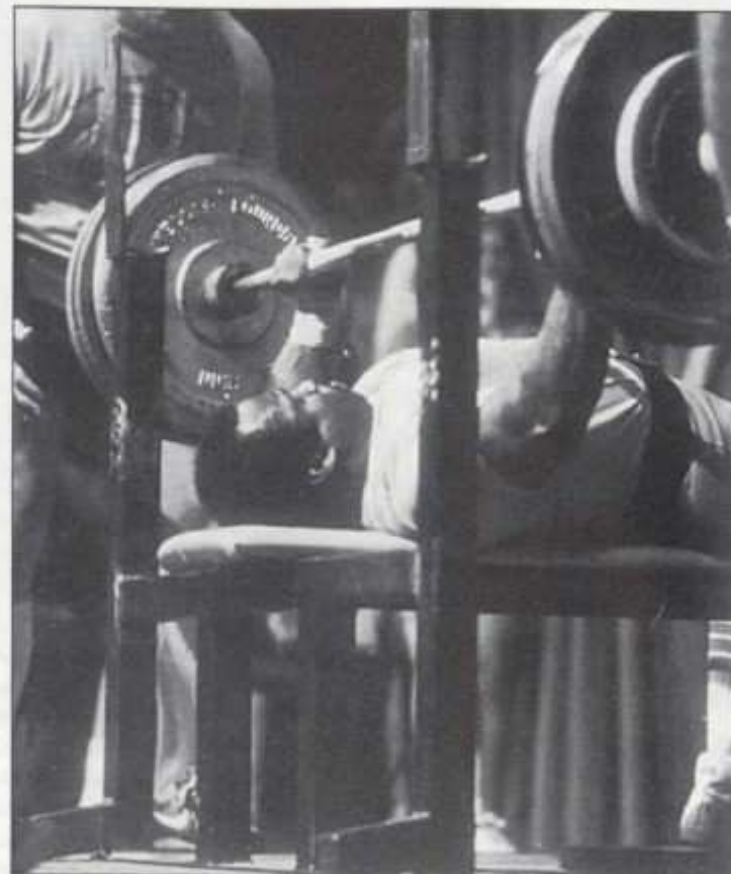


INTERVIEW

Personal dialogue between
PL USA Magazine and the
Sport's Greatest Names.

Walter Thomas

interviewed for Powerlifting USA by Mike Lambert



Balance... Walter is a triple threat man - good in all three disciplines.

meet directors have to bear.

I do believe we are much better off than we were in the late 70's and 80's. If you notice the totals, they usually reflect the real truth.

ML: Tell us about your new Training Course. What makes it a good buy for the lifter looking for some guidance?

WT: Mike, I have invested a large amount of time, effort and money in developing a training course that I truly believe will assist the Beginner, Intermediate, and Professional Powerlifter in achieving their goals. This course is designed, developed, and based on seven major World and National Championships that I have won over a 25 years period of time. The lifter will be able to avoid trial and error methods which consumes a lot of valuable time, by using my Training Program,

As you know Mike, I didn't have access to this type of a Training Program as a lifter in the early 70's, but I did have the greatest coach ever, the late Dick Burke. As a result of his expert advice, I was able to become a World Class Athlete in a very short time. Twenty-Five years of experience and devoted, hard, tedious work have gone into developing these Training Courses. I know that anyone purchasing this program will not regret their investment in this lifetime. All of the information in my Training Program is the **Truth!!!**

ML: You're 50 years of age now. Will you be competing in World IPF World Masters Championships in the future.

WT: Yes, also in the USPF and ADFPA Seniors, and the ADFPA Masters. I still like to compete

against the younger generation, it keeps me motivated - win or lose. (Smile).

ML: When you are training in the gym, or lifting in competition, do you still hear the advice of Dick Burke, your mentor, in the back of your mind? Please share with us your thoughts about Dick.

WT: Yes! Dick Burke was very much more than a coach to me, he was my best friend, my brother-in-Christ, he was like a father to me in many ways. On many occasions, about three weeks before major competition, he would subtly prepare me mentally for the upcoming event. He would talk about priorities, like win the meet first, achieve personal records second, go for world and national records third, etc. I have been accused of being a conservative lifter in major meets, well, you can blame Dick for that, because he always suggested win first, then save any extra energy for the next major competition. Now that I look back on that brilliant suggestion, that's probably the reason I have lasted this long (smile). Many times when I am in the gym training, I can subconsciously hear the echoes of Dick's voice giving me sound advice on how to train. Many times in heated battle on the platform going for a limit lift, I try to subconsciously think back to advice that Dick communicated to me in our training sessions. Dick Burke was truly

an asset to our great sport of Powerlifting and the greatest coach that I had a pleasure and honor of knowing.

ML: I know that you are recently retired from your careers in Civil Service and the U.S. Military. What were your accomplishments in those areas?

WT: Mike, I have been connected with the U.S. Government since age 17. The U.S. Government has provided me with a livelihood and opportunity that I probably would not have acquired as a civilian. I was a high school dropout and juvenile delinquent, before entering the Army in 1963. The following are the things I accomplished over a 32 year period in government service: 1. Retired 32 years Civil service.; 2. Retired 22 years U.S. Army Reserve.; 3. Served 3 years active duty U. S. Army, rank PFC.; 4. Acquired

ML: Walter, you have a special perspective on our sport, competing and winning at the highest level, the IPF Men's World Championships, over a period of three decades. From your first title to your most recent one, what is the same about the Worlds, what is better, and what - if anything - is worse?

WT: The IPF Worlds still provides the highest level of competitors worldwide and the availability of drug testing procedures which levels the playing field for all competitors at world meets. I noticed that many new countries are now competing in the IPF, which makes it better for our sport. I look forward to the day when the IPF World Meet is hosted again on U.S. soil.

ML: Please review for us the techniques you utilized to rehabilitate your back injury, which kept you off the platform for years, until you came back to win several recent national and world championship victories. That degree of injury seems like it would have permanently retired most lifters.

WT: Mike, there are several techniques that I used:

1. Traction for lower lumbar back, administered by my good Physical Therapist friend Todd Munson.

2. Stiff Leg Deadlifts, suggested by my training partner Clark Chestand.

3. Decrease in training, dictated by my age (smile).

4. Feldene (Anti-Inflammatory Medication) prescribed by my doctor for my back.

5. Sabbatical. I believe a lifter should take a one year break from major competition every 3 years, but I don't stop training; I just scale it down.

ML: How has the sport dealt with the issue of drug usage during your long tenure? Is drug use down these days, in your opinion. Are we better off than we use to be?

WT: I believe the IPF, WDFPF, ADFPA, and the USPF have addressed the eradication of this disease in our sport (which has plagued many) by providing highly sophisticated drug testing procedures which discourages drug usage at the national and international levels. However, I suspect drug usage at the state and local levels are still running rampant due to the high expense the