

VOL. 26

*This Issue in Memory of*  
BILL TALENT COUGHLIN  
MASSIMILIANO TRUZZI

No. 7



NEWS LETTER

Fall

1 9 7 4

## blowing ping pong balls out of your mouth

BY PETER KOGEN

I've tried blowing ping pong balls out of my mouth as Gran Picaso does and I've come to a conclusion that others who have tried it will probably agree with: it's very difficult!

There is a way, however, to make the trick easier. By blowing ping pong balls out of your mouth one at a time and catching them (as they come down) in your hands and continue to "feed" them into your mouth and blow them out again, it's possible (and not too difficult) to juggle 2, 3, 4, and even 5 ping pong balls by either cascading them or using the fountain pattern in which two separate arcs are made without the balls crossing. I've found the fountain easier than the cascade. I have been able to keep 5 ping pong balls going for a short time by using this continual "feed" method. The difficult part of the trick is in bending your neck back far enough (but not too far), and in "feeding" the ping pong balls into your mouth. It's possible to do 2 with one hand or both hands, as can 3 or more. Having a bowl of water nearby makes it convenient to keep the ping pong balls clean. It's also easier to blow moist ping pong balls rather than dry ones.

I've found in trying to do this type of juggling that it is a good exercise for the legs because the legs support the weight of the body as it's bent back. The neck is also strengthened (it will be sore after first attempts). The lungs also get a good workout!



1975

# Convention information 1975 International Jugglers Association

ORGANIZED JUNE, 1947 By—Harry Lind    George Bervinchak    F. R. Dunham    Roger Montandon  
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September 14, 1974

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FALL 1974

## CONVENTION 1975

I don't believe I could start early enough making definite plans for the convention. So that everyone is aware of what is going on I will make a report every month and a half or so on our progress.

The normal charges for renting the facilities at the YMCA are quite astronomical. In fact it would wipe out the IJA treasury to pay for one 8 hour day's use of one gym. The reason for the high price is that the "Y" does not care to have "outsiders" use their facilities. Because of my and Joe's position at the "Y" and the nature of the IJA, the "Y" has offered to donate most of the building to us for the 1975 convention. The executives of the "Y" have developed a strong interest in the activities of the IJA and in the art of juggling from a physical fitness standpoint. They did, however, ask us to make an honest effort to pay the utility bills which we arrived at a fair figure of \$400.00. To defer this cost I have consulted a local printer about printing an Ad-Program booklet which will be passed out at our public show August 2. The booklet will consist of business ads, a program of the show, and a brief history of the IJA. Cost of printing is about \$275.00 for 300 programs; the total worth of sellable ad space is about \$750.00, more than enough to cover expenses. Whatever is left goes to the IJA treasury. The "Y" has promised me that in case of problems they will not hold us to the \$400.00, but will take whatever we can raise. We have started selling ads in our spare time and find that local businesses are very sympathetic to our cause. With the amount of time we have Joe and I see no problem in raising the money we need. If you have any questions or objections to this please let me know as soon as possible.

Dick Francis  
President

# 1975 convention information 1975

## § DATES

JULY 31 (Thursday) - AUGUST 1 (Friday) - AUGUST 2 (Saturday) - AUGUST 3 (Sunday)

## § PUBLIC SHOW

Saturday, August 2 the public show will be held in the main concourse of the Southern Park Mall which is located in a south suburb of Youngstown. They have an elevated stage with a backdrop which fits over a large fountain in the center of the mall. U.S. Keyboards will provide an organ and organist to play backup music for the acts much as the organist at the Circus Hall of Fame did. A public address system is also built into the stage.

## § JUGGLING ROOM

The juggling will be held in a new 2 year old gymnasium. Size is two full basketball courts with a 30 foot ceiling. There is airconditioning, lots of neoprene mats, rollaway stage for the competition, and a large lockable equipment storage room.

## § FOOD

The "Y" has two restaurant facilities in the one building. The cafeteria is open for breakfast, lunch, and supper. Also the 24 hour Servomation in the main lobby. Both have excellent food and are very reasonable.

## § MOVIES

One or two times will be set up during the convention so those who wish to show or view juggling movies or slides can do so. Adjacent to the gym is a large movie room. A 16mm projector will be available during the day so BRING YOUR FILMS!

