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MARIE PROVAZNIK

(10/4/1890 Prague, Czechoslovakia - 1/11/91 Schenectady, NY)

By Peter Dusek, Jr., Cleveland Ohio for the Encyclopedia of Ethnic Sports in the United States

Her father (Vaclav Kalous) supervised the construction of iron bridges and her mother (Marie, nee Klement) was a housewife. She received her education at Minerva, a college preparatory school for girls and at Charles University Institute for Teachers of Physical Education. Provaznik taught girls' secondary physical education in Prague, was a professor at Charles University Institute for Physical Education and served on the advisory committee in the Ministry of Public Health as head of the Department of Girls' and Women's Physical Education. She also served as the Director of Women's Training in the Czechoslovak Sokol Organization, a national gymnastic and physical education organization. Marie was a dynamic and innovative teacher. She brought girls' and women's gymnastics and physical education in Czechoslovakia to a level of excellence previously considered unattainable. She was a leader in the use of film and radio for physical education instruction and promotion. In 1920 the Federation Internationale de Gymnastique (FIG) was formed. Marie helped to lay the foundation for the Women's Technical Committee and held various offices. Under her leadership, the Czechoslovak Sokol Organization developed the uneven parallel bars and high balance beam and introduced them into women's international competition. She was chief organizer of women's gymnastic competition at the 1948 London Olympic Games. Provaznik defected to the United States after the London Olympics, following the communist takeover of Czechoslovakia in February 1948. Marie accepted a part-time teaching position at Panzer College of Physical Education and Hygiene, East Orange, New Jersey, where she participated in the teacher training program; demonstrated modern educational gymnastics in public schools; gave displays at professional conventions and took part in clinics and workshops. She was active in Czechoslovak Sokol Abroad and worked with the American Sokol Organization and Sokol USA. In addition, she organized Relief for Sokols in Exile to aid Czechoslovak refugees and regularly spoke on the Voice of America.



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THOUGHT STARTERS

from Bro. Jerry Milan,
ASO Educational Director

"The block of granite
which was an obstacle in
the pathway of the weak,
becomes a stepping stone
in the pathway of the
strong."

From Your Editor...

There are some updates to previous articles in this issue. If you are interested in exhibit dates for the Alphonse Mucha Exhibit, see Page 10. Latest news about Sokol Minnesota's elevator is on Page 9. Bro. Slavik comments on the Kosice Slet and World Sokol Federation on Page 3. Former Sokol Tabor and Town of Lake Campers, be sure to check out Page 10!

NA ZDARI!

Sis. Patricia Satek
46 Northgate Road
Riverside, IL 60546-1639

CALENDAR of EVENTS

OCTOBER

- 10 Sokol Berwyn-Slavsky Pork/
Dumplings/Sauerkraut Dinner
11 Sokol Tabor/Town of Lake
Camp Reunion
14 American Sokol Little Ferry
Octoberfest
14 Sokol Ceska Sin Halloween
Bonfire
18 DA Sokol Sbor Winfield
Annual Dinner
18 Sokol Milwaukee
Recognition Dinner
23 Sokol Minnesota Harvest
Dance
23-24 Sokol Brookfield Rummage
Sale
24 Sokol Milwaukee Old World
Wisconsin Tour

OCTOBER

- 24 Sokol USA Byram 100th
Anniversary Celebration
24 Sokol New York
Czechoslovak Independence
Day Celebration
28 80th Anniversary of the
Czech Republic

NOVEMBER

- 1 Sokol Minnesota Pork Dinner
1 Central District Annual Mtg.
1 Sokol Detroit Dinner Party
14 American Sokol Little Ferry
Pirogi Sale

**SOKOL USA NATIONAL SLET
JUNE 23-27, 1999
CLEVELAND, OHIO**

A.S.O. Board of Instructors meets every 2nd Wednesday, 7:30 P.M.
A.S.O. Executive Board meets every 4th Tuesday, 7:30 P.M.

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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.

SLET IN KOSICE

During the first week of July, 1998, "Sokol na Slovensku" held its first international Slet and sports meet in the metropolis of eastern Slovakia, Kosice. Although the weather did not cooperate, Slovak Sokols proved that they can organize Sokol festivities as well as any other organization. Various sports meets lured over 250 competitors, while close to 1600 Sokols of all ages (but most of them young) participated in the main event. Some 2000 spectators admired mass calisthenics of all classes. From children with parents (some 200 of them), through girls and women with various hand apparatus in colorful leotards, Loyal Guard (all Czechs) and calisthenics - Men & Women, all numbers were done so well that the spectators rewarded them with steady ovations. While rehearsals left much to be desired, the Sunday program surprised with its swift organization. The whole show was over in 90 minutes, leaving more time to farewell sing-along sessions which lasted well into the night.

Representatives of the Ministry of Education and the Olympic Committee addressed the Friday banquet. They were followed by several local dignitaries. After the speeches, all participating Sokol organizations and individuals received Slet cups and plates. Since all speeches were translated into English, the banquet seemed to be a never ending affair.

