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OLYMPIC PORTRAITS
ANNIE LEIBOVITZ





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A Bulfinch Press Book
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Boston New York Toronto London

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INTRODUCTION

The invitation by the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) to take pictures of any aspect I liked of the 26th Olympiad, to be held in Atlanta in the summer of 1996, is the kind of assignment a photographer dreams about. Not because I'm a sports photographer but precisely because I am not a sports photographer. I'm a portrait photographer, a portrait photographer who has always been more interested in what people do than in the way they look. But what they do usually is reflected in the way they look. And there's nothing people do which is more intensely reflected in how they look than athletics. The energy, the concentration, the discipline of sport is something preeminently visual. The only activity that is comparable, in its sheer visualness, is dance . . . and perhaps it's my dance photography that has best prepared me for this work.

The pictures in this book are a selection of the photographs I took of American athletes who were training to take part in the Games in Atlanta. In meets and competitions all over the country, the best athletes were testing themselves, and being tested, as part of the process of qualifying for a place on the American teams. My photographs were done in individual and group sessions that I set up with the athletes. This gave me the opportunity to depict movement close up, intimately — when movement was the subject. Of course, it wasn't always the subject. Each time I worked with an athlete I had two possibilities: I could concentrate on the person (a portrait in the more conventional sense) or I could concentrate on the sport. Sometimes I was able to do both.

The first shootings took place in California over several days in December 1993. I brought some very young female gymnasts and their gymnastic equipment to a dry lake bed outside Los Angeles; I took some runners there, too. Then I did a shoot at the UC Davis Olympic pool with a swimmer and two divers. In the spring of 1995 I began a year of concentrated shootings around the country, which took me to the Olympic Training Center at Colorado Springs, where I photographed fencing, wrestling, and weightlifting; to Atlanta, where I photographed women's field hockey at the Clark Atlanta University Stadium, the modern pentathlon at a riding academy, men's volleyball in a park outside the city, and team handball in a downtown studio; and again to Colorado Springs, to photograph track cycling in the Memorial Park Velodrome and boxing in the Olympic Training Center. The work continued in venues in California (San Diego, Chula Vista, Irvine, Mission Beach, Culver City), Texas (Houston, Fort Worth), Florida (Miami, Key Biscayne, Sanford), Oregon (Portland), Georgia (Conyers, Savannah, Fort Benning, Atlanta), and Michigan (Marquette, Shelby Township) until early June 1996. All the categories of sports in which Olympic athletes compete are represented in the book.

Of course, some sports are more “visual” than others. Anything to do with water, from diving to rowing to sailboarding, seems wonderful. So does anything that involves a throw or a leap or jump, from decathlon to equestrian events, because of the extension of the whole body or the arm, the leg. The sports I expected to be beautiful were beautiful. I became a bit wary of the seductions of such traditionally elegant sports as diving, javelin throwing, fencing, pole vaulting — especially the ones that produce a heroic body line. I was glad to find grace and heroic form and appealing oddity where I didn’t expect it: in synchronized swimming, for instance, and in men’s water polo, where the photographs show the work that’s done out of sight, under the water.

Anyone who looks at photographs of previous Olympics will see that the ideal form in a given sport is not something fixed once and for all. When the aim is to get the pole vaulter over the crossbar more quickly, the diver into the water faster and with less splash, these sports won’t be performed in the same way, with the movements once thought most beautiful. The pole is now fiberglass, so the jumpers are jumping higher; they can pull themselves up and over the crossbar without flinging out their legs to clear it, then drop straight down. There are no more swan dives. The dive is mostly straight lines.

As I’ve said, there is something similar in photographing dancers and photographing athletes. In both, you are photographing ideal bodies and ideal uses of the body. And because athletes, like dancers, are performers, they are often asked to pose. But sport is not, any more than dance, *about* posing. It’s about movement — which the photographer is trying to catch in a single image. Film, TV, video can record the movement. A photograph must represent it. And that limitation is its strength. A photograph is the most powerful, the most memorable rendering of movement precisely because you get to stop the moment and look at it. That’s why we remember photographs, and can summon up hundreds of them in our heads. You don’t remember, in the same sense, moving images. (From moving images, you only remember “stills.”)

So, in sport as in dance, the camera is making a fixed image of something happening in time. The fixed image represents a fraction of a second of that movement. It has to be just the right slice of time, right in the sense that it can stand for — and suggest — the whole movement. And it’s all happening very fast. In the first photograph I took of the sprinter Dennis Mitchell coming out of the starting blocks, all I had was his foot. (Rule: You don’t see it when you photograph it. If you see it, you’ve missed it.) Eventually I did get the shot. It shows that when Mitchell came out of the starting block, he was literally parallel with the ground — it looks as if he’s about to fall. (His start was so fast that he had to go half the length of a football field before he could stop.) That was the moment I wanted, before the leg straightens and the body goes diagonal.

In sport, unlike dance, speed is always a plus. To go faster, higher, farther, longer — that is the point in many, though not all, sports. (In dance, you want to go higher — the dancer wants to be freed from gravity — but not necessarily faster or longer.) And there is a different role of competition. Dance is competitive, but the competition is not expressed so numerically. Sport is centered on the keeping and breaking of records.

Women have been breaking records, by the increasing number of sports in which they participate and the rising level of their performance. This Olympiad is the first for the women's triple jump, the women's soccer team, and women's fast-pitch softball. I was moved by the range of the faces and bodies of the women athletes, the youngest to the most seasoned — from the Romanian-born gymnast Dominique Moceanu, who is fourteen years old, to the captain of the basketball team, Teresa Edwards, who will be competing at Atlanta in her fourth Olympic Games.

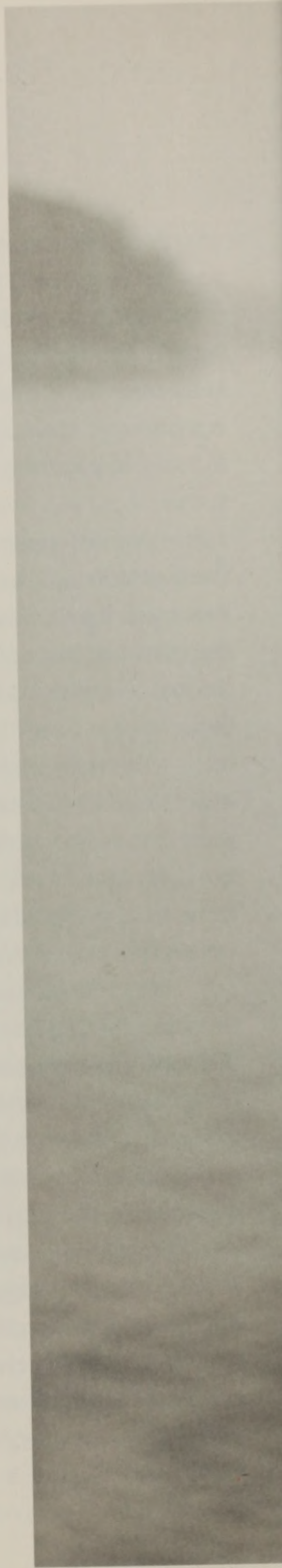
Every sport (like every art, including dance) has its stars and its superstars. And some of them are in this book, like Gwen Torrence and Michael Johnson and Dominique Moceanu and Carl Lewis and Jackie Joyner-Kersey and Leroy Burrell and Mike Powell and Teresa Edwards (forgive me for the names I've inadvertently left out). But all the athletes I photographed for the book seemed to me heroic, whether they made the Olympic team or not (a few of them, despite the best expectations, didn't); whether, if they made the cut, they come away from these Games with a gold or silver or bronze medal or nothing. I admired them all — and the women especially — for the fierceness of their devotion to the idea of doing something better, always better.

The Games are intensely, heartbreakingly competitive. Every athlete wants to win. But every athlete also knows that the point of competing — of the effort, the strain, the self-sacrifice involved in training to be world-class — is not only winning, which often means being the fastest. It is also about being “in form.” And about euphoria — about feeling good. That's why the book ends as it does: showing a terrific athlete, a world sailboarding champion, Mike Gebhardt, having a good time in the water, far from the struggle of winning and losing.

Originally, I had thought that the book would also include photographs taken during the Atlanta Summer Olympic Games. But that would bring other subjects before my camera besides the athletes: the spectators, the new facilities, the media coverage, the spectacle, the advertising. On the occasion of the centennial of the revival of the Games, it seems hard not to have some reservations about how far their current evolution has taken them from the spirit of Olympics past. But this issue barely arose in these photographs, except that I did have to insist with some, though not all, athletes that they not wear clothes with the logo of the company whose products they were endorsing.

That's why I chose to make a book out of photographs taken during the preparation for, on the road to, the 26th Olympiad. It's in the preparation for the Olympics that we can be closer to the spirit of, what the Games were meant to mean — and do mean, ideally. To photograph athletes when they are still preparing means to concentrate on the athletes themselves. Their dedication, their joy, their pain, their mastery is what makes everyone care about the Olympic Games.

ANNIE LEIBOVITZ
June 1996











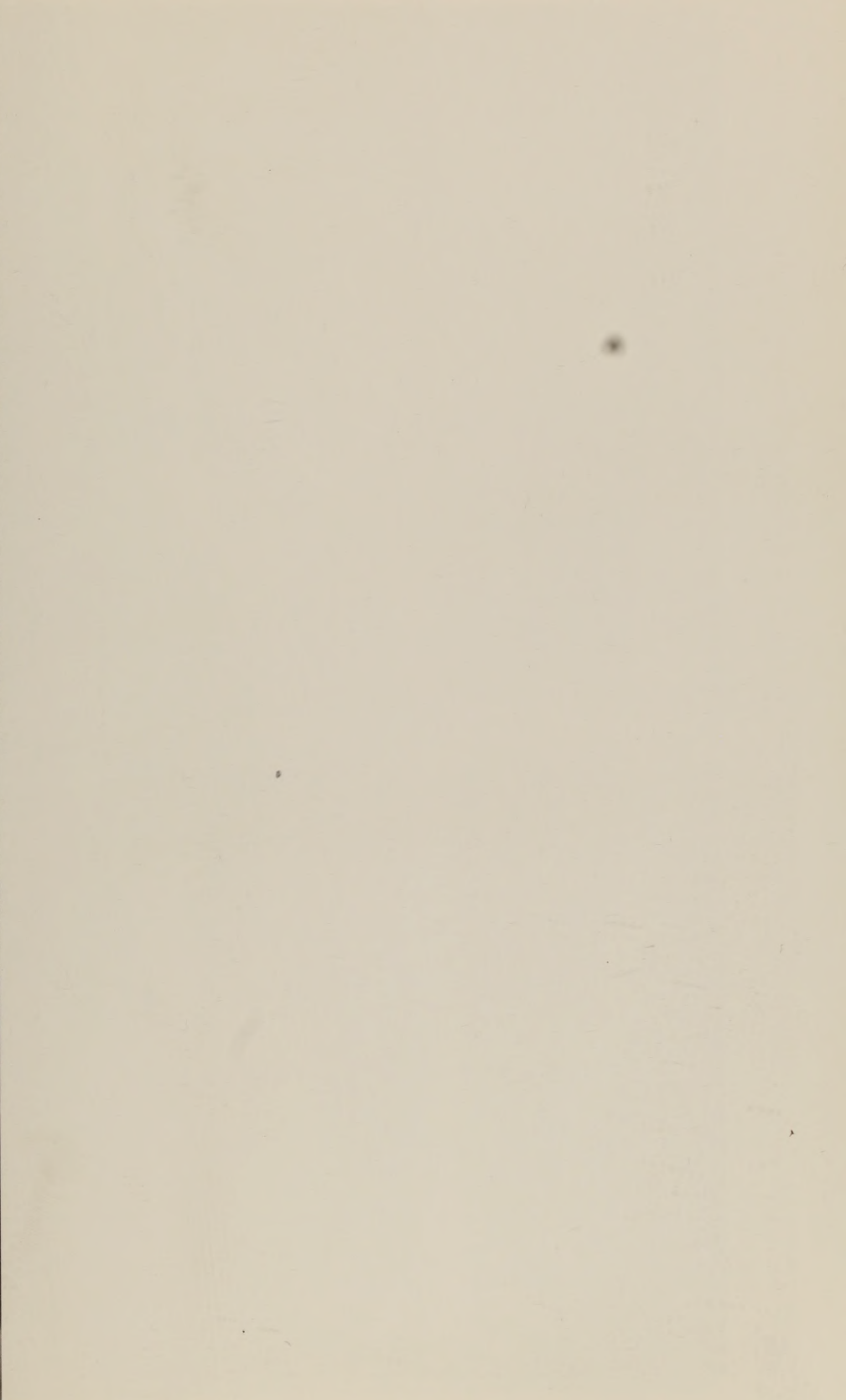
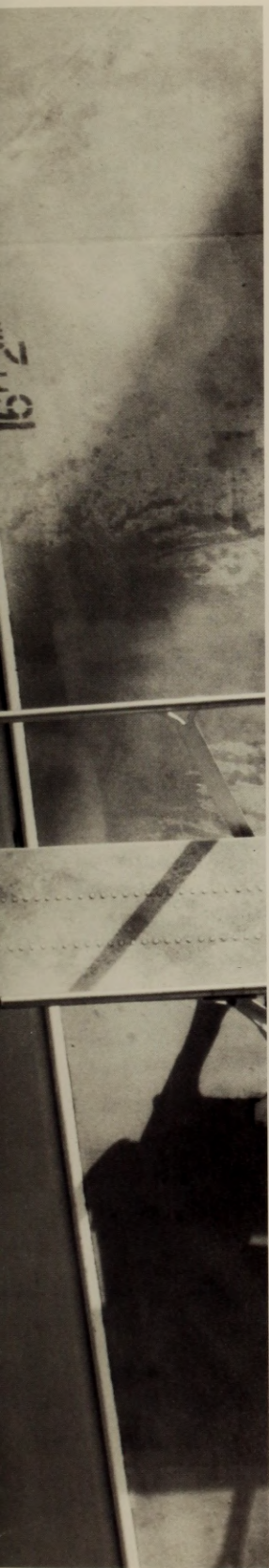
























