

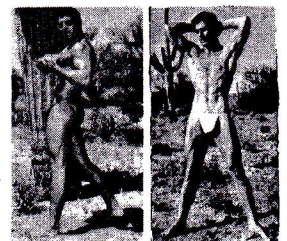
vividly for I was then able to speak German perfectly and he was thus able to talk to me far better than the first time we had met in the same beautiful town, which thanks to modern bombers is a horrible, smashed-up sight today. I cannot help laughing when I think of one bit of advice he gave me. We happened to discuss the fact that ants were very much stronger than human beings in proportion to weight "and," said Lurich, "scientific investigators have found that this is due to the formic acid which their bodies produce!" He then picked up a Parisian Physical Culture paper and showed me an advertisement. Here is a rough translation of what it said:— "FORMIC ACID IS THE SOURCE OF THE FORMIDABLE STRENGTH OF THE ANT! Be wise athletes and write to us for a supply of our cachets which are guaranteed to contain the same formic acid which makes the ant so strong." I was young and very ambitious so I really could not resist that advert and I did not waste a moment but wrote to Paris right away for a supply of the cachets which were to give me such enormous strength. When they arrived I found them a bit difficult to swallow as they were about the size of a silver dollar but I persevered and after swallowing three of these awkward cachets daily for a couple of months I found that I was still not as strong as Lurich. I got inquisitive at last and broke one of the things open; I was nearly sick on the spot for inside the cachet I found nothing but coarse sand mixed with CRUSHED ANTS!!! After that I thought it better to stick to my own ideas and not to try "stunts." I am writing this chapter during a tour of Northern Rhodesia and this is the one country in the world where you see thousands and thousands of antheps 20 and even 30 feet high and I'm sure one could supply the whole world with formic acid from these parts but I'm also sure that I won't get busy on a stunt like that!

Way back in 1909 clean lifting was hardly known but on December 20th of that year I was present when the gigantic Grafl showed what he could do in this style. That morning I had met my little pal Kliment and he told me that Grafl was going to do some really big lifts that night at the Männer Stemmklub in Vienna. It was snowing hard but I was anxious to see this particular performance of this really BIG man altho' I had often had the opportunity of seeing his fine feats in the past. I am sorry that I cannot find my records of his measurements but perhaps Dave Wiloughby can let us have them! In a snug two-horse sledge with plenty of jingling bells and with Kliment holding the reins (he was Grafl's official coachman) we set off for the Stemmklub (weightlifting club). Grafl was in great form that night and after warming up with heavy dumbbells he pulled in clean and pressed (with heels together and NO backbend) 308½ lbs, and without any further lifts he immediately cleaned a 374¾ lb. barbell and jerked it with only a slight bend at the knees and certainly without a split. We all cheered like mad but I was forced to explain to the crowd that altho' the two lifts were both world's records they could not be claimed as we had no officials present; everyone was much distressed until I went on to explain that the club held every world's record except the bent press which was held by Arthur Saxon and the one hand snatch held by Rondi of Germany. This led to more cheers for Grafl's terrific performance. The photo of little Kliment posing under his boss's outstretched arm was taken in Düsseldorf in Germany just after they had each won a World's Championship on the same

night in June 1910. This small Iron Man was mighty tuff and on more than one occasion he jerked well over double his own body-weight of 129 lbs. when we were training together. I reported the Championships and here are the fine lifts done by Kliment in the Feather-weights (he only weighed 127 lbs. that day):— Right hand snatch 132½ lbs. Left 121¼ lbs. Two handed press 209½ lbs., two handed jerk 253¾ lbs. Splendid lifting for those days of long ago! Grafl was also in good shape at Düsseldorf and duly won the World's Championship for 1910 by doing a right hand snatch of 187½ lbs. and a left hand snatch of 165½ lbs. In the two hand press (absolutely "military" style) he raised 287 lbs. In the jerk he started off with the big poundage of 350 lbs., we were just a bit nervous as, in those days, a lifter was not allowed to try the same weight again if he failed. We need have had no fear for the weight went up easily and he finished off with a faultless jerk of 375 lbs. After the Championships were decided Grafl tried a two handed jerk of 388½ lbs., the big weight went up beautifully but he failed to "fix" it. Had he succeeded he would have beaten Swoboda's record of 386¾ lbs by a small margin. The big Grafl was in his best form in 1910 and at Graz he easily pressed (very correctly) 308¾ lbs. TWICE and a few minutes later he jerked 374¾ lbs. also TWICE and I assure you that he never moved his feet at all during these two really big jerks. What COULD those Vienna giants have done with modern apparatus and scientific training? I'm quite sure that Swoboda would have done a clean and jerk of at least 425 lbs. (he DID jerk 440 lbs. when he was helped to the shoulders with the barbell) and that Steinbach, Witzelsberger and Grafl would all three have exceeded 400 lbs. in the t.h.c.andj. Steinbach wrote me in March 1910 telling me in what great form Grafl was and said that the big fellow had pressed 220 lbs. perfectly correctly ("military" press) EIGHTEEN times before competent judges, thus creating another world's record.

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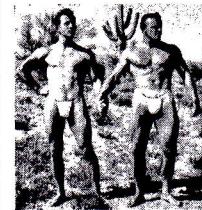
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