Sokols from seven countries took part in the Slet. COS came with a 400-member delegation, followed by American Sokol Organization, Sokol USA, DA Sokol and Slovenian, Polish, Austrian, Swiss and Ukraine Sokols. Slovak Sokols are all young, hardly anyone over the age of 50, therefore the Slet atmosphere was full of joy, happiness and singing. They register some 20,000 participants. Kosice and its neighboring towns are the stronghold of Sokol na Slovensku.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE WORLD SOKOL FEDERATION

In conjunction with the Kosice Slet, the World Sokol Federations held its election meeting on the morning of July 3, 1998. The session was limited to four hours. Since Bro. J. Janos resigned his office in May, Bro. Vladislav Slavik conducted the meeting. The organizational rules submitted by all American organizations was accepted, which considerably helped to accelerate the proceedings. The delegates followed with their usual reports. When examined, these reports indicate a slight rise in membership and activities, mainly due to COS and organizations from eastern Europe. The new president of COS, Bro. Miloslav Pleskac, was given an opportunity to outline his Sokol goals.

COS reported that the Federation's video is finally ready to be sent out.

All agreed that the presentation of COS and American Sokol Organization are excellent. Other presentations must be improved. This video is so well done that it can be shown everywhere and to anybody. It will be an effective tool of Sokol promotion. A motion for "Fitness Test" contest among Sokol children and juniors was accepted. The BOI of the Federation is working on its details. The finale of this contest will be held in Prague during the XIII All-Sokol Slet.

The election of officers followed. Six organizations were present to vote. Bro. Slavik received a nomination of four organizations, but declined to accept the office of president. Therefore, Bro. Stanislav Doutlik, COS, was elected president; Bro. Slavik and Lukacek (Sokol na Slovensku) vice-presidents and Bro. Vratislav Zbuzek was once again appointed secretary. (Secretary is, per by laws, a non-delegate.)

The Federation received two applications for membership. First it accepted the Sokolski Tovarysstvo in Poland, whose delegations was present. The Federation now has nine members. The application of Yugoslav Sokols was considered, but not acted upon, until we receive a report from two members, Bro. Anzur, Slovenian Sokol and Bro. Laurenc, who will ascertain the facts in Beograd. Should their report be favorable, Yugoslav Sokols will be accepted at the next meeting in Cleveland in June 1999.

STRAHOV – What To Do With An Aging Giant

World's biggest stadium could become leaner, meaner soccer showcase.

By Alex Friedrich

Jan Obst knew it was time to redesign Strahov Stadium when he became too ashamed to bring foreign soccer officials to his stadium office.

The facilities had become so cramped that to reach his quarters, visitors often had to squeeze past half-naked female athletes coming out of a nearby locker room.

"I couldn't believe it when I saw it," the Czech-Moravian Football Union deputy secretary said with a sigh. "It was impossible. These spaces are not efficient. They're not dignified. That's why I always hold my meetings in different places."

Visitors may no longer have to press flesh with sweaty athletes, but Obst still cringes at the other things they see: a deteriorating hulk of crumbling walls and creaking beams – not exactly the showcase for a European championship contender.

Nor can he even say the stadium is designed for soccer; the plain is so wide that winds have often ripped through the field and disrupted matches.

So for people like Obst, Strahov – the largest stadium in the world and a symbol of Czech patriotism and physical culture – has become an embarrassment.

That's why he's leading a plan to revitalize the giant through a 4 billion Kc (\$129 million) renovation project that he says will turn it into a top-ranked, regulation national stadium that would enable the Czechs to host European club competitions in style.

That would mean a leaner, meaner stadium built in right in the middle of Strahov's vast field. With room for 51,000 fans in the stands and another 10,000 on the field for concerts, the stadium would be the home to the national soccer team and a venue for cultural events.

The current Strahov covers 6 hectares (15 acres) of land and has the potential to house some 200,000 people. The Rolling Stones managed to pull in about half that amount in 1995.

The existing tribunes and sides of Strahov will be converted into offices, shops and recreational areas and the space between the new stadium and the boundaries of the old will become a park.

Now that the city has awarded the soccer association rent-free use of the stadium, Obst says he's ready to assemble a construction team and deliver up a deluxe sports facility to the soccer world by 2003. That should leave enough time for one final extravaganza in celebration of the year 2000 for Sokol, the nationalist, physical fitness movement whose name is inextricably linked to the stadium.

Though many people mistakenly believe the colossal, concrete Strahov is a communist-era structure, the stadium actually was built under Tomas Garrigue Masaryk during the First Republic – the heyday of Sokol. The original construction took place in 1930.

The stadium, with its vast field, was perfect for Sokol's rallies: masses

of color and movement in which hundreds of thousands of athletes performed synchronized exercises.

Despite being a small nation, with the Strahov stadium the Czechs could flex their muscle by amassing an amazing number of people who were capable of demonstrating physical prowess and discipline to the world. Sokol was as much linked with nationalism as it was with exercise.

