoslovak Christmas season began on St. Nicholas' Eve, December 5th. In old times, there were three men, one dressed as St. Nicholas, one dressed as an Angel with a record book, and the third disguised as the Devil, who made the rounds of the villages. As they went from cottage to cottage, St. Nicholas would ask the good children what they would like to have for Christmas. The Angel would then write down their answers in his book. Good children were given fruit and candy and those who had been naughty during the year were suppose to be switched by the Devil.

Christmas Eve would include a meal of carp, just like Americans expect to have turkey on Thanksgiving. The children would save the fish scales as they were supposed to bring good luck in the form of money during the next year. A traditional Christmas Eve menu for a family living in Prague would include: carp soup, carp cooked like wiener schnitzel, and eaten with mashed potatoes, a vegetable and a potato and mayonnaise salad, compote of cooked fruits, apple strudel, homemade cookies.

After the Christmas Eve dinner table is cleared, the tree lights are turned on and the youngest child in the family passes out the gifts. Carols are sung and games are played. One of the Czech games is a "family check-up" to see if the family circle will still be intact on the next Christmas Eve. Each member takes an apple, slices it crosswise through the middle to expose the seeds, and then eats it. If the cut shows the seeds in the pattern of a star, all is well; but if the seeds fall into the shape of a cross, it means bad luck will befall that person before the next Christmas. Another unusual custom

is to light tiny candles set in walnut half shells and float them in a large bowl of water. The person whose candle goes out last is the luckiest, but misfortune will come to those whose candles flicker out quickly.

In many little farm villages, the girls of the family still go out in the yard during the evening and, giggling, toss one of their shoes over a shoulder as they stand facing their parents' home. If the shoe points away from the house, it is a sign that they will be married within the year.

Christmas Day Dinner traditionally includes goose with Czech bread dumplings, kraut and soup.

Contributor - Sokol Greater Cleveland review of the book *The Land and People of Czechoslovakia* by Elvajean Hall. ·

More from The SLOVO....

The Czechs and Slovaks get off to a good start with a traditional house cleaning at the beginning of December..a week-long effort. The Christmas holiday season officially begins with St. Nicholas Day and it marks the start of baking *Vanocni Cukrovi* (Christmas candies and sweets). Each family has its special goodies to share with other families and friends. Part of the holiday includes visiting friends and celebrating together. It is customary for those who have quarreled during the year to forgive each other publicly.

A tree is bought, secretly hidden away; no one is allowed to see it until after dinner on December 24th. Only the head of the household trims the tree, done on Christmas Eve morn, and only he or she can see the tree until that magic moment when *Jezisek*, the Christ child arrives (which always happens after dinner).

The Christmas tree is decorated with hand-made ornaments using walnut shells wrapped in colored paper or gilded. Some use eggshells decorated to look like fish or angels. Colored pin-wheels resembling snowflakes and stars are hung by a thread. A small *creche* is placed at the base of the tree. Gifts are put under the tree before 6 p.m. in great secrecy.

On December 23rd people go out to buy the traditional Christmas carp for dinner. Several days earlier, huge wooden barrels appeared in the cities with live carp swimming around in them. The buyer points to the fish he or she wants and then the fun of trying to catch it begins. Most often the carp is taken home alive and allowed to swim in the family bathtub until Christmas Eve morning. Best cuts of the carp are covered with flour, dipped in egg, covered with bread crumbs and fried. Lesser cuts are baked with dried prunes and served with dumplings mixed with butter-fried cubes of

RENATA TYRSOVA

By Vladislav Slavik

A short study of the life of the daughter of Jindrich Fuegner and wife of Dr. Miroslav Tyrs, founders of the SOKOL movement.

dedicated to Sokol Prazsky

(Part II, continued from last month)

A known journalist, elder stateswoman in Sokol, Renata became a prominent citizen of Prague. Even the Austrian government realized that Renata Tyrsova was someone to be reckoned with.

The highest point of her accomplishments came just about at the time when all of Europe shook in the devastating spasms of World War I. The moment that Sokols had waited for so long, and Tyrs was dreaming of, the moment when the brave deeds had to replace the words, the moment of truth also set forth its horrible consequences. COS (Czechoslovak Sokol Union) was disbanded, Josef Scheiner (Tyrs' successor) was charged with high treason. For an example, the Austrian government sentenced to death two Moravian Sokols and immediately hanged them. Habsburgs, mortally wounded, mercilessly struck one blow after another against the Czech nation.

In reprisal, Renata resigned her government positions and readied herself for a journey to Switzerland to join T. G. Masaryk in his fight for Czechoslovak independence. Realizing her enormous value abroad, especially in France and among the American Sokols, the Austrian government refused to issue her a passport. Undeterred, Renata helped her nation in many ways. When the resources draining caused famine and disease, Renata helped form a relief organization "Ceska srdce" (Czech heart) which saved thousands of children. In May of 1917, when many Czech politicians were still "sitting on the fence", Renata was the first one to publicly sign a Manifest of Czech Writers prepared by Alois Jirasek. The Manifest called for a total independence of Czechoslovak lands and was of immense help to T.G. Masaryk convincing Western powers that he represented all Czechs and Slovaks.

But her finest hour came right at the beginning of the war. An assembly of Prague's outstanding ladies was called to the Old Town Hall. When the chairlady addressed the gathering speaking in German, Renata interrupted her with a sharp rebuke: "In this ancient city hall, Capital of the Czech Kingdom, one cannot, indeed must not, speak but only in the Czech language". Her nation never forgot Renata's brave act, a simple statement of national self-respect.

