

JON FREDERICK COLE

The "Monard of Might" by Herb Glossbrenner



The Great Jon Cole squatting a personal and world best 902 on October 28th, 1972 at the Arizona State Championships. (Benzecze)

Often times we forget those whose incredible performances of yesterday are stored in the vaults of history. In the hierarchy of amateur strength athletes one man stands above all others: Jon Frederick Cole, who was indeed the Monard of Might. He was a true Titan of Triotomomy. The trichotomy of a man is labeled a combination of mind, body and spirit - functioning as a harmonious unit of the whole being. Jon possesses the mind of a scholar, the strength of Superman and the spirit of perseverence. Cole was neither the best ever in Olympic lifting or powerlifting but combining his talents, he remains even today as the best there ever was. This is indeed a bold achievement. I have bestowed the title as History's Greatest Strength Athlete by verified statistics. I made my determination by a combination total of best results in the two competitive strength sports. The powerlifts represent a true reflection of human strength. Weightlifting (the overhead lifts) demonstrate the epitome of explosive power and athleticism. A lifetime of statistical data made the compilation of this list much easier. The aggregate of the two sports exemplifies the best of both worlds. I have not included the clean and press in this comparison for several reasons: (1) It was eliminated from the Olympic lifting discipline because it deteriorated from a true test of strength over the years to become nothing more than a clean and jerk without foot movement. (2) All athletes after 1972 never practiced it. (3) I could not have rated them accurately. (4) It would not have changed the final outcome.

I wanted to include Paul Anderson and Vasily Alexeev (URS) on this list. Paul did far more as a professional. I have already written of his claimed best lifts for the sephalon. I never asked him his single limits in powerlifting as an amateur. I will not theorize. It would be

HISTORY'S ALL-TIME GREATEST STRENGTH ATHLETES - TOP 25 (AMATEUR)

ATHLETE	YOB	NAT	HT	BWT	TOT	O/L	P/L	SN	CJ	SQ	BP	DL	Cat
1. Cole, Jon	43	USA	5-11	268	3163	770	2393	340	430	901	610	882	PL
2. Krastev, Antonio	61	BUL	5-11	380	3141	1058	2094	485	573	860	463	760	WL
3. Kazmaier, Bill	64	USA	6-2	320	3135	661	2474	286	374	926	661	887	PL
4. Reding, Serge	41	BEL	5-9	292	3103	920	2182	402	518	882	529	771	WL
5. Henry, Marcus	71	USA	6-3	371	3088	860	2228	386	474	953	529	745	WL
6. Reinhold, Don	45	USA	6-3	345	3059	630	2429	260	370	937	606	886	PL
7. Haara, Taito	42	FIN	5-9	3058	865	2193	386	479	893	501	799	91	PL
8. Patena, Ken	43	USA	6-1	330	3057	892	2155	387	505	820	560	785	WL
9. Withamm, Bruce	43	USA	6-3	325	3043	887	2155	402	485	800	562	793	WL
10. Alexeev, Sergei	64	RUS	5-10	3042	3042	904	2138	386	518	926	485	727	WL
11. Popov, Evgeni	55	RUS	6-4	333	3031	975	2056	441	534	799	485	771	WL
12. Wrenn, Paul	47	USA	6-0	340	3027	656	2371	286	369	975	540	855	PL
13. Naelikoff, Viktor	53	UKR	5-11	275	3009	838	2171	369	468	860	496	816	PL
14. Muskratkov, Andral	61	RUS	6-0	250	3004	904	2100	391	512	793	507	799	PL
15. Magsee, Thomas	58	CAN	6-5	280	2992	755	2243	325	430	860	507	800	WL
16. Flannan, Jerome	53	USA	6-0	340	2972	865	2107	386	479	800	507	800	WL
17. Kerr, Andrew	46	GBR	6-4	300	2965	782	2182	341	441	788	551	843	PL
18. Hatfield, Fred	42	USA	5-6	249	2948	645	2303	275	369	1014	523	766	PL
19. Rethwisch, Gus	45	USA	6-3	325	2937	645	2293	264	380	905	523	865	PL
20. Nagy, Jan	45	TCH	6-0	308	2907	620	1986	386	534	772	509	705	WL
21. Saarlahinen, Hannu	44	FIN	5-10	255	2904	799	2105	363	435	793	567	744	PL
22. Saari, Tavo	46	EST	6-1	286	2877	882	1995	367	507	738	485	771	WL
23. Snelgr, Milos	60	TCH	6-0	242	2877	788	2089	347	441	738	534	816	PL
24. Sigmarsson, Jon P	60	ISL	6-3	310	2871	733	2138	320	413	804	518	816	PL
25. Gabner, Gary	42	USA	6-2	297	2806	786	2020	345	441	775	510	735	WL

epitome of athleticism - harmony of motion and proficiency of technique. He understood why historical art and sculpture portrayed the event as Olympic ideology. During his junior year at Glen Dale High School he spun the 3 lb. 9 oz. National Powerlifting Championships. A few months away he tested himself - 1825 (465-645-715). This alerted his career sister sport something to smile about - 1035 (370-290-375).