The sight of thousands of determined Czechs unsettled the Germans so much in 1938 that the Nazis executed Sokol leaders before the leaders could mobilize their members into an opposition force.

After the war, the communists banned Sokol and replaced the movement's mass exercises with their own version, Spartakiada, and the next generation of Czechs slowly began to identify the stadium with the Communist Party.

After the revolution in 1989, Sokol was among several far-flung expatriate organizations that managed a revival, but it hasn't grown beyond a fraction of its original size. So far, it hasn't been able to stage enough large events to justify such a large venue. The Sokol reunion of 1993, which drew thousands of participants, still played to what looked like an empty house.

Jiri Zizka, the Sokol deputy mayor, said he hopes to hold rallies in the new stadium in the future, though the grandness of the old stadium will be lost.

Continued on Page 5.

That loss of prestige has chafed some old Sokol members, who oppose the remodeling and say the movement's current leaders should have fought for the stadium," according to Zizka. "But we've always rented it out, so we have no proper stake in it. It's a pity to lose Masaryk's stadium, but life goes on."

Sokol isn't the only group having trouble filling the stadium's broad plain and sea of empty seats. The sheer size of Strahov dwarfs most events held there. It's a nightmare for rock groups, especially those that are upset if they don't sell out their shows.

"There are only four to five bands in the world you can put there," said music executive David Urban. Only the rolling Stones, Pink Floyd, U2 and Bon Jovi have mustered the courage to try to fill all those seats. Faced with the task of filling that gaping void a third time, the Stones recently opted for Vystaviste's Sportovni Hala, which seats only 10,000.

The awkwardness of such a big venue is not lost on city officials. "It has always been a megalomaniacal idea," said Tatana Stedra, a director of Prague's Institute for City Development. "It's too big for the city, it's too big for the country. The First Republic had big ambitions, but ...the idea of (Strahov's) creators wasn't fulfilled."

Despite its awkwardness, Czechs such as Stedra say they like the building. They show a pride that their little brother Strahov is the largest – albeit clumsiest – kid on the block.

Strahov Hopes for Investor Rally

By Alex Friedrich

Architects aren't known for their emotion, but Ludek Stefek raised his clenched hands for emphasis as he described his mission to revive the "corpse" of Strahov stadium.

"We need to use this structure – not destroy it – and give it a new idea, a new life," he said, leaning forward out of his chair, his voice suddenly higher.

Stefek has been waxing enthusiastic in the early stages of his hunt for investors, developers and managers who can turn the old symbol of the First Republic into a Czech sporting and leisure mecca for the 21st century.

That will take up to 4 billion Kc (\$129 million), according to general plans drawn up by Stefek's firm, AG Studio. The firm is under contract with the Czech-Moravian Football Association.

In addition to the 51,000-seat stadium in the middle, plans call for sporting facilities, gambling rooms, cinemas, restaurants and snack bars, as well as a "giga-shop" for sports equipment and other sports boutiques.

Those should fit into 51,000 square meters (549,000 square feet) of commercial space, and Stefek has reserved 20,000 square meters of room for the offices of sport companies and athletic associations.

But Stefek is quick to say the plans are broad. The stadium itself has usually dwarfed most of the events it has hosted and Stefek said the plans for its renovation may dwarf him as well.

"I just want to start the project, to get it going," he said with his drafts in front of him. "To me, that's something."

Stefek already has contacted three investor-developers from Germany, Great Britain and Switzerland, but serious discussions over a closed tender will start next month.

"The situation is very open," he said. "The system of investment has not exactly been determined. It could be a share holding company or something else."

Almost all of the investment will be private. Strahov officials are considering issuing bonds, and they may approach the government for some guarantee. Stefek is hoping to draw international investors and developers as well as managers who have experience with sporting facilities.

He added, however, "I don't know whether there's an example like this from Europe."

Project officials hope to have the investors, developers and operators determined by next summer and construction completed by 2003.

Now that Stefek is satisfied that the stadium's land can support the project, which he says is designed "not to be too visible" from the rest of the town, he said one problem remains: transportation infrastructure.

Although the stadium's underground garage will be able to house more than 6,000 cars in addition to the surface parking lots, project officials are negotiating with the city to install tram lines and additional bus routes to the stadium.

FUTURE SOKOL LEADERS FUND

Purpose: 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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SOKOL *Flag Waver!*

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See Page 11 for information on how you, too, can become an AMERICAN SOKOL FLAG WAVER!

SOKOL USA NATIONAL SLET

Cleveland, Ohio • June 23-27, 1999

It's not too early to start planning to attend the Sokol USA Slet in Cleveland next summer. Venues for the majority of the competitions will be at Cleveland State University. Headquarters and housing will be in downtown Cleveland. In addition to the traditional artistic gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics, Sokol Triathlon and volleyball events, preliminary plans also include 3-On-3 Basketball for both Men/Jr. Boys and Women/Jr. Girls, 6-Man Soccer and perhaps even Tennis. Contact your Unit or District Directors for continuing information.