## § SPECIAL EVENTS

### § SEVENTH ANNUAL IJA JUGGLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Date has not yet been set.

### § DRAWINGS

Various prop makers have offered to donate props to be given away at one or two drawings a day depending on the number of props donated. Anyone wishing to donate props should contact me.

### § SHIRTS

Souvenir "T" shirts of the convention will be printed and sold at the convention at a reasonable cost.

### § ADVERTISING

We have been promoting the convention here since we returned from Florida. While Youngstown is not a small city, it is very entertainment starved. Newspaper and Local TV have already assured us of top rate coverage. In the weeks preceding the convention Joe and I will do a series of juggling exhibitions all over town to announce that the JUGGLERS ARE COMING. Mark Bates of Cleveland has offered to ride a unicycle from Cleveland to Youngstown (80 miles) taking 5 days and arriving in downtown Youngstown mid-afternoon Thursday when town is most crowded.

The 1975 Convention will have an orderly but casual schedule so that if someone misses something it is because they didn't care to attend, not because they didn't know about it.

## § SUGGESTION

Contact those jugglers that you know who don't attend conventions because of professional commitments, those traveling with Shows etc. Tell them that these dates are DEFINITE and that conditions will be ideal for whatever they wish to do. This will be the BEST IJA CONVENTION EVER!!!!!!!!!!!!

— Dick Francis

## 12. Juggling

Paul Spadoni

Probably the two most famous European jugglers of the last hundred years were Paul Spadoni of Germany and Enrico Rastelli of Italy. Spadoni was born in 1870, and reached the peak of his skill in the early 1900s. While he did a great deal of his balancing and juggling with heavy paraphernalia, he was equally capable in handling small, light objects with speed and agility. He could either balance a small automobile (!) on a perch on one shoulder, or juggle at one time six fresh eggs. In order to show that the eggs were not hard-boiled, Spadoni, after juggling them, would break them in a plate. This six-egg feat has never been duplicated. After retiring from his exhibitions, Spadoni became one of the foremost European theatrical agents and producers.

Enrico Rastelli

The best feats of the versatile Italian juggler, Enrico Rastelli (1896-1931), were to juggle at one time either 12 balls or 8 plates! In these feats he is said to have been without an equal. While standing on his hands and spinning a hoop on one of his legs, he could cause a ball to "climb" from his head up his back to the sole of his other foot. All his feats were performed with "inimitable ease."

Paul Cinquevalli

Another topnotch juggler and equilibrist of the 1890s was Paul Cinquevalli. One of his feats was to spin a heavy tub high above him on the point of a pole which he balanced, then knock the pole away and catch the tub squarely on the spike of a helmet that he wore. He also performed the "iron jaw" feat of holding by his teeth the rung of a chair in which a man was sitting. He made the feat look very easy by meanwhile sitting himself in a chair at a table, apparently reading a newspaper! He would conclude this part of his act by arising, still holding the chair and man, and strolling off the stage while he juggled three or four "cannonballs."

Francis Brunn

During recent years one of the greatest jugglers has been and is Francis Brunn. The way he is able to throw and catch spinning balls unerringly on any part of his body is simply fantastic.

Oriental jugglers

But there were, and are, Oriental jugglers as well; and in their specialties they appear every bit as wonderful as their European contemporaries. One of these "Oriental" specialties is the juggling of knives. In India and China may be seen jugglers who keep in motion many pointed knives, always catching them by the handles. By throwing these knives from a distance, they can "pin" their partner against a soft board, completely surrounding his body with the daggers but never injuring his skin. In India also is performed the so-called "Dance of the eggs." The dancer, usually a woman, places on her head a large wheel made of light wood. Around the edge of the wheel, at regular intervals, are strings with loose knots at their ends, into which the dancer places the eggs as she causes the wheel to revolve. Finally, all the eggs are on the strings and are revolving so rapidly that they swing out horizontally from the wheel. The same phenomenal speed and skill that was required in putting the eggs on the strings without having one smash into another is then exhibited in removing the eggs one by one.

