

Bogdan POPRAWSKI : "REMARKS OF CHAMPIONS"

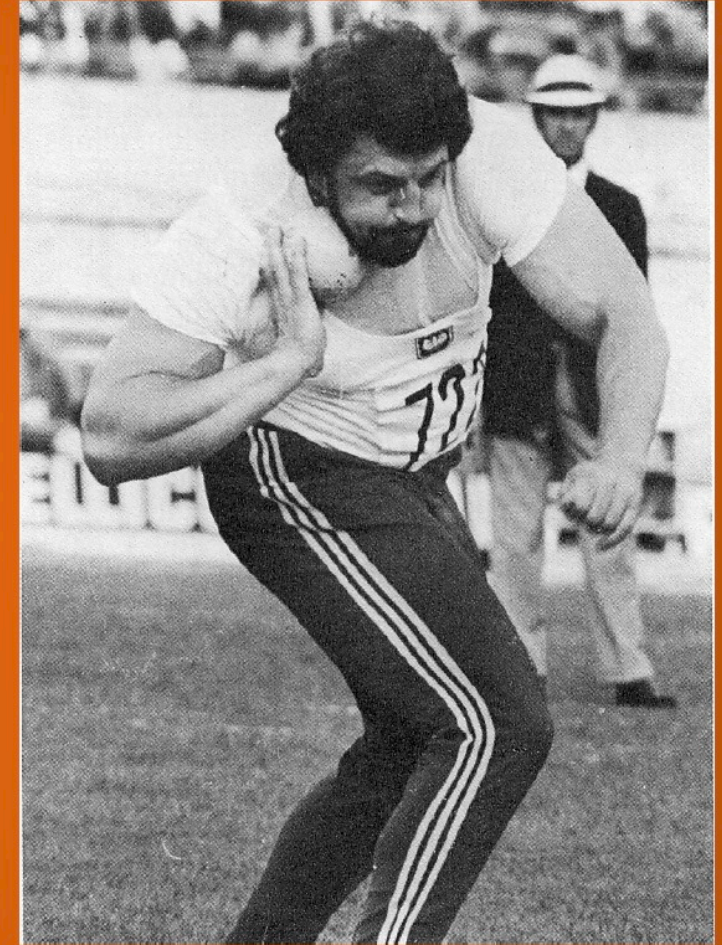


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I suppose it is the inevitable by-product of the fast paced technological world we live in, but it strikes me we do not allow ourselves the luxury of listening to those who, in our chosen vocations, have gone before us.

All too often we fail to heed the words of our predecessors and end up having to discover truths that have been already discovered many times over.



KOMAR (POL)



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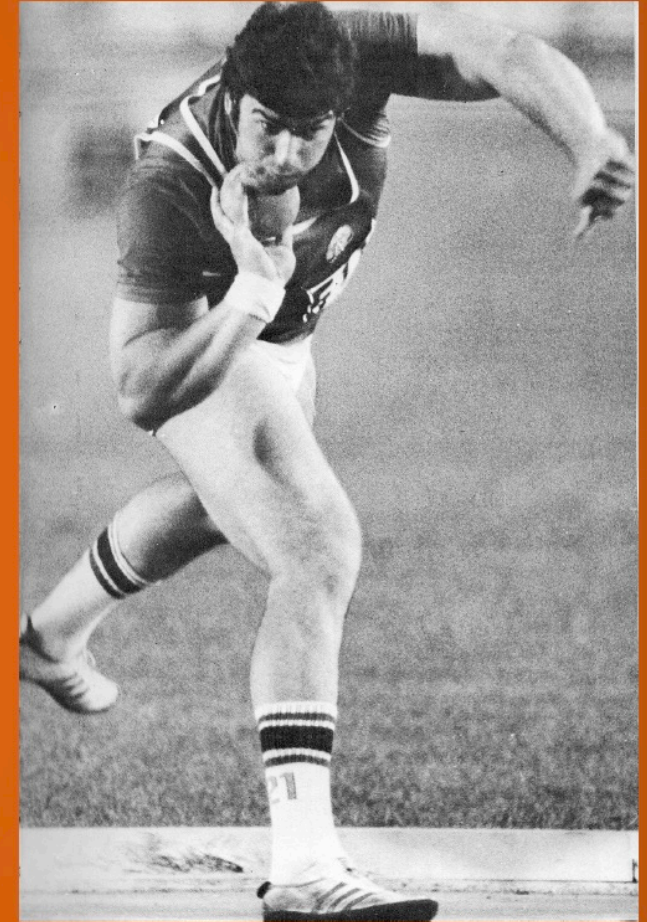


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This is particularly true in sports. We tend to think of our champions as faceless entities with nothing to offer developing athletes. Eastern-bloc athletes, for example, are considered "mysterious robots" who are programmed by an efficient system to succeed.