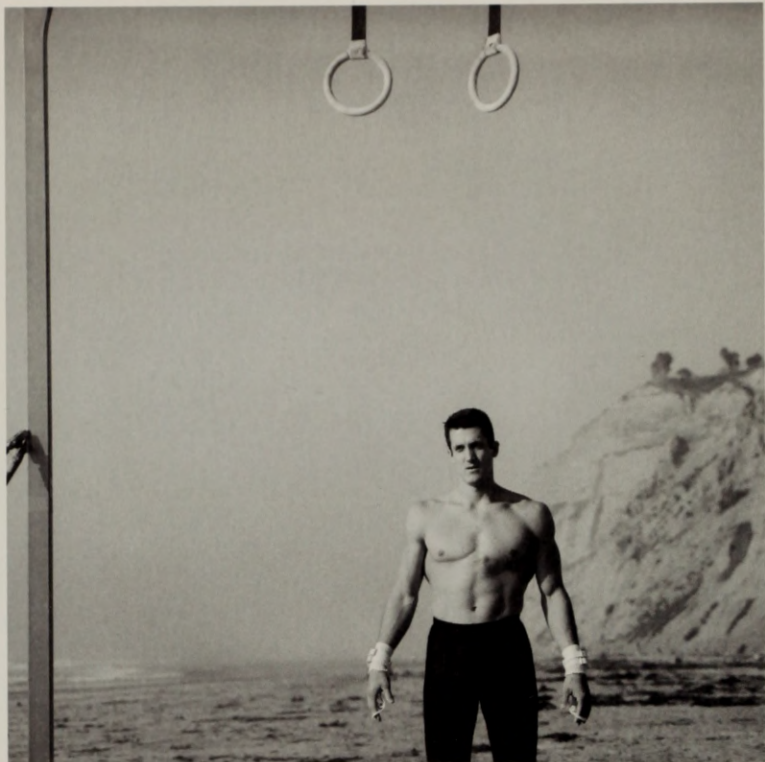






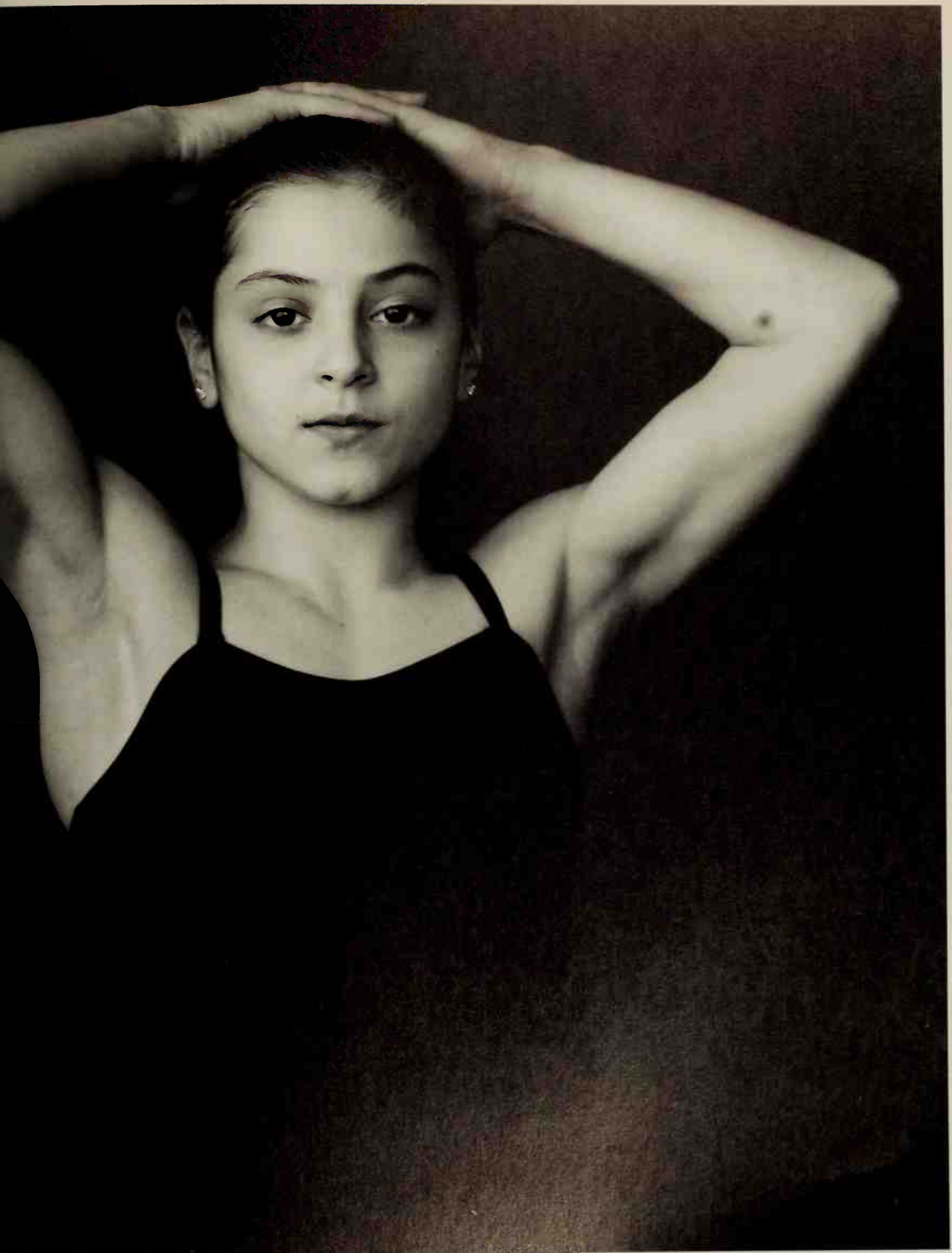


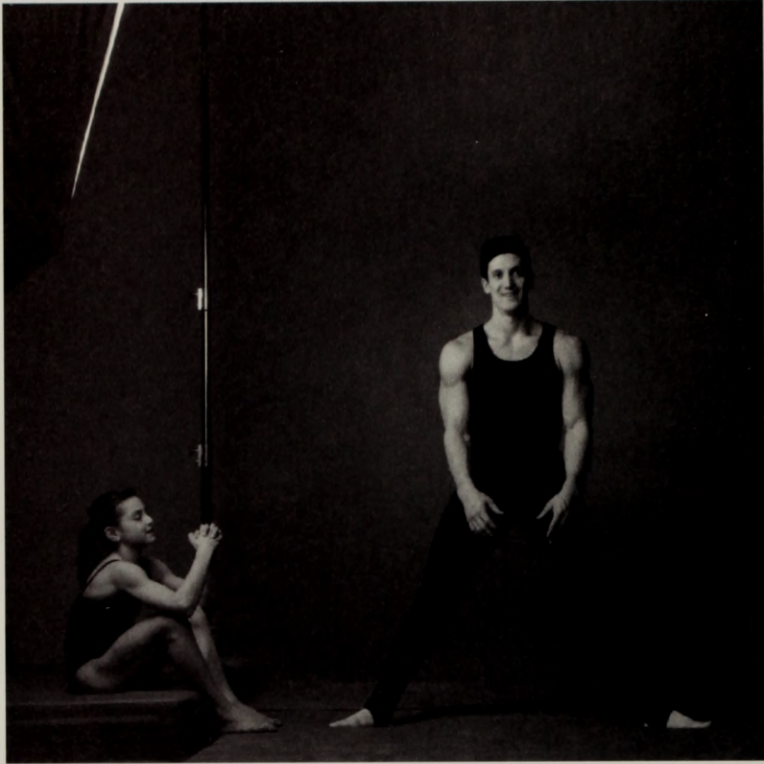


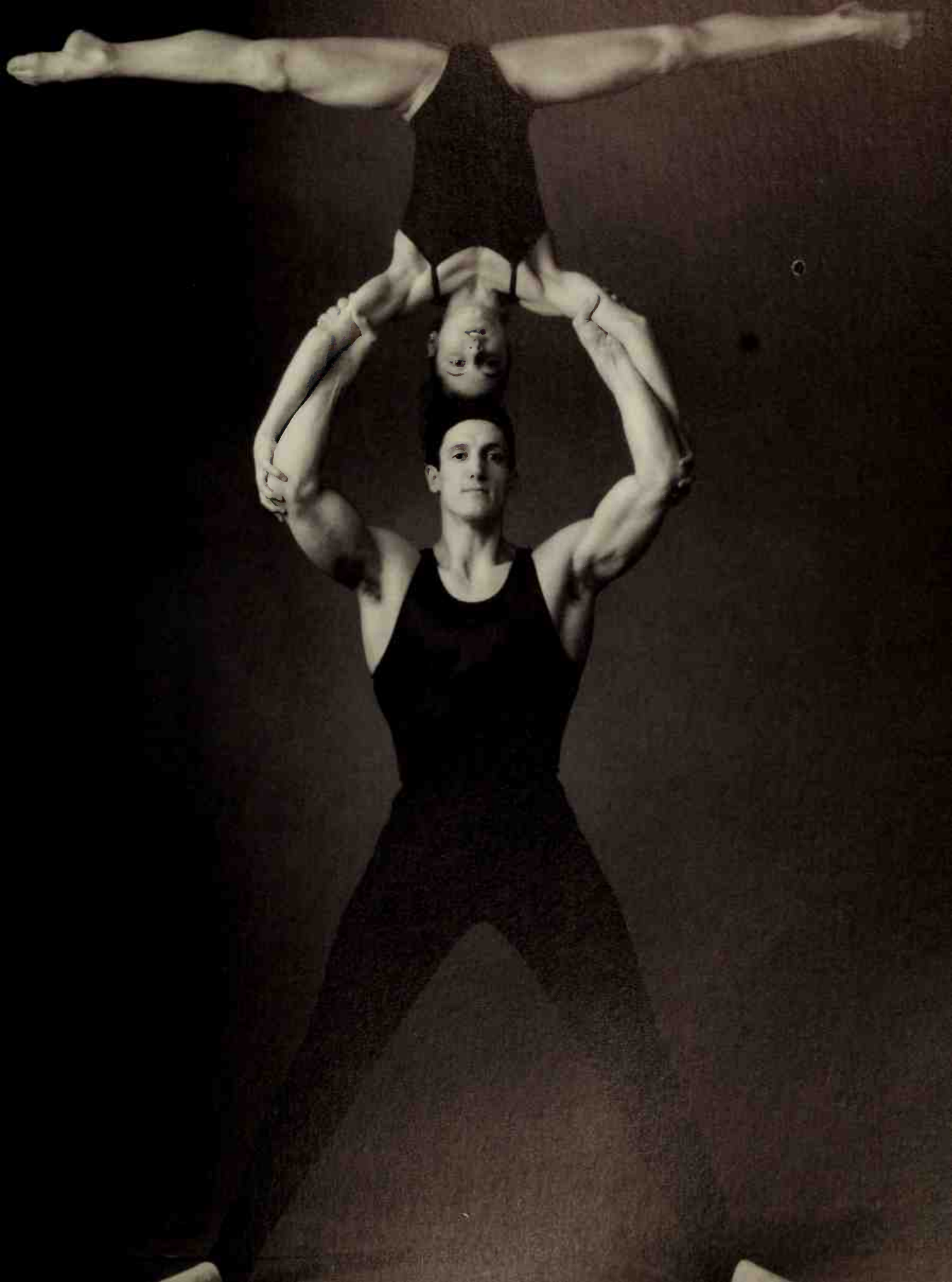




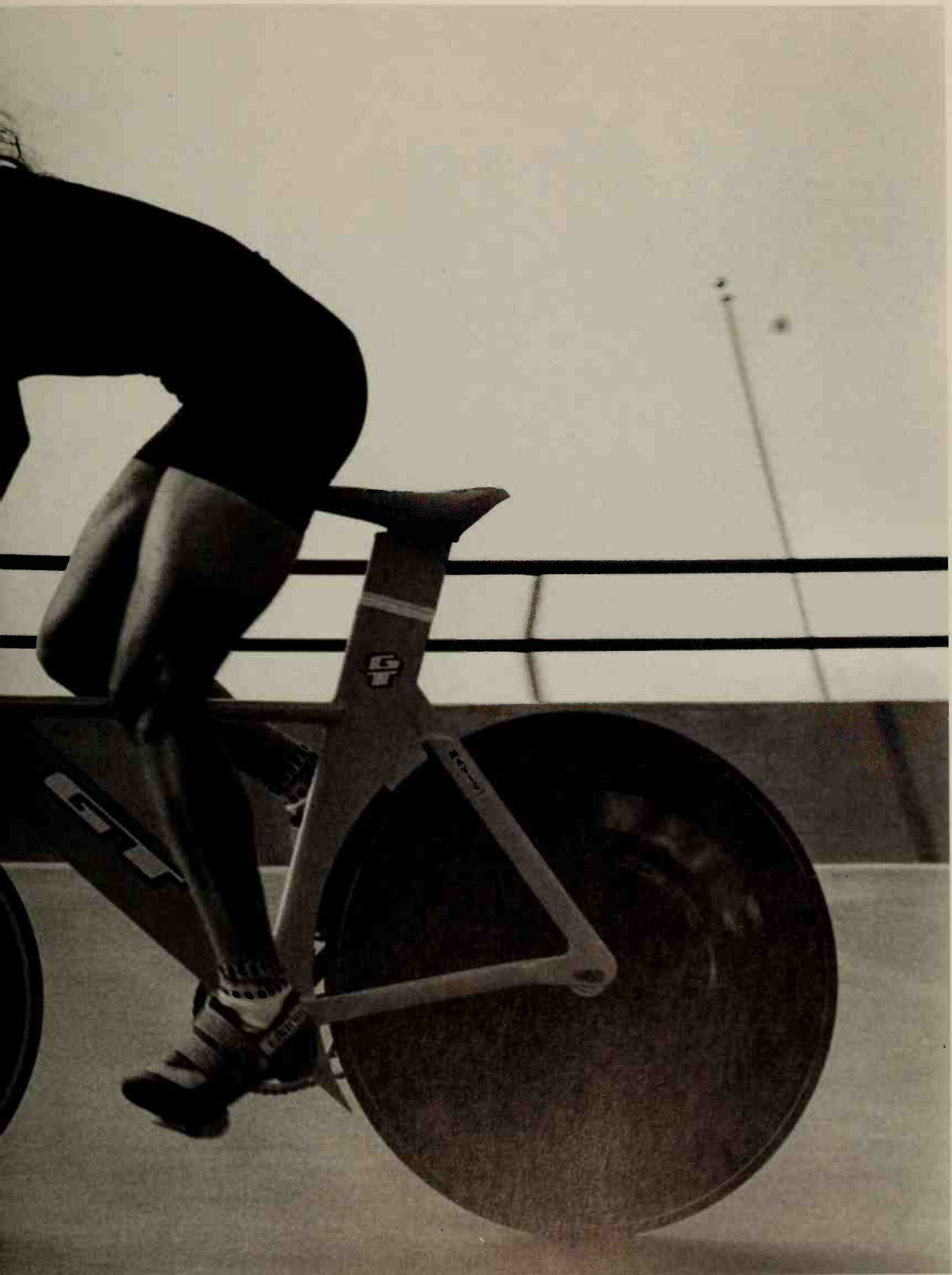


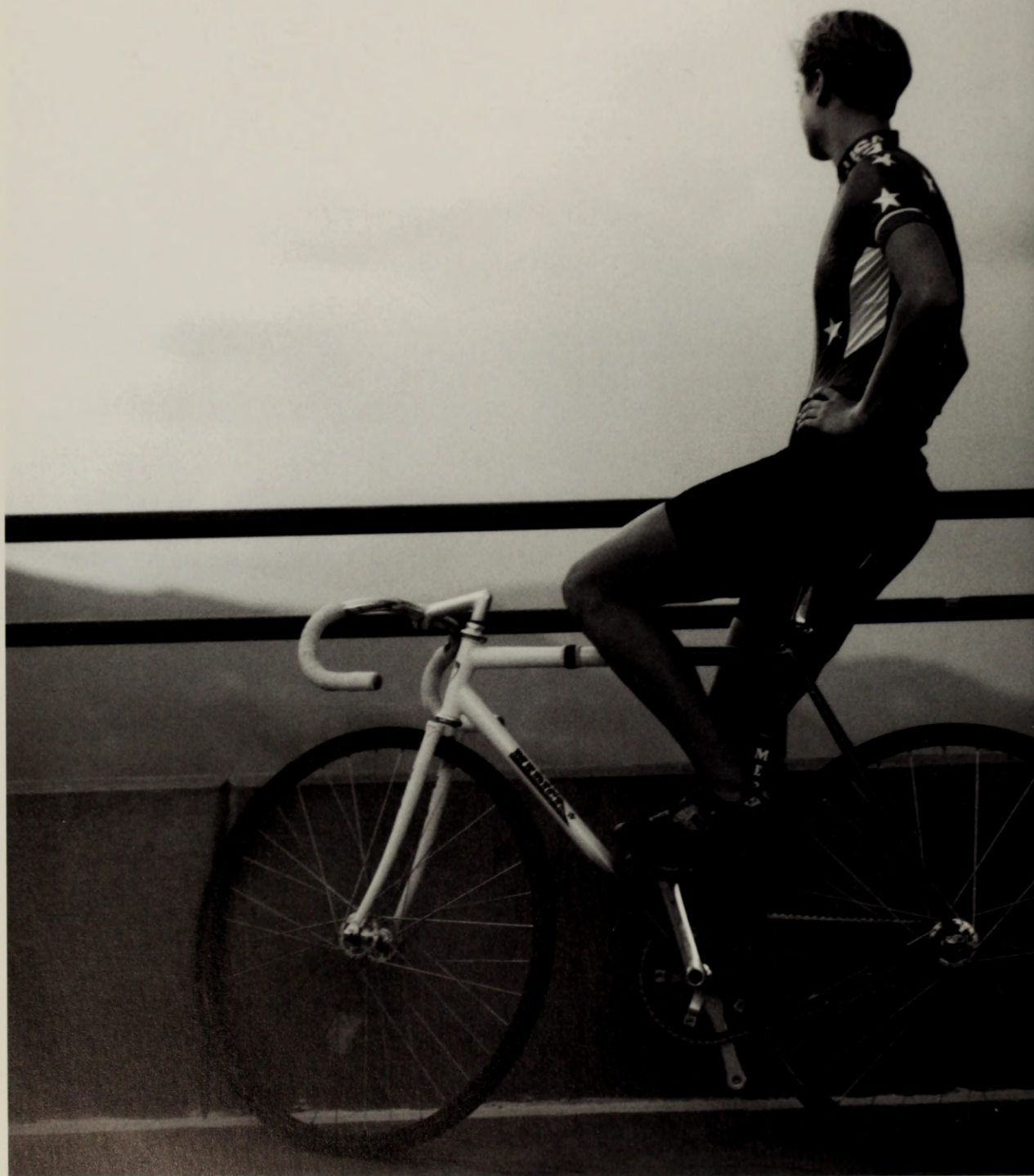








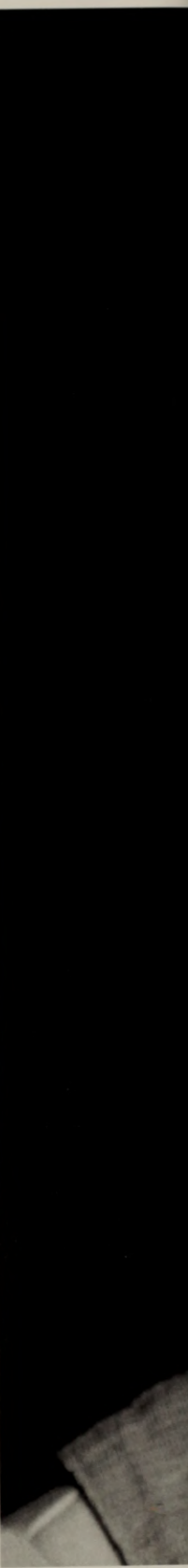
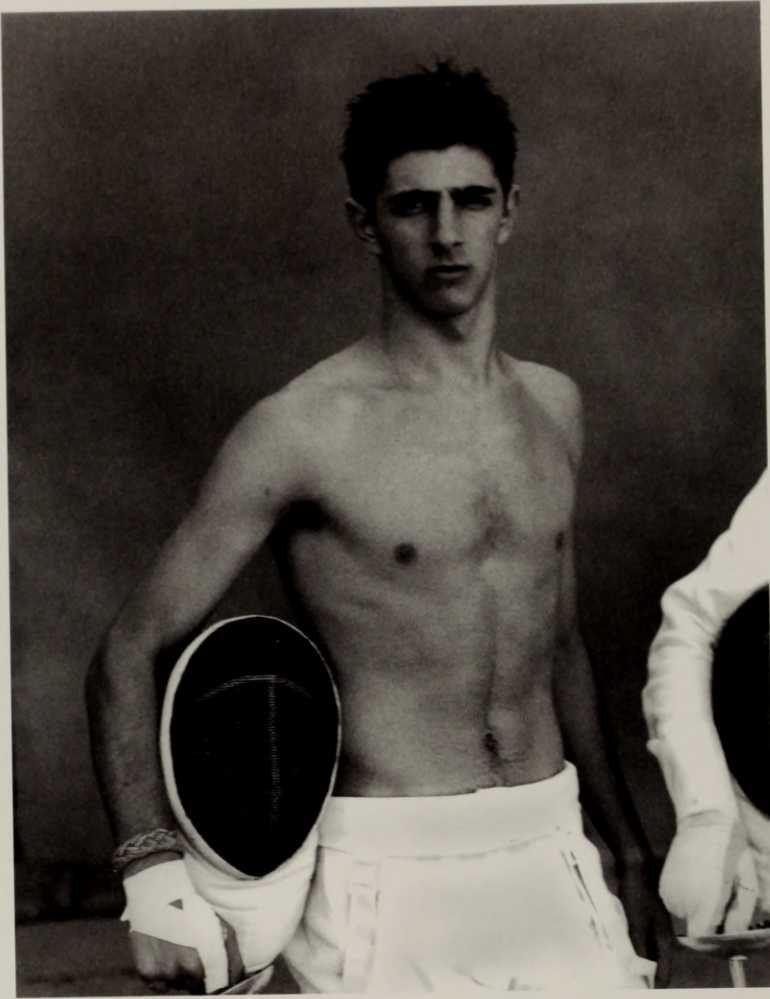








