

1st Annual Pan-American

By Bob Hoffman

WITH A FRIENDLY SPIRIT of good competition throughout, the first annual Pan-American Powerlifting Championships proved to be a memorable and happy event.

Five countries were represented at the contest which was held in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico on April 18 and 19. The host country was the only one to field a full 10-man team. The United States was next with nine, Canada had eight while Argentina was represented by four and Venezuela by two men.

The competition was surprisingly keen and the battle for the team title was very close with the United States finally edging Puerto Rico by a score of 101-89. Canada was third with 67.

Enrique Hernandez represented the United States in the 132-pound class. If he had lifted for the country in which he was born—Puerto Rico—they would have won the contest by virtue of the 12 points he won by copping the featherweight title.

114-pound class

It was fitting that a member of the host country make the very first lift in this first annual event. Heriberto Acevedo successfully started with a 260 squat. Wayne Osborne of Canada made an easy start with 270. Acevedo then made 275 and Osborne twice tried to take the lead with attempts of 285 but he failed both times. Acevedo then tried 290 but it proved too much for him.

Both men made the same lifts in the bench press, 190 and 200 so after the first two lifts Acevedo still clung to his five-pound lead.

In Olympic lifting we say that the clean and jerk separates the men from the boys. In powerlifting the deadlift is often the determining factor. Here, the Canadian lifter showed his superiority by making 370 and 390 and passed up his last attempt as Acevedo only managed 330. Final totals—Osborne 860 and Acevedo 805.

123-pound class

Old in experience but not in years, Fernando Baez of Puerto Rico won the bantamweight class. At one time, he lifted for the York Barbell Club and he once held the world record in the press.

Canada's Stefano Finateri had the lead after the squat competition by virtue of his 375. Baez made 360 and Felix Ferrera was five pounds ahead of Venezuela's Hector Ferlin who made 310.

Most of the American team who competed in Puerto Rico won their classes, and Marv Phillips, who placed second in the World Championships last year is shown jumping with joy after making a new squat record—733 pounds! Phillips won the 220-pound class with a total less than he made at the World Championships here in York. However, all his lifts and total were Pan-American records. See the tabulated results on opposite page. Klemens photo

Argentina's Ferrera tied Baez in the bench press category with 240. Finateri could only manage 190 and Ferlin fell away by making only 155.

Baez closed out the 123-pound competition by deadlifting 420. His total of 1020 was 50 pounds better than that of Ferrera and Finateri, who led after the first category, was third with 965.

132-pound class

The featherweight class provided some surprises! World title holder, Allen Lord of the United States finished in 3rd place behind countryman Hernandez and Luiz Ramos of Puerto Rico.

Lord is very proficient in the deadlift and usually starts with 500 or more. Suffering from injuries, he was forced to go low and he only made 460. Combined with his 420 squat and 245 bench, this deadlift gave him 1125.

Ramos was another surprise. Tall for his class, he was almost a muscle-less wonder. He only made 345 in the squat and 265 in the

bench so he was far behind the leader Hernandez going into the deadlift. He tried hard to make up lost ground and succeeded with 475; this proved he was a mighty little man indeed. He then was successful with 515 before failing with 525. Nevertheless his 1125 total tied Lord and Ramos won the runner-up spot by virtue of being the lighter man.