While Renata never shied away from any work that would benefit her nation, her genuine interest during her long life was Sokol. Spiritually, she considered herself a steadfast guardian of Tyrs' ideas. As such, Renata saw to it, that despite numerous social, economical and moral changes in her lifetime, Sokol would remain faithful to Tyrs' principles. In 1924 COS invited Renata to bid farewell to a Sokol gymnastic team as it was leaving for the Paris Olympiad. Without any hesitation Renata addressed the team, and in a larger sense, the entire Sokol organization:

"Brothers, as you know, Tyrs did not approve any one-sided individualistic contest such as the one in which you are now ready to compete. What he had in mind was something else; that is an improvement for all- not merely an improvement for few individuals. However, I understand that you are going to Paris to gain honors for your country. This being your goal, I sincerely wish you success. Nazdar!"

As an 8-year-old child, Renata had cheerfully decorated the first Sokol flag of Sokol Prazsky with flowers. 61 years later, on October 28, 1923, standing in front of a Sokol hall that her father built, Renata crowned the COS flag with a green branch of laurel. Thousands of Sokols marched from there through a rejoicing City of Prague to dedicate a cornerstone of Tyrsuv dum (Tyrs' House). Many turbulent years had passed between those two great events. The arrogant Habsburg empire disappeared into the abyss of history. New democratic states rightfully took their place, The dream of Tyrs and Fuegner finally came true. Czechoslovakia was free - in a large measure through enormous sacrifices of Sokols, at home as well as abroad. Renata Tyrsova, now almost 70, spent the

Renata was the champion of social justice, the pioneer of Czech folklore and the defender of Tyrs' pure Sokol.



RENATA TYRISOVA

twilight of her life in tranquil rest, although she did write three books about her father and husband. The books were, and still are, a deep well of valuable information for Sokol historians. Czechoslovak National Council elected her a vice-president of that organization. In 1924 the COS paid her the highest tribute and expressed its deepest gratitude by bestowing upon her the COS medal.

But Renata had no intentions to rest on her laurels. Without any announcements she would venture into Tyrsv dum, Slets or exhibitions, or folklore and art exhibits. Sokol leaders, especially her close friend, Josef Scheiner and Sokol historian Karel Vanicek, kept her informed but also, seeking her advice. The "guardian of pure Sokol heritage" never hesitated to offer a solution, constructive criticism, or help if needed. At the end of their visits Renata would urge them to steadfastly adhere to Tyrs' legacy: to serve the entire nation and be guided by the Czech spirit and culture. In her last years Renata began to fear that her nation was beginning to deviate from the noble ideals that brought Czechoslovak independence. Only in Sokol did Renata see an ardent shield protecting the spiritual values on which Czechoslovak republic was built.

On February 22, 1937, as the clouds of still another catastrophe began to gather above her motherland, Renata Tyrsova peacefully died of old age. The champion of social justice, the pioneer of Czech folklore and the defender of Tyrs' pure Sokol, she finished her wordly task. Like her father and husband long before her, Renata Tyrsova, the last great woman of the Czech national revival, met the test of fate.

Christmas continued from page 3 -

of bread. Some carp is made in plain gelatin as *Rosol* and served cold with salad. The head and tail are wrapped in white cloth, boiled and the stock is made into soup with vegetables and served with croutons.

There was caroling in the streets and homes on Christmas. Sometimes the carolers carried miniature Bethlehem scenes along. It was customary to invite them in for a glass of wine and *vanocka*, a sweet bread made with nuts, raisens and candied fruit. There is much dancing and eating after the fasting which ends on Christmas Eve. Sometimes little boys dressed as The Three Kings go out singing for treats.

Dinner begins at 6 p.m. with members of the family standing and praying together, and then when the mother gives the signal, they all sit down at the same time to dinner and no one is allowed to get up, no matter what! They may also share *oplatky* and honey before the meal. Christmas Eve supper might include pearl barley soup with mushrooms, carp, potato salad, fruits and decorated cookies. In some families there is a custom of putting a small coin under each person's plate to symbolize wealth in the coming year, and that coin is carried around for good luck. When dinner is over they all stand at the same time and wish each other

Joyous Christmas *Stastne a Vesele Vanoce*. Then they embrace and finally rush to the tree and the gifts are distributed and opened. A quiet evening is spent until Midnight Mass. Sometimes the children slept on a bedding of straw on the floor under a table or the Christmas tree, allowing them to take part in the Lord's poor and humble birth.

Christmas dinner might consist of giblet soup with noodles, roast goose with dumplings and kraut, braided coffee cake, kolaches, fruit, nuts and coffee.

Some Christmas games were played - the candle in the nutshell, games of predictions of marriage. At the beginning of Advent December 1st, a branch of a cherry tree was broken and placed in a pot of water in the kitchen. It usually burst into bloom around Christmas and was considered a good luck omen. The girl who tended it was supposed to find a good husband within a year if it bloomed on Christmas Eve. Girls drew sticks from a pile of kindling; a long stick meant a tall husband, a thick one a stout husband, and so on. A future husband's occupation was forecast by dropping melted lead into a pan of water and seeing what shape it took as it cooled. ■

Books on this subject and other Czechoslovak customs are: Czechoslovak Culture, The Czech Book, Czechoslovak Wit and Wisdom - Penfield Press 215 Brown St. Iowa City, Ia 52245-1358

**FUTURE SOKOL LEADERS FUND
NOVEMBER 1991**

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their unselfish performance, in the time of need.
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Charles Machotka
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To train and educate young people to assure able
administrators, the best of idealistic instructors and
educational directors for Sokol units and districts.

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**FUTURE SOKOL LEADERS FUND
NOVEMBER 1991**

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MEMBERSHIP CONTINUES TO GROW

Membership Chairperson Sis. Joan Sedlacek extends
congratulations to the following units on their growth.
Sokols Washington D.C., Stickney, St. Louis, San Fran-
cisco and Sokolice Milwaukee reported net membership
gains in the second quarter of 1991.