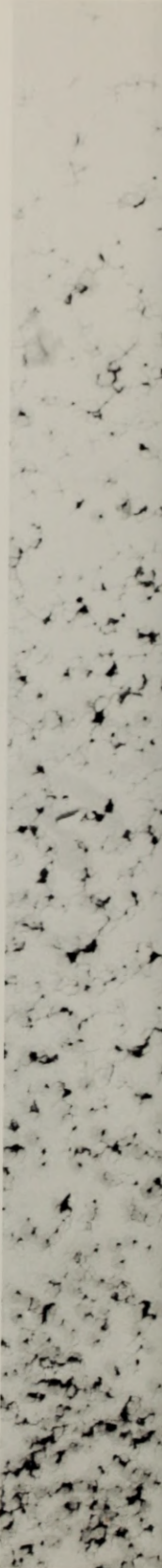


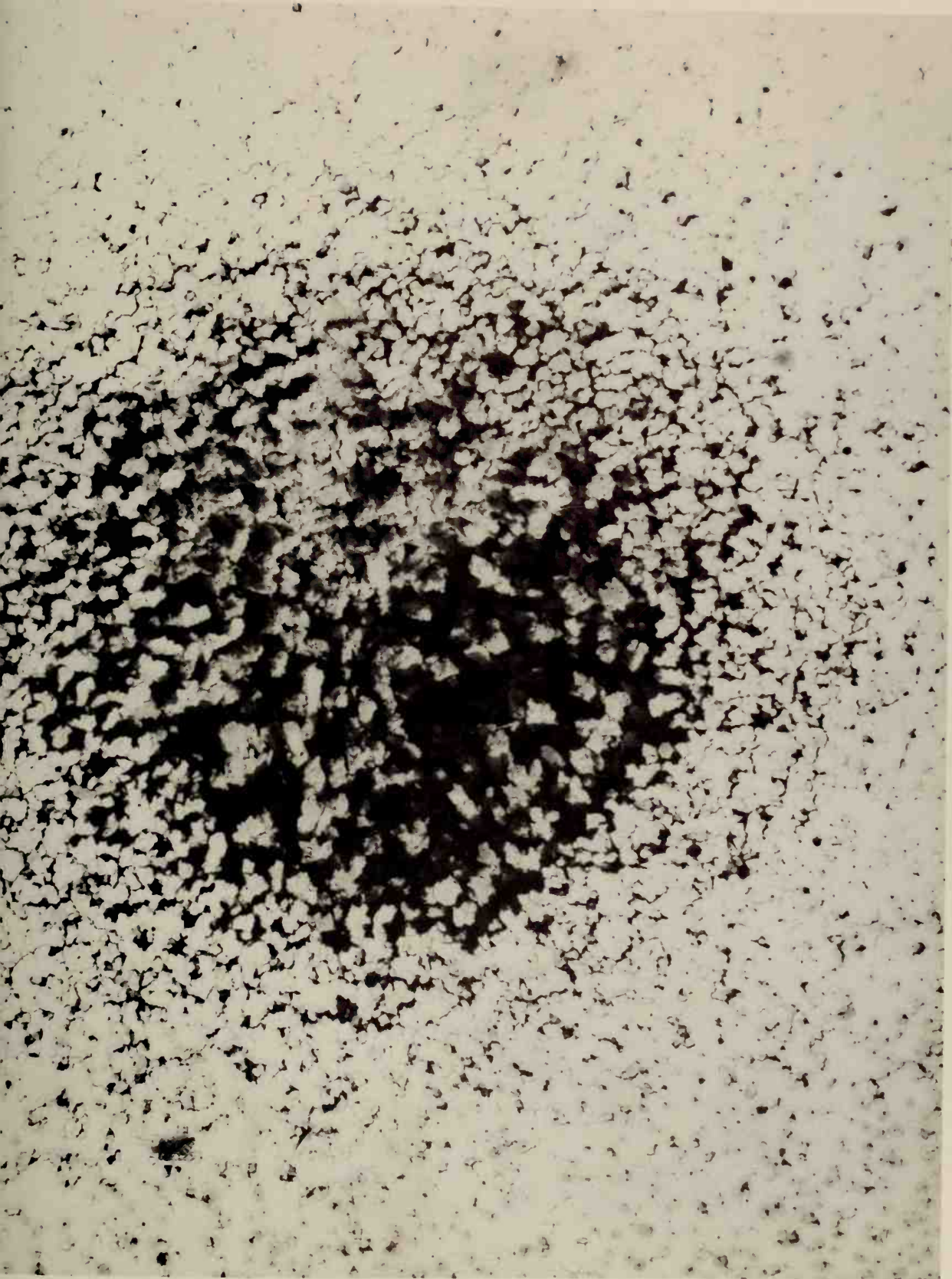








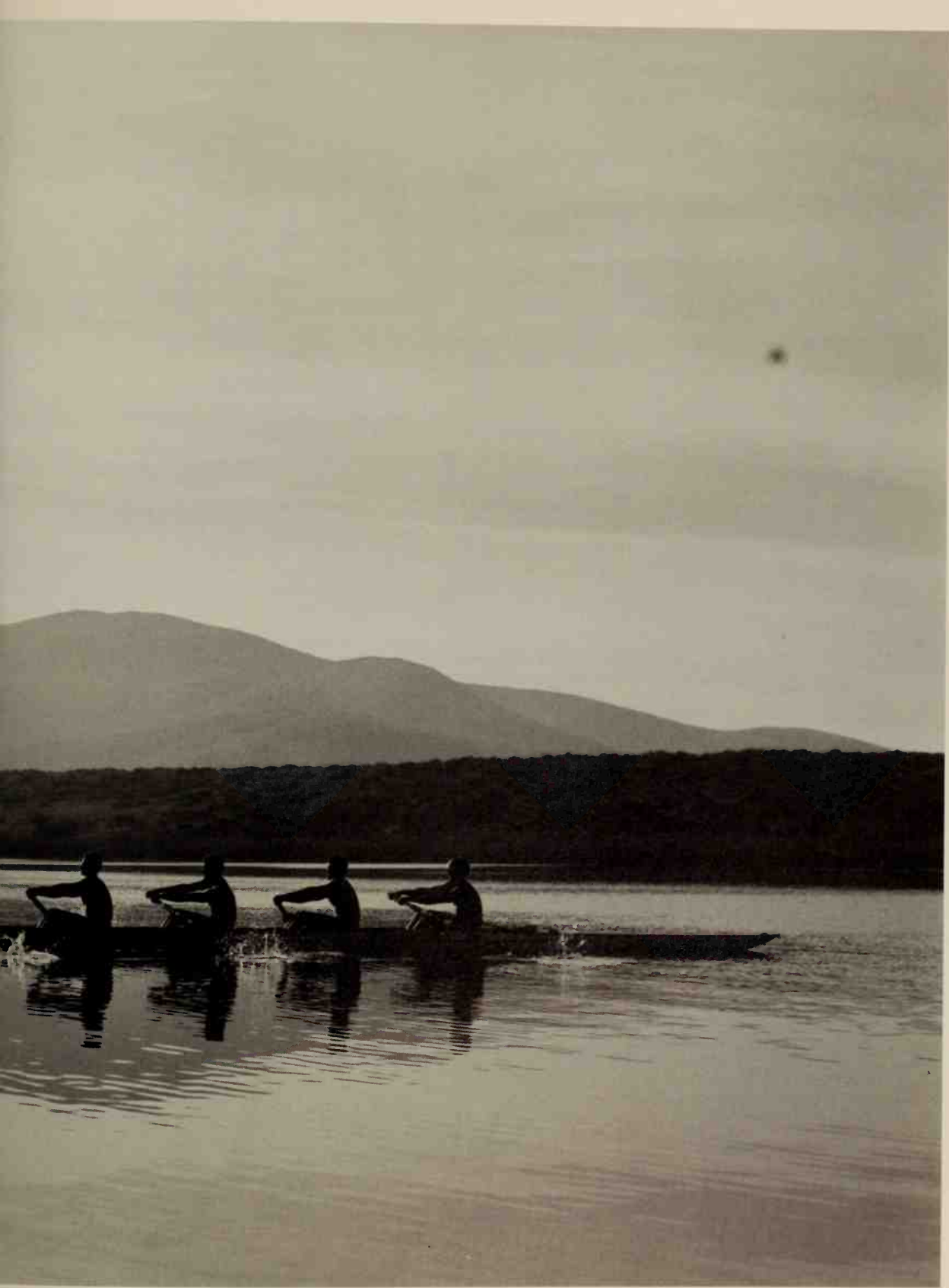


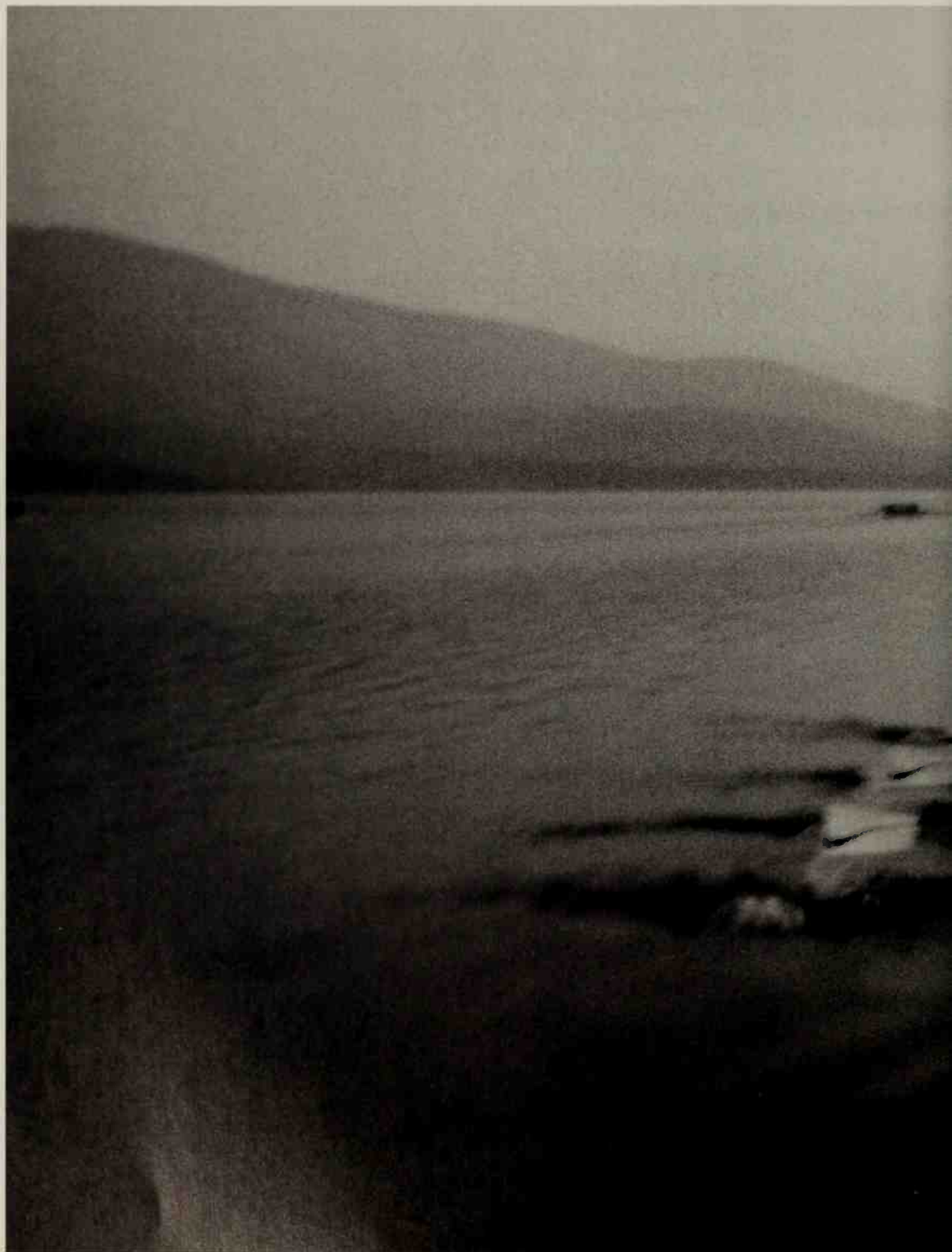


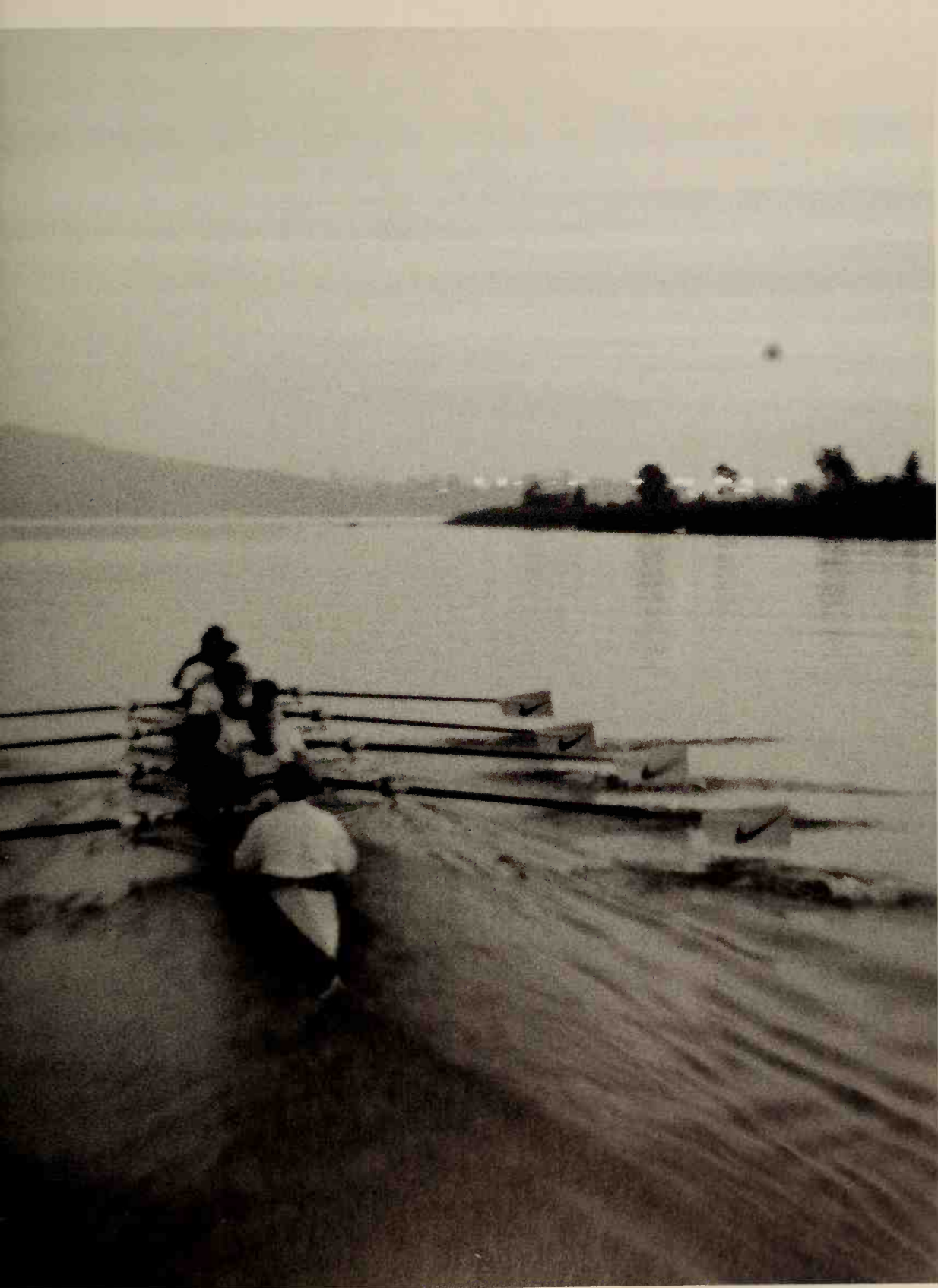


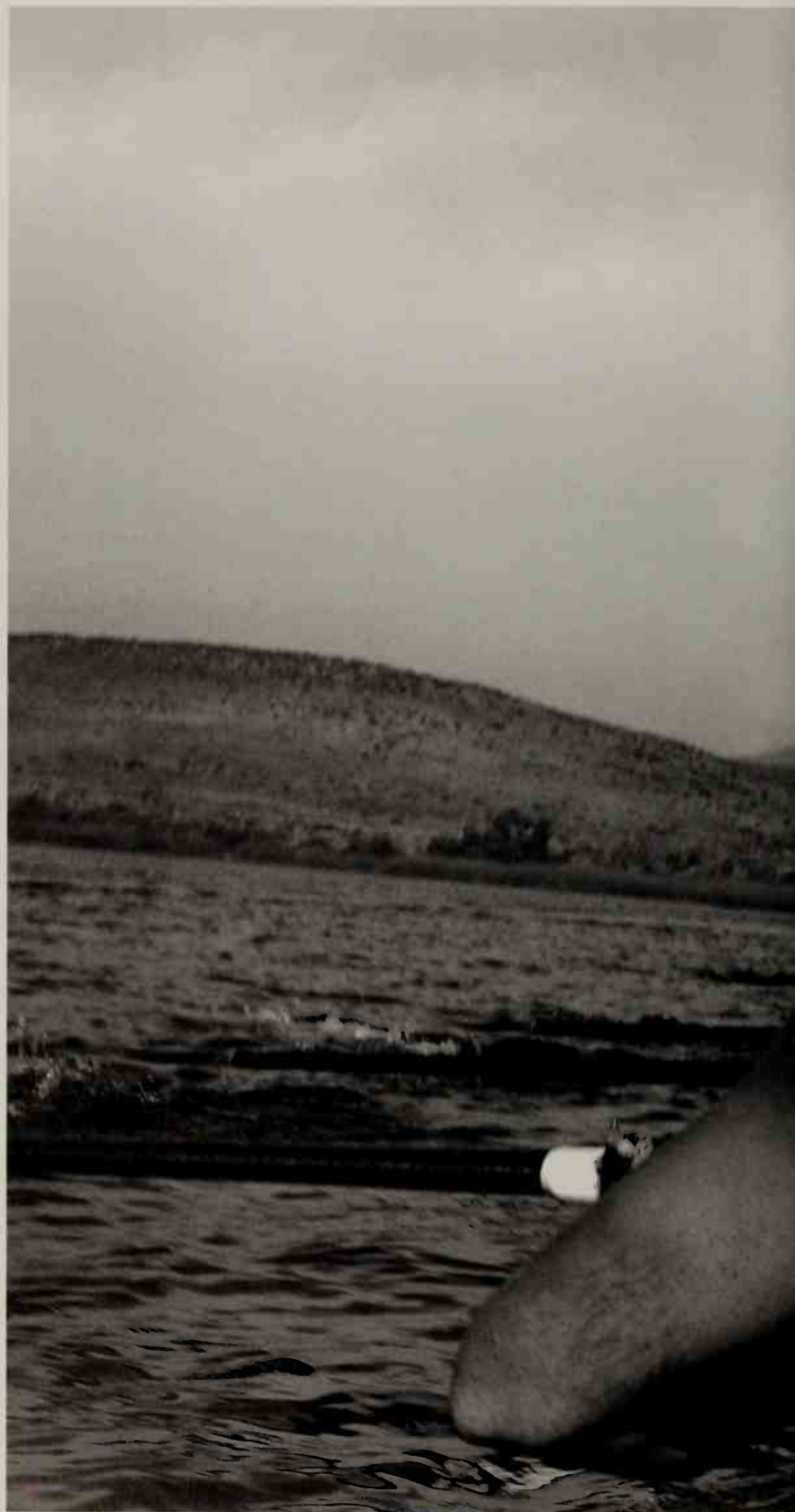


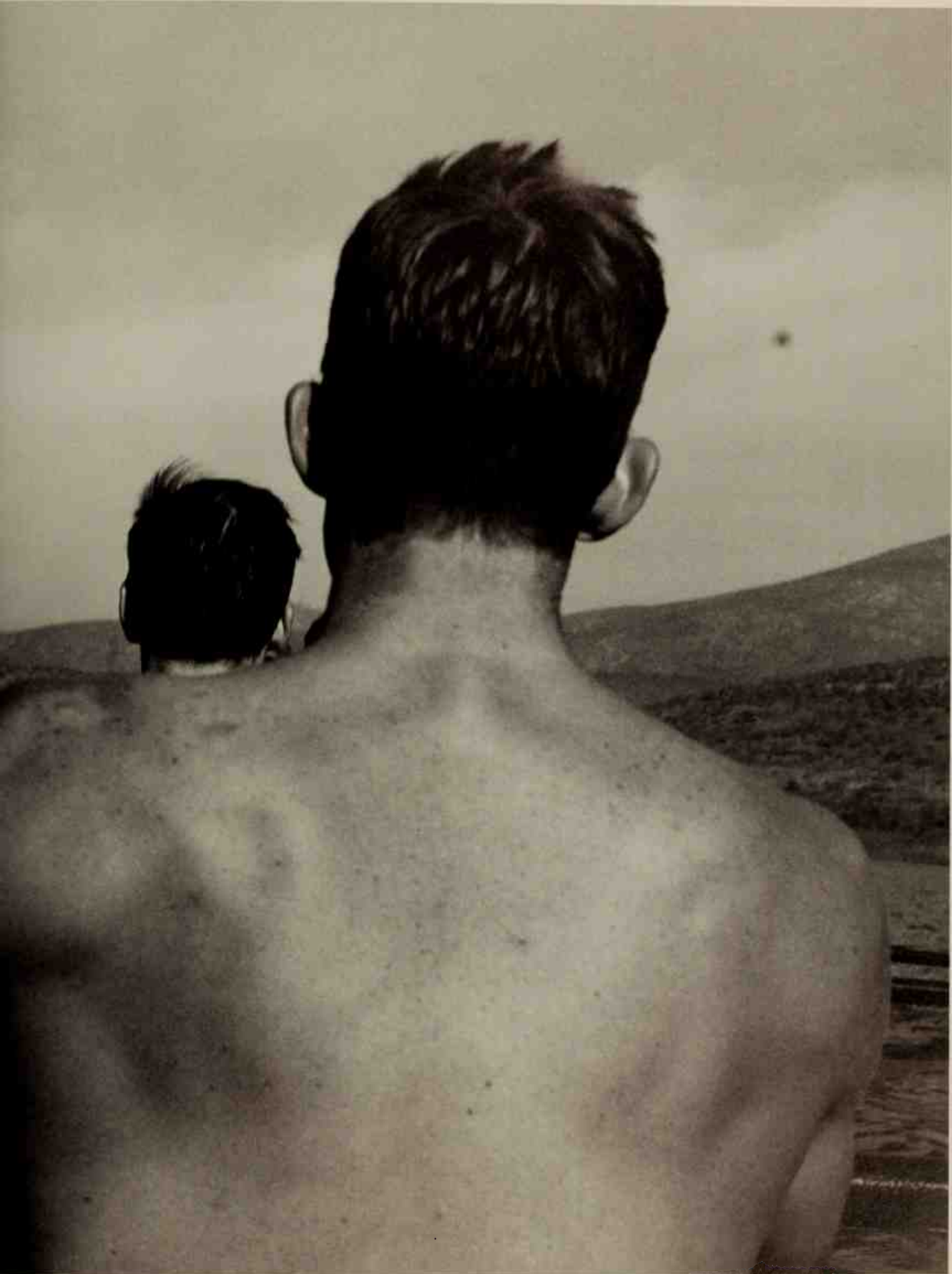


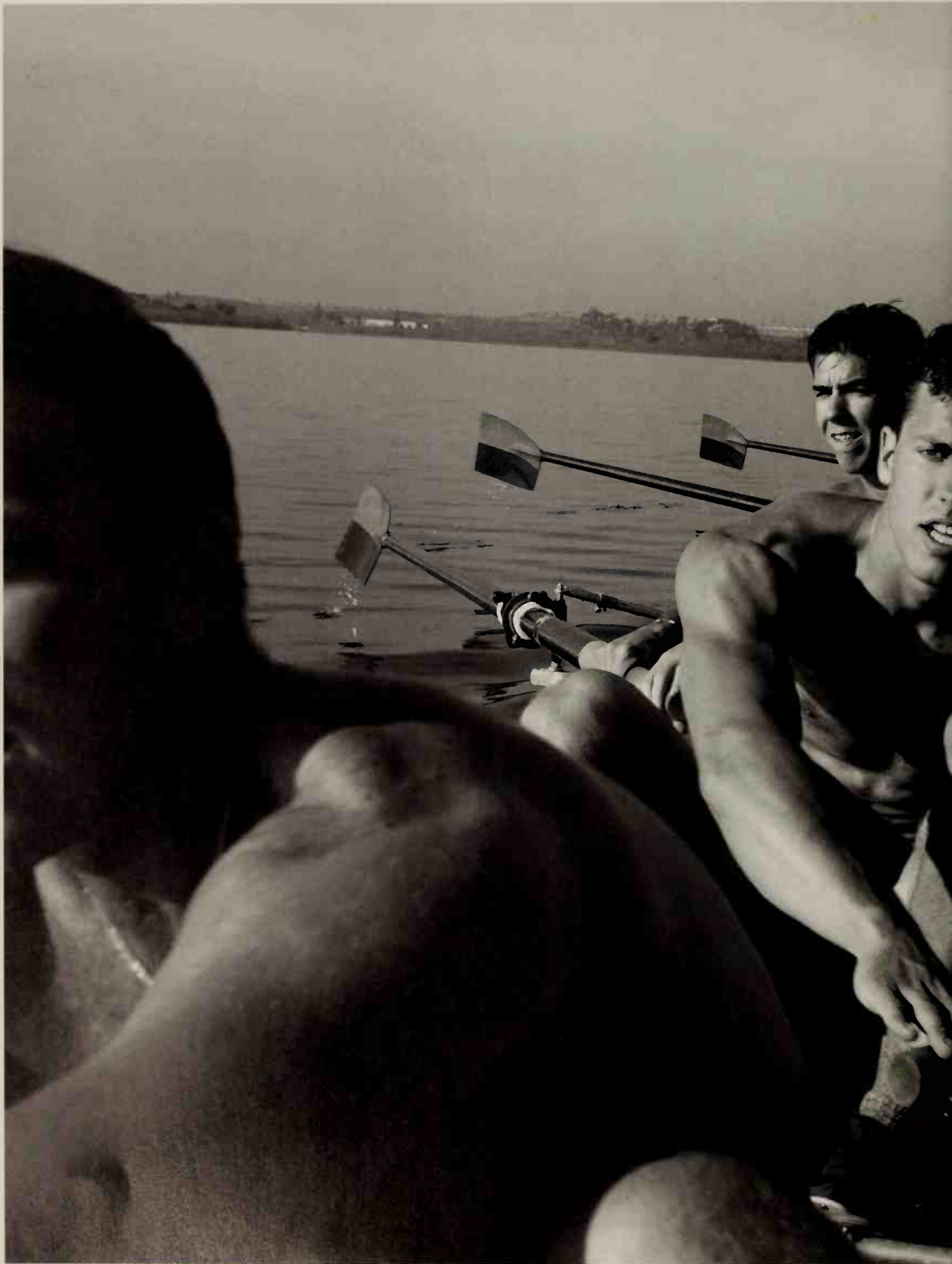




















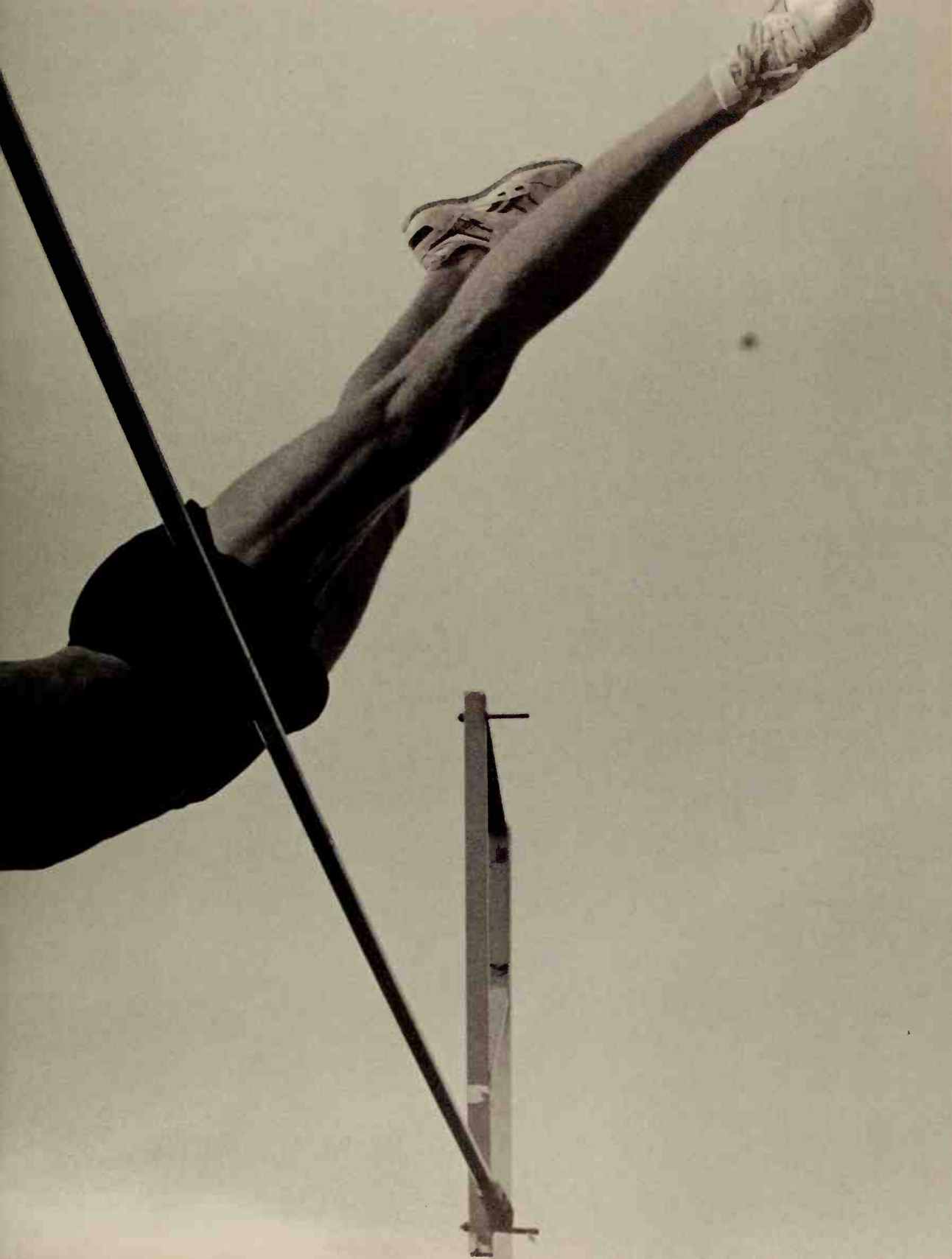








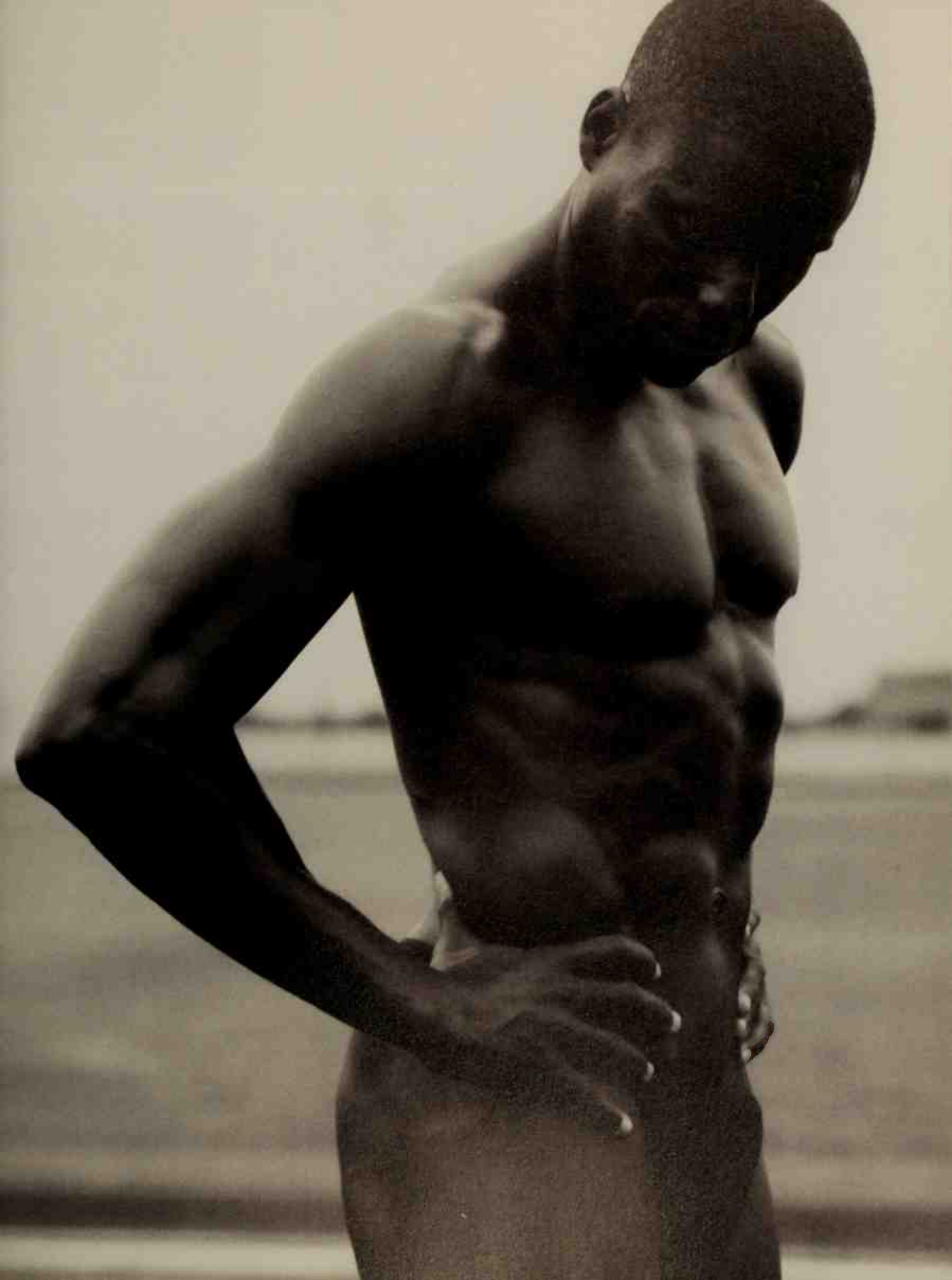










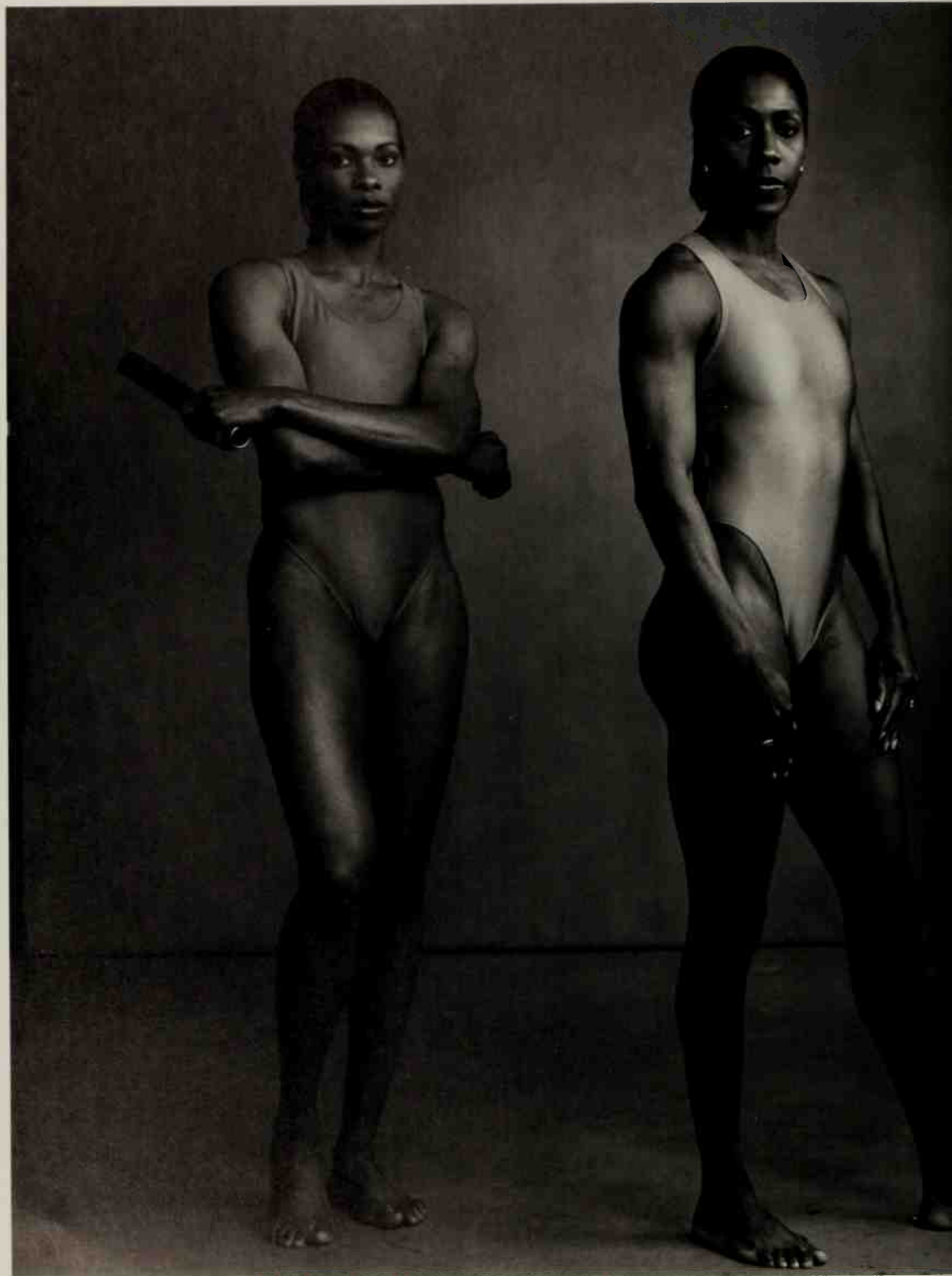








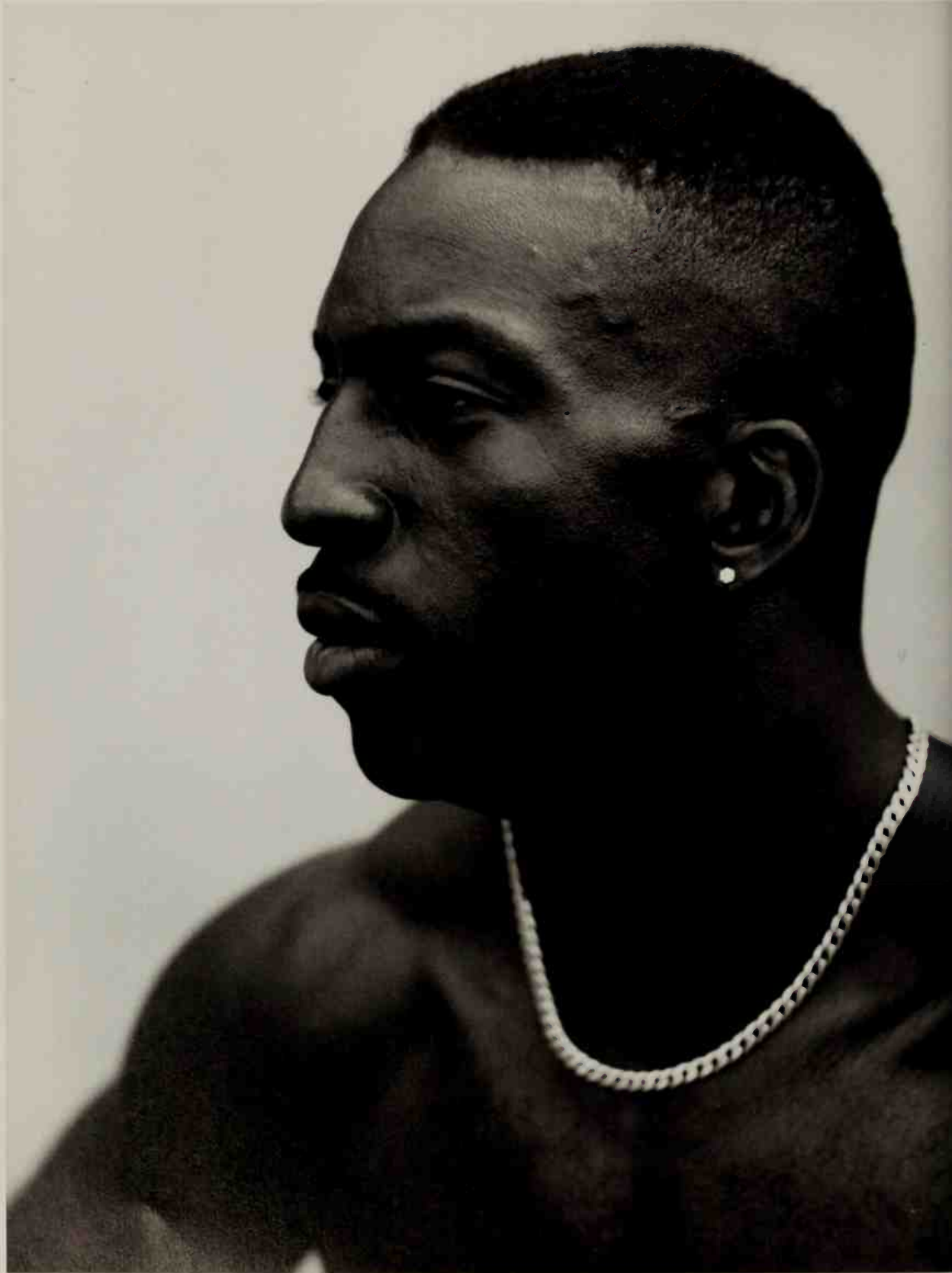






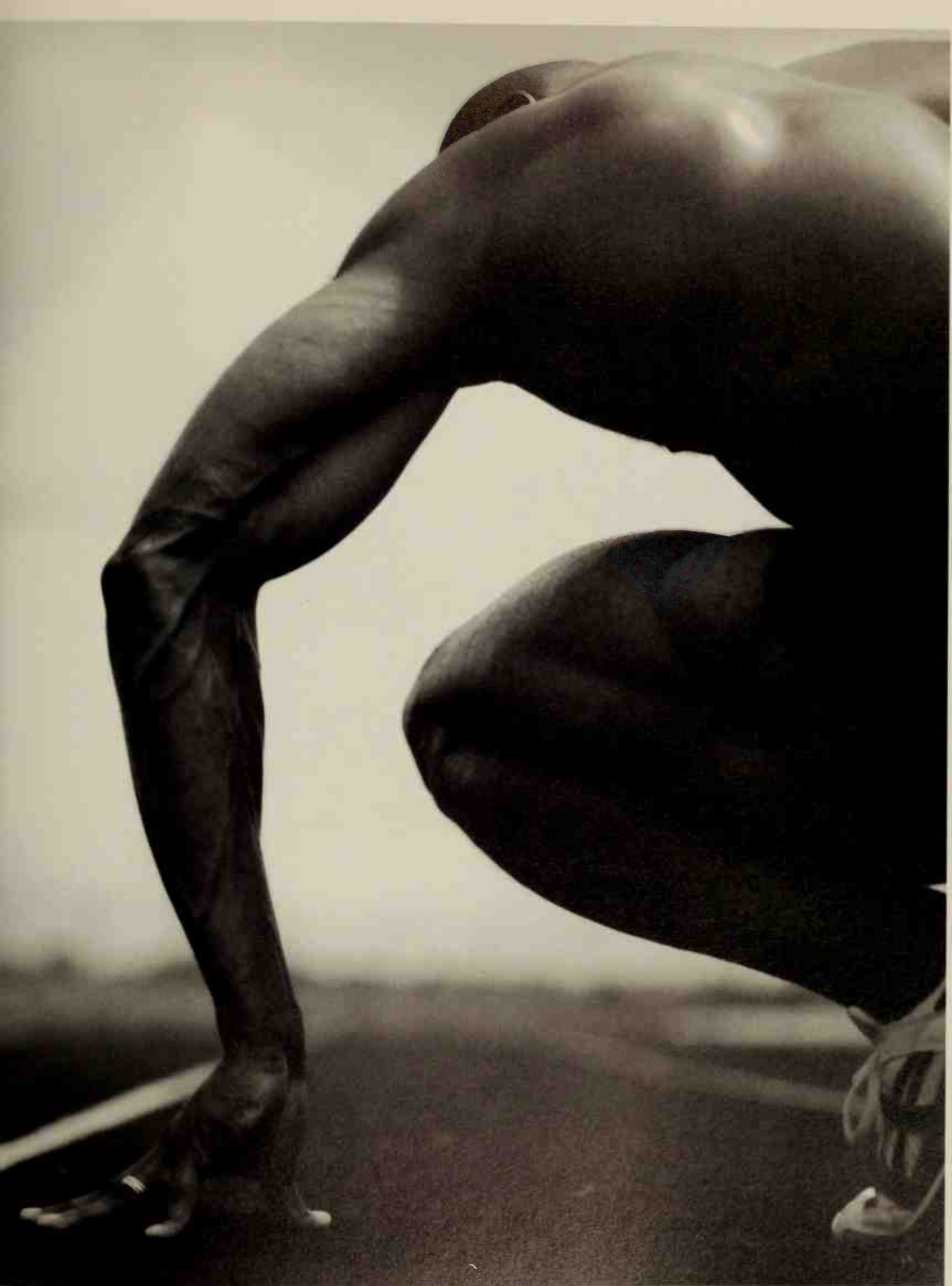








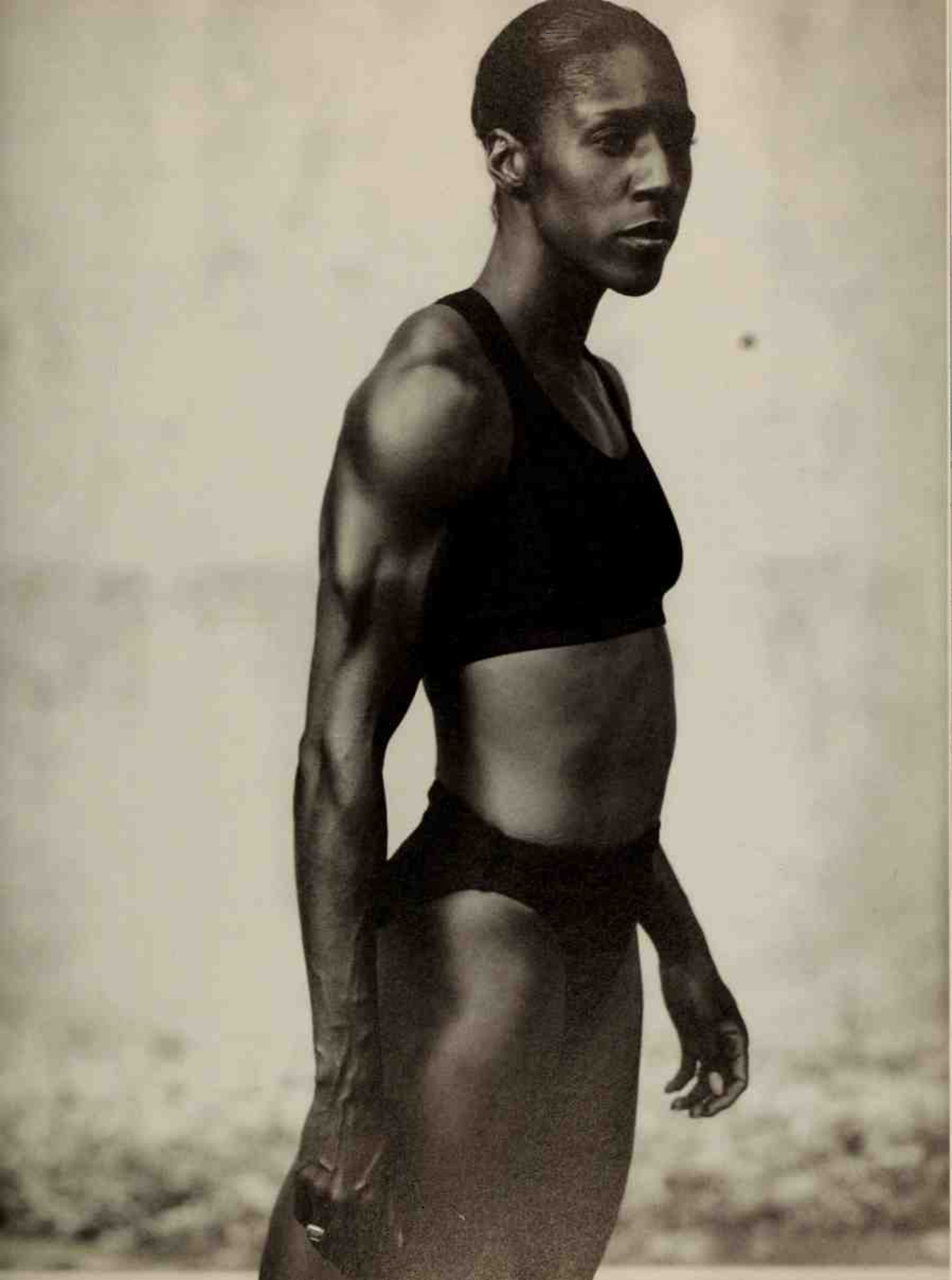










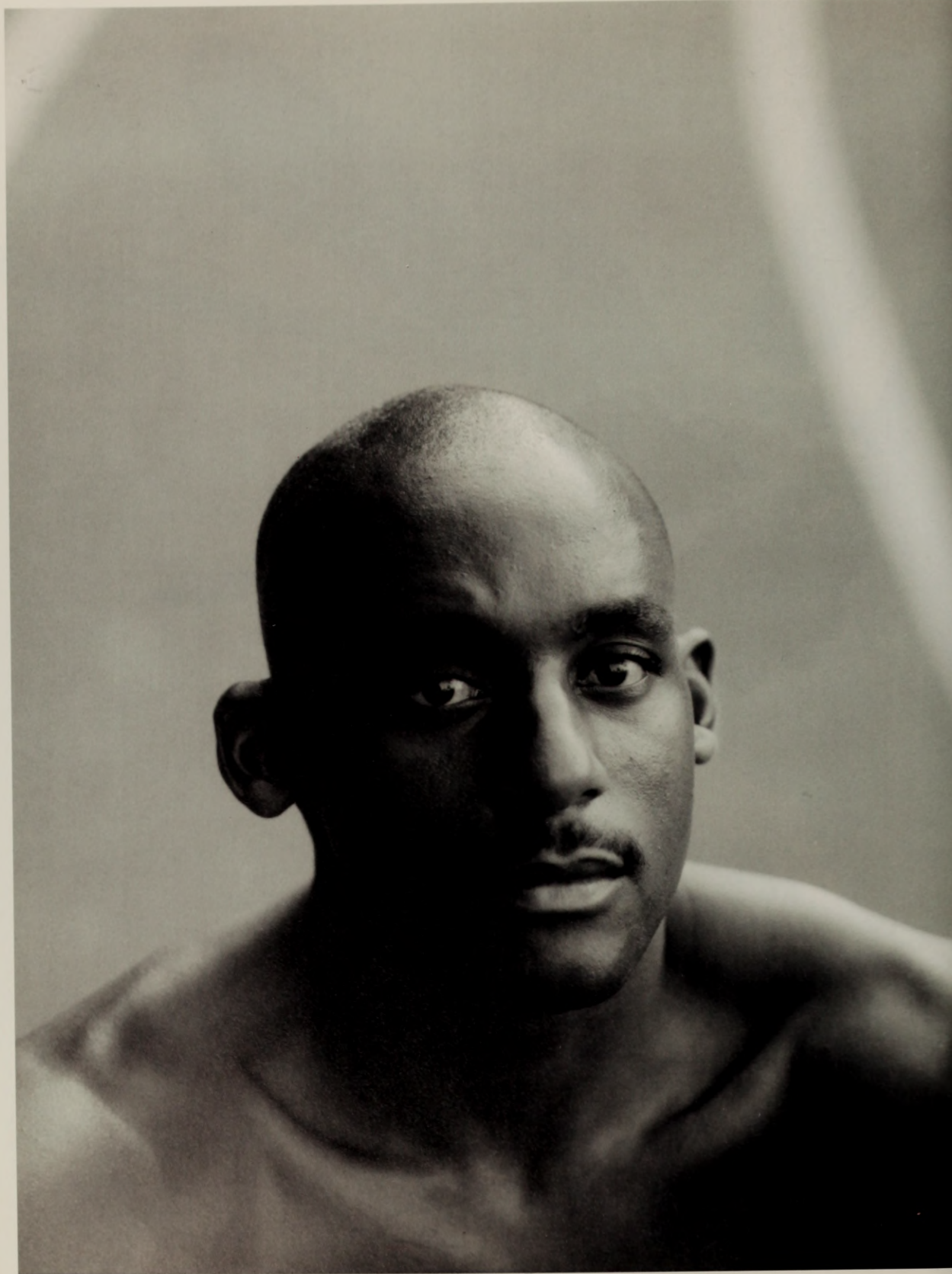


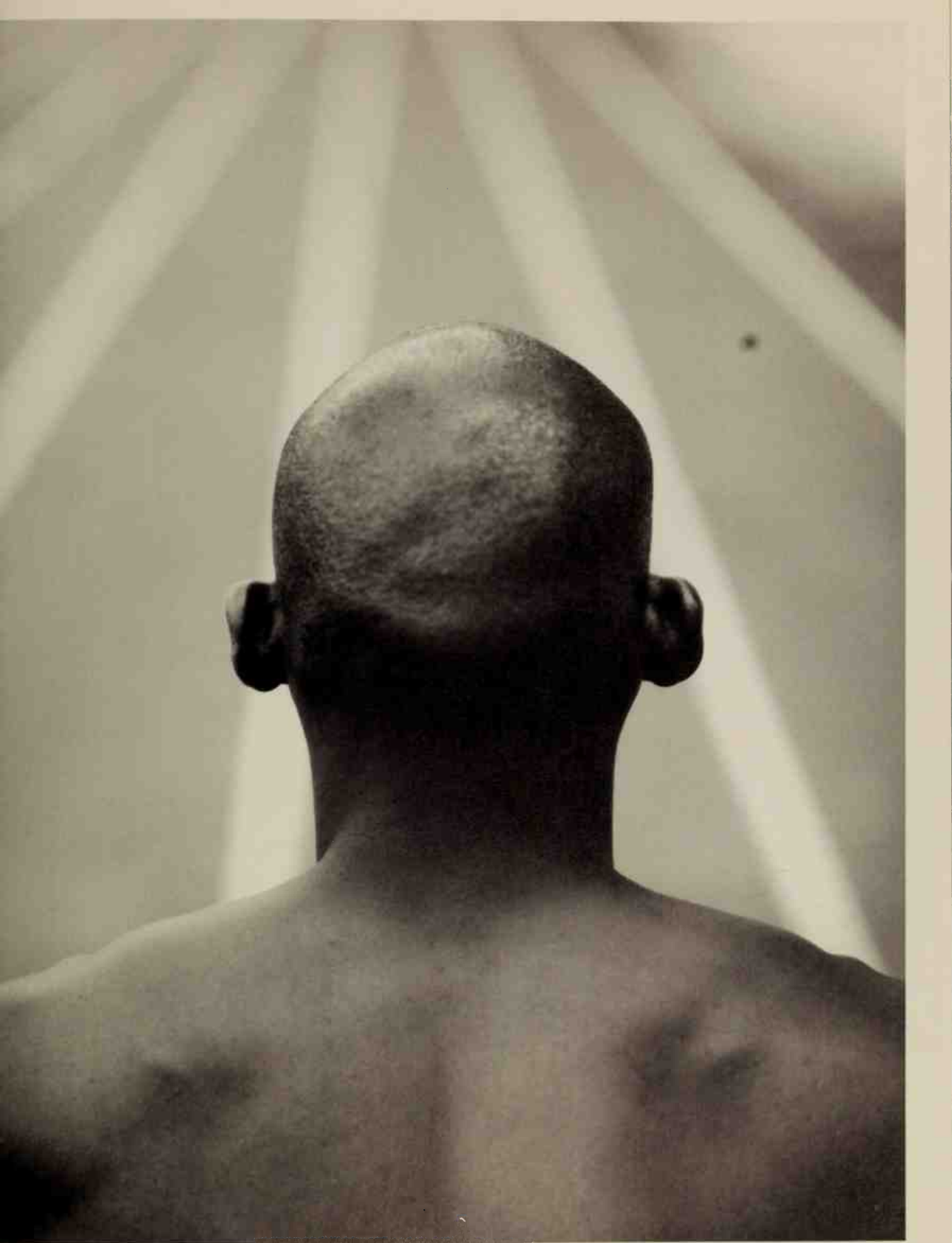


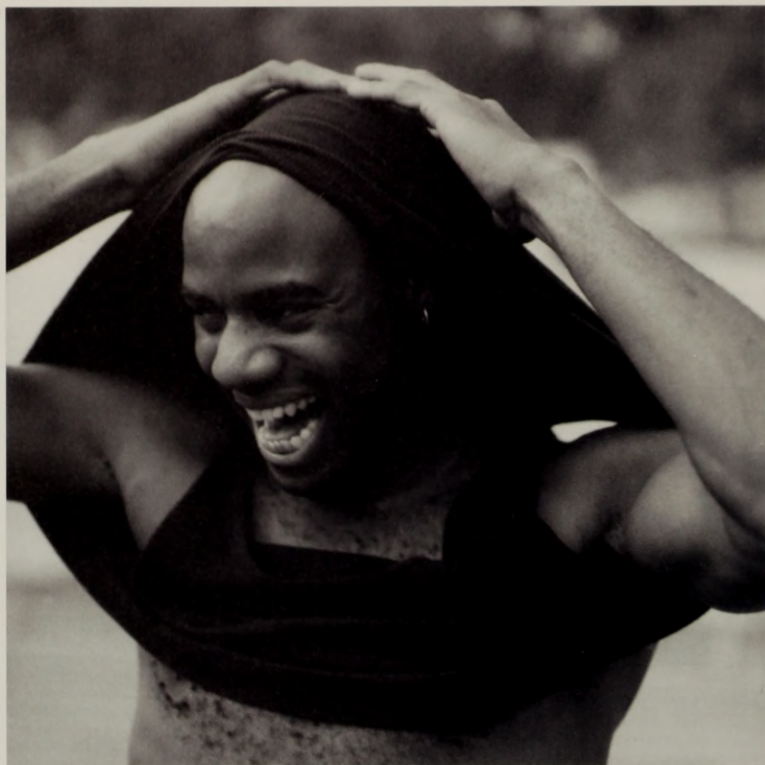














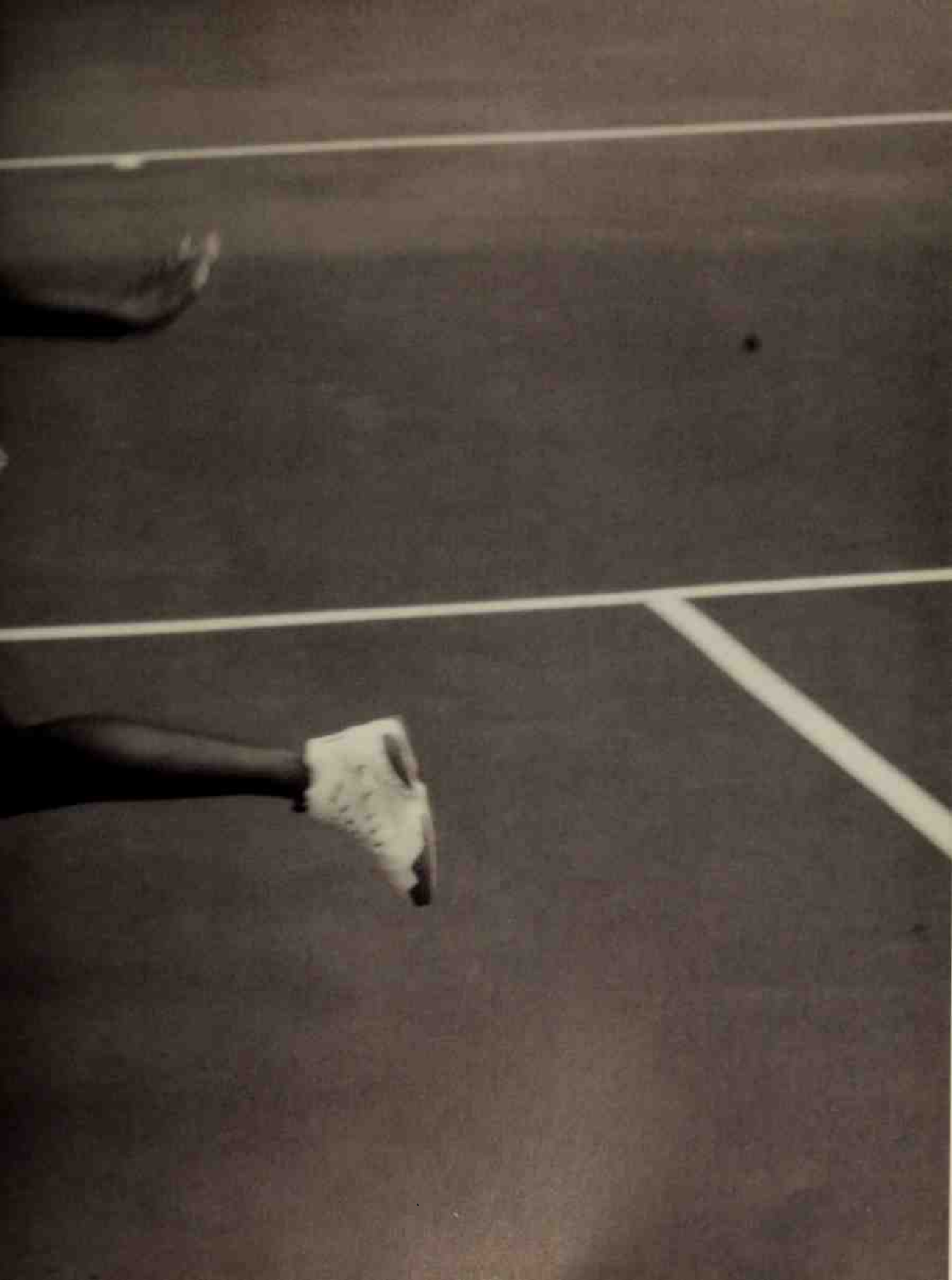














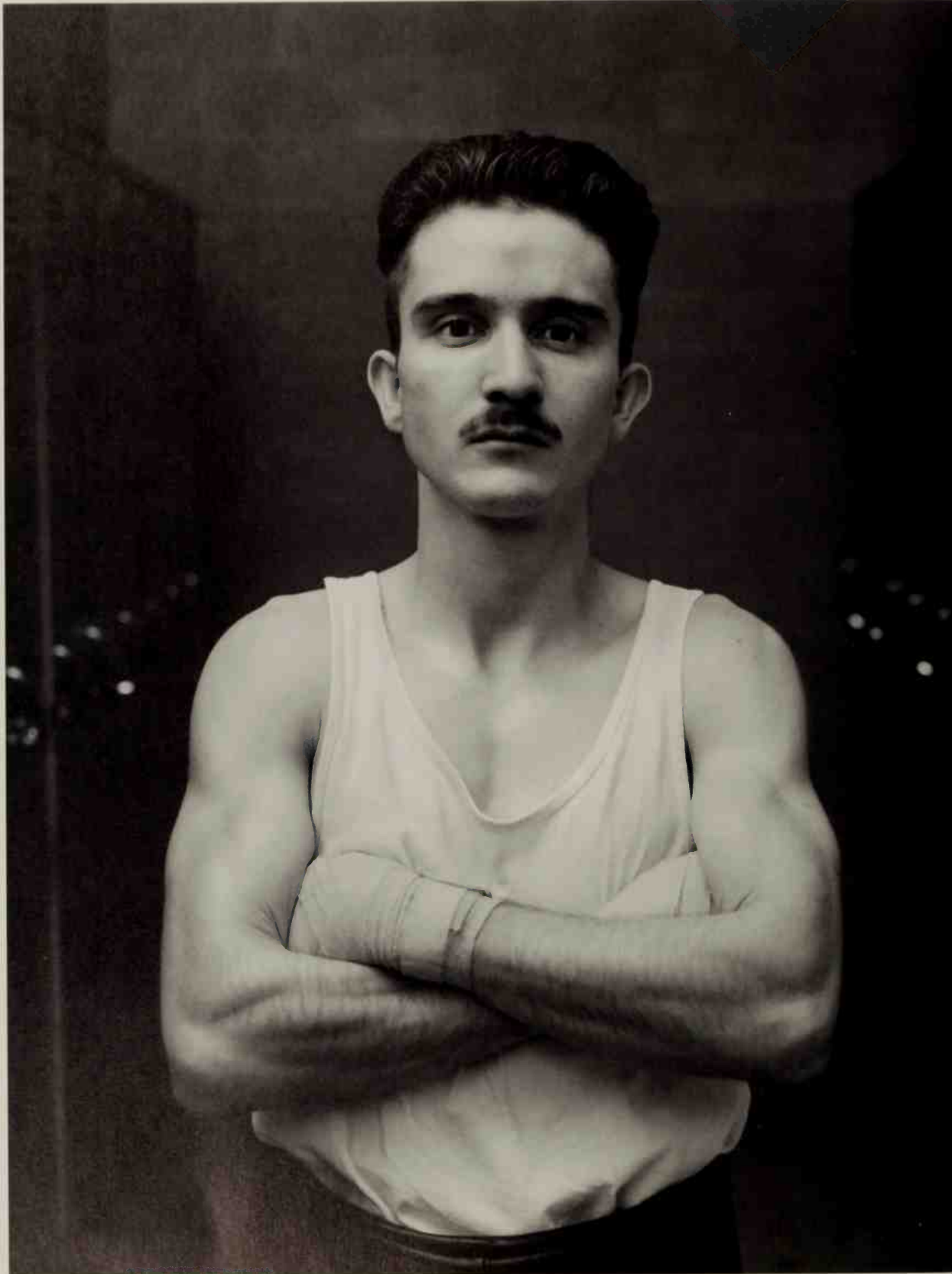


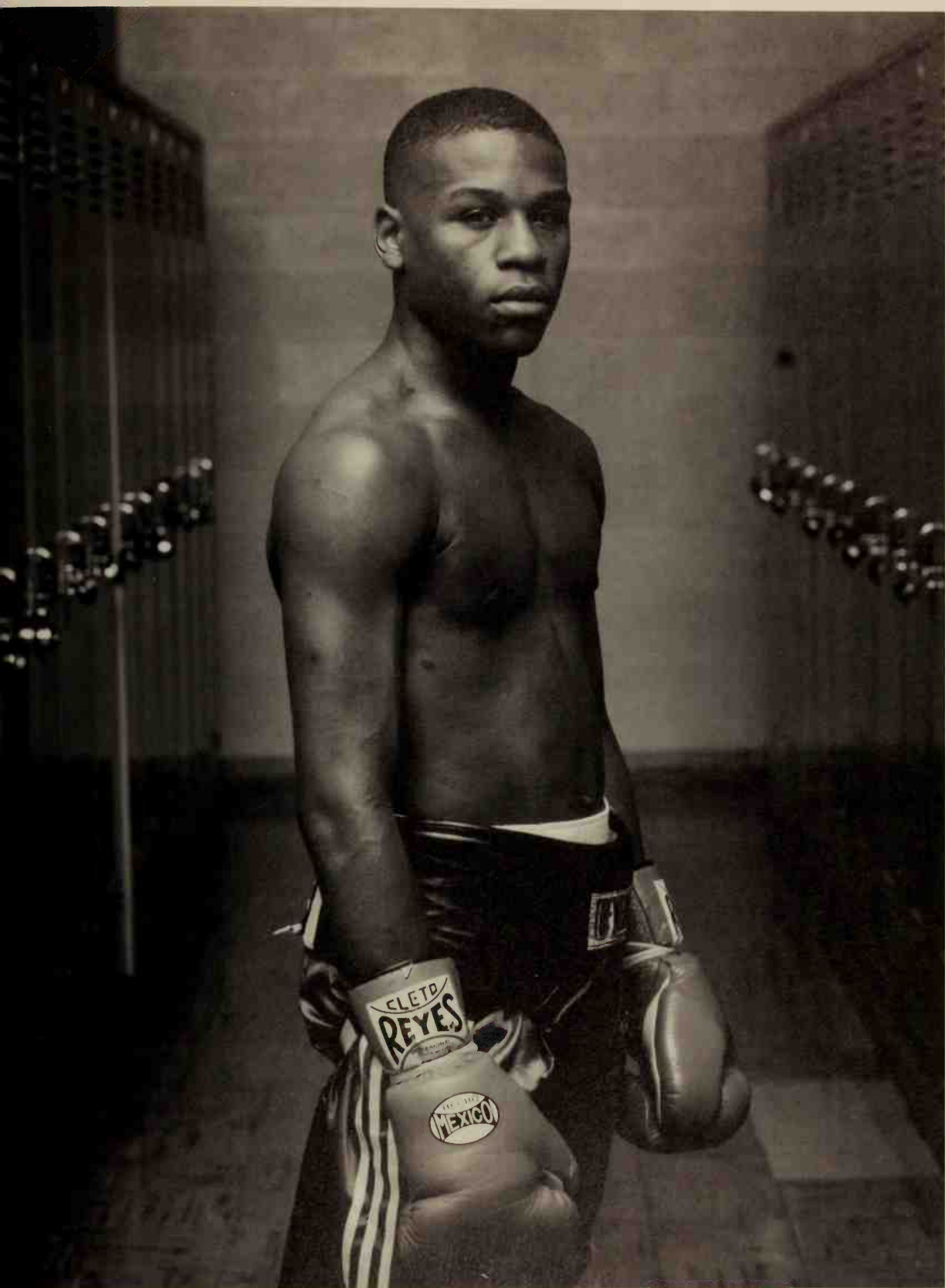


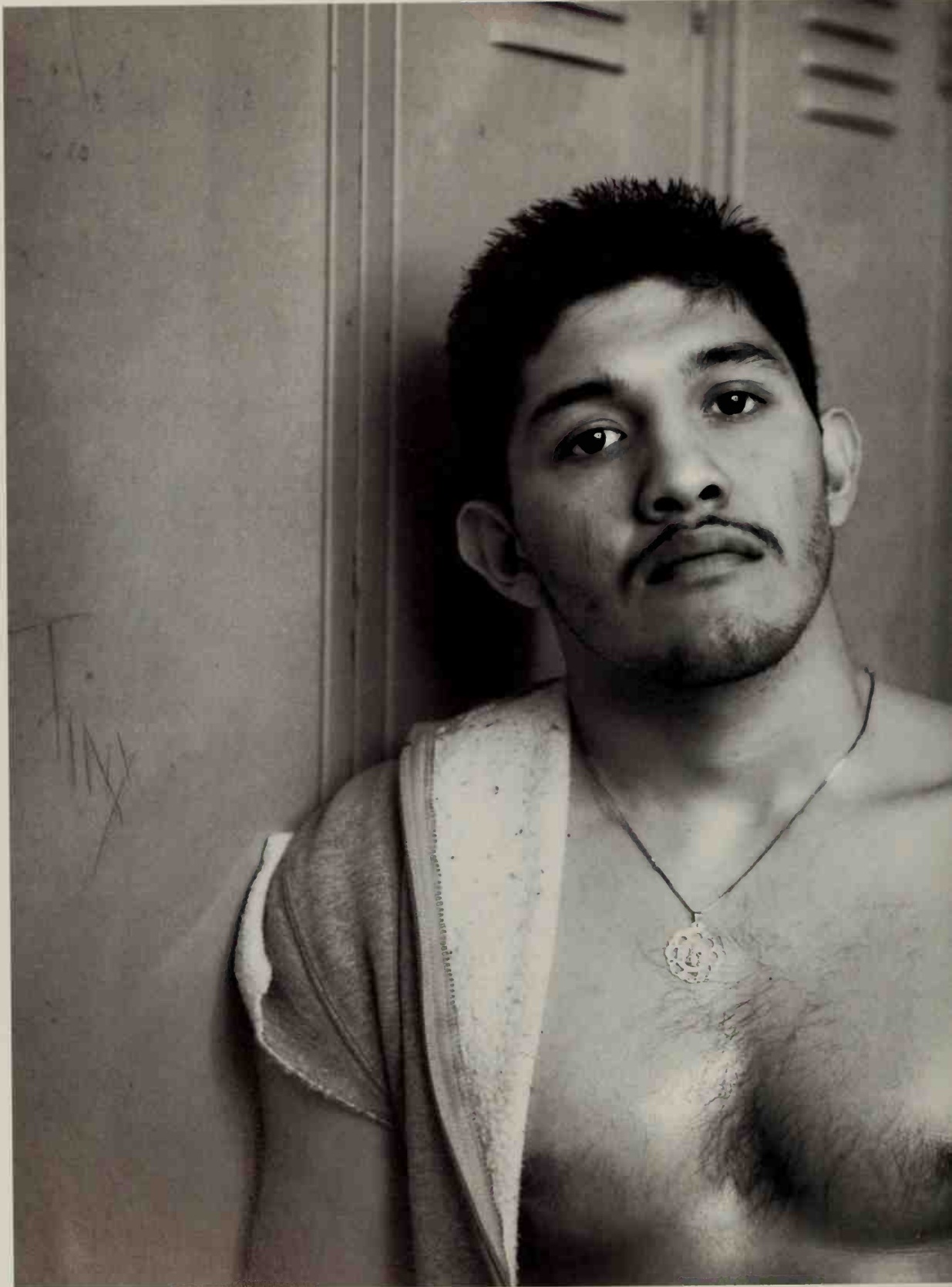


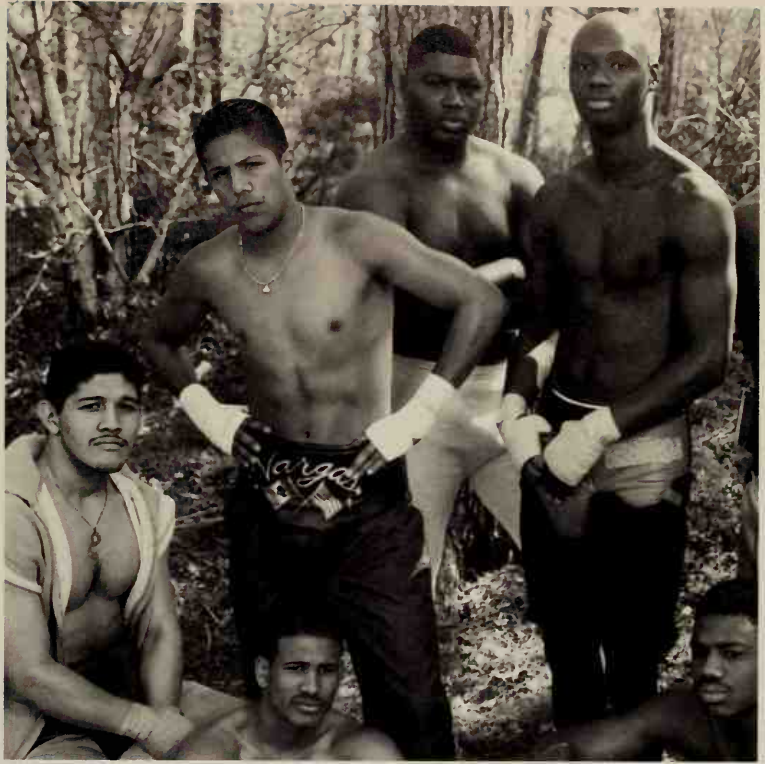


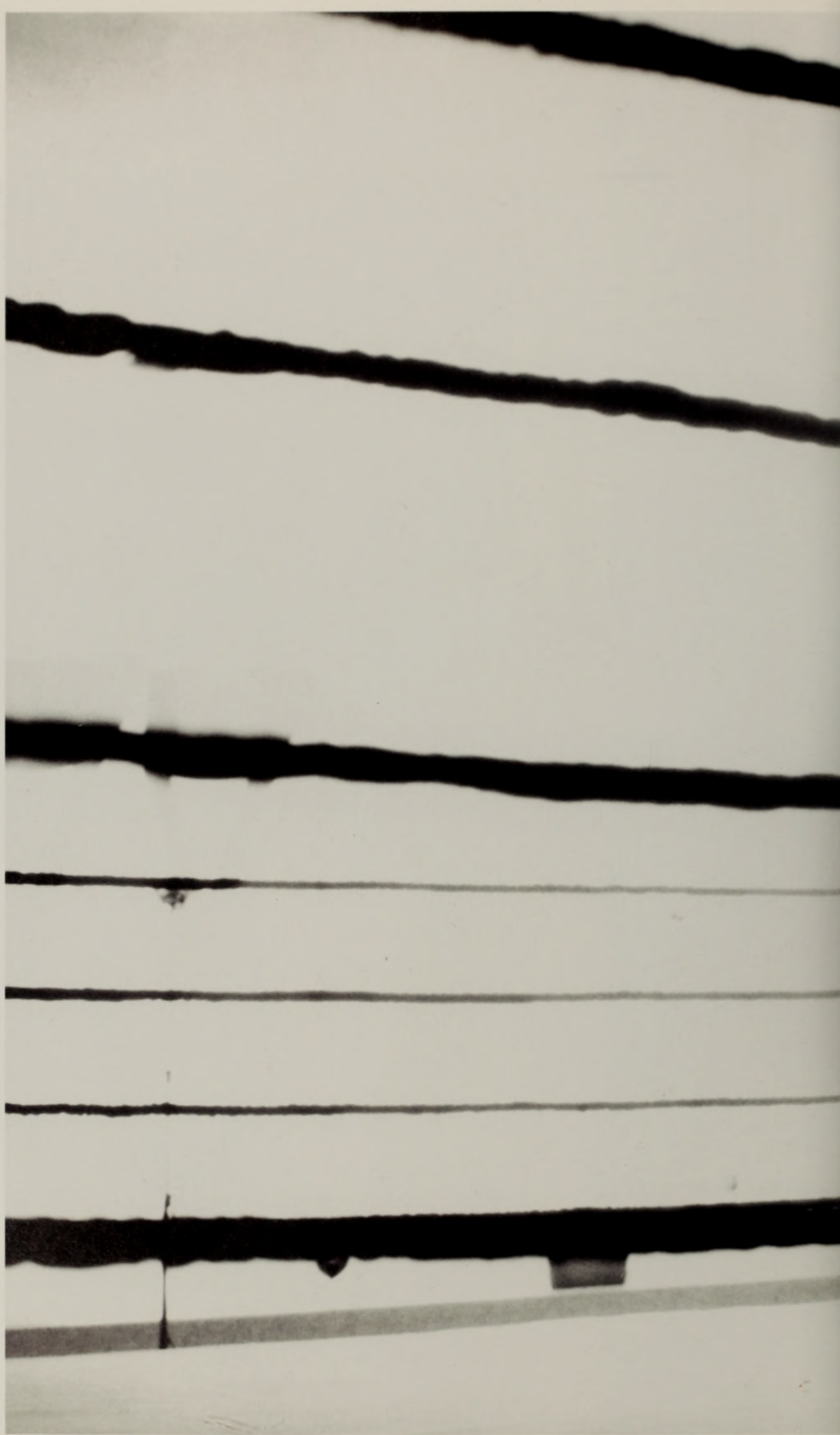


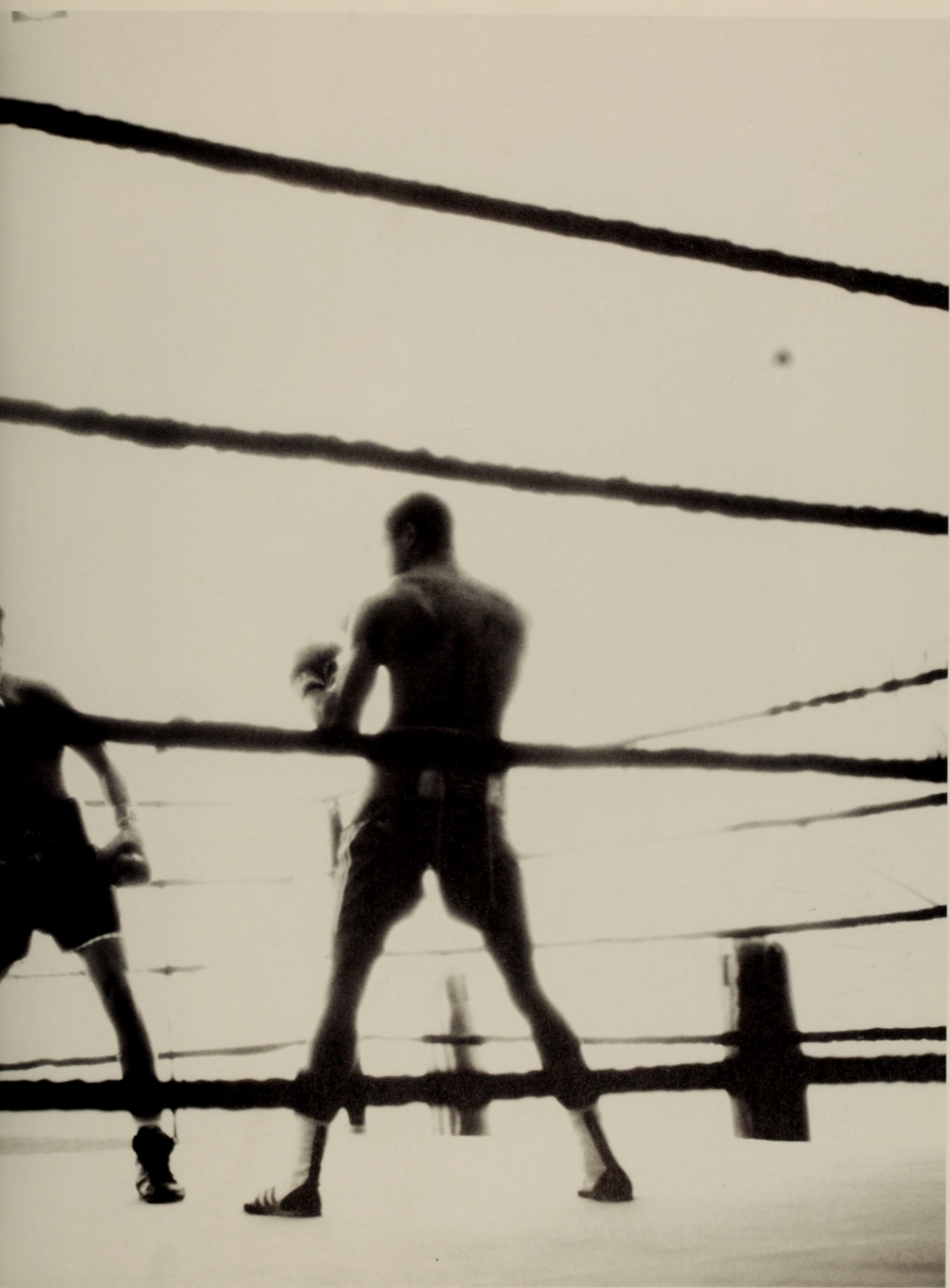


















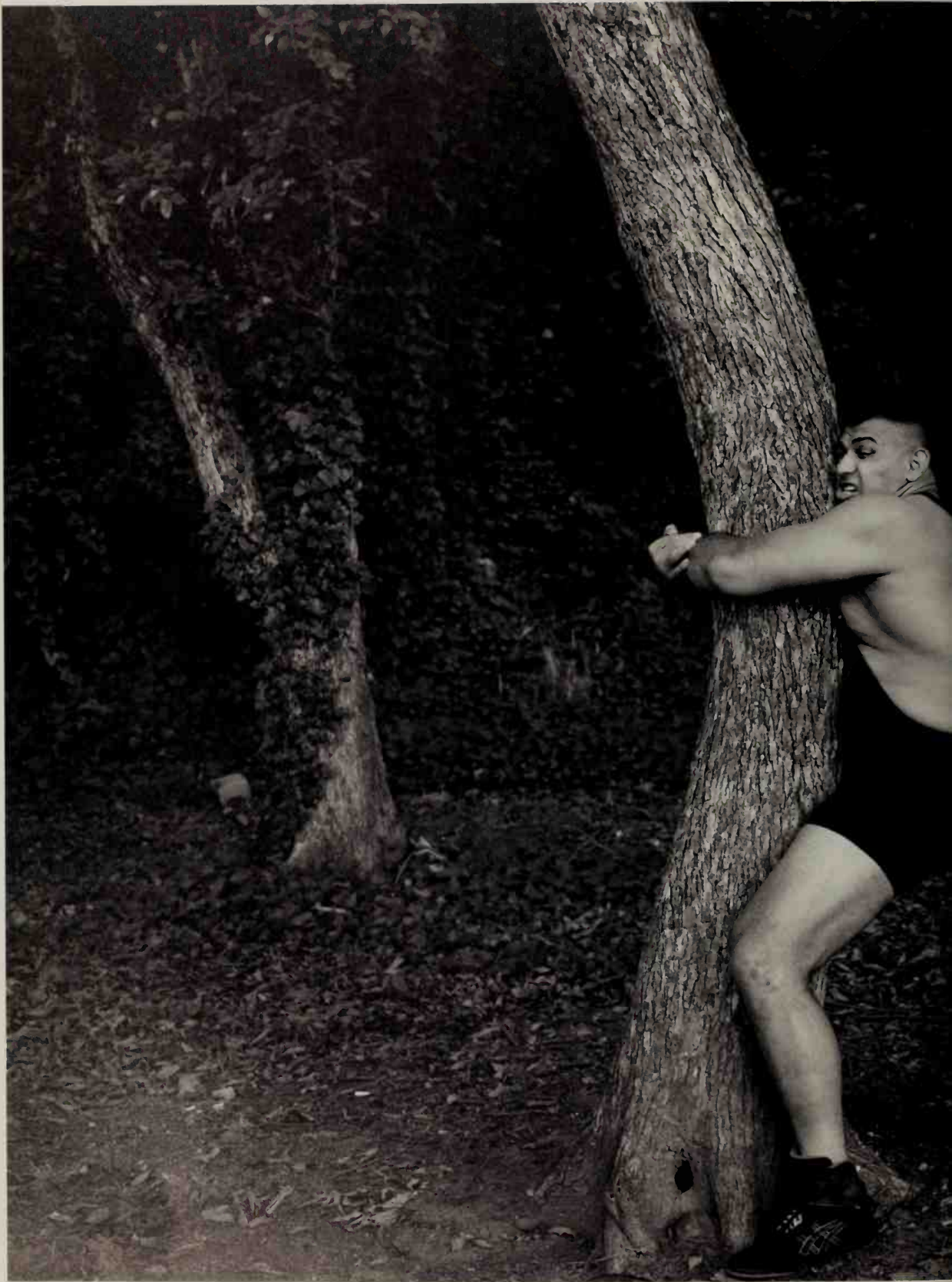


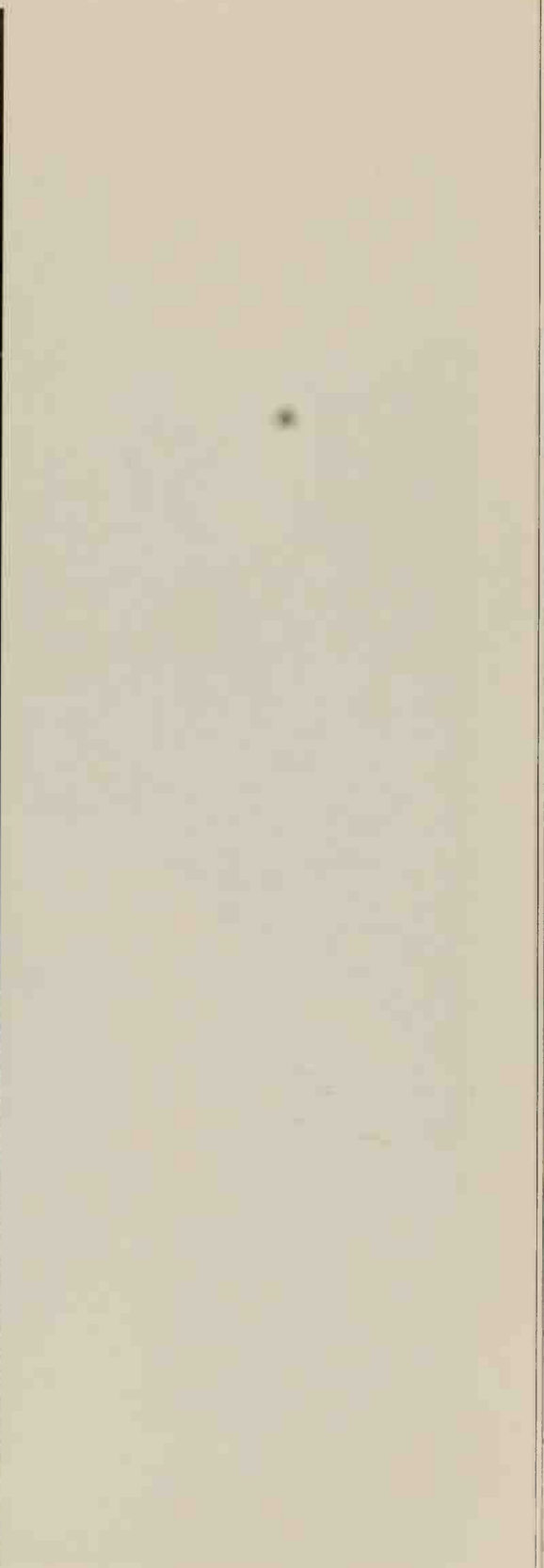






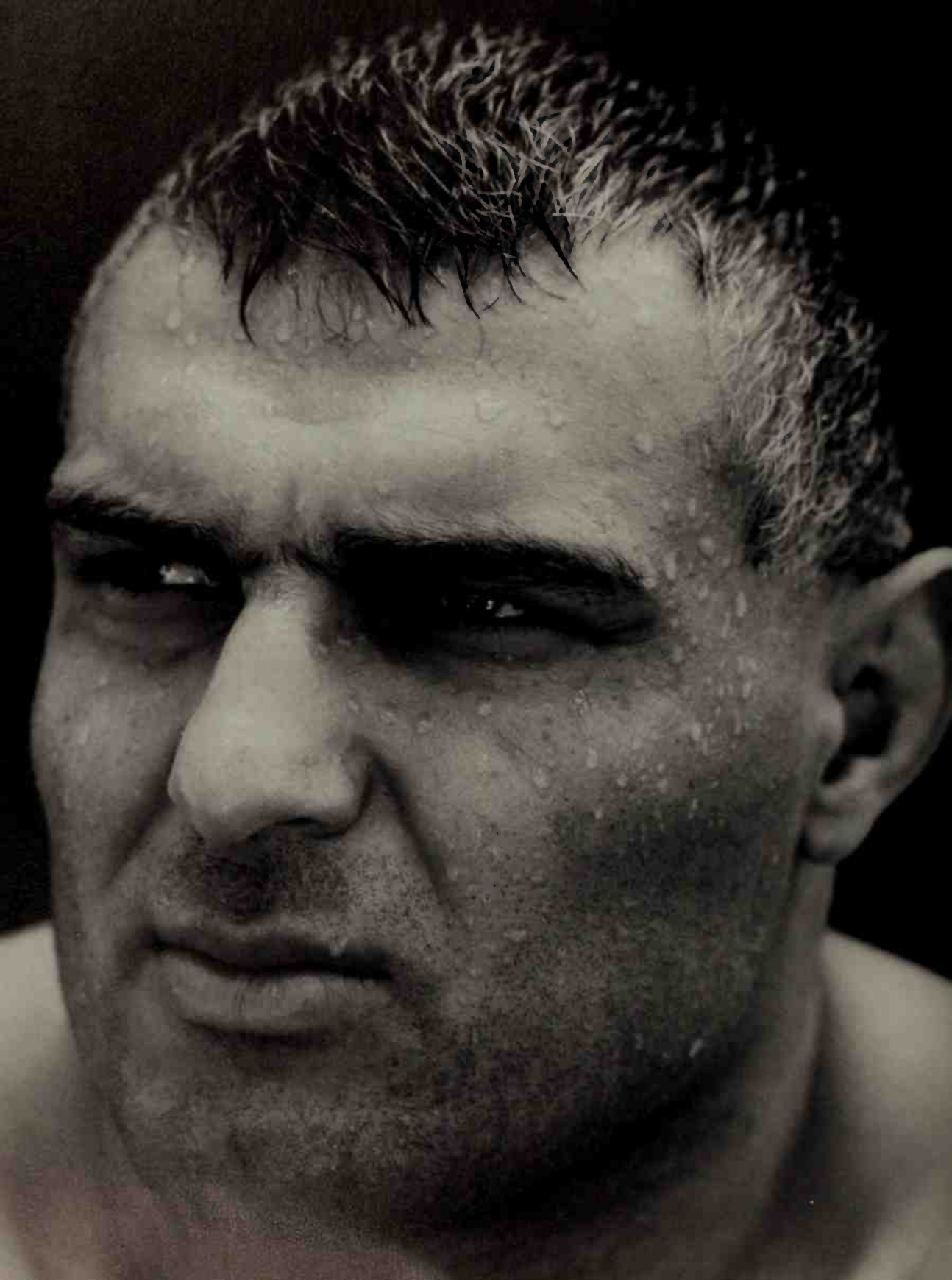


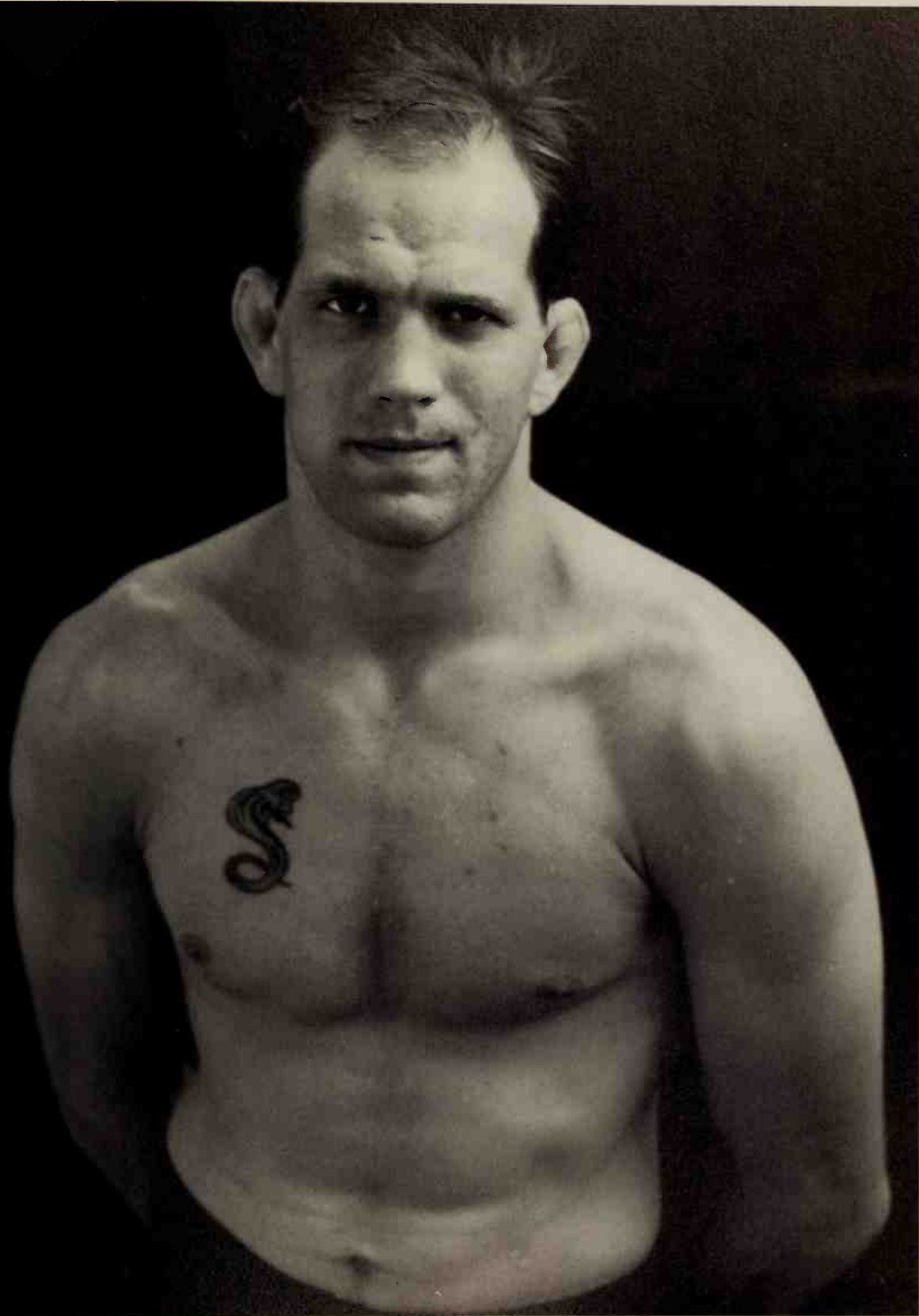




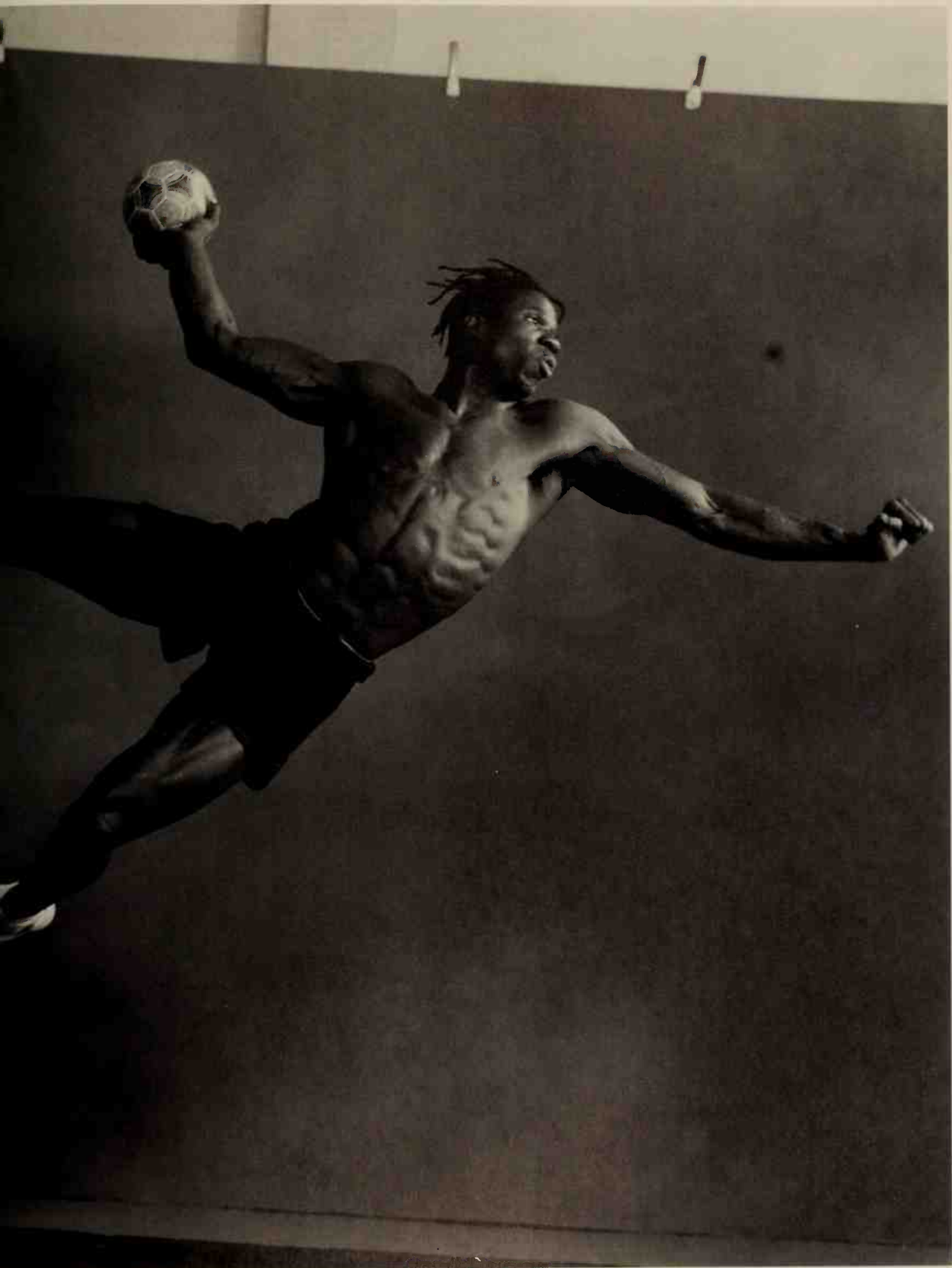






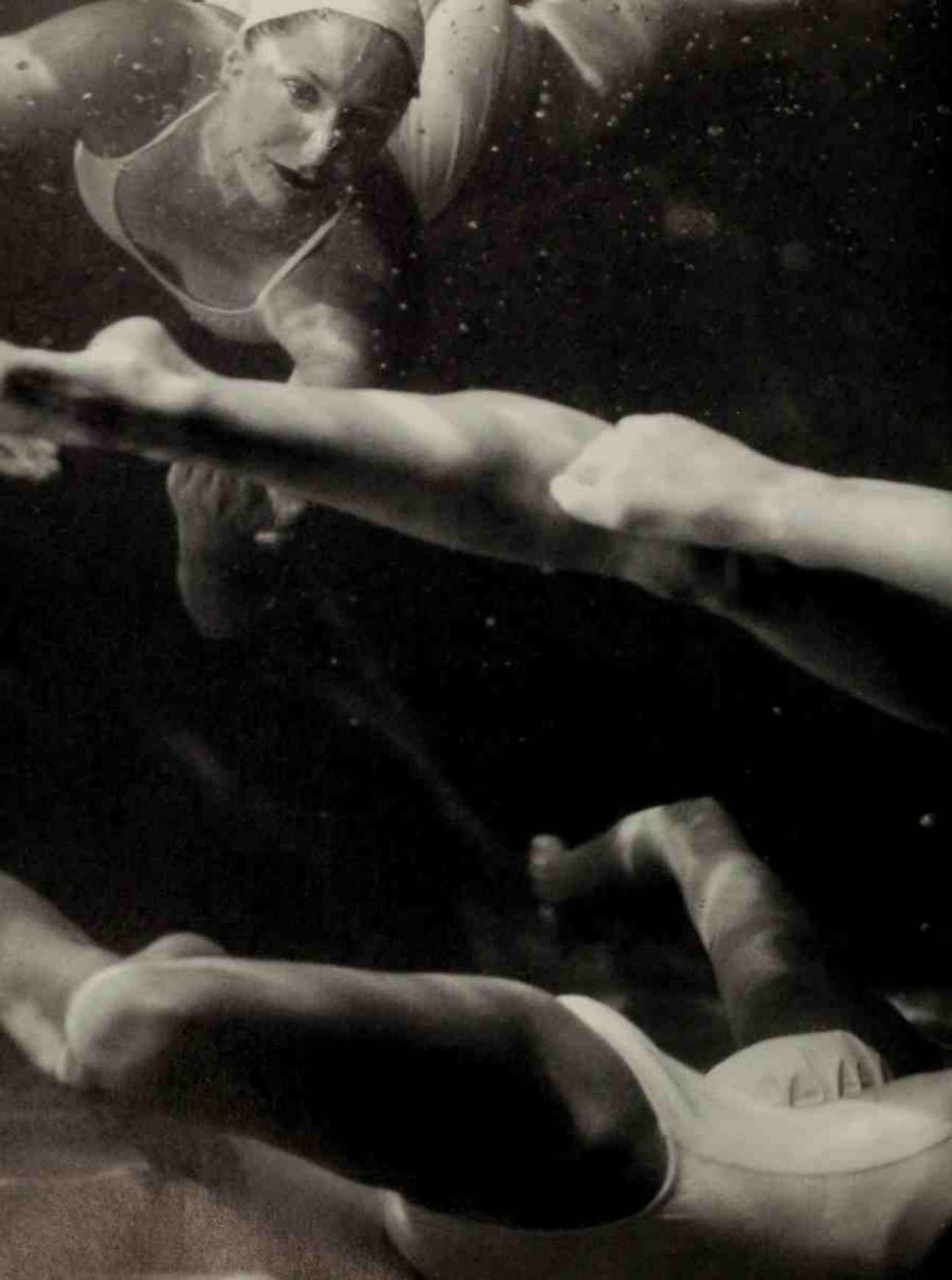
















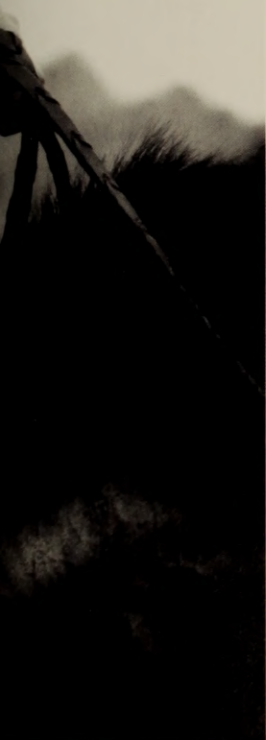












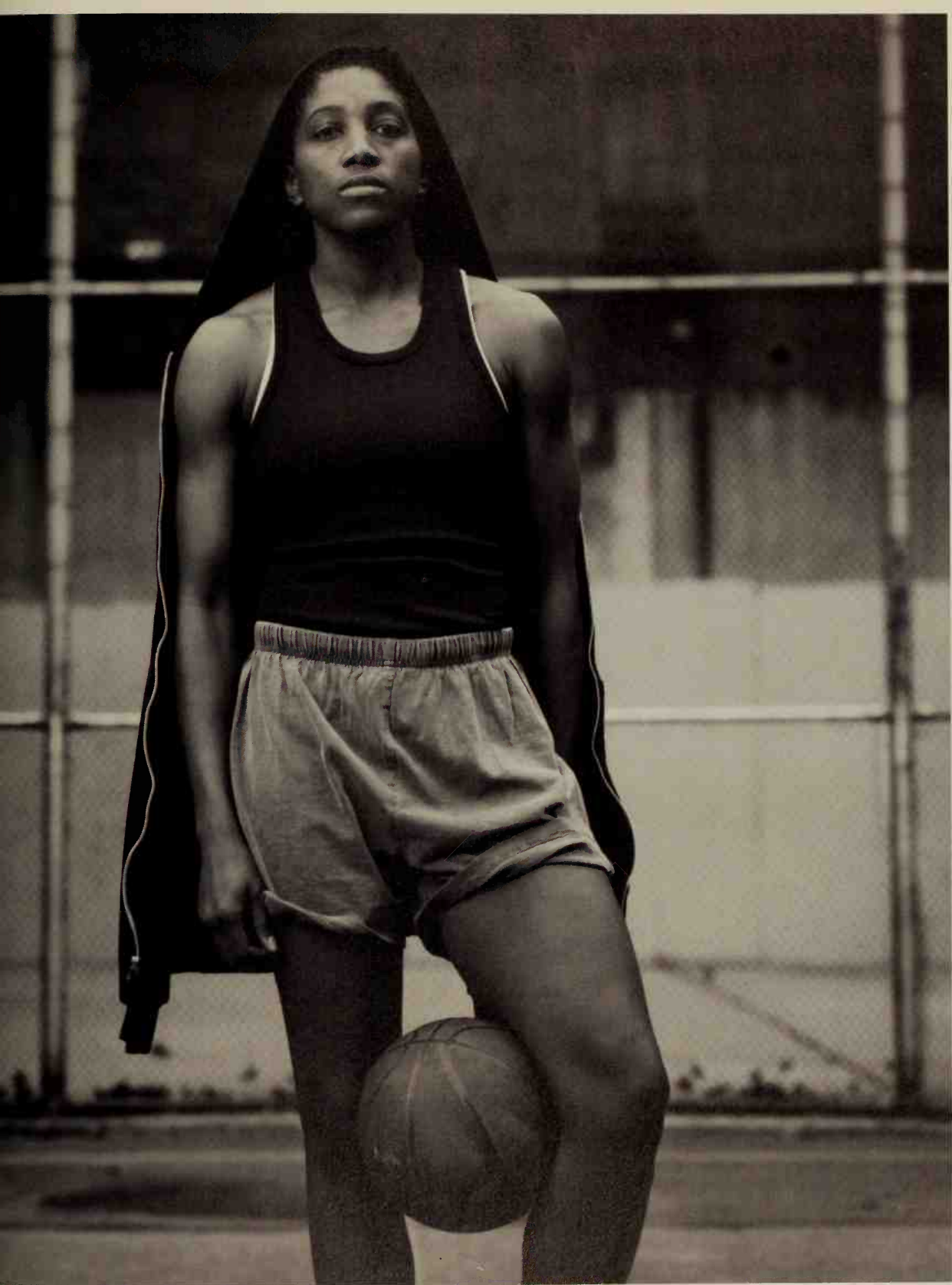






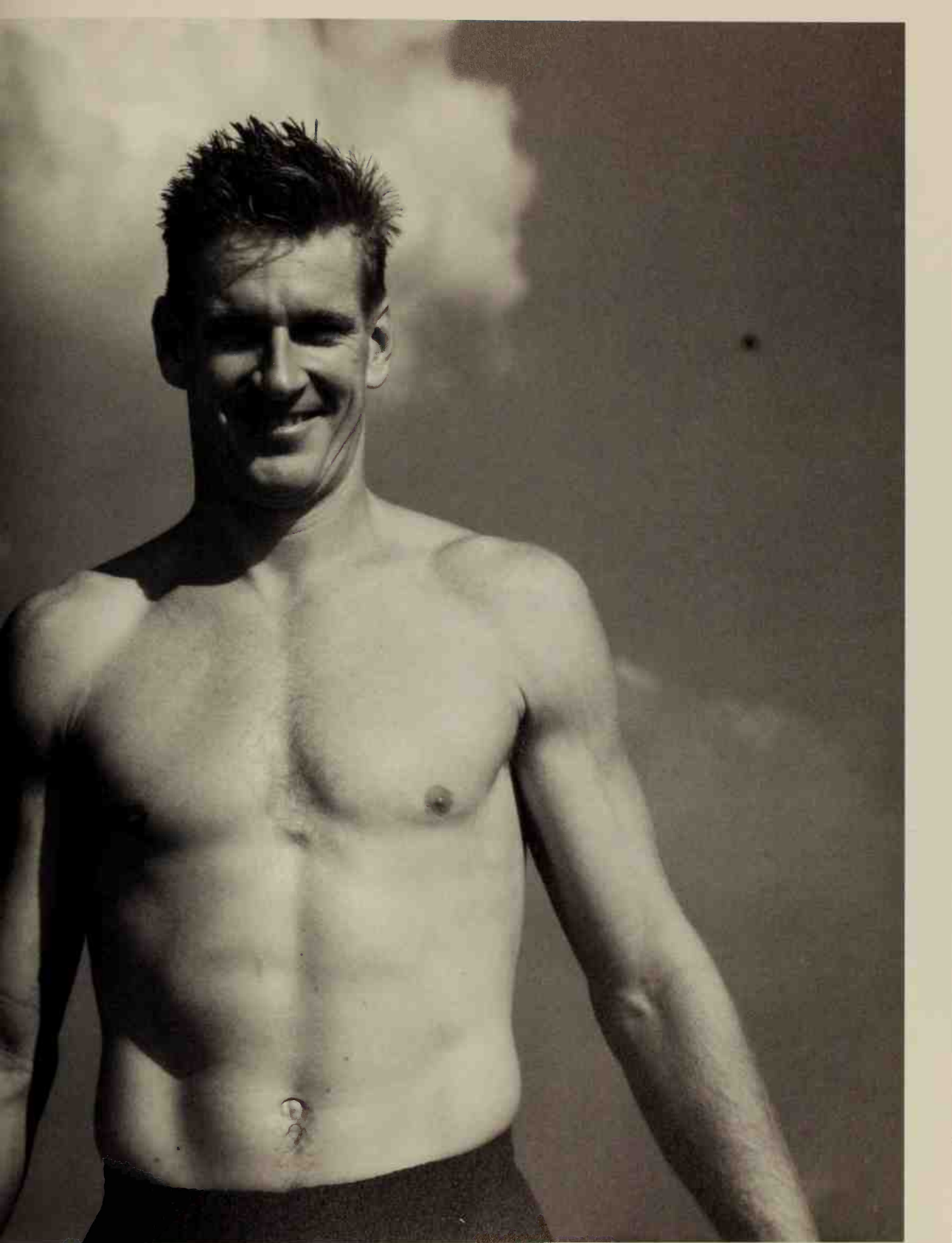














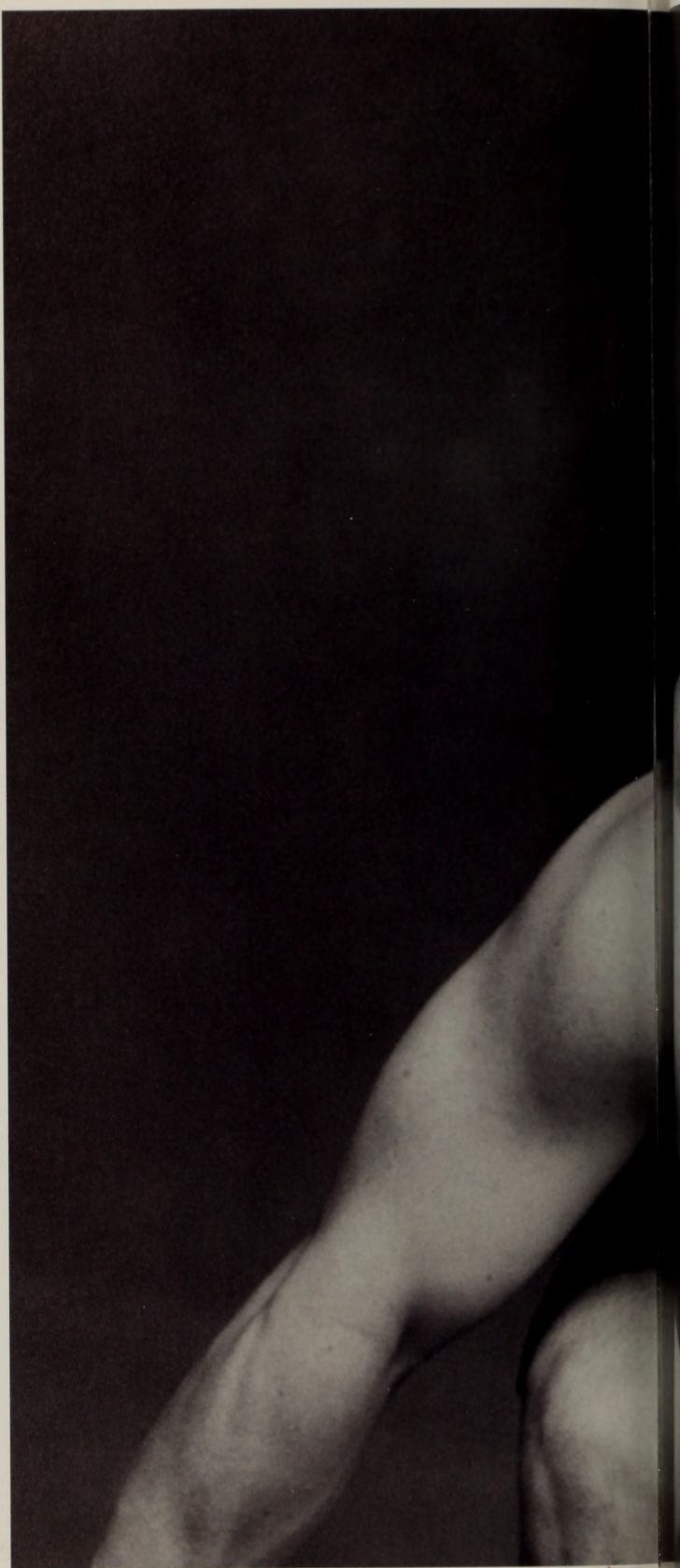


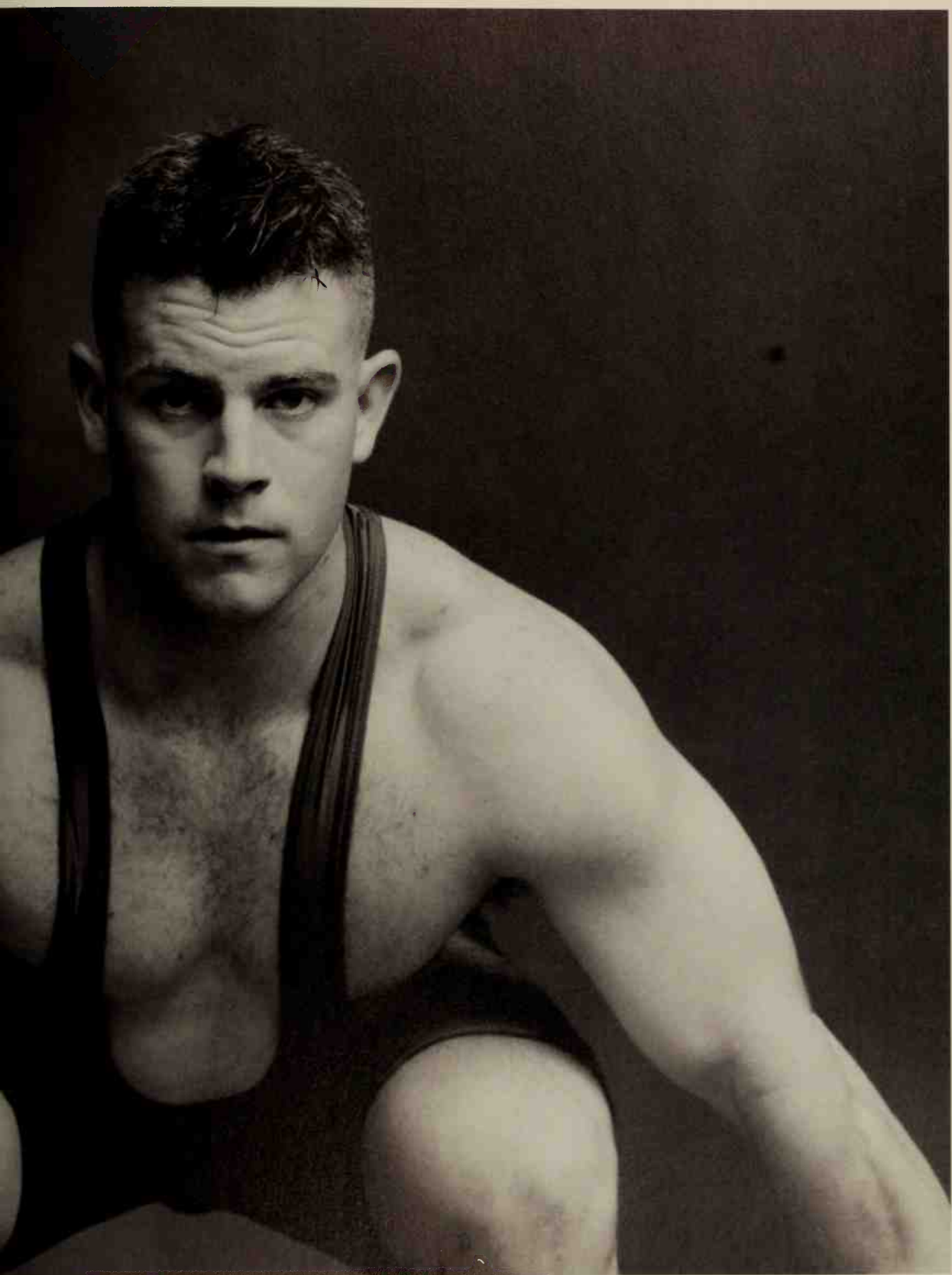




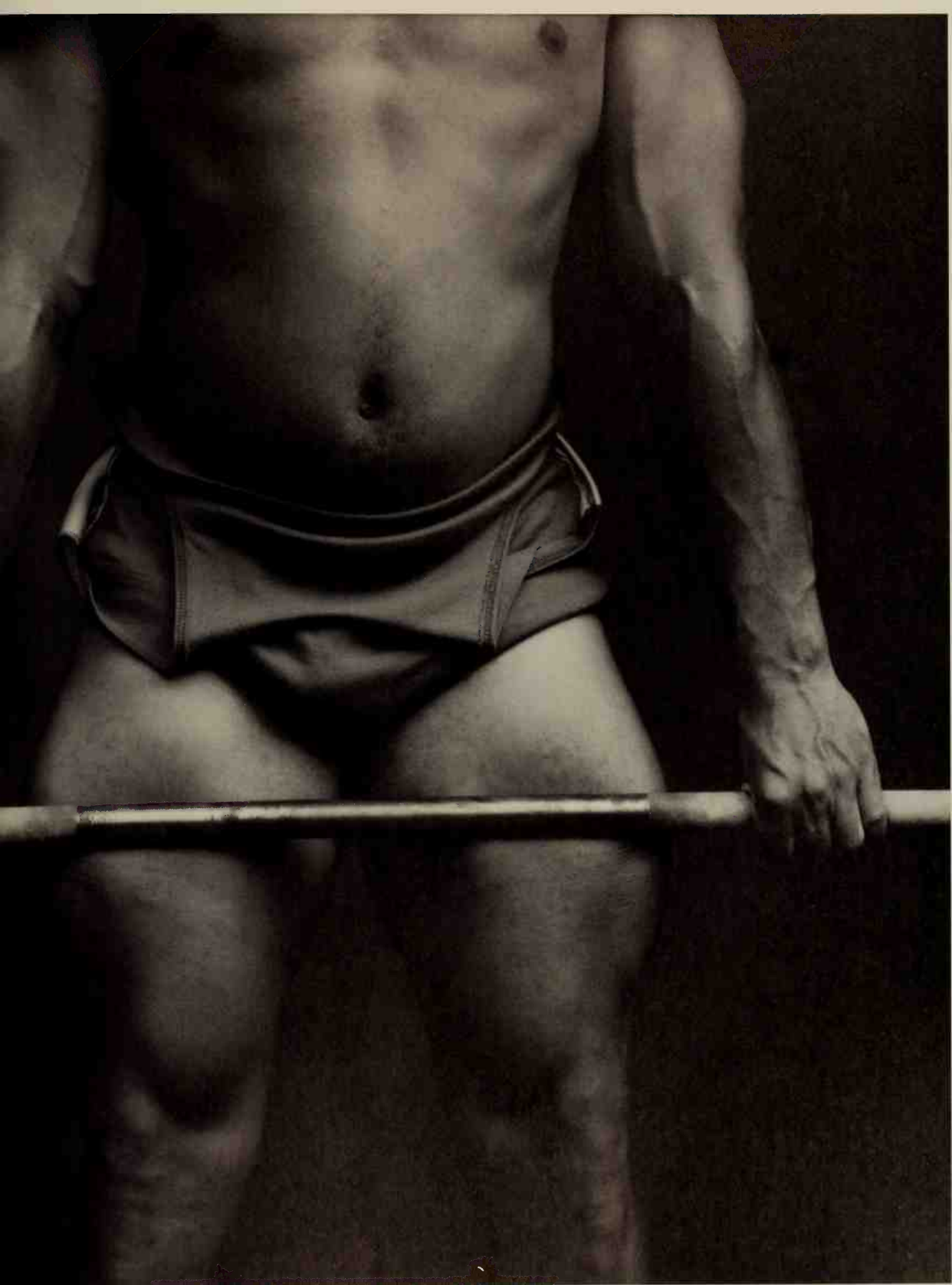






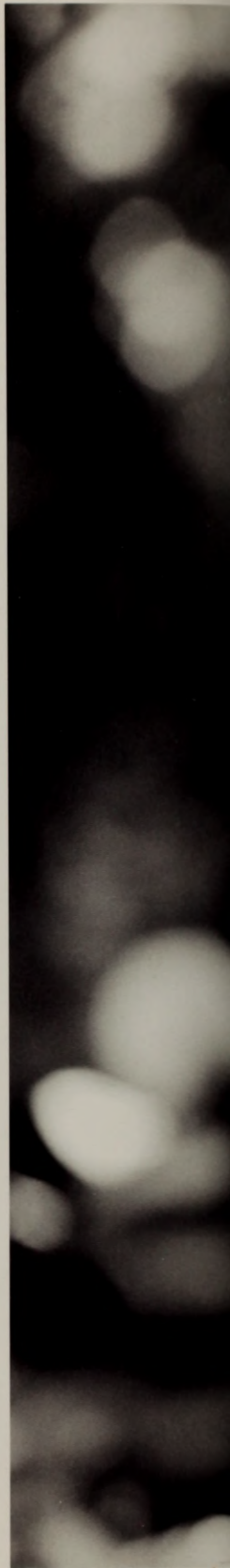




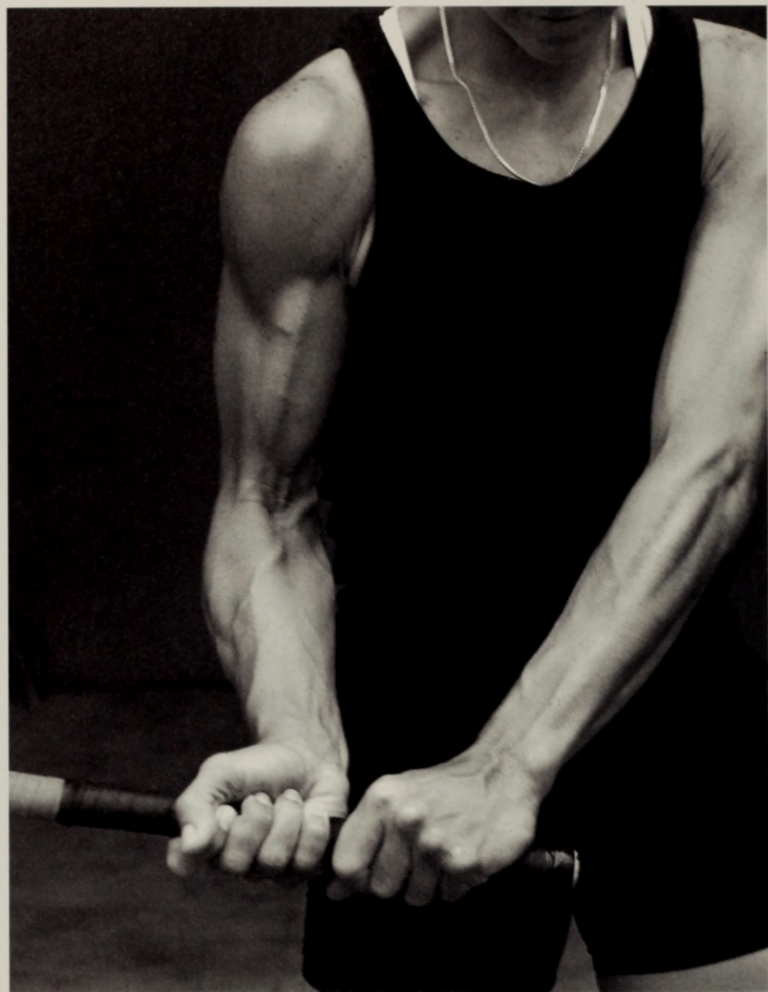




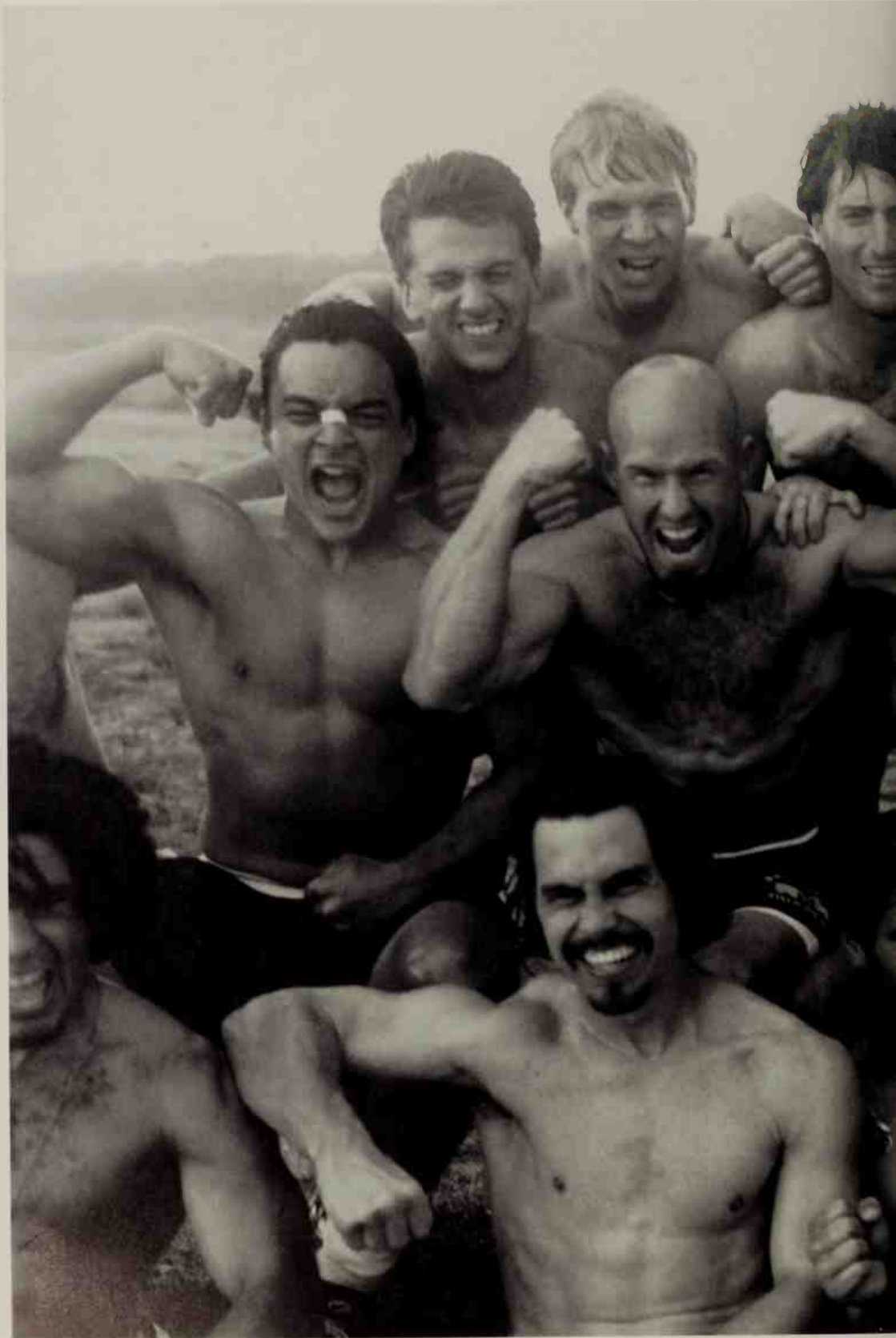




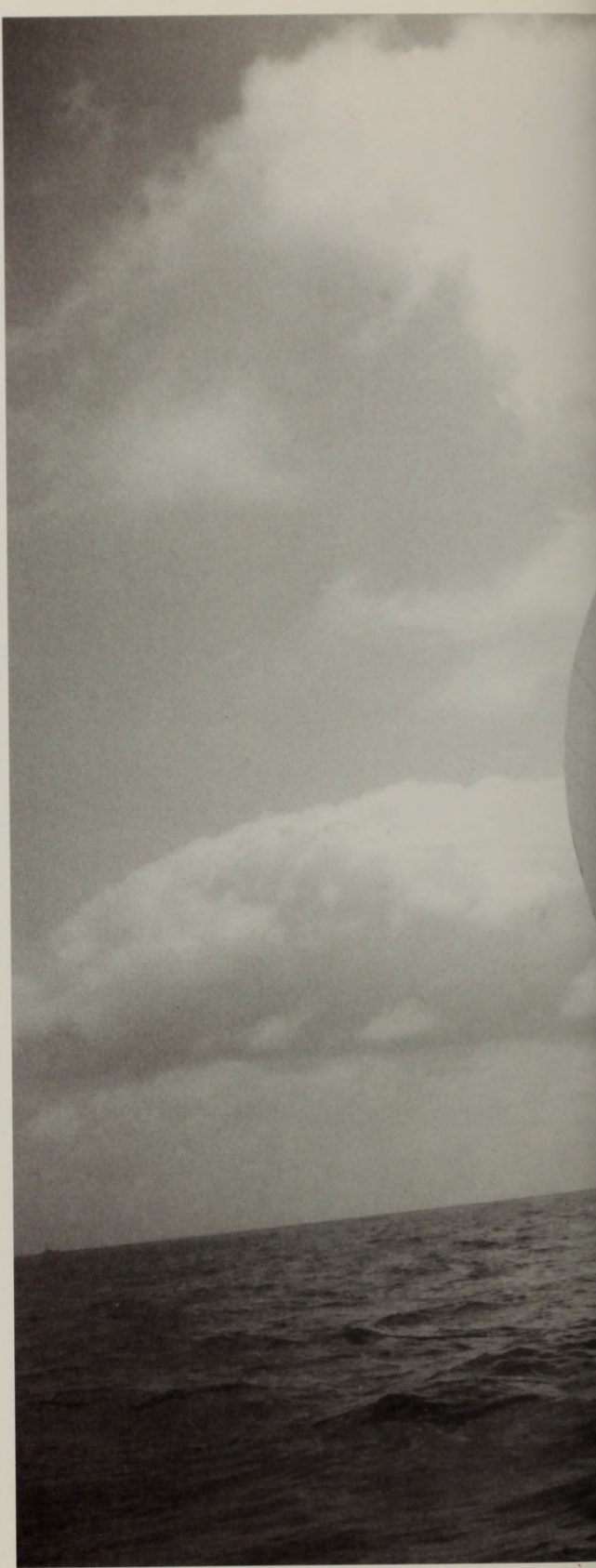




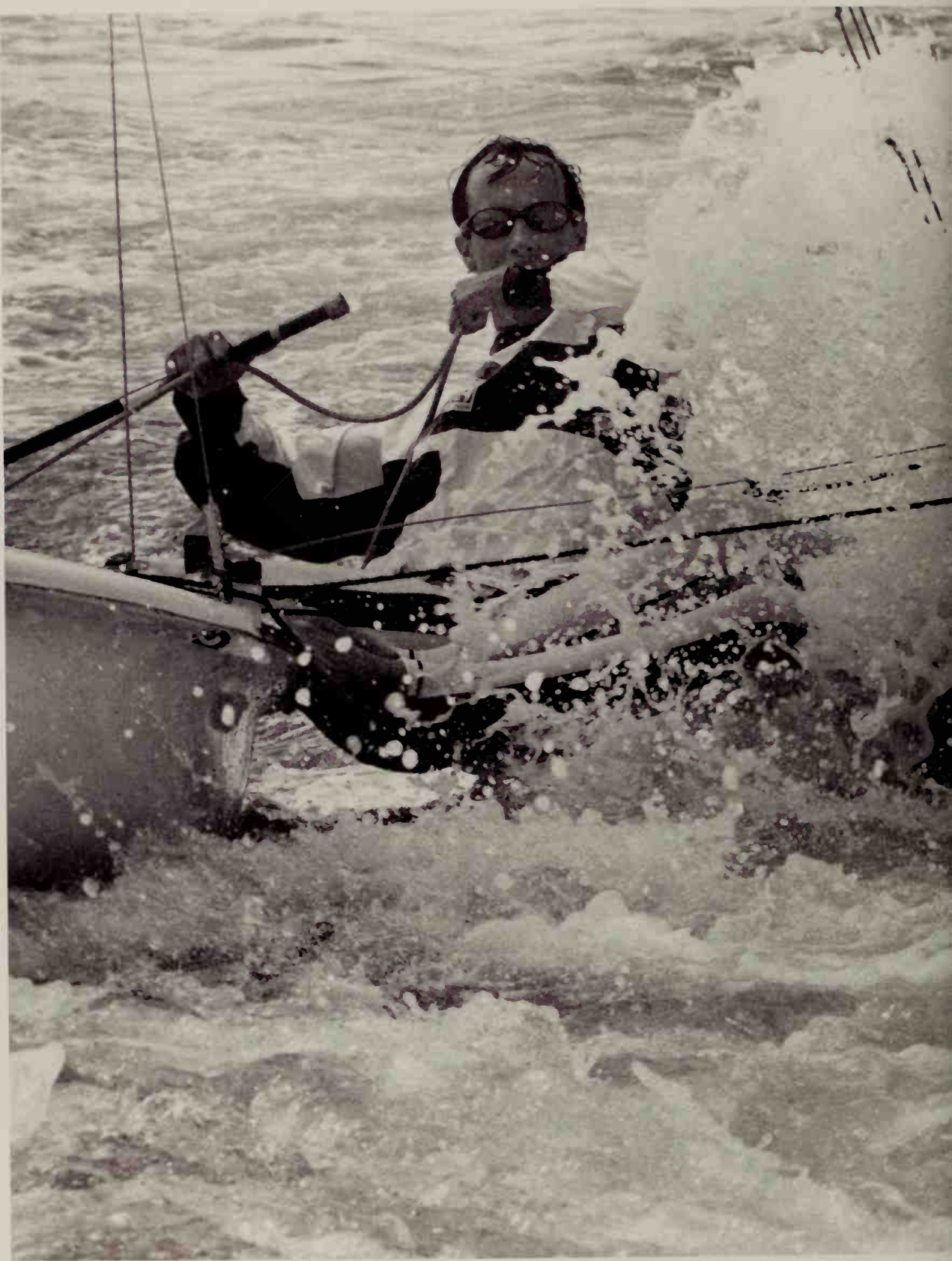






