AMERICAN SOKOL ORGANIZATION

GYMNAST

Editor: Chuck Kalat -- 2401 Bluebonnet Dr., Richardson, Texas 75082



1998 ASO Instructors Kurz Report Sokol KHB, Ennis, Texas



The 1998 Instructors School was highly successful with the largest number of students in eleven years. The school ran simultaneous classes for 35 beginning, 16 intermediate and 12 advanced students. Also returning were 3 advanced students for their second year. Our Sokol teaching staff included Brothers Rome Milan (So. dist. director Men, Gymnastics Association of Texas President and 1998 school director), Bud Benak, (ASO School Board director), Robert Liptak, Frank Michalik, Joseph Vrzalik, Sisters Lori Laznovsky (So. Dist. Director Women and General Gymnastics Committee member for USAG), Mary Panakia (USAG Safety Certifier), Jessica Burns, Instructors in Training (IT) Kevin Bates and Seneca Smith and School Secretary Lisa Laznovsky.

The following is a short overview of the activities that the school presented to the students. When I set out to prepare the schedule for the 1998 school, I wanted to incorporate the philosophy of our most recent Southern District Instructor schools which has three parts. First to prepare Sokol students with the proper tools needed to promote Sokol material, gymnastics and other recreational activities in their home units. Second to promote creativity and self confidence among the students so that they could be resourceful in gathering new information in their area and continue to educate themselves in the sport. Third to seize the opportunity to promote Sokol awareness within our local community and gymnastics circle. I truly feel that the 1998 ASO Instructors school was able to expose the students to a variety of activities that has accomplished these goals.

The School curriculum followed the general guidelines contained in the ASO School Board Instructors School Guide. All tests in the Guide were also used. Our daily schedule included Flag

1998 ASO Instructors Kurz Report cont

protocol, proper morning fitness activities, Marching, Calisthenics, Games, Rhythmics, Apparatus terminology, Hands on Spotting class, Skill Progressions for a systematic teaching method, Flag lowering and Group Interactive competitions. The daily schedule also provided for 2-one hour long time slots for additional activity classes such as Pyramids, Dance, Folk Dance, Combatives, Hand Balancing and array of others. One hour each day was devoted to Sokol lectures such as Philosophy, History, Organization, Methods, Practice Teaching, Slets and Mottos. Since 1979, the Nightly Group Competition has been an outstanding activity that promotes creativity, cooperation, socialization, camaraderie, spirit, physical fitness, participation and fun within a competitive atmosphere. The competitions dwell on the activities that make the Sokol programs so special. General Gymnastics type activities usually performed to music such as Special numbers, a Marching number, Pyramid numbers, Calisthenics numbers, relays and of course the awe inspiring "Talent" Show.

Additional activities that we included for the first time at an ASO School which received great enthusiasm from the students included mini clinics on the apparatus by volunteer guest presenters such as Olympic and World Champions Valeri Liukin, Evgeny Marchenks, Sergei Pakastornik and Elite coaches Steve Snow and Kelly Eaton. A mock Sokol membership meeting was presided over by Southern District President Larry Laznovsky. Surprisingly the students showed a good deal of enthusiasm making motions and voting on their ideas. A psychology class was presented by an outstanding local motivational speaker, Mark Sherman. Each student was able to do a character profile which had all of them anticipating their best match at the school. They learned how to utilize the information and identify characteristics that will be prominent in their teaching. By-law class and Round table discussions led by Bro. Bob Podhradsky and Bro. Chuck Kalat respectfully, were well received with the students having prepared By-law changes and topics for discussion prior to the class. It was incredible to see the students note-worthy goals and recommendations. They were again so involved that they didn't want to quit. These students are tremendously responsible and will make great leaders for our organization. The challenge for them to learn as much as they could was evident and we must provide that opportunity for them to gather the information from every source available. This school did just that.

The Southern District was able to provide funds for additional educational opportunities for each of the students by promoting Sokol awareness and the National School within the local community. The school students received 75 donated meals each day from local fine dine and fast food restaurants. This was of such incredible savings that we were able to provide all students of proper age with USAG Safety certification and those of audit age with the opportunity to audit the certification course. Each student at the Kurz received a USAG Safety Guide which will be beneficial to each unit. All students received CPR training as well as First Aid training by a local American Heart Association certifier. All students took the Professional Development Program (PDP) clinic, test, video test and Sequential Gymnastics test and clinic. Those 14 years and older will receive certification. PDP and Sequential Gymnastics guidebooks were provided for each unit at the Kurz. The USAG Junior Olympic mens judging test and mini clinic was given by FIG Brevet Judge Bro. Kevin Bates. Each student received a one year subscription to the American Sokol Directors Newsletter as well as Instructor membership to USAG for those of proper age and Associate membership for all others. I must at this time recommend that all units of the ASO promote our programs in this way. People and business owners who have little idea of our programs become more aware of our Sokol units when we ask them to be a part of them.