Sokols Philadelphia, Detroit, Greater Cleveland, Ceska
Sin, Cedar Rapids, Minnesota, Corpus Christi, Fort Worth,
Houston, Karel-Havlicek Borovsky, Zizka, Los Angeles
and Sokolices' Tabor and South Omaha added new mem-
bers.

Thanks to all units who sent their reports in on time.

**XVII SLET COMMITTEE
SEEKS LOGO DESIGN**

The executive board and the 1993 Slet committee are
preparing the ground work for the upcoming XVII Slet to be
held in the Chicagoland area, June 23-26, 1993.

At this time we are requesting the talents of our members
for ideas to create a theme and design for a Slet logo and the
appropriate art work. The art work should be basically red
and blue on white stock. The logo, theme and accompanying
art work should be coordinated.

Please submit ideas to the attention of the American Sokol
secretary, Nancy Pajeau, at the ASO office in Berwyn. and
include the name of the designer and unit affiliation.

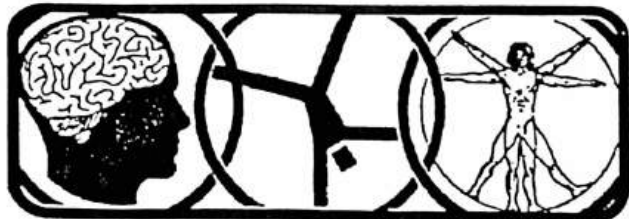


AMERICAN SOKOL ORGANIZATION

GYMNAST

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1991

Editor: Frank H. Michalek — 10 S. 020 Lorraine Dr., Hinsdale, Illinois 60521



Coaches' Education Never Ends

Steve Whitlock

USGF Director of Educational Services

In all sports, NGB Executive Directors are hearing the same questions — "Where are we going to get our new coaches?" "How are the coaches going to gain their training?" "How are the coaches kept up to date with needed information and skills?"

While several NGB's have already undertaken aggressive efforts to develop programs to identify and train their current and future coaches, the survey completed by the USOC Coaching Committee in 1990 clearly indicates that there is a great deal of work to be done to provide coaching education programs for the basic core of coaches who work daily with developmental and recreational level athletes and for the elite coaches who prepare our athletes at the highest levels.

The United States Olympic Committee is making a strong commitment to America's coaches. They have made coaches' education a priority for the next two quadrenniums. Over the next few years, NGB's will be encouraged and assisted in their efforts to provide comprehensive developmental programs for coaching education.

At the entry level, coaches need basic information: first aid training, communication skills, class organization skills, planning, some basic knowledge of the sport sciences, sport "rules," basic skill tech-

niques and progressions, etc. The solution to date is surprisingly similar across sports! Multi-level programs are being developed that begin with providing "core" information from the sport sciences and the teaching profession. "Sport specific" information, skills and techniques are provided by the NGB. A variety of methods are utilized to communicate and measure progress — books, pamphlets, videotape presentations, etc. Home study, "on the job" or in-service training, week-end workshops and clinics are common.

If the program is designed well, the participants can easily identify their route to gaining accreditation in the system. Criteria are developed for each level. Progress is monitored through participation and testing. The coaches can easily determine the steps which they need to take to demonstrate satisfactory achievement.

The depth of information required to be a successful coach at the elite level is almost staggering! Keeping up to date with current trends and sport science research is a problem. As the information becomes more and more detailed and specialized, the coaches find that they not only have difficulty in finding the time to seek out what they need, but they also need assistance in translating research information into practical terms that can be applied in the training situations with their athletes.

Case study evaluation of successful elite coaches demonstrates that these coaches have adopted the attitude that they can never have enough information. They never "know enough" and never "know it all." They realize that to maintain their "cutting edge," they must seek information, guidance and assistance from a wide range of resources. **The smartest coaches in any sport are the ones who never stop learning!**

Coaches' Education Never Ends — cont.

For the NGB's efforts at coaches education programs to be truly successful, the issue of providing ongoing developmental educational programs at the higher levels of coaching must be addressed. One of the goals of the Coaching Committee is to assist the NGB's in making use of the vast resources available through the USOC.

The NGB's must realize that the support and encouragement from the higher level coaches is vital when NGB's institute coaches' education programs. These individuals need to contribute to the process for the development of criteria for successful coaching and serve as models of the "successful" coach in each sport. In addition, they also need to recognize that coaches education programs will be assisting them directly in providing information and recognition.

The above article was suggested by an article titled "Smart Coaches Keep Learning: Good Learners are Good Teachers," by Cindy Bristow, Director of Junior Olympic Softball, Amateur Softball Association appearing in the *ASA Newsletter*, August, 1990.



COACHES CORNER

*Robert Cowan,
Men's Program Administrator*

Communication

Communication or lack thereof has been blamed for more situations than possibly any other excuse. From a missed appointment to a misunderstanding, it is easy to say, "it was just a case of miscommunication."

When miscommunication is present in a gymnastics program, there is more at risk here than simply missing a casual appointment. There are young athletes who have placed their entire trust in an adult, and this adult is supposed to be able to communicate. Coaches must be able to communicate effectively in clear and precise terms that are understood and appreciated by the gymnasts.

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The USGF Safety Manual stresses that a spotter must be in communication with the athlete for safety. Yet, there is a more subtle, and oftentimes more important, need to communicate. It opens up a two-way dialogue. There is a difference between a coach who TALKS to his/her gymnasts and one who really COMMUNICATES! Coaches who communicate to their gymnasts find that their gymnasts can communicate back...in a sharing opportunity. Gymnasts need to feel they can express themselves to their coach, about anything. Surrogate parents are what coaches often find themselves being. Everything from the first menstrual cycle to school problems to home-life issues and yes, even gymnastics fears, can be alleviated or lessened if the athlete has someone to talk to, and someone who will listen.