OLYMPIC PORTRAITS

ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

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Robert Kaehler
Men's Eight
Jeffrey Klepacki
Men's Four
Jamie Koven
Men's Eight
Michael Peterson
Men's Pair
Steve Segaloff
Men's Eight Coxswain
Donald Smith
Men's Eight
ARCO Olympic Training Center
Chula Vista, California

p56 **Jonathan Brown**
Men's Eight
Sean Hall
Men's Four
Fredric Honebein
Men's Eight
Robert Kaehler
Men's Eight
Jeffrey Klepacki
Men's Four
Jamie Koven
Men's Eight
Michael Peterson
Men's Pair

Steve Segaloff,
Men's Eight Coxswain
Donald Smith
Men's Eight
ARCO Olympic Training Center
Chula Vista, California

p58 **Michael Peterson**
Men's Pair
Fredric Honebein
Men's Eight
ARCO Olympic Training Center
Chula Vista, California

p60 **Jonathan Brown**
Men's Eight
Sean Hall
Men's Four
Fredric Honebein
Men's Eight
Robert Kaehler
Men's Eight
Jeffrey Klepacki
Men's Four
Jamie Koven
Men's Eight
Michael Peterson
Men's Pair
Steve Segaloff,
Men's Eight Coxswain
Donald Smith
Men's Eight
ARCO Olympic Training Center
Chula Vista, California

CANOE/KAYAK*

p62 **Alexandra Harbold**
ARCO Olympic Training Center
Chula Vista, California

ATHLETICS*

p65 Field
John Godina
El Matador State Beach
Malibu, California

p66 Field
John Godina
El Matador State Beach
Malibu, California

p68 Field
Sheila Hudson-Strudwick
ARCO Olympic Training Center
Chula Vista, California

p70 Field
Dean Starkey
ARCO Olympic Training Center
Chula Vista, California

p72 Track and Field
Jackie Joyner-Kersey
UCLA Drake Track Stadium
Los Angeles, California

p74 Track and Field
Carl Lewis

Pearland High School
Pearland, Texas

p75 Track and Field
Carl Lewis
Pearland High School
Pearland, Texas

p76 Track and Field
Carl Lewis
Pearland High School
Pearland, Texas

p77 Track and Field
Carl Lewis
Pearland High School
Pearland, Texas

p78 Track
Dennis Mitchell
ARCO Olympic Training Center
Chula Vista, California