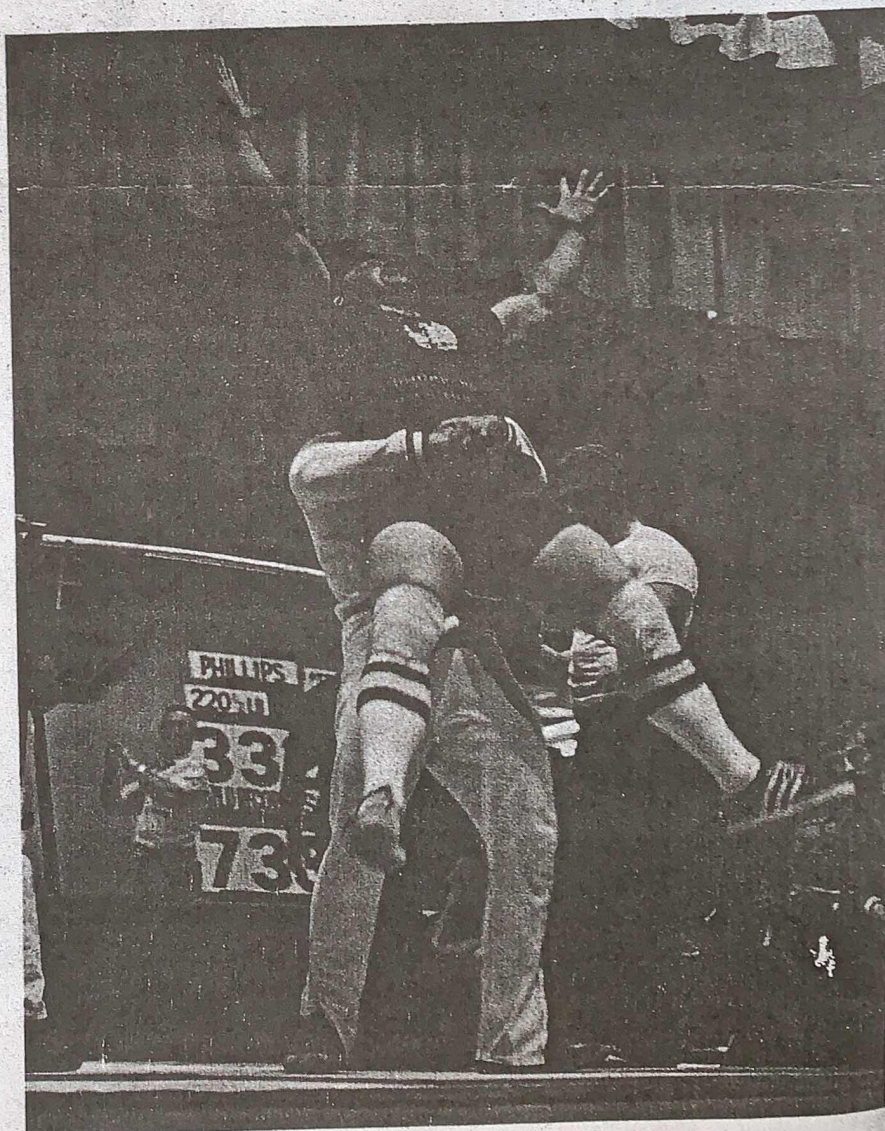
Hernandez really gave the crowd some thrills by setting three world records. His 470 squat and 330 bench were both records as was his 1280 total.

148-pound class

With five lifters, the lightweight class was the largest of the competition. The lifters here were evenly matched, especially in the squat.

The eventual winner of the class, Doc Rhodes of the United States, was first after the squat as he made 455. Mauro Dipasquale of Canada was next with 445. Sergio Leinstejer of Argentina was third with 420.

After two lifts, Rhodes had gone into a comfortable lead with a 785 sub-total. Leinstejer



Powerlifting Championships

moved into second place with a 310 bench and a 730 sub-total to a 715 sub-total for Dipasquale.

Although he made only 580 in the deadlift, after failing with 600, Rhodes still captured the deadlift category. The man from South America was 10 pounds behind in the deadlift and 65 pounds behind Rhodes' 1365 total. Dipasquale finished with a 1265 total.

The United States, after two victories in a row, was now in first place!

165-pound class
Joe Spack of the United States was the favorite in the middleweight class but he was lagging badly after the first two lifts.

Puerto Rico's Eliezer Plaza had a 785 sub-total made up of a 430 squat and a 355 bench press, the highest of the class. Spack's leading 475 squat and his 280 bench gave him a 755 sub-total, 30 pounds behind Plaza.

Once again the deadlift counted heavily. Spack lifted 145 pounds more than Plaza, 645 to 500. This gave him the overall victory with a 1400 total as compared to Plaza's 1285.

