

# ULTIMATE HOME TRAINER

by Frank Bold

I'm obsessed with designing and manufacturing my own training equipment and I sometimes trawl through the old magazines looking for 'new' ideas, I came across an article in a 1940s copy of SUPERMAN magazine about a man who I think must be the ultimate home trainer, Harry L Good.

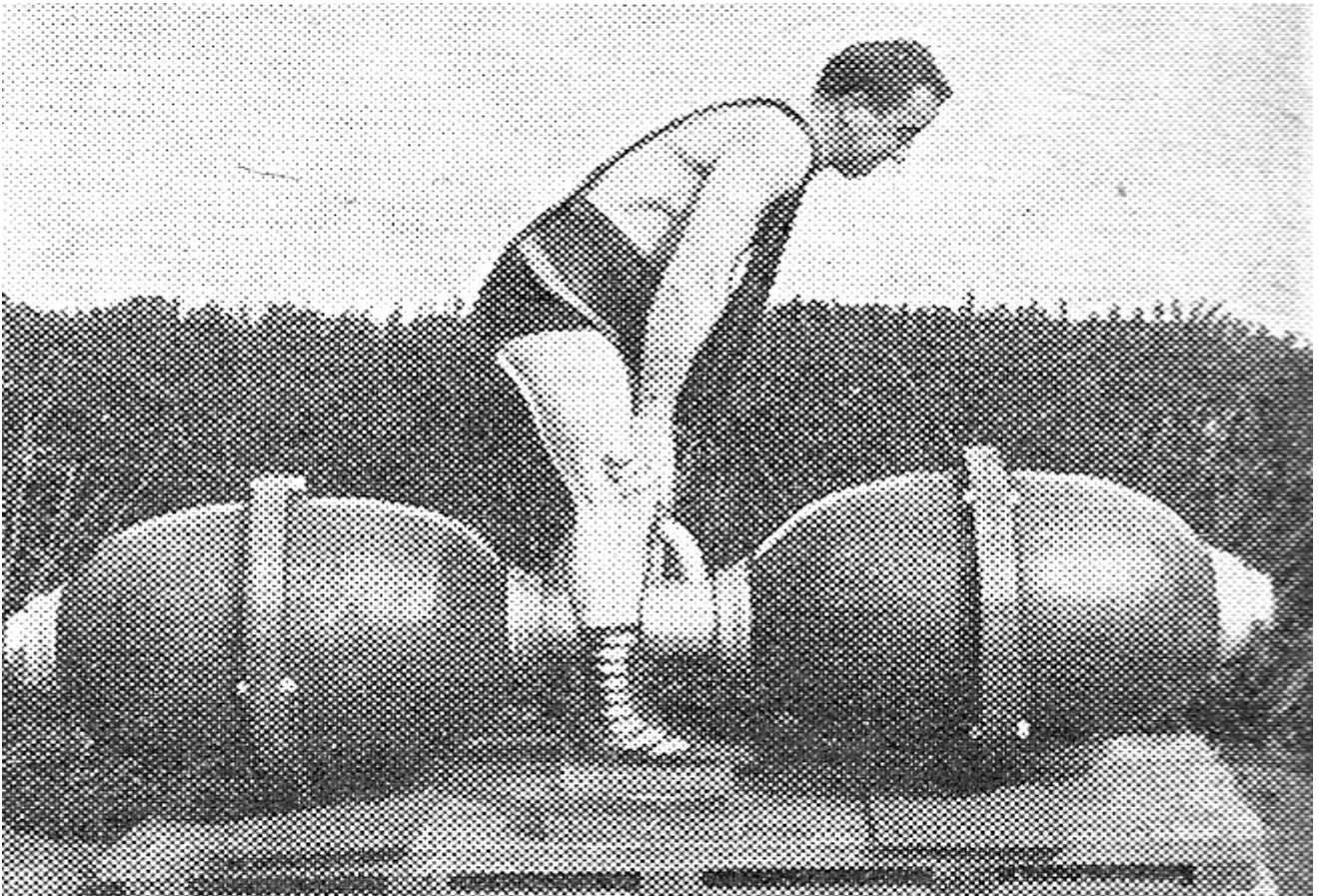
Harry Leisey Good was born in Reamstown, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Most of his early life was spent on his father's farm; in his early teens he took up weight training to fulfill an urge to become strong. He began lifting stones and other heavy objects, and bending iron bars. Within three years he was able to perform the following feats of strength at a bodyweight of 150 pounds: lift a 548-pound stone with one hand, with a rope wrapped around the wrist; lift 829 pounds in the same manner, using both hands; lift a 270-pound stone upon a three and one-half foot wall without any aid; shoulder from the floor 200-pound potash bags; shoulder from the floor two full bags of oats, one in either arm (weight of each bag about 70 pounds each); lift a 370-pound stone from the ground by gripping it with the hands only; all in addition to bending heavy iron bars.