p80 Track
Esther Jones
Gwen Torrence
Carlette Guidry
Atlanta, Georgia

p82 Track
Michael Johnson
North Atlanta High School
Atlanta, Georgia

p83 Track
Michael Johnson
North Atlanta High School
Atlanta, Georgia

p84 Track
Michael Johnson
North Atlanta High School
Atlanta, Georgia

p86 Track
Leroy Burrell
Pearland High School
Pearland, Texas

p87 Track
Leroy Burrell
Pearland High School
Pearland, Texas

p88 Track
Gwen Torrence
North Atlanta High School
Atlanta, Georgia

p90 Track
Gwen Torrence
North Atlanta High School
Atlanta, Georgia

p91 Track
Gwen Torrence
North Atlanta High School
Atlanta, Georgia

p92 Track
Mark Crear
ARCO Olympic Training Center
Chula Vista, California

p94 Field
Charles Austin
North Atlanta High School
Atlanta, Georgia

p96 Track
Michael Marsh
North Atlanta High School
Atlanta, Georgia

p97 Track
Michael Marsh
North Atlanta High School
Atlanta, Georgia

p98 Field
Mike Powell
UCLA Drake Track Stadium
Los Angeles, California

p99 Field
Mike Powell
ARCO Olympic Training Center
Chula Vista, California

SOCCER*

p100 **Joy Fawcett**, Midfielder
Staci Wilson, Defender
Danielle Garrett, Forward
Shannon MacMillan, Forward
Carla Overbeck, Defender
Mary Harvey, Goalkeeper
Jennifer Streiffer, Defender
Thori Staples, Defender
Cindy Parlow, Forward
Tracy Noonan, Goalkeeper
Michelle Akers, Forward
Tiffany Roberts, Midfielder
Brandi Chastain, Midfielder
Tiffany Milbrett, Forward
Lorrie Fair, Defender
Carin Gabarra, Forward
Kristine Lilly, Midfielder
Mia Hamm, Forward
Briana Scurry, Goalkeeper
Tisha Venturini, Midfielder
Julie Foudy, Midfielder
Amanda Cromwell, Midfielder
Seminole County
Sports Training Center
Sanford, Florida

p102 **Julie Foudy**
Midfielder
Seminole County
Sports Training Center
Sanford, Florida

TENNIS

p104 **Chanda Rubin**
Singles
North Atlanta High School
Atlanta, Georgia

SOFTBALL

p106 Fast-Pitch
Christa Williams
Pitcher
Gateway Park
Fort Worth, Texas

p108 Fast-Pitch