Take the time to sit your gymnasts down and talk to them. Express yourself in terms that they understand. You do not want to take their parents' place, but you do care for them. If not, you would not put in all the extra hours that coaches usually do. Let your gymnasts know that you are concerned about them, and you will gain their respect. Establish some ground rules for a relationship and open up the communication lines. The hardest thing for an adult to realize is that most kids don't want to be treated like adults. They actually do want guidelines and they do like being told they can't do something, no matter how much they would profess the opposite to an adult.

Finally, and this is the most important, be honest. A child can detect a fake faster than anyone. If they know you care, the battle is half won. If they think you are trying to sell them on something which they know is not real, they will close you out.

Communication is vitally important for the coach and the athlete. It makes for a better, healthier and safer situation for all concerned.

WANTED:



GYMNASTS!

Baby's First Year

By Margi Henschien

A baby develops rapidly during its first year. Each month brings so many changes that it can make scheduling your child's fitness classes difficult. A class of non-crawlers one month may have five out of seven crawling the next. Babies who could not jump a month ago are now jumping, while two in that group are walking and one is still crawling.

The development of babies is not on a time clock; every baby is different. One might cry when asked to join the class for the first time, and yet another may leave his mom without even looking back. Even the best instructor with the most reassuring words and hugs can't always stop the tears.

To keep the class from becoming a traumatic experience, let your child explore the environment. Let him/her get to know the fitness class gradually. Ask if you can arrive a little early for class to let the baby adjust to the new surroundings. If a baby becomes very upset, bring a transitional object from home, such as a favorite blanket or toy.

Soon your baby will be socializing with the other babies. Playing pat-a-cake or waving goodbye are examples of social interaction. A warm-up to songs and games that babies can imitate is good. Between six and nine months, babies babble and can make out certain words.

The biggest changes during these months are the motor skills. A six-month-old may not be able to sit unsupported without tipping over, while a month later s/he can sit confidently. After another month s/he may be crawling all over the place. Your baby will enjoy meeting other people, so a fitness course at this age can be a lot of fun.

Designing a Class

A baby's fitness class should consist of fun activities. If you are designing a class for babies, try to incorporate the following ideas:

Sliding on their bellies is how babies will start to learn to crawl, so be sure to include lots of ways a baby can slide. Place toys just beyond a baby's reach to encourage movement. Remember, even sitting is a skill that has to be mastered first.

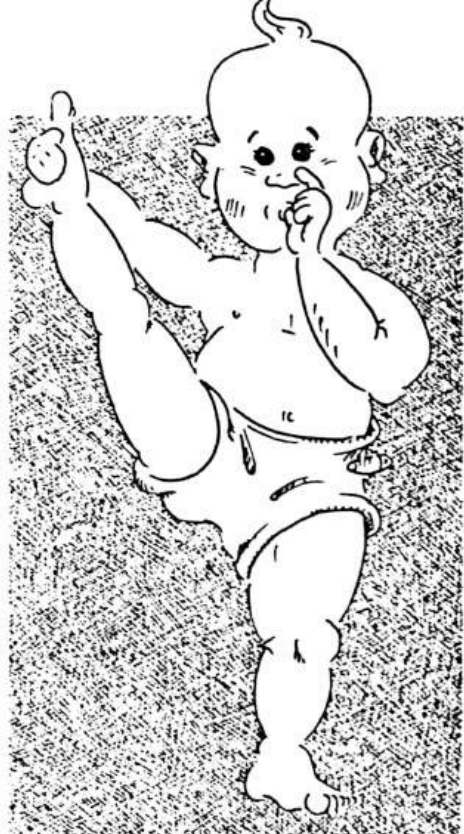
Use lots of tunnels, inclines and bright shapes and colors. Bubbles, music and a sense of routine each week will help make the babies feel comfortable in this new environment.

A parachute can be fun with babies. Place the babies in the center of the floor. The mothers can hold onto the edge of the parachute and lift it high in the air. Babies squeal with delight as the bright colors and gentle breeze go over their heads!

This is exploring time: new people, new environment, new everything! **IG**

Margi Henschien and her husband, Joel, are Owner/Directors of American Gymnastics of Boca in Boca Raton, Fla. Margi also publishes a preschool gymnastics magazine.

International GYMNAST December 1990



On Raising Girl Athletes

By Pat York

'CHECK this out, Mom!" My 12-year-old daughter noticed the cover of a paperback book at our grocery store. It showed a slim, young girl in a sequined leotard sitting gracefully on a vaulting horse. The model had pale blue tulle and flowers in her fluffy pony tail. A froth of more blue tulle and flowers were scattered around the clean, shiny horse.

We both had to laugh at the picture. How could we help it? We thought back to the nine years Nora had spent studying this most difficult and intriguing of sports. If the picture on the book had been accurate, the model would have had the shape of a tiny football player, leg and arm muscles bulging. The gymnast and horse would have been covered in a sticky layer of chalk dust mixed with sweat. The gymnast's hair would have been disheveled, and the horse would have been stained with sweat and the blood from rips, that chronic problem all gymnasts develop when their palms blister and finally tear.

She should have had construction-worker's calluses on her hands, a permanent sore at the nape of her neck, and big strawberry brush burns on her thighs from missed leaps on beam.

Nora isn't a gymnast anymore. Her doctor discovered a genetic defect in her spine that will keep her forever from the sport she both loves and hates.