When he was about 18 years old when he saw an advertisement in the "Police Gazette" advertising the Farmer Burns School of Wrestling. Farmer Burns was, without doubt, the greatest wrestler ever produced in America and was responsible for the rise of Frank Gotch, who twice defeated George Hackenschmidt in such dramatic circumstances. Good sent off at once for the course; waited impatiently for it to arrive, but unfortunately, he did not have a practice partner! He wrote to Farmer Burns asking for the cost of personal instruction in his school at Omaha. Burns answered with a price that was beyond Harry's means and that is how he decided not to be a wrestler! A year later he purchased an Earle E. Liederman bodybuilding course, utilising both strand and resistance exercises. He pursued this course faithfully for six months with fairly good results, but forsook it when he moved to Reading, Pennsylvania, to accept a position there. In Reading he lived in an apartment house where his only exercising for about a year consisted of push-ups. He became so expert in this exercise that eventually he could perform 100 push-ups in one exercising period with ease! On one occasion, in fact, he did 120 in good style, and he found that this

exercise gave him great results and increased his pectoral development considerably. In 1923 Harry went back to the farm to rejoin his parents and resume his outdoor bodybuilding. However, the routine was changed when another magazine advertisement stressed the value of weights in health and bodybuilding and the attainment of super-strength. So he bought a barbell set for \$40. Just imagine his amazement when he discovered that in his first attempt at lifting weights he was able to lift 170 pounds in the Two Hands Clean and Jerk; 110 pounds with one hand from the shoulder; and 90 pounds from the floor to arms overhead. He studied all the courses he could lay his hands upon and formulated his own system of physical training.

His younger brothers, impressed by Harry's progress, took up weight-training about two years later. After four years of persistent training he decided to enter the National Weight-Lifting championships in Allentown, Pennsylvania, and was declared the winner in the Five Olympic Lifts with the following total:

One Hand Snatch, 129½ lbs.; One Hand Clean and Jerk, 146½ lbs.; Two Hands Military Press, 152½ lbs.; Two Hands Snatch, 117½



lbs and the Two Hands Clean and Jerk 223½ lbs. Good's progress in weightlifting was rapid and on May 11th, 1929, he made many National Amateur records in the 168 lbs. class. His actual bodyweight at the time of the performance of these record lifts was 167lbs., and the records were created in the Heavy Middleweight Class. A Two Hands Anyhow with Barbell and Kettle weight of 276 lbs., is still the best Amateur Record for all classes, while a Teeth Lift of 451½ lbs., remains a record and the third highest lift ever made in the U.S.A. A Right Hand Clean and Jerk of 180½ lbs. is an A.A.U. record and has also been performed by his brother Bill. In 1930 and 1931 Good en-

tered the National A.A.U. Championships, but although placed, decided to turn professional and become a bodybuilding instructor in Philadelphia. He continued to put up weightlifting records, his outstanding lifts being the Harness and Back Lifts, the Jerk from Behind the Neck, Two Hands Anyhow, Teeth Lift and One Leg Presses. In the latter lifts, due to powerful leg development, he could Press with One Leg 350 lbs. a number of times, and had made a One Leg Press of 380 lbs. twice by placing the barbell on the sole of the foot himself and then pressing it by straightening the leg. Good was the owner of the World's Heaviest Dumbbell weighing 2,150 pounds [see

photograph]. It is almost seven feet in length and twenty-six inches in height. It was purchased from Warren Lincoln Travis\* and was used by Travis and Arthur Dandurand, famous strength stars, when exhibiting together throughout Canada, when a large truck was necessary in order to transport it from one town to another. Harry Good was famed for his supporting and balancing feats with exhibition bells and human weights and for his juggling ability with the weights. Hence his exhibitions usually include all feats of this type, some posing and hand-balancing. Harry L Good died in July 1998 aged 95.