Each district has received a packet of all handouts and other information that was distributed to the students during their two week stay at the 1998 ASO School. This information may be used in your district to help with weekend schools or providing topical information to individual units. All Kurz students received this information. However, the most beneficial and immediate way this knowledge can be put to use is to provide an opportunity for these Intermediate and Advanced students to begin to take responsibility in your Sokol programs. The true success of any ASO school is up to each unit/district to work hand in hand with the graduates to insure growth and guidance towards our future leaders.

NAZDAR!

Bro. Rome Milan (1998 ASO Kruz Director)

USA GYMNASTICS 1998 NATIONAL CONGRESS AUGUST 19-22 -- Indianapolis, Indiana

This year's USA Gymnastics National Coaches Congress attracted over 2000 gymnastics coaches, gym owners/administrators, gymnasts, and other gymnastics professionals. Included in this number was a healthy contingent of about 21 Sokol members. Other Sokol members that attended (that I know of) were:

National BOI Members: Chuck Kalat (KHB), Bud Benak (S.Omaha), Sandy Benak (S.Omaha), Lori Laznovsky (KHB), Barbara Barnes (Stickney), Patricia Vondra (Stickney), Helen Onni (Tabor), Mary Panackia (Detroit), and Rome Milan (Ft.Worth)
Sokol Members: Lil Laznovsky (KHB - Ennis); Buddy Benak and Joe Berka (S. Omaha); Natalie Smith & Emil Milan (Ft.Worth); Doris & Belinda Marks, Jay Vondra, Nancy Pajaeu, Audrey Austrevich, & Donna Miller (Stickney); & a familiar face or two from Sokol USA.

Roughly 150 - 1 hour & 15 minute individual sessions were presented over the course of the Congress with 13 sessions occurring simultaneously at any given time. The sessions were divided into interest tracks: Sport Science, Business, Education, Alternative Programs, General Gymnastics, Preschool, Womens, Mens, Rhythmics, & Judging (M, W, R). There was always at least one session of interest to attend and unfortunately, frequently more than one session of interest at the same time. Although many of the sessions deal with material/problems more advanced than those normally encountered in our Sokol gyms, there are still many other sessions which directly relate to our activities. In addition, even the more advanced areas allow for personal growth and a better understanding and appreciation of the sport of gymnastics as it changes year to year. The business related sessions provide insights into how we can and should run our Sokol "businesses" in a more professional manner.

By way of example of the variety of lectures available, I myself was able to attend the following sessions: Tumbling for the Preschool and Class Program, Creative Lesson Planning, History of USA Gymnastics, How to Improve Yourself as a Teacher, Preschool Summer/Holiday Camps: How and Wow!, Creating a Year of Lesson Plans, Preschool Teaching Philosophy and Progressions, So You're Coaching the Little Boys! A Survival Guide, Using Props in Class -- How and Why!, Birthdays: Turners & NCAA, and Introduction to General Gymnastics. It appears that in the world of the gym club, preschool programs is where the money is -- so there is always a strong emphasis and a great deal of interest in these sessions. Some distributed material will appear in the *Directors Newsletter* and *Gymnast*.

In addition to the technical sessions, the various United States Association of Gymnastics Equipment Suppliers provided a huge equipment exhibit area with everything from grips, shoes, leotards, awards, & insurance, to the latest in gymnastic equipment and much more. Again there is a large emphasis on new preschool equipment, supplies, and material. It easily took a several hours just to browse around, and I am sure that everyone came home with a stack of catalogs and a really long 'wish list'. I even have heard that some Sokol units attending took advantage of "show specials" to fortify their apparatus inventories.

The Congress was again held in conjunction with the United States Gymnastics Championships giving us the opportunity to view 4 sessions of the best gymnastics the United States has to offer in Senior Men and Senior Womens divisions. The Junior Men and Junior Womens sessions were held during the day and thus conflicted with Congress sessions. The USAG General Gymnastics Committee presented a general gymnastics number with 300 participants - children thru adults - before the mens and womens finals championship sessions. All championship sessions included Sports Acrobatics presentations.

Coming in contact with all these gymnastic professionals at Congress is always interesting. It is amazing the level of enthusiasm, dedication, creativity, and love of their work that these gymnastic professionals exude and share. I wish more of us who work in this area as an avocation could have that same level of enthusiasm. Over the past couple Congresses, a few more Sokols have come, seen what goes on, learned new things, and have returned for more. I would like to see still more Sokol people take advantage of this opportunity. Next year's Congress is in Sacramento, California, August 25-28th.

Jan Kalat - Director of Women

Is Winning Everything?

From: "Olympism - A Basic Guide to History, Ideals, and Sports of the Olympic Movement"

Of course everyone wants to win. Everyone wants to be liked, admired and respected for their achievements. It is perfectly normal to want to win, and winning is a worthwhile goal.

Where all of this can go terribly wrong is when winning becomes the all-consuming goal. That is, when the desire to win is so great that it causes one to consider dishonest and excessive methods.

At the ancient Greek games, athletes caught cheating were forced to pay for statures of themselves. These "ZANES" were lined up at the entrance to the stadium and all athletes, who were to compete, had to pass by them as they entered the stadium.