If it was painful for Nora to give up gymnastics, it was a relief for me. I don't have to drive an hour and a half, four times a week, to get her to practice. I don't have to pay for lessons, handgrips, travel or competition fees. I don't even have to spend weekends in strange cities at gymnastics meets.

So why don't I feel better?

Athletics does funny, subtle things to girls. In a process that is completely different from what boys go through, athletics can change a girl. Once a young girl has become part of a team sport, she develops a sense of competence and accomplishment, and perhaps most importantly, a team spirit. Nora and other young athletes I know say that the friendships they build over sweat and hard work are closer than any others in their lives. Watching their older teammates play gives them role models for courage and grace under pressure. As each girl develops skills and becomes more important to the team, she begins to understand that she is a unique person who can really accomplish things

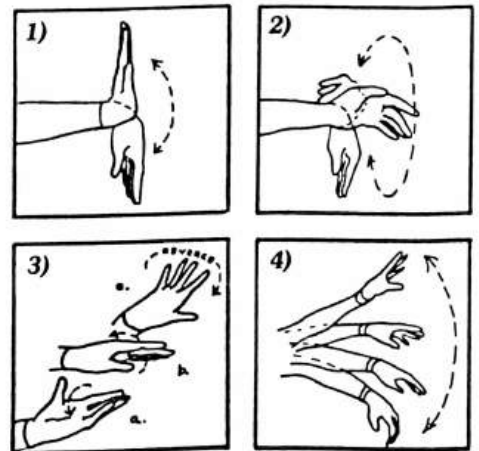
Helping Hands!



4 simple drills to complete your line

By Lynn T. Wilton

Do you fall into one of the above categories? You don't need to spend valuable gym-time working on your hands. Perfect these moves at home, maybe while standing in front of a mirror brushing your teeth, morning and night. Then incorporate what you've mastered into your routines. The difference you'll see—and what the judges will see—just may be that little "extra something" that makes YOU stand out from the rest of the competition!



Hand Exercises

1) Hyperextension to Flexion: Start by shaking your hands to get rid of tension. Then extend your arms, directly to the side or front, and alternate up and down from a total flex to a total extension.

2) Hand Circles: Circle hands from the wrists, first going clockwise, then counter-clockwise. Be sure to stretch through the full range of motion.

3) Rotation: Twist from palm up to palm down, using a smooth, soft motion.

4) Arm & Hand Wave: Begin with your arms and hands relaxed at your sides, then raise them sideward in a slow, even tempo until they're overhead. Then reverse. Try thinking of your hand as a paintbrush and you're putting broad strokes of paint on a wall. Concentrate on being smooth, fluid and relaxed.

IG

HANDS are like the icing on the cake. Once everything else is ready—neat appearance, tricks down pat, a winning smile—expressive hands can add elegance and grace to every move you make.

Or, they can be like a sore thumb (no pun intended!) and detract from the performance you worked so hard on.

During most workouts you'll hear gymnasts say things like "Hope I get my double back today!" and "Tell me what I'm doing wrong on my aerial." But do you ever hear "Hope I can soften up my hand positions this time!" or "Would you let me know how my hands look during this scissor leap?"

Hands are often a forgotten appendage, but they need work just as much as tight legs and a good toe-point. Supple hands can easily be the deciding factor between two equally-difficult and well-executed routines. Next time you watch world-class gymnasts, notice their hands; the movement is gorgeous!

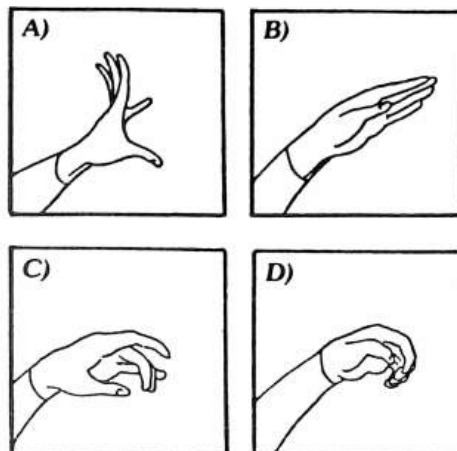
What can you do about your 10 fingers? The first thing is to recognize some common problems and see if your hands are offenders:

A) Overzealous: Very common among gymnasts, these well-intentioned hands look like they've just been scared out of their sleeves!

B) Military: Flat, with all fingers squeezed together, leave this hand position for men's gymnastics.

C) Ballet: Often seen in dancers-turned-gymnasts, it shows dance style discipline but lacks the flair needed for our artistic sport.

C) Total Concentration: (On everything except hands!) These are totally forgotten hands, just "along for the ride," which erratically gesture and clench, depending on the difficulty of the trick being done.



when she sets personal goals. Nothing else in life teaches a girl those lessons quite that well.

It wasn't like that where I grew up. When I was a kid, sweat was considered unfeminine. The closest most of us ever got to sports was gym class—sit-ups or dodgeball for 30 minutes. In my Catholic high school we didn't even have that. The gym was the last thing to be built. No one considered athletics for girls to be particularly important.

But time has passed and the world has changed. The sight of a whipcord-tight young woman barreling toward a vaulting horse is not only acceptable, it's commonplace.

If it was painful for Nora to give up gymnastics, it was a relief for me.

Athletics serves a purpose for us in raising our children that we don't usually even recognize: that skill is important and race really isn't, that sometimes even champions can lose, but that they can do so with grace.

Nora has been very lucky. Her back problem does not prevent her from playing all sports. Only those that require her to jump and land hard.