181-pound class

The United States was not represented in the lighthweight class and, in fact, there were only two lifters in action. It was, however, a very close match.

Nestor Gregory of Puerto Rico gained the victory with lifts of 510 in the squat, 320 in the bench press and 540 in the deadlift for a total of 1370.

Juan Nicolina of Argentina made the highest bench press with 340 but he fell behind in the squat and deadlift with 465 and 530 respectively for a 1335 total.

After six classes, the scoring did not look good for the United States as Puerto Rico was leading with 66 points compared to 44 for the United States and 41 for Canada.

198-pound class

Vince Anello had been the United States champion in the 181-pound division but he let his weight go up to 196½ and he won the middleweight class.

There were as many misses as successes in this class, six good lifts and six failures.

Anello made the highest squat with 530. Ned Gvoich of Canada missed twice with the same weight and had to be satisfied with 490.

Alfredo Rodriguez of Puerto Rico made 470 and then had two failures with 500.

There were only three successes out of 12 attempts in the bench press. Anello missed 390, made it and then missed with 400. We weren't worried, however, because we knew his ability in the deadlift. Rodriguez was not so good in the bench press as he made only 250, twice missing with 270. Gvoich made 320 for a sub-total of 810 compared to Anello's 920.

Anello made the highest start of the entire meet in the deadlift with 700 pounds. His ability in this lift is remarkable. He shifts gears in the middle of the lift and all of a sudden, it's up!

His first lift seemed easy and then he tried 750 but he was turned down twice. I feel the judges were too strict as the platform was rather rickety and hardly strong enough to properly support the weights that were being handled. In any event, Vince lost two lifts which seemed good enough to me.

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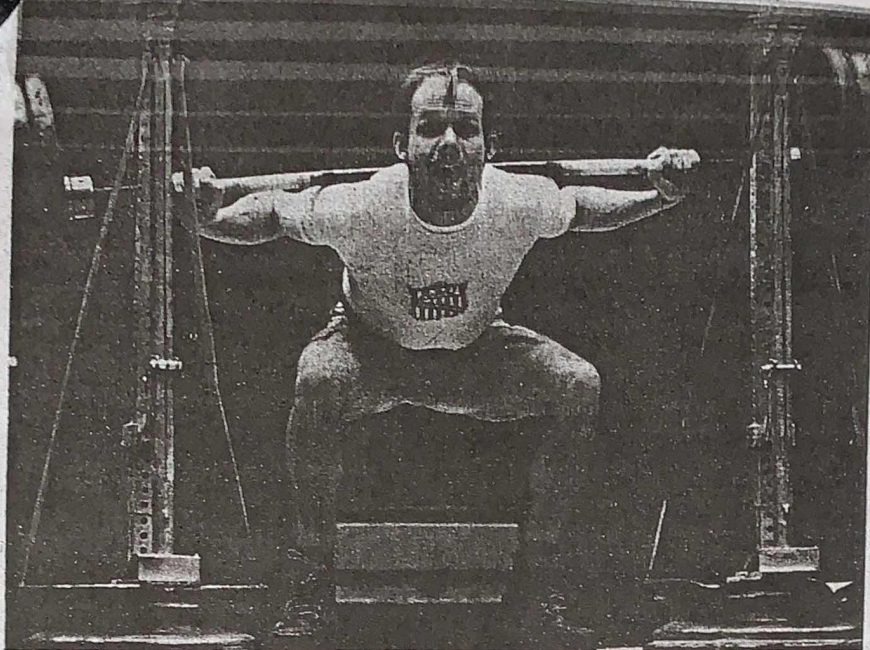
FIRST ANNUAL PAN-AMERICAN POWERLIFTING

Aguadilla, Puerto Rico

Age						Weight					

*—Pan-American record
**—World record

Best lifter—Mary Phillips
Team title—United States



Allen Lord, the 132-pound World champ placed 3rd in Puerto Rico.

