

SANDOW — PIONEER of STRENGTH.

"Sandow, of all strong-men, invested strength with a glamour which, possibly, was mainly instrumental in keeping weight-lifting alive..."

By
W. J. LOWRY
World-famous
statistician of
Strength Records.

HISTORY has left marks indelibly impressed on the mind of the "man-in-the-street" that trace the word "Sandow" whenever the word "Strength" is mentioned, and it matters not how often and how many more superlative records may be established by his stronger successors, Sandow's position on the pedestal of fame remains unassailable.

The average man still imagines—even to this day—that weight-lifting was something invented by Sandow. As I shall be at pains to prove as this series proceeds, however, there were stronger men in Europe, and particularly in Austria and Germany, both before and subsequent to the advent of Sandow. And the information available proves conclusively that weight-lifting was both practised and definitely established even during Sandow's childhood.

If I appear, therefore, to deviate from the strict chronological order of history, I do so because this popular belief has resulted in the better recording of weight-lifting from the time of Sandow because of the publicity attracted to the sport by reason of Sandow's artistry.

Whatever claims may have been advanced on Sandow's behalf, and whatever may be said by his detractors (and there were many even in his "hey-day"), none can gainsay the fact that Sandow, of all strong men, invested strength with a glamour which, possibly, was mainly instrumental in keeping weight-lifting alive as a sport in the early days when so many saw fit to attack whatever form of lifting was practised. Few then had sufficient knowledge to counter the adverse propaganda.

The men of my generation all worshipped Sandow, and believed the feats attributed to him (at least in our very young days). Many claims were advanced on his behalf by his admirers—

possibly, at times without his knowledge and consent. But as we know in these days of scientific study, an implicit belief in un-authenticated stories had the effect of developing in British weight-lifters an inferiority complex from which it has been extremely difficult to recover.

Many strong men, despairing of ever emulating Sandow's reported feats, and reaching his incredible measurements, gave up the ghost or diverted their energies to other and more productive pursuits. When a champion arose able to perform, under official conditions, meritorious feats, those performances suffered by comparison with feats not subjected to the same rigid ruling and scrutiny of a governing body.

Sandow, as is well known, was first discovered by Mr. Aubrey Hunt, an artist, whom he met at Venice in 1889. The meeting resulted in the painting by Mr. Hunt of Sandow in the character of a Roman Gladiator, and this painting adorned the wall of the reception room at Sandow's School in St. James's Street, London, for many years following.

Sandow comes to Town

Sandow was persuaded by the artist to visit London for the express purpose of picking up the gauntlet thrown down by Sampson to the whole world. At that point in history Sampson was appearing at the Royal Aquarium, London, billed as "The Strongest Man in the World," together with a pupil named Cyclops and was offering £100 to anybody who could defeat his pupil, and £1,000 to anybody proved capable of defeating the Great Sampson himself.

Sandow, as history now records, came to this country in 1889 and leapt into fame overnight by defeating, in dramatic fashion (it was the thing to do then to "jump the stage"), Cyclops, and, on a later date, Sampson himself.

Sandow, the supreme artist as he always proved himself to be, made his entry to the "World of Weights" in a most unexpected and unorthodox manner. By pre-arrangement with Professor Atilla, whom Sandow had met in Brussels some time previously, Sandow made his appearance publicly at the Aquarium by walking uninvited on the stage in evening dress, and not in the conventional attire of the stage strong man.

Although a good tailor can cover a multitude of physical defects, in Sandow's case the tailor concealed an unusual and extraordinary physical development—subsequently to be partly revealed by the removal of coat and sufficient clothing to indicate the real man who was destined to captivate the imagination of millions of people all over the civilized world.

Now it is an undisputed fact that Sandow defeated Cyclops decisively. The point for all weight-lifters to note, however, and so that this part of history may be placed in its proper and accurate perspective, is that there was no association at that time with any control over such contests. The weights lifted had not to be weighed and checked by officials. The contest was decided on the basis of "do what I do with the barbell or dumb-bell." Consequently, such is the fallibility of human memory, poundages served to grow as time advanced. Weights were "about" 300, 200 or 100 lbs. and no one seemed to worry about the necessity of weighing them for historical record.

