

What Is A Snail's Pace? A Racy 23 Inches An Hour

A snail can race at a speed of three inches a minute, and at least one souped-up gastropod shot eight inches in a breath-taking two minutes.

Few snails can keep up this heady pace for long, however. On a treadmill at the University of Maryland, a snail maintained an average speed of only 23 inches an hour.

But that is not bad, considering the snail is not merely traveling but making the highway it

travels on. The snail spreads mucus on the surface it plans to cross. This highway of slime protects the snail so well it can move along the edge of a razor blade.

Pulls Heavy Weight
To compensate for its lack of fleetness, a snail has fabulous strength. It can pull a top wagon loaded with 200 times its own weight. To equal this task, a 10-pound baby would have to haul an automobile.

Land snails are generally harmless creatures but a few sea snails are poisonous, the National Geographic society has pointed out. The bite of a pretty Australian snail native to the Queensland coast may cause painful illness or even death.

The abalone, a snail with a shell that behaves like a clam shell, may kill a man in another way. The abalone can slam its shell down on a man's fingers and hold him prisoner—to drown in the returning tide unless rescued.

The infamous Giant African Snail (*Achatina Fulica*) is harm-

less to man, but wreaks untold destruction. A native of the east coast of Africa, this six-to-nine-inch monster has spread across the world during the past century. It has repeatedly invaded the United States, but so far has been successfully repulsed. Congress passed a law against importation of the marauder in 1953.

Each with 80,000 sharp teeth, African snails chew up flowers and vegetation and may even rasp off pieces of buildings. They have devastated parts of Hawaii and the Orient. In some areas they swarm in fantastic numbers over everything. Pedestrians and cars squish them under foot. Trees hang thick with them. They heap up in places, and drop like overripe fruit from bushes.

Like the Japanese beetle, the Giant African snail is not a serious scourge in its homeland. There it has plenty of natural enemies—including snail-eating men—to keep down its numbers. Hence biologists have sought another animal to prey on the snail. One promising predator is a cannibalistic snail that likes to crawl into *Achatina's* shell and gradually eat it up.

Snail Dines on Oysters
Another pestiferous snail is the oyster drill, a sea snail that eats oysters. With its tiny radula or rasplike tongue, the snail bores a hole in the oyster's shell and then sucks out the nutrients.

While snails cause man considerable trouble, they also provide pleasure for the epicure. Shells strewn in paleolithic camp sites show men have relished snails from prehistoric times. The French have eaten more and more snails since World War II. In one recent year Gallic gourmets consumed 600,000,000 gastropods.

Snails themselves love to eat. They file off vegetation with their thousands of tiny teeth. A hungry snail can quickly reduce a lettuce leaf to a few shreds.

Besides its trencherman ways, the snail has a mildly sensational love life to complete its dissolute personality. Most snails are both male and female. When some snails meet each other they let fly with "love darts"—tiny barbed



MEET RANDOLPH C. GRANT

SPARTLIGHT

Grant was born in Wilmington and was educated there, completing his public education in 1922.

He then became employed by the American Bakery Company of Wilmington and remained with that organization until 1930. He then joined the Wilmington Fire Department and served for twenty-five years, retiring with the rank of Captain in 1955.

Grant then came to Sunny Point Army Terminal and now holds the position of Fire Chief in the Engineer Division.

He and his wife, the former Lillie Jacobs of Wilmington, have three children and now reside in Southport.

limestone slivers that penetrate the tissues of the other snail. These love darts apparently stimulate interest, as Cupid's arrows did.

World meat production increased three per cent in 1959—23 per cent above the 1951-55 average. Consumption ranged from 234 pounds of meat per person in Australia and Uruguay to only nine pounds in Japan. Per capita consumption in the U. S. was 160 pounds.

Over 100 Simon Pures In Pro-Am

WILMINGTON—One hundred or more amateur golfers from around the two Carolinas are expected to take part in the \$2,500 pro-am tournament here March 30, which precedes the annual \$12,500, 54-hole Azalea Invitational golf tournament scheduled for March 31 through April 2. Both events will be played at the Cape Fear Country Club.

J. B. (Bunny) Hines, president of the sponsoring Wilmington Athletic Association, says that amateur entries for the pro-am are being accepted on a first-come basis.

Hines has urged all amateurs who plan to participate to write to Box 3251 for entry blanks. The entry fee is \$25, which includes a season ticket to the three-day Azalea Invitational tournament.

All amateur golfers who have established handicaps are eligible for the pro-am tournament.

When the field is completed, play will be in threesomes, with two amateurs paired with one professional.

Winning professionals will share the \$2,500 prize money, and winning amateurs will receive appropriate trophies.

While the amateur field begins to take shape for the pro-am, many of the nation's leading professional golfers have tentatively agreed to play in the big Azalea Invitational, and will also take part in the pro-am.

The professionals include seven former Azalea Open Champions: Jerry Barber, Jimmy Clark, E. J. (Dutch) Harrison, Howie Johnson, Billy Maxwell, Art Wall, Jr., and Tom Neipporte.

Also, Gene Sarazen, Al Balding,

Bob Rosburg, George Bayer, Bob Goalby, Denny Shute, Tommy Bolt Ellsworth Vines, Doug Ford, Vic Chezzie, Gay Brewer, Ed Furgol, Marty Furgol, Chandler Harper, Horton Smith, Dave Ragan, Ernie Vossler, Jimmy Thompson, Wally Ulrich.

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Bolivia, Waccamaw Eagles Divide Wins

ASH—Waccamaw's Eagles clipped the Bolivia Bears, 52-47, and the Lady Bears tripped the Eagles, 50-46, here, Friday night, in a Brunswick County twin-bill.

Earl Hughes paced the rebounding for the Waccamaw boys, in addition to scoring 17 points. Shirley Little had 26 for the Eagles. Bolivia's scoring leaders were Russell Cook with 13 and Jackie Lewis, with 21 points.

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