One such method of cheating today is the use of illegal (and usually harmful) drugs seeking to enhance athletic performance. Increasingly, athletic organizations are insisting that competitors subject themselves to drug tests, and they are punishing those individuals found to have taken drugs.

In 1988, Ben Johnson of Canada broke the world record in the 100 meter dash, but lost the record and the gold medal when he was disqualified because anabolic steroids showed up in his urine sample.

Failure to abide by the rules and the spirit of the rules is destructive to the sport. When players use illegal tactics--such as holding, pushing, tripping, etc.--even without being detected, they have violated *the letter of the rules*. When such illegal tactics are taught to players, the coaches have violated *the spirit of the rules*, and, indeed, *the spirit* of all competitive athletics.

Olympic Oath

"In the name of all competitors, I promise that we will take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, in the true spirit of sportsmanship for the glory of sport and the honor of our teams."

When athletes lose their self-control and attack their opponents or heatedly protest the decisions of referees or judges, they have usually violated *the letter of the rules* and, most certainly, *the spirit of the rules*.

When coaches, school officials, parents or spectators lose their self-control they have set a most unfortunate example, and dishonored the sport.

Fair competition, the Olympic ideal, is based upon two basic premises:

- ♦ that athletes abide by the rules and not seek unfair advantage; and
- ♦ that athletes treat each other not as enemies but as co-players who, while competing fiercely against each other, afford each other the respect due to comrades in the same sport

Think About It --

Opponents are necessary partners

-- how can we have sports events without them

It is impossible to have a competitive sporting event without rules or referees to insure that they are followed. When the rules are consistently broken and the judges ignored, that sport disintegrates and is in danger of becoming a farce.

A Triumph of Sportsmanship

Many people today believe that the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin were marred because the spirit of good competition was invaded by Adolf Hitler's politics. But, in the hearts of some athletes, the Olympic spirit was very strong. Luz Long, a German long jumper, was the perfect model for Hitler to prove his theory that the Nazis' Aryan race was superior. Jesse Owens, an African-American athlete who had already won the gold medal in the 100-meter dash, was the one man capable of ruining Hitler's show.

Owens, however, had trouble landing on the 23' 5-1/2" mark to qualify for the long jump finals. When Owens took what he thought was a practice run into the pit, it was counted as his first jump by officials. Slightly shaken, he then fouled on his second try. As the American prepared for his final attempt, Long tapped Owens on the shoulder and advised Owens that if he moved his mark back one foot and didn't try to hit the take-off board, he would qualify for the finals.

Not only did Owens qualify (following this advice), he won the finals, leaping to an Olympic record of 26' 5-1/2". Long received the silver medal and then congratulated the man that Hitler had called "inferior".

Reflections

REFLECTIONS



What! A peace symbol? No, a circle graph! Has Dick taken leave of his senses? What does it signify? Our budget for the year? Expenditures for the proposed local option tax? None of the above. It's the way our gym time was allocated years ago. Even with this structure, class time possessed a degree of flexibility, especially around akademie or Slet time when we didn't know the prostna. Because I hated calisthenics, I was constantly trying to extend the apparatus time, or seriously encroach into volleyball time. If the entire period had been spent on either rings or parallels, I'd have been happy as a clam. "Bad news," cried the oldsters. "Too much support work makes one 'hrbaty' (round shouldered) from over-development of the pectorals, anterior deltoids and abdominals." (A condition I did observe on the specialists at Santa Monica.) Thus, like a child who is told to eat his meat, potatoes and veggies if he wants ice cream, I did the prostna and the whole nine yards to be able to climb on the rings and parallels.

The class period started with the military line up - "Pozor!" (Attention!), "Na Pravo Vyridit!" (Dress Right!) and "Primo Hled!"

(Ready Front!), which at that time I would have cheerfully dispensed with. But years later, when watching collegiate teams straggle to the apparatus like reluctant children doing household tasks, I heard myself remark, "those kids really need some marching background, like Sokol."

So, first we marched, then split ranks for calisthenics. I grudgingly admitted the Sokol or European system was superior because of the overall balanced attention to the body. To the Navy or scholastic calisthenics belonged the push-up, sit-up, squat thrust, duck walk. (After the Navy session, one felt like your vest was buttoned to your trousers, because you had done all that front work and virtually nothing for the upper or lower back.) The hanging apparatus followed and if the class was sufficiently large the less seasoned were "leveled" into another group with their own "vedouci" (teacher/aide) while the regulars received attention of the head instructor. I have always felt this leveling, i.e., low, intermediate and high, had a great deal of merit in physical education. Each individual worked within his or her capabilities and was encouraged to seek realistic goals. The instructor would choose the moves, demonstrate, explain and each class member would take his turn. This was the classic formal approach to instruction at that time. Its merits were that you stood in line and were able to witness and be inspired by skillfully executed moves of your colleague and also

spot the flaws, with an eye toward avoiding those mistakes. The downside was that considerable time was spent standing around waiting your turn. After the allotted time was spent, the next progression to a supporting apparatus took place in a similar fashion. So, what were the merits and disadvantages of this system? First, in the eyes of current authorities (if such things exist), consensus seems to be we need a warm-up, proceed to peak activity, taper off and finish with a cool-down. In this light, modern physical education gives credence; the system seems years ahead of its time. How did this happen?