Nicolai Olkhovikov

In 1967, in the Moscow Circus, which that year toured the United States, there was a Cossack riding act called The Iristons. One of the riders was Nicolai Olkhovikov, a sixth-generation circus performer and former opera singer. Standing on the croup of a cantering horse, Olkhovikov balanced four filled water-glasses on a plate atop an 8-foot pole, while he sang!

# books

## THE SUPER ATHLETES.

I've ... enclosed two Xerox pages from a book titled *The Super Athletes* by David P. Willoughby (it's subtitled, "A record of the limits of human strength, speed and stamina."). In his account of juggling, he credits Enrico Rastelli with doing 12 balls and 8 plates. Even the *Guinness Book of World Records* only credits Rastelli with doing 10 balls. I've read a lot of Willoughby's stuff (going back almost 20 years) and he's usually a very reliable researcher. However, I'm going to write to him and ask what source materials he used for this section of his book. I'll keep you informed of the results.

—DENNIS SOLDATI

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dennis Soldati telephoned recently to report that Mr. Willoughby's source for stating that Rastelli did 12 balls was Walter Umminger *Supermen, Heroes and Gods*—The story of sport through the ages (Translated from the German by James Clark). New York, McGraw-Hill, 1963., pages 213-214.

Willoughby, David P , 1901-  
The super athletes: a record of the limits of human strength, speed and stamina. Cranbury, N.J., A. S. Barnes, 1970.

665 p. illus., 26 cm. \$15.00

Bibliography: pp. 624-629.

EDITOR'S NOTES:

Page 325 —It was Ernest Clarke, not Alfredo Codona, who first performed the triple somersault on the flying trapeze (See: Fred Bradna, *THE BIG TOP*, 1952, pp. 167-168.).

Page 329 —Nicolai Olkhovikov (b. 1922) was a soloist in 1967, not a member of the IRISTON HORSEMEN; in 1971 he became head of a teeter-board act called RUSSIAN TROIKA.

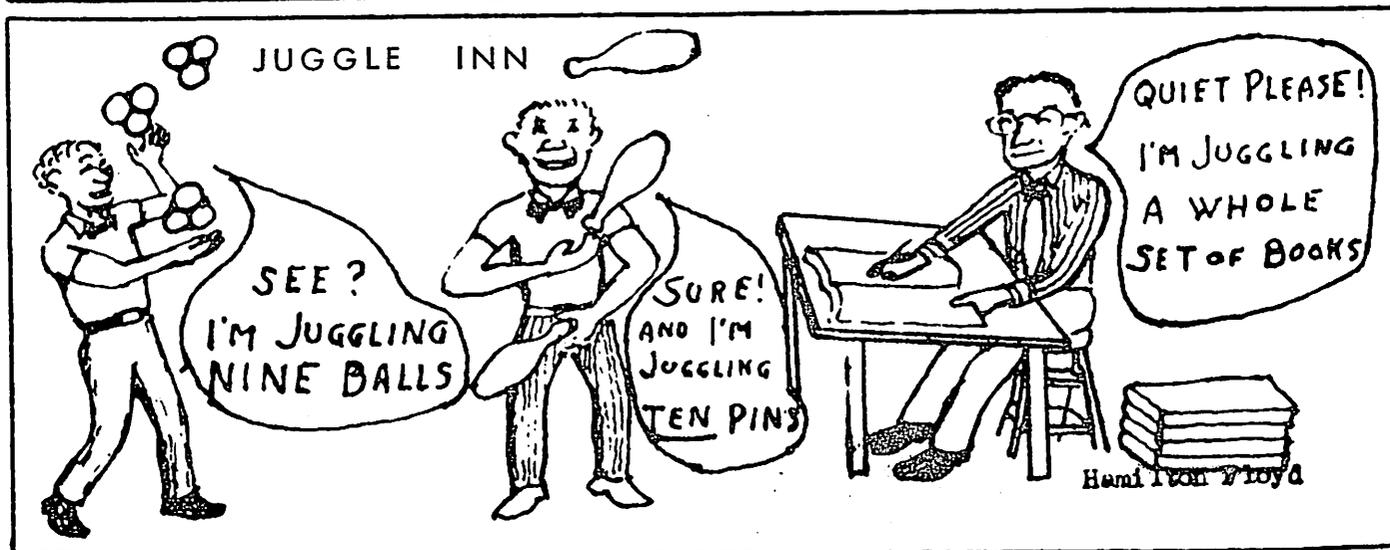
ISBN 0-498-06651-7

72-88302

# juggle-in report

Among those attending Jerry Greenberg's New York Juggle-In (Sept. 8) were:

Hana Belier, Hovey Burgess, Judy Burgess, Richard Brestoff, Leigh Clark, Norm Danzig, Harry DeDio, Roger V. Dollarhide, Paul Duff, Bob Geer, Ron Graham, Kim Green, Jerry Greenberg, John Grimaldi, Ernst Gruenbaum, Michelle Gruenbaum, Mark Haber, Stuart Haber, Peter Haviland, Terry Hayes, Clint Hebard, Carol Hine, Jon Jaffe, Art Johnson, Justin Kapp, Tim Kapp, Kenneth Kaye, Chuck Levine, Cecil MacKinnon, Richard Mills, Steve Mills, Larry Pisoni, Susan Pores, Don Reed, Lana Roberts, Jason Rosenfield, Mitch Schnaer, Gypsy Snider, Peggy Snider, Dennis Soldati, Arleen Sunshine, John Townsen, Sharon Underhill, Joan Verrill, Mary Lou Westerfield, and Lynn Weinstein.



# bill talent

APRIL 5, 1893 — AUGUST 23, 1974

## VARIETY REPORTS (COMPILED FROM TWO SEPARATE OBITUARIES):

Bill Talent (Coughlin), 81, vet vaudevillian died August 23rd at his Hollywood home. Talent, regarded one of the top jugglers in vaude, for 35 years was teamed with his late wife, Flo, as Talent & Merritt. Act had performed on all the major circuits as well as in England. He retired about 10 years ago. Talent was one of the founders of the Hollywood Comedy Club and for 27 years one of its most active members. Surviving is a sister, Tish Cornalia, former actress.

### "BIOGRAPHY OF BILL TALENT"

Vincent Coughlin, better known as Bill Talent to jugglers and other show people, was born in Sioux City, Iowa, April 5, 1893. His brother, Jack, taught him to juggle three oranges. Seeing jugglers at an old 10 and 20 cent theater, he copied them and their tricks and a couple years later he had a routine.

At the age of 17, he contacted the Havelocks, and after seeing him juggle, they promised to send for him, which they did two years later. In 1912, he became a member of the Havelocks. Wallace Havelock was one of the famous Agoust Family. As the Havelocks, they played the Keith circuit and other leading theaters in the east.

In the early part of 1914, Wallace reorganized the Agoust Family act consisting of five people—Emile, Wallace, Mrs. Havelock, Max and Talent. They played the Lew Fields' Music Hall and a Broadway show for the Shuberts.

The family act broke up in 1915. Max and Bill put an act together calling it Les Augusts, using Billy DeArmo and his wife and Max and Talent. This act lasted about a year.

Max and Bill did a two-act show called Vincent and Maxime, also using the name of Agoust and Agoust. They did all the tricks the family did but only by two people.

After being hospitalized with pneumonia, Bill went into the army and served overseas with the 359th Infantry. He was discharged June 10, 1918, and teamed with Gene Winchester, working under the name of Vincent Redford and Gene Winchester and playing the Keith circuit, Interstate time, Orpheum circuit, and Independent time.

Then Bill met and married Flo Merit and formed the act of Merit and Coughlin. Later, they changed the name to Talent and Merit and played everything in show business until 1935. His wife's illness forced him to do a single.

(The above was condensed and edited from the original version by Lane Blumenthal\*)

### TOWARD A CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BILL TALENT, 1893-1974

- 1944-1955 JUGGLER'S BULLETIN (monthly). Tulsa, Oklahoma:
  - Montandon Magic. [Talent featured on cover of No. 21].
- 1949 Harry Moll. The Art of Juggling. Denver, Colorado; Harry Moll.
- 1949- [In Progress] IJA NEWSLETTER, International Jugglers' Association. [Lane Blumenthal. Biography of Bill Talent. My '64]\*.
- 1951 (Tulsa, Oklahoma) JUGGLERS' BULLETIN 1950 ANNUAL.
- 1972 Ken Benge. 3 Ball Juggling. Chicago: Magic, Inc.
- 1974 September 4 (New York) VARIETY Obituaries—Bill T. Coughlin.
- 1974 October 2 (New York) VARIETY Obituaries—Bill Talent.