It took her many months and a lot of help from her parents to get over the disappointment of losing her first sport. She tried diving and then switched to tennis. Now she works as hard at backhand lobs and second serves as she once did at tumbling passes. She has forgotten about chalk dust and has exchanged one set of sore muscles for another. I seem to be driving a lot and spending too much money again, but I don't mind. I think the results are worth it.

IG

Pat York is a freelance writer from East Aurora, N.Y. Among other publications, her work has appeared in Seventeen, Essence, Toastmaster International and Learning '89.

International GYMNAST December 1990



Top Left-Ray Hemzacek dedicates plaque. Top Right- 1949-53 camp group. Lower left- Sokol Town of Lake members. Above- "Terrible 6"

SOKOL TOWN OF LAKE CAMP REUNION WILLOW SPRINGS, IL. - SEPTEMBER 29, 1991

Rise & Shine - Those familiar words were spoken 38 years ago by Laddie Vanek and Chuck Novotny our camp directors. A good time was had by approximately 65 campers. A great feeling of togetherness was felt as brother Ray Hemzacek dedicated the memorial plaque in honor of "Teach Koleno". Comments and past memories were spoken by Joe Ceithmal, George Vytlocil, followed by songs led by Anton Smunt. The day was spent visiting, looking over photograph albums, and walking around the camp grounds hoping to find a few Vana soda bottles, broken camp dishes and, yes, the remnants of a bug-juice pitcher.

Thank you to Frank Pliml for furnishing the volleyball equipment, even though we didn't get to our scheduled program. The event started out to be a small group of us that camped, worked and played between 1949 and 1953. Members of Sokol Town of Lake became interested in joining us. A special thanks to them for assisting us financially. There were many people who contributed to the reunion's success. We thank John Nekolny for designing and installing the plaque with Duke Jedlicka. Thank you to Marilyn Vacha Deal for creating the colorful sign at the camp entrance, and planting the mums with her mother Rose.

We couldn't have done it without everyone's co-operation including those who traveled from afar like Mary Lou Bruhnke Kozub from California, Henrietta Banfi Milan from Texas and Dan Farley from New York. Sokol Camp wouldn't be complete without Moms pies. Thanks to Anne Banfi and Henrietta (Hank) who made pies early that morning for all of us. We also want to thank the Palos Forest Preserve for offering us their parkway for the reunion, putting out picnic tables and mostly for relocating the rock in which the memorial plaque is set. "We Did It."

Annette Banfi Schabowski 708-788-3695

Vivian Mardoski Navratil 708-349-6878

P.S. We found "Buchta"...Who can you locate for the next reunion?

CALENDER OF EVENTS

UNIT EVENTS

- Dec 1 Sokol Greater Cleveland Annual Mtg.
Dec 1 Sokol Detroit Czechoslovak Dinner Party
Dec 7 Greater Cleveland "Mikulasska"
St. Nick's Dance
Dec 7 Sokol Minnesota Annual Mtg &
Christmas Party
Dec 7 Sokol Stickney Spaghetti Dinner
Dec 8 Sokol Ennis Annual Christmas Program
and Party with Chili Supper
Dec 8 Sokol New York Christmas Party
Dec 14 Sokol Slavsky St. Nick's Party at Sokol
Berwyn
Dec 18 Sokol Naperville Christmas party and
gymnasts' awards
Dec 19 Sokol Little Ferry Winter Exhibition &
Christmas party
Dec 31 Sokol Detroit New Year's Eve Dance
Dec 31 Sokol Stickney New Year's Eve Party
Jan 25 Sokol Ceska Sin Exhibition
Feb 16 Sokol Stickney Pancake Breakfast
Feb 29 Sokol Women of Little Ferry Czechoslovak
Pork Dinner 5-8 p.m.
Feb 29 Sokol Brookfield Exhibition
Mar 8 Sokol West Suburban Exhibition
Mar 14 Sokol Tabor Exhibition
Mar 15 Sokol Slavsky Exhibition
Mar 21 Sokol Stickney Exhibition, Pavek Center
Mar 28 Sokol Berwyn Exhibition
Mar 28 Sokol USA Lodge 306 Exhibition

District Events

- Dec 14 Central - Boys & Men Gymnastic
Competition

SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY DATES

- May 3, 1992 Sokol Chicago's 100th Anniversary
Oct 13, 1992 Sokol New York's 125th Anniversary

Czechoslovak Independence Day Celebrated at Roosevelt University - Chicago

The Central District members and Sokol gymnasts were part of a Chicagoland celebration on October 28, organized by the Czechoslovak American Congress commemorating the creation of the Czechoslovak republic under the leadership of Tomas Garrigue Masaryk in 1918.

Past celebrations have been held in Chicago's Daley Plaza. The venue was changed to recognize Roosevelt's University's Scholars for Freedom Program which offers full-tuition scholarships to Eastern European students. Two Czechoslovak students currently attend classes through this program.

MAYDAY ! MAYDAY !

To All Sokol Members:

Sokol San Francisco is under great stress. Our Hall has been condemned by the Building Dept. of San Mateo County due to extensive dry-rot throughout the entire building. It will take many thousands of dollars to put it back into working condition for gymnastics and Sokol cultural and social events.

We urgently need donations (big and small) from all our units and their members. Please help!

Please make your donations payable to Gymnastic Assn. Sokol San Francisco, c/o our Financial Secretary, Sis. Elizabeth Bele, 11 Fairview Place, Millbrae, Ca. 94030.

Thank you. Nazdar!

Br. Cliff Tucker, President

The Sokol and Its Roots Credits

To The Editor:

We noted with interest that you had reprinted *The Sokol and Its Roots* by Ivan Dubovicky from our Sokol Minnesota SLOVO in your October issue. We appreciate the wider distribution being given to this exceptionally fine article.