Cole developed a camaraderie with George as they toured Europe together on the U.S. track squad. Jon had a premier year in throwing. He won the 1969 AAU Nationals in the discus. He challenged his 1900 lb. total record. As expected Minneapolis monster Hennessy dominated the bench press with 536, a record Kanter, the burly squat master, and Gary Young, the National record holder, kept a wary eye on Cole - the new kid on the block. With a calm confident demeanor Jon benched 465 and kept within striking distance. Kanter and Young made borderline squats with 700. Cole outdid them with 705 (actual weight 710) a meet record. The others overestimated their strength. Jon ripped up a 720 (724) deadlift and eclipsed Kanter with a lighter bodyweight of 1890. Young went for a three way tie and lighter bwt. win, but 780 was way too much. Making his first appearance on the national scene, Cole won handily. Later in his column record had survived, later in his column he did 375 PR, 300 SN, 380 CJ for 1065 total.

Boydhood aspirations resurfaced during 1968, the Olympic year. Early in doors he chucked the shot 62'10" and



Jon's Brute Strength and Explosive Ability brought him quick success on the Olympic Lifting platform. (photo by Louis Benzecze)

sights on George's record. On November 3 in Phoenix he obliterated it with 1975 (485-740-750). Actual weight lifted were 491-752-761 for an unofficial 2004! His squat and total were U.S. records. He entered several weightlifting meets in 1968 also. In December at Dick Green's meet in Stafford he gave the iron Carnie sister sport something to smile about - 1035 (370-290-375).

George developed a camaraderie with Hennessy/finished runner-up with 1885. Cole pulled up a monster 780 (779) deadlift for 2060. He out-lifted, at 242, all the Supers who would become famous - Cundy, Fletcher, Cassidy, White and Williams. In El Paso, Texas, in November, Jon really calculated doing 525-780-785 for 2004. MUSCULAR DEVELOPMENT magazine called him PERHAPS the best powerlifter in the world. At 242 now he was far better than any Super (Weaver held SHW Total at 2040). One week later on November 7 Jon registered 1090 in the overhead lifts (380-310-400).

On December 13 from lost the spotlight. He regained his long lost the record. His squat was fantastic - 840 (863). With a 740 deadlift he crushed the 2100 barrier. Cole was most surprised at George's 520 bench press (a 60 lb. improvement).

Jon responded to the challenge and once more kicked it up into high gear. He set his sights on a meet in Tolleon on March 14, 1971. His newly grown patch of facial foliage made him an even more imposing sight. One was-stickin' younger stouter, 'C'non, Hercules' every time Jon came out. He made a 525 bench press easily but misgripped 540. He squatted 800 and missed 820. The spotters guided him back into the rack. One fellow who was trying to be helpful wasn't. He picked up one end and twisted Jon's back. It didn't seem to affect his deadlift as Jon became the third member in the 800 club (Frenn - 812.5-244 and Cundy 801.5 at 775). He ripped up the biggest lift in history - 815 (813 weighed). Jon, who at this time was Assistant Track Coach at ASU, was now called by MUSCULAR DEVELOPMENT magazine as the BEST powerlifter in the world. The word PERHAPS was now deleted.

Jon wanted to skip the 1971 Seniors in Dallas. Pressured by the pro's and friends he entered at SFHW. He had squatted 865 shortly before the meet and came in at 266. His instincts were correct. The warm up room was poorly lit and a huge bar thicker than normal circumference was to be used for the SFHW squats. What's this? Jon inquired. "That's the bar Paul Anderson used!" came the reply. "Humph, " Jon growled. "I ain't Paul Anderson!" Jon was badly out of "sync". It was his worst ever competition, and the only one I know that he failed to total. He barely made 525 and misgripped other tries. He was trying higher heels on his lifting boots which hindered his squat. He missed

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