# massimiliano truzzi

DECEMBER 4, 1903 — OCTOBER 31, 1974

## MARCELLO TRUZZI WRITES:

I thought the IJA should be informed of the death of my father on October 31st. He had been ill with emphysema and heart problems for the last two years. He had just returned home from the hospital with a good prognosis and in good spirits. He took a nap and never woke up. We are grateful that he died a painless death under psychologically happy conditions.

I enclose a news story from the Sarasota paper with a couple of corrections made on it.

### "FAMED CIRCUS JUGGLER TRUZZI DIES"

Massimiliano Truzzi, billed as the world's greatest juggler during his years as a center ring performer with the Ringling Bros., Barnum & Bailey Circus, died Thursday (October 31st) at his Sarasota residence. He was 71 years old.

He was a member of one of the great European circus families, originally from Italy. The family moved to Poland, which was then part of Russia. Truzzi was born in Lodz, Poland, Dec. 4, 1903. He and his father, Enrico Truzzi, managed the Circus Truzzi in Russia before he came to the United States in 1940 to join the Ringling show.

Having learned the art of juggling from the famous Italian juggler, Enrico Rastelli, he perfected his skills to become the first juggler ever to appear alone in the center ring for the Ringling show in a 20-minute solo performance. Leaping and bounding about the great arena, he juggled with lighted torches thrown high in the air.

A self-educated man, he was a lifelong student of history and philosophy. He once said that "life requires a human being to understand both philosophy and juggling, because it takes a little of both to get along in the world today."

He leaves his wife, Sonya; a son, Dr. Marcello Truzzi who is a professor and head of the sociology department at Eastern Michigan University; a brother Rudolfo Truzzi of Portugal; a sister, Louisa Ferroni of Poland, and two grandchildren.

In accordance with his expressed belief that "life is for the living" with no sign of mourning, there will be no funeral service.

(The above was condensed and edited from the original version by Sally Glendinning\*)

### TOWARD A CHRONOLOGICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF MASSIMILIANO TRUZZI, 1903-1974

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- 1942 RINGLING BROS. BARNUM & BAILEY CIRCUS MAGAZINE.
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- 1963 Yuri A. Dmitriev. Sovetskii Tsirk. Moscow: Iskusstvo.
- 1966 December SOUTHERN FOLKLORE QUARTERLY Marcello Truzzi. The American Circus as a Source of Folklore: An Introduction.
- 1973 Tsirk--Malenkaya Entsiklopiya. Moscow.
- 1974 March-April BANDWAGON: THE JOURNAL OF THE CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY Marcello Truzzi with Massimiliano Truzzi. Notes Toward a History of Juggling.
- 1974 November 2 SARASOTA HERALD-TRIBUNE Sally Glendinning. Famed Circus Juggler Truzzi Dies."
- 1974 November 11 CIRCUS REPORT In Memoriam--M. Truzzi.
- 1974 November 16 AMUSEMENT BUSINESS Final Curtain--Massimiliano Truzzi

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tv

...a couple of weeks ago I taped a TV show. I was on Dinah Shore's new show—"Dinah!" juggling and it will be aired the end of November. I'm not sure of the exact date, but other guests (which it would be listed under) were Jimmy Connors, David Brenner, Dick Haymes, etc...

—HILLARY CARLIP

The IJA Newsletter is published twelve times per year by the International Jugglers' Association.

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## the editor's notebook

We mourn the loss of the two great jugglers to whom this issue is fondly and respectfully dedicated. TALENT (a vaudevillian) and TRUZZI (a circus performer) joined IJA within a month of one another, and, some twenty-seven years later, died within two months of each other. So devoted were they to both their public and their juggling as to develop showmanship plus originality plus numbers juggling. Let their lives be an inspiration to all of us. Those who knew and loved them will miss them greatly. May they rest in peace.