This is far from the truth, for many champions from these countries are in fact intelligent, thoughtful people who have succeeded because they have put considerable time into their respective programs and their sport.



BEYER (GER)



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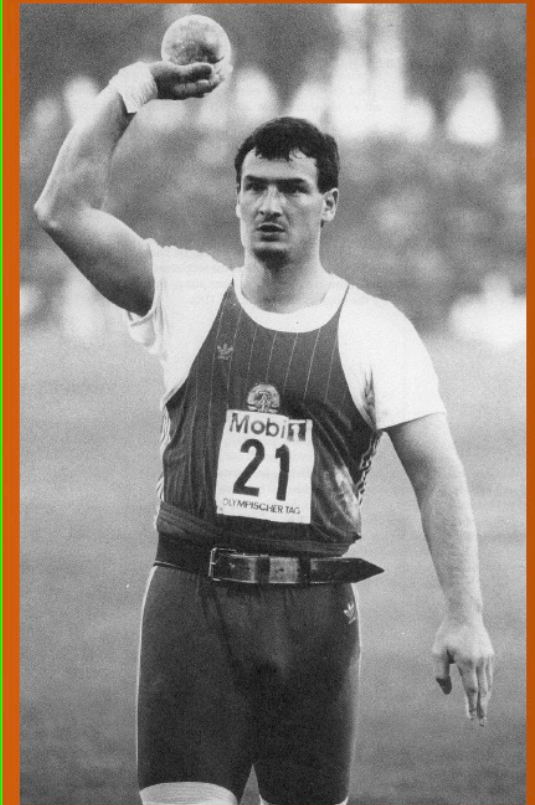
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When you stop and think about it and try to put into perspective feelings we all share, to be a champion in track and field is an amazing accomplishment. If we take the shot put for instance there have only been 22 Olympic champions.

Out of four billion people only 22 have won the Olympic Gold! Quite remarkable.

I have always found it interesting to listen to champions and hear why they think they reached the pinnacle of their sport. The information these "super" human beings provide has a different, and possibly more beneficial flavor than the myriad theoretical papers that are extant.



TIMMERMANN (GER)



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The material I present here is a compilation of my personal contact with the athletes, interviews, and was extended by some data printed in the Polish publication "Lekkoatletyka" in 1984 and 1987. I would also like to thank Mr. Hans-Rudi Kunz, who helped me when I interviewed Werner Gunthor at the World Championships in Rome in 1987.

With this in mind I put together this article based on my conversations with three great champions in shot put, Edward Sarul, World Champion in Helsinki in 1983, Wladyslaw Komar, Olympic Champion in Munich in 1972 and Werner Gunthor, World Champion in Rome in 1987.



GÜNTHÖR (SWI)



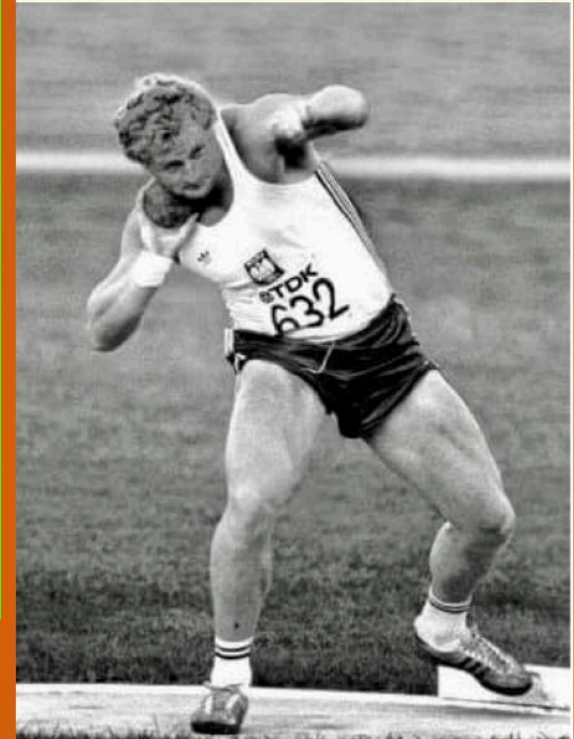
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BP - *When did you start to practice systematically?*

Komar - I guess I really started training in a systematic fashion when I was 20. But before that I had at least 5-6 years of general physical preparation. I swam, dove, boxed and played games such as European Handball and rugby.

Sarul - I started earlier, I think I was 15. At the age of 17 I was sixth at The Youth Spartikade. I put the 6kg shot 14.85 m.



SARUL (POL)

WALSH (NZL)



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