Kim Maher, Infield
Leah O'Brien, Infield
Laura Berg, Outfield
Martha O'Kelley
Jennifer McFalls
Michelle Venturella
Sheila Cornell, Infield
Michele Granger, Pitcher
Christa Williams, Pitcher
Lisa Fernandez, Pitcher
Gillian Boxx, Catcher
Barbara Jordon
Michele Smith, Pitcher
Dionna Harris, Outfield
Shelly Stokes, Catcher
Dot Richardson, Infield
Dani Tyler, Infield
Julie Smith, Infield
Gateway Park
Fort Worth, Texas

p110 Fast-Pitch
Lisa Fernandez
Pitcher
East River Softball Field
New York City

BOXING

p112 **Albert Guardado Jr.**
Light Flyweight
United States Olympic
Education Center
North Michigan University
Marquette, Michigan

p113 **Floyd Mayweather**
Featherweight
United States Olympic
Education Center
North Michigan University
Marquette, Michigan

p114 **David Diaz**
Light Welterweight
United States Olympic
Education Center
North Michigan University
Marquette, Michigan

p115 **David Diaz**
Light Welterweight
Fernando Vargas
Welterweight
Eric Morel
Flyweight
Lawrence Clay-Bey,
Super Heavyweight
Antonio Tarver
Light Heavyweight
Rhoshii Wells
Middleweight

United States Olympic
Education Center
North Michigan University
Marquette, Michigan

p116 **Fernando Vargas**
Welterweight
David Reid
Light Middleweight
United States Olympic
Education Center
North Michigan University
Marquette, Michigan

BADMINTON

p118 **Kevin Han**
Singles
Olympic Training Center
Colorado Springs, Colorado

p119 **Kevin Han**
Singles
Olympic Training Center
Colorado Springs, Colorado

TABLE TENNIS

p120 **Lily Yip**
Singles; Doubles
Atlanta, Georgia

p121 **Jim Butler**
Singles; Doubles
Atlanta, Georgia

AQUATICS*

p122 Water Polo
Kirk Everist
Driver
Loma Verde Pool
Chula Vista, California

p124 Water Polo
Troy Barnhart, Two-meter
Defense; Utility
Chris Duplanty, Goalkeeper
Kirk Everist, Driver
Chris Humbert, Two-meter Offense
Rick McNair, Two-meter
Defense; Utility
Alex Rousseau, Right Wing
"Baywatch" Tank
Culver City, California