Some sources feel this was due to the industrial, educational and political climate that existed at the end of the 18th Century and the beginning of the 19th Century, with appeals being made to European leaders to use education as a vehicle to restore prestige. Therefore, this work was entrusted to some of the top minds, philosophers, physicians and educators had input into the program. (Gymnastics & Tumbling - United States Naval Institute)

Later, these people were to seek a more rarefied atmosphere and only recently, with the advent of sports medicine and related disciplines, are we witnessing a resurgence.

This formal European approach can be an excellent toning, recreational workout. It will not provide much of a cardiovascular workout; it won't give your "buns of steel" or "rock hard abs" or cause your weight to drop 20 pounds - and two classes per week won't turn you into a top flight gymnast.

But it may furnish an opportunity to stretch and activate, in a balanced

Continued on Page 10.



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SOKOL CORPUS CHRISTI BURNS MORTGAGE!

Congratulations to all the members of Sokol Corpus Christi (TX) who are celebrating the burning of their mortgage after 20 years. They received the following note from Texas Governor George W. Bush:

Greetings to Sokol Gymnastic Center,

Congratulation on the occasion of your mortgage burning celebration on August 22. This event provides a great opportunity for people to meet, renew friendships and relive memories.

For 20 years, the Sokol gymnastic Center has helped young people in Corpus Christi develop sound minds and sound bodies. I commend you for your dedication to improving the health and fitness of children. Our young people represent the future of our state and your investment in them enhances the quality of life for all Texans.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush
Governor, State of Texas

Recognition was also received from Dr. Jiri Janos,
President of the Czech Sokol Organization.

Submitted by Bro. Jerry Elzner

GEORGE HALAS

George Stanley Halas was the son of a Czech immigrant tailor who came from Pilsen, Bohemia and settled in Chicago. George was born February 12, 1895, the last of eight children. George got his love for sports early in life as a member of Sokol Pilsen. He was excellent in baseball and football, playing in high school and on Sokol Pilsen teams. He finished high school and started college. George learned about football (praseci kuze) from Bob Zuppke at the University of Illinois. When World War I broke out, he joined the Nave and after OCS School, became an ensign. He rejoined the Navy during World War II with the rank of Lieutenant Commander.

After WWII, George played baseball with the New York Yankees, but his first love was football, so he came back to Chicago, to football.

He started with the Decatur Staly's. In 1920 he moved the team to Chicago's Wrigley Field and as it already the Cubs, George named his football team the Bears. The immortal Red Grange was on the team. In the early days, he was a player, coach and manager. This lasted until 1978. He was one of ten delegates which organized the Professional Football Association, which later became the NFL.

Among his accomplishments, Halas introduced summer training camps, press box spotters and game films to assess player performance. He helped organized the player draft as a means of equalizing competition among teams, supported televised games and backed the merger of the American and National Football Leagues. Before his death in 1983 at the age of 88, Halas coached 326 winning games, an NFL record.

Playing football, George was "as American as apple pie," but in his heart he was "as Czech as Kolacky;" at least once a month, his meal had to be crisp roasted duck stuffed with apples, with bread dumplings and sauerkraut, made like his mom used to make.

Forward, Forward, Backward Not A Step!

SOKOL MINNESOTA ELEVATOR

In a recent issue, I reprinted an article about Sokol Minnesota and their quest for an elevator for their building. Here's a quick update, from Sokol Minnesota Slovo.

On June 10, the Sokol (Minnesota) membership met and approved the final definition of the elevator project as defined by architect John Yust. This definition includes an elevator connection to the basement, first level (lobby) and second level, along with a stairway connection from the first level (lobby) to the second level. The structure will be designed to support and accommodate construction of a future addition, which would make an elevator and stair connection to the third level. Firm bids have been received for the excavation and footings, conversations have been held with Northern States Power about additional electrical service and discussions have taken place with the general contractor about getting him started. The structural and mechanical consultants are finalizing their specifications. The architect is finalizing his drawings in preparation for securing the building permits. The task now is to begin constructions and continue *fund-raising*.

U.S. Issues Warning On Five Czech Hotels

The U.S. Embassy has identified five prominent hotels in the Czech Republic as being Libyan-owned and warned Americans they would be breaking U.S. law if they stayed in them. The Forum and Panorama in Prague, as well as the Palcat in Tabor, The Bavor in Strakonice and Cernigove in Hradec Kralove were sold by IBP Bank to the Malta-based Corinthian Group in February. Americans staying at the hotels or eating in their restaurants would be violating U.S. sanctions against Libya when they paid their bill and be subject to criminal and civil penalties.

From Sokol Minnesota Slovo

NEW CZECH PASSENGER LISTS AVAILABLE

Czech Immigration Passenger Lists, Volume VII, is now available.