Dr. Dubovicky is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Ethnology of Charles University in Prague, Czechoslovakia. He very kindly took the time to write this article for us while working at the University of Minnesota as a Fulbright scholar last year. We were fortunate to receive the benefits of his scholarship in this article.

Karleen Chott Sheppard

HONOR PAST PRESIDENTS

Sokol Milwaukee is continuing to stock the past president's pin for your unit to honor your own past presidents. The gold pin is available with either a stem or clasp back, garnet insert, for only \$25.00 post paid and insured.



Make check payable to Sokol Milwaukee and mail to
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**POSITIVE, MEANINGFUL PRAISE
PUTS KIDS ON THE RIGHT PATH**

Associated Press

In the rush to give children a healthy dose of self-esteem, some well-meaning parents go too far in the praise department. And that, says clinical psychologist Robert Brooks, can backfire.

"It doesn't take long for kids to figure out that maybe all that praise wasn't totally justified," says Brooks, a clinical psychologist at McClean Hospital in Cambridge, Mass., and assistant professor of psychology at Harvard Medical School.

Maybe a nursery school teacher fails to gush over a painting the way Mom and Dad have always done. Or a playmate tells a child his clay bowl is yucky.

Brooks makes the comparison to the adult working world: "If you were getting positive feedback on the job for years and suddenly someone announced that your work was not very good after all, you'd be disoriented. Adults can sort it out; a child can't.

A child who is praised too much may also fall into the great-expectations trap. "I call these pressurized kids," Brooks says. Too much praise can set up a fear-of-failure scenario. Scared that they won't be able to do a task perfectly, they don't do it at all.

All this is not to say parents should act like military drill sergeants. But by the time kids are in preschool, parents should think about when and how they praise. For example:

Don't praise indiscriminately. Children need and deserve realistic feedback about their accomplishments to better understand their strengths and weaknesses. If adults gush over everything, they will never recognize what areas really do need improvement. Instead of treating every painting as if it were a Picasso, talk about the facts: "Look at that deep-blue sky!"

Focus on the child's special talent. "There isn't a child in this world who doesn't have some small island of competence, one that can serve as a source of pride and accomplishment," Brooks says. Encourage that special talent--and the child's pride in his achievement will transfer to his other work.

Take a helicopter view of the child's progress. "Too often, parents reward the results and forget it's more helpful to reward the effort." Look back two or three months on the child's progress and concentrate your praise on how much a child has improved.

Never compare a child with siblings or friends. Many times parents don't realize that positive comments are really given in comparison to other children. When you exclaim "You're the smartest little girl!" your child may think, "What if I goof up the next time? Will I still be the smartest?"

Teach children that making mistakes is a natural part of the learning process. While the adults will never be able to take away all the disappointment the child will face, they can

make sure he doesn't feel defeated by it. For instance, if you see the child is upset because a project didn't come out the way he wanted, say "I can see you're upset. Would you like to start again? What would you like to change?"

Be careful not to give a backhanded praise. "I can't believe you finally cleared your dishes" is not helpful. Try instead: "Thanks for putting your dishes away. Now we can read."

**Chairman of President's Council on Fitness and
Sports Speaks Out on "Couch Potatoes"**

Arnold Schwarzenegger wants to pump you up. When he's not making movies or turning real estate deals, he is on the road bringing his "fitness summits" to all 50 states.

Some of our Sokol districts and units have received congratulatory letters from Arnold recognizing Sokols' achievements in physical fitness these past 126 years - Central District, Sokol Ennis and Sokol Tabor.

He states - "The President's "America 2000" education strategy calls for demonstrated excellence in five basic subject areas, recognizing that physical fitness programs are a significant part of a well-rounded educational experience. As President Bush has said; "...Physical education programs that help youngsters to become stronger and healthier can also help to enhance their performance in the classroom."

In a recent newspaper interview, he recalled that exercising as a family was "pretty much the way I grew up in Austria". At home in Thul, a village close to Graz, he hiked, biked, bowled, swam and played soccer with his brother and parents. The result is "togetherness" and healthy, self-confident kids. "Fitness has a much greater impact than just a physical impact."

His general advice for families:

Set a Goal. Keep an ideal in sight, and gradually increase the pace of an exercise. Include all members of the family.

See a doctor. If you pick up the pace of your workouts, make sure your body can handle the stress.

Don't rush. Don't look for the quick answer, ease into it.

Dump diets. "Crash diets, water diets, high-protein diets" and other fads have little lasting effect. "Make fitness and exercise a part of your life rather than looking for a gimmick."

Lighten up. "People who turn fitness and sports into a fun activity are the ones that end up doing it the rest of (their) lives."

Admire? Aspire. If you admire someone, "use this example as an inspiration to do something yourself."

Sokol's 126 history is rich with heroes, role-models, caring, giving instructors and members. Who was or is your personal "hero" in Sokol? Write us and tell us who you admire in your unit and district. Attn: Editor
Deadline - February 25, 1992.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES OCTOBER 22, 1991

The meeting was called to order by President Borvansky at 7:45 p.m. and the pledge to the flag given.

Members present: Bro. Satek, Babka, Michalek and Lebloch and Sis. Kourim, Wojcik, Kalat and Pajeau in the office and Bro. Masek, Milan, Kalat and Dalton and Sis. Dalton on teleconference.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved upon correction of the line in the financial report that should read Sis. Dalton questioned the title given to some of the publication expenses. Sis. Dalton moved to then accept minutes, seconded and passed.

The Central District and Northeastern District minutes have been received in the office as has publication from Sokol in Czechoslovakia.

Br. Babka moved to purchase a \$90.00 quarter page advertisement to appear in the October 28, 1991 issue of the *Denni Hlasatel* in honor of Czechoslovak Independence, seconded and passed.