WRESTLING

p126 Greco-Roman
Matt Ghaffari
130 kg/286 lbs. Classification
Piedmont Park
Atlanta, Georgia

p128 Greco-Roman
James Johnson
Matt Ghaffari
130 kg/286 lbs. Classification
Memorial Park
Colorado Springs, Colorado

p131 Greco-Roman
Matt Lindland
Clark Atlanta University Stadium
Atlanta, Georgia

HANDBALL

p133 **Darrick Heath**
Left Back
Atlanta, Georgia

AQUATICS*

p134 Synchronized Swimming
Becky Dyroen-Lancer
Jill Savery
Heather Simmons-Carrasco
Jill Sudduth
"Baywatch" Tank
Culver City, California

p135 Synchronized Swimming
Becky Dyroen-Lancer
Heather Simmons-Carrasco
Jill Savery
"Baywatch" Tank
Culver City, California

p136 Synchronized Swimming
Heather Simmons-Carrasco
Jill Savery
Becky Dyroen-Lancer
Jill Sudduth
"Baywatch" Tank
Culver City, California

p139 Synchronized Swimming
Becky Dyroen-Lancer
"Baywatch" Tank
Culver City, California

p140 Synchronized Swimming
Heather Simmons-Carrasco
Jill Savery
Jill Sudduth
"Baywatch" Tank
Culver City, California

p143 Synchronized Swimming
Becky Dyroen-Lancer
Jill Savery
Heather Simmons-Carrasco
Jill Sudduth
"Baywatch" Tank
Culver City, California

MODERN PENTATHLON

p144 **Michael Gostigian**
Little Creek Farm
Atlanta, Georgia

SHOOTING

p145 **Sergeant Teresa DeWitt**
Double Trap
Fort Benning, Georgia

JUDO

146 **Celita Schutz**
61 kg/134 lbs. Classification
Shannon Weaver
Atlanta, Georgia

BASKETBALL*

p148 **Grant Hill**
Forward
Shelby Township, Michigan

p149 **Grant Hill**
Forward
Shelby Township, Michigan

p151 **Teresa Edwards**
Guard
West Fourth Street Courts
("The Cage")
New York City

p152 **Sheryl Swoopes**, Guard; Forward
Katy Steding, Forward
Teresa Edwards, Guard
Jennifer Azzi, Guard
Katrina McClain, Forward
New York City

VOLLEYBALL*

p155 Indoor
Bob Ctvrtlik
Arabia Mountain
Atlanta, Georgia

p156 Beach
Karolyn Kirby
Mission Beach, California

p158 Beach
Nancy Reno
Karolyn Kirby
Mission Beach, California

p160 Beach
Nancy Reno