Sandow had no difficulty in defeating Cyclops on feats recorded as a mixture of "money for jam" with what would be considered, in some instances, exceptional, even in these days of superlative record breaking.

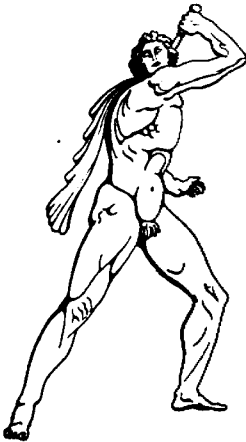
Cyclops (or Franz Bienkowski to give him his true name), as a kind of "hors d'oeuvres", performed a bent press of 160 lbs. (called the side press in certain circles in those days), and this Sandow duplicated by means of a kind of "Arm Push". This was not anything really extraordinary, yet when one considers that

Eugen Sandow the Magnificent.

these people were challenging and defying the "World", one would have expected greater poundages to be served up for emulation—even as an initial tit-bit. We have had many 10 stone lifters (and even lifters of lighter body-weight) capable of duplicating that particular feat without any special preparation—yet these lifters were not necessarily British Champions because of their ability.

The second test given Sandow by Cyclops was a "Two Hands Clean & Jerk with Barbell" of 220 lbs. as given in the "Romance of Weight-Lifting" by W.A.P., and 240 lbs. as given in Sandow's own book, was again not anything extraordinary. It is true that Sandow pushed the bell but even that has been exceeded not only in the push style but also in the Press by men much lighter in body-weight.

Yet when it comes to a "Two Hands Anyhow with Dumb-bells", the feat is given in Sandow's own story as "One bell of 210 lbs. and a smaller one of 100 lbs."—a combined weight of 310 lbs. a feat never



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World's Strongest Men in that style. It should further be noted that not only did Sandow perform this "record" with ease but Cyclops, the "pupil" of Sampson, did it on the same date.

The final effort described by Sandow himself was the lifting of a great stone weighing "about" 500 lbs. On this stone were secured two 56 lbs. weights. Two chairs were brought out and, Cyclops, standing on them, in order to get a position directly above the stone, lifted the whole load with his middle finger some four inches from the ground. This feat was also duplicated by Sandow—and with ease.

I am not, of course, quoting all the above as historical records. There were no certificated officials with certificated scales, and, of course, the poundages quoted were always "about" poundages in multiples of 100 lbs.

We all know the difficulty in guessing poundages. Even the trained lifter cannot always guarantee to guess weights to within 10 lbs. Yet it seemed possible, in those days, to guess the weights of bulky and unusual stones weighing 500 lbs.

Sandow defeats Sampson

History goes on to record that Sandow subsequently met Sampson and defeated him in feats of strength such as iron bar bending, breaking chains, breaking a wire cable tied tightly around the chest, etc., etc. The value and estimate of such feats cannot be gauged by me for obvious reasons. Suffice to state, however, for purpose of historical record, that the contest took place on the 2nd November 1889 at the Royal Aquarium, London, with the Marquis of Queensberry and Lord de Clifford as Judges—gentlemen of unimpeachable integrity but with no specialist weight-lifting knowledge.

Alas for faith in human nature, Sandow records that he did not receive the promised £1,000 despite his clear cut victory achieved by not only duplicating Sampson's own chosen feats, but also by inserting two of his own which Sampson failed or, rather, refused to attempt. Sampson betook himself far and wide from the scene of his former triumphs and Sandow ultimately agreed to accept £350 from the management of the Aquarium in full settlement.