Br. Lebloch had correspondence from Czechoslovakia about a television documentary which will be put in the publication.

COMBINED BOI REPORT - Br. Michalek and Sis. Kalat: The Conference of District Directors is set for this week-end. A bill from Br. Benak for phone calls in regard to USGF Congress for \$ 13.96 was approved on motion by Br. Lebloch, seconded and passed.

A detailed report from the Congress is in the office and on file. The Merit Award committee is working on a proposal to change the month that the award is given so that students receive the money for their first semester expenses. The 1993 Slet Calisthenics has been selected and is being tested by volunteer districts.

Final report forms from the Eastern, Southern and Western Districts were presented. Br. Lebloch moved to pay bills only when district's units have paid their third quarter dues, seconded and passed.

Br. Lebloch moved to increase amount set for District Directors conference lunch an additional \$27.00, seconded and passed. Received a letter from Br. Banjak, who is teaching in Czechoslovakia, that he is working to complete the Manual.

EDUCATIONAL REPORT - Br. Lebloch: He has reviewed correspondence from abroad. Br. Slavik sent completed text on Dr. Tyr and Renata Tyrsova and will find pictures and look for a printer. Br. Barcal has finished the History of the American Sokol and will look for a publisher.

PUBLICITY - Br. Milan: After viewing backdrops at the ASO office he recommends that we advertise in the publication if any unit would want them.

MEMBERSHIP - no report.

EDITOR - no report.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY - Sis. Pros: excused, but sent written report. The computer was repaired and the

recommendation is that if the hard drive is a problem again, that we get a new system. We need to think about a new copier before the 1993 Slet. Due to a water leak in the office, some copies of the publication were destroyed and some overseas groups did not get a copy. If anyone has extra copies, please return them to the office. Br. Babka moved that the financial secretary and the president make a decision if money has to be moved temporarily from one account to another in order to meet expenses, seconded and passed.

TREASURER - Sis. Wojcik: reported on up-dated accounts. Still needs interpretation between government insured and federally insured funds from Br. Riha. District and unit financial forms will be sent out shortly.

II VICE-PRESIDENT- Br. Masek: reported no activity in the Foundation Fund. Would like the second vice-president of each unit and district to be on the Foundation Committee. They would be responsible for a fund-raiser for their own unit or district in which a percentage would go into the Fund. Looking into creative financing for large donations.

I VICE PRESIDENT - Sis. Kourim: reported uniform sales are brisk. Looking into spectator insurance for the 1993 Slet. Also, talked to Central District about committees for the Slet.

PRESIDENT - Br. Borvansky: reported that he would be attending the District Directors Conference and Sokol Tabor's 125th Anniversary.

The 1993 Slet activities are under way. The Central District has units committed to special areas and will have a finalized list after their annual meeting in November. Sis. Kourim is making a Sokol quilt that will be part of a raffle. Looking into having sponsors for different events. Br. Babka moved that two people from the BOI and two people from the Executive Board look into sponsorship and set guidelines, seconded and passed.

Br. Lebloch questioned if units would be willing to pool money to sponsor a Czechoslovak gymnastic team to come and put on an exhibition was discussed.

The annual holiday seals should be out the beginning of November.

Sokol Abie - no report.

Sokol Omaha is closing. Br. Michalek asked about the furnishings. Br. Masek stated that a decision about that has not been made.

Sokol Seattle property is listed with a real estate agent.

Bro. Podhrasky sent a report. All by-laws he has reviewed are acceptable. The office has old copies of by-laws and Sokol Omaha's current by-laws as most units use the ASO's by-laws.

Executor Director search - no report.

There will be no December meeting. A holiday party is being planned and will try to accomodate the out of town members. Sis. Kalat will borrow the ASO flags for the conference and Sokol Tabor's anniversary and return them to office.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Sis. Nancy Pajeau, Secretary

AMERICAN SOKOL PRICE LIST

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS booklets	SOUVENIRS	MEMBERSHIP PINS & KIT
Sokol and the Sokol Idea \$ 2.50	Sokol Stick pin \$ 7.00	Plain (no year) \$ 5.00
Our Task, Aim and Goal 2.50	1989 Festival Coffee Mug 2.00	5,10,15,20 year 7.00
Dr. Miroslav Tyrs 2.50	Sokol Lucite clock 3.50	25 year 13.00
Dr. Josef Scheiner 2.50	Sokol coaster .10	30,40 year 8.00
Highlights of Czech History 2.50	Sokol felt tip pen 2.00	35,45 year 6.25
ASO 125th Anniversary Book 4.00	Sokol Stadium Cushion 4.50	50 year, gold filled 15.00
American Sokol Sings 4.00	Sokol scarf 7.50	
	Sokol flower postcard .25	55 years and over
	1989 Festival "T" shirt adult 3.50	"Citation of Merit" n/c
Gymnastic Activities with 6.00	Plastic Mug 1985 Slet .75	
Hand Apparatus	Sokol Charm "NEW" 3.00	Membership Kit 7.50
by Marie Provaznik	Sokol Stud "NEW" 2.00	for new members,
& Norma Zabka		includes
plus shipping	Board of Instructors	Plain pin, By-Laws, Tri-fold,
	Gymnastic Skills Patches 1.00	Parliamentary procedure,
Sokol SLET Plates \$ 22.00	Gymnastic Skills Bars .50	Sokol & Sokol Idea booklet,
XV Slet, 1985, XVII Slet 1989	NEWLY ADDED ITEM	car decal
plus shipping	ASO FALCON T SHIRT 8.00	
	(1990 PARIS SLET)	
TYRS Bronze Bust \$ 1,450.00	*All items plus shipping	* All items plus shipping
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