Mission Beach, California

WEIGHTLIFTING*

p162 **Tom Gough**
Olympic Training Center
Colorado Springs, Colorado

p164 **Wes Barnett**
108kg/238lbs. Classification
Olympic Training Center
Colorado Springs, Colorado

p165 **Wes Barnett**
108kg/238lbs. Classification
Olympic Training Center
Colorado Springs, Colorado

CYCLING*

p166 Mountain Bike
David "Tinker" Juarez
Olympic Mountain Biking Course
Conyers, Georgia

p168 Mountain Bike
Juliana Furtado
Costley Mills
Conyers, Georgia

p169 Mountain Bike
Juliana Furtado
Costley Mills
Conyers, Georgia

HOCKEY

p170 **Barbara Marois**
Defender; Team Captain
Clark Atlanta University Stadium
Atlanta, Georgia

p171 **Andrea Wieland**
Goalkeeper
Clark Atlanta University Stadium
Atlanta, Georgia

p172 **Nicholas Butcher**
Midfielder; Forward
Steve Danielson, Defender
Daniel Eichner
Shawn Hindy
Binh Hoang
Steve Jennings
Midfielder; Vice Captain
Ryan Langford
Ben Maruquin, Sweeper
Marq Mellor, Forward
John O'Neill, Midfielder
Brian Schledorn
Otto Steffers, Defender
Philip Sykes, Defender
Tom Vano, Goalkeeper
Steve Van Randwyck, Midfielder
Steve Wagner, Goalkeeper
Eelco Wassenaar, Midfielder
Scott Williams, Defender
ARCO Olympic Training Center
Chula Vista, California

YACHTING

p174 **Kevin Burnham**
470 (Double-Handed Dinghy)
Morgan Reeser
470 (Double-Handed Dinghy)
United States Sailing Center
Miami, Florida

p176 **Kevin Burnham**
470 (Double-Handed Dinghy)
Morgan Reeser
470 (Double-Handed Dinghy)
Olympic Training Course
Savannah, Georgia

p178 **Mike Gebhardt**
IMCO One-Design (Sailboard)
Savannah, Georgia

p179 **Mike Gebhardt**
IMCO One-Design (Sailboard)
Savannah, Georgia

p180 **Mike Gebhardt**
IMCO One-Design (Sailboard)
Savannah, Georgia

* As of June 5, 1996, these team trials were still in progress.



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Program Director
Atlanta Centennial Olympic Properties

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