The Measurement Controversy

Controversy has often raged concerning Sandow's abilities and particularly concerning his measurements. It is unfortunate that exaggeration was rife in those days and stage athletes often found themselves compelled to allow claims on their behalf to remain uncorrected because of even better claims advanced by, or on behalf of, their rivals. Thus Sandow, or agents

To clear up the question of Sandow's measurements, it is sufficient to quote herewith two sets of measurements: The first quoted by Sandow himself in his book, and those for which Doctor Sargent of Harvard University, U.S.A., held himself responsible, and which have been accepted as accurate by all responsible authorities. These are as follows:—

	<i>Sandow's own Figures</i>	<i>As measured by Dr. Sargent</i>
Weight	14st. 6lbs.	12st. 12lbs.
Height	5ft. 9½ins.	5ft. 8ins.
Neck	18 inches	16.5 inches
Chest (Normal)	48 inches	44.1 inches
Chest (Expand.)	62 inches	46.9 inches
Waist	30 inches	32.7 inches
Hips	42 inches	38 inches
Thigh	26 inches	23.2 inches
Calf	18 inches	15½ inches
Biceps	19½ inches	16.9 inches
Forearm	16½ inches	13.4 inches

It will be seen that Sandow was never a real heavy-weight as Continentals understand the term. His feats, therefore, were really good for a Light-Heavy-weight but he sought comparison as a heavy-weight and as such his feats have been compared with stronger and more famous weight-lifters.

There is just the point, of course, that the two sets of measurements were taken at different periods in his life. His own are given at the age of 35, and those of the Doctor's at the stage of 26. Allowing, therefore, for increase of body weight in that period, the difference is still too great between the two for acceptance—particularly the chest expansion claimed of 14 inches. In any case, Sargent's measurements were taken at a reasonable age of maturity, and it is unlikely that he could have grown 1½ inches in height during the intervening periods. The body weight of 14st. 6lbs. is probably correct but certainly not the chest, waist, calf and biceps measurements. I suggest, therefore, that Sargent's measurements should be accepted for historical record as the most authentic it will ever be possible to obtain from any source.

Sandow as a Lifter

So far as Sandow's weight-lifting abilities are concerned, these are clearly indicated by his performances in the only real contest in which he was persuaded to engage, viz.: the contest against Hercules McCann, at the Royal Music Hall, Holborn, on December 10th, 1890. This contest was held under conditions that approximate official conditions of to-day, and provide clear cut evidence for purposes of comparison: these I propose to deal with in my next instalment together with one or two interesting episodes connected with Sandow's stage activities.

In this article I will explain the exercises for developing a large chest as well as the muscles of the upper back. In the next article I will deal with the exercises to be used for developing the legs, hips and lower back. It must be understood by the reader that there is no attempt being made to list all of the exercises which are possible to perform for the areas being discussed in this article, for in reality this article will serve as an individual course of instruction and only those exercises which have been proven to bring results most quickly will be listed. As stated previously, in future articles I will list more completely specialized methods for developing all the muscles in the body, and at that time will go into greater detail concerning a larger variety of exercises.

Immediately following is my recommended course of exercises to be used by all those who are eager to gain bulk in their chest and upper back.

Exercise 1. The floor dip is a very valuable exercise for developing the pectoral, or chest muscles. Start as is shown in illustration 1. Now lower the chest to the floor as is shown in illustration 2. Return to the starting position and repeat for as

many times as you are capable.

Exercise 2. Taking advantage of the stimulation provided to the chest area by the first exercise we will now perform an exercise which will increase the size of the rib box and by doing so permit the development of even larger pectoral muscles. This will be the two arm pullover. Start as is shown in illustration 3. Now, keep the elbows stiff and breathe in deeply, and lower the weight to behind the head as is shown in illustration 4. Breathe out and return to the starting position still keeping the elbows stiff. Repeat for twenty repetitions.

Exercise 3. We will now perform another important exercise for the pectoral muscle. This exercise will pack a lot of solid muscle on the chest and is a fine one. Start as is shown in illustration 5. Now extend each arm off to the side, with the elbows stiff as is shown in illustration 6. Return to the starting position and repeat for 15 repetitions.

Exercise 4. The two arm press will develop a lot of muscle on the upper back. Start as is shown in illustration 7. Now press the weight to above the head as is (Concluded on page 128)

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