Pope photos

Although this cut down his total and he only finished with 1620, he was still far ahead of Gvoich who totaled 1415 and Rodriguez who made 1330.

The United States had gained a little but we were still trailing as the score was Puerto Rico 74, United States 56 and Canada 50.

220-pound class

Puerto Rico was not represented in the 220-pound class and as the United States lifters finished first and second, we took over the team scoring lead with 77 points.

This is the newest class in powerlifting and although it is not a part of Olympic weightlifting, we think it should be as there is a big spread between the 198 and 242-pound classes.

Karl Hult of Canada finished third in this class. He is a very good lifter but it just happened that he was up against two unusually good lifters, Marv Phillips and Tom Farchione.

Hult made lifts of 550, 390 and 515 for a 1455 total.

Farchione who had some very close lifts turned down made only his first attempt squat with 650, having missed twice with 670. In the bench press, Farchione made very good lifts with 390 and 410 and then a close miss with 420 for a sub-total of 1060. This was 110 pounds behind the sub-total of countryman Phillips who squatted with 700 and then benched 470.

Farchione showed his stuff when he went after Phillips in the deadlift. He made a very good attempt with 685 but couldn't bring it in. This was 85 pounds more than his previous attempt, which was successful.

Phillips, who won the Best Lifter trophy, deadlifted 625 for a total of 1795, a total which was only exceeded by superheavyweight Paul Wrenn's 1955.

Paul Wrenn was the only competing superheavy in these championships.



242-pound class

Clay Patterson, the Executive Secretary of the International Powerlifting Federation, was the winner of the heavyweight class by 250 pounds.

Jorge Garcia of Puerto Rico, not a very big heavyweight at 228 pounds, was fourth in the class. He made lifts of 475, 350 and 565 to total 1390 pounds.

His countryman, Jose Perez, totaled 1510 and gained third place although he was only five pounds behind Canada's Bill Gvoich. Perez was the lightest man in the class.

With the 15 additional points they picked up, the two Puerto Ricans fattened their country's score to 89.

Gvoich squatted with 515 and then made three successful bench presses with 320, 330 and 340. He followed these with two successes in the deadlift with 605 and 660.

Clay Patterson proved to be the strongest secretary in the world as he did some very, very good lifting. He made 600 in the squat and then made two very good bench presses with 410 and 435 before missing with 450.

After two lifts, Clay had it "in the bag" as he led with a 1035 sub-total as compared to Perez's 875 and Gvoich's 855. He used the very, very wide leg spread in the deadlift and was strong enough to get 640 up but he couldn't manage 685.

The 12 points he gained for his victory gave the United States a total of 89 points and moved them into a tie with Puerto Rico. In actuality, however, the competition was over as only Paul Wrenn of the United States was entered in the superheavyweight division and all he had to do was total for the United States to take the team scoring title.

Superheavyweight class

In spite of the fact that Wrenn only needed to total, he put on a good show. He opened with an 800 squat and then made three successful bench presses with 435, 460 and 470 and it seemed as if he could have done more if he had to.

In the deadlift, he made a success with 685 and then tried unsuccessfully with 740 and 790. I am certain that if he had been pushed, he could have gone over the 2000 mark.

There is a great deal I could write about this wonderful trip but I am limited by magazine space. Everything seemed just perfect—the food was good and quite plentiful, the weather was terrific and the ocean was exhilarating.

One day we took a ride to a nearby town and there was a ball game in progress. The beach was loaded and the cars were parked on both sides of the street. As we had a bus, we couldn't get through. So, our lifters got out and lifted the cars up over the curb so we could get by.

I once wrote a book in which I said, "I like weightlifting and weightlifters." After this trip I like them even more.

Before I close I would like to add one more thing. In addition to all the wonderful people we met on this trip, we were very impressed by the mayor of Aguadilla. For the first time in the city's history, the mayor is a woman. She, incidentally, was the first mayor that I have ever known to stay for an entire contest.

Apparently, she too likes weightlifting and weightlifters. MD