After many years of research, over 39,000 Czech immigrants who arrived in New York between 1887 and 1896 were identified by reviewing and abstracting 166 rolls of National Archives microfilm. Since there is no index for arrivals during this time period, this volume will be of interest to those who have ancestors who arrived during this time period. It will be of special interest to Texans of Czech descent, as there was no direct immigration through Galveston during this time period. An alphabetical listing of these Czech immigrants is included in the book, giving their name, age, place of origin, date of arrival, name of ship and destination. There is also a discussion on sources of immigrant ship data and pictures. Copies of this book are available for \$19.95, postpaid, from Leo Baca, 1707 Woodcreek, Richardson, TX 75082. **DO NOT send orders to the American Sokol.**

10 Stress- Busters You Can Do

Sometimes work or personal problems can result in tense muscles, minor pains and irritability. But you can learn a few easy methods for reducing stress on a daily basis. To start, try out a few of the following stress-busters:

1. Do some deep breathing by inhaling slowly, then exhaling for 5 to 10 seconds.
2. Stretch the head and neck muscles by lowering chin to chest, then gently rolling the head to one side until the ear is over the shoulder. Hold for a few seconds, then return to the starting position and repeat on the other side.
3. Take a walk in the fresh air.
4. Get a professional massage to ease tension in specific areas of the body, such as the shoulder, back or neck.
5. Eat a well-balanced diet rich in complex carbohydrates and low in fat and salt. Limit caffeine and alcohol.
6. Read. It's a great way to escape for a little while.
7. Do something entirely for pleasure, whether it's gardening, going to the beach or having dinner with friends.
8. Find a safe, quiet place to really get in touch with your feelings or even to cry. It can provide a healthy release of pent-up emotions.
9. Ease the burden of everyday troubles by talking them over with a friend.
10. Laugh out loud. Laughing can have dramatic effects on a person's attitude.

*A product of National Health
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Reflections

(continued)

fashion, muscles one does not use in everyday activity. Properly executed in a wholesome atmosphere, it might provide a respite from daily vocational and family cares and promote a feeling of well being, thus affording balance in our lives.

In conclusion, I wish to further examine one of Tyrs' concepts. His striving for perfection; "It would be difficult to find anything that is so perfect that it couldn't be improved in some way," and "If our efforts were carried to the highest goals in everything."

Today, at my time of life, I feel differently about this. Early on, I might have bought into this reasoning. If you adapt any approach with such lofty ideals, each unattainable or unrealized goal can result in frustration and despair. When I served as Nacelnik (Men's Director) years ago, I burned with such zeal I alienated some members who didn't share my focus and I now feel our unit would have been better served if more realistic goals were addressed. Our times are not Tyrs' times - our physical education core is not slated for a people liberated from bondage. Our gym practitioners have a more personal agenda. I now feel our Sokol might be better served directed toward broader community action and diversity of service to our youth.

NA ZDAR!

*From Noviny Sokol Cedar Rapids
by Dick Petrzalek*

ALPHONSE MUCHA:

The Spirit of Art Nouveau

Alphonse Mucha (1860-1939), a Czech painter and designer, earned a modest living as an illustrator and designer in Paris until 1894 when a poster he designed for an actress - Sarah Bernhardt - brought him overnight success and fame. The poster's unusually elongated shapes, delicate coloring and combination of simplified outlines and ornamental decoration led to more work for Mucha, including six years of designing posters for the actress and for commercial products and exhibitions.

Mucha's portrait of an idealized woman whose long hair coiled and swirled around her in a complicated pattern was often imitated and became one of the more distinctive images of the Art Nouveau style. The artist, however, most desired recognition as a serious painter and conceived of a series of 20 monumental paintings that would depict the history of the Slav people. He devoted most of the last 29 years of his life to his Slav Epic paintings, presenting them to the city of Prague in 1928.

"Alphonse Mucha: The Spirit of Art

Nouveau," an exhibition organized by Art Services International, presents much of the work the artist created between the 1890s and 1930s, including paintings, jewelry, sculpture, pastels and drawings. The exhibition features several of the posters Mucha designed and images from the Slav Epic, represented by narrative studies in pencil, watercolor, oil, gouache and pastel.

Exhibition Dates and Sites:

November 7, 1998-January 7, 1999

Norton Museum of Art,
West Palm Beach, Florida

January 31-March 28, 1999
North Carolina Museum of Art,
Raleigh, North Carolina

April 24-June 20, 1999
Philbrook Museum of Art,
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Mark your calendar for a cultural and educational experience to see the work of this Sokol member. Mucha made posters and other work for the Sokol Slets and the COS.

*Thanks to Bro. Jerry Milan,
ASO Educational Director, for this info!*

Notice to All Sokol Tabor and Town of Lake Campers!!

On Sunday, October 11 at 11:00 A.M., a camp reunion will take place at our former Sokol Camp. All former members are invited to attend to hike, share a picnic lunch and reminisce. If you are interested, please contact Annette Schabowski at 708-788-3695 or Mildred Mentzer at 773-779-1272. Let's make it a good one!

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