

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

N E W S R E L E A S E
Monday, February 4, 1985

For further information, call:
Phillip L.B. Halpern, 293-5482

DEFENDANTS

1. Name: RICHARD ANTHONY FITTON Age: 34
Address: 140 West College Street
Auburn, Alabama
Bail status: On Bond, \$7,500 C/CS
2. Name: VICTORIA LEA STEENROD Age: 34
Address: 4626 Idlewilde Street
Albuquerque, New Mexico
Bail status: On Bond, \$7,500 C/CS

SUMMARY OF
CHARGES

Indictment 84-1071-E
Number of defendants: 2
Number of counts: 13
Violations and Maximum Penalties:
Conspiracy to Import Merchandise
(18 U.S.C. §§ 371 and 545) - 1 count
Maximum Penalty: 5 yrs. and/or \$10,000
Importing Merchandise
(18 U.S.C. § 545) - 10 counts
Maximum Penalty: 5 yrs. and/or \$10,000
False Statements to a Federal Officer
(18 U.S.C. § 1001) - 2 counts
Maximum Penalty: 5 yrs. and/or \$10,000
Possession of Controlled Substances Without
a Prescription
(21 U.S.C. § 844(a)) - 1 count
Maximum Penalty: 1 yr. and/or \$5,000
Agency: U.S. Customs

NEWS RELEASE
SUMMARY

The United States Attorney, Peter K. Nunez, announced that Richard Anthony Fitton and Victoria Lea Steenrod today pled guilty before the Honorable William B. Enright. Mr. Fitton, a former body building coach for the British national team, pled to three counts of Indictment No. 84-1071-E charging him with conspiracy to import steroids, importing steroids, and false statements to a customs agent. Under the plea, his potential penalty is 15 years and/or \$30,000.

Ms. Steenrod, a world champion power lifter who is presently living with Fitton, pled to a one-count superseding information charging her with possession of a controlled substance without a prescription. She faces a maximum penalty of 1 year and/or \$5,000.

Government investigation revealed that Fitton flew from Alabama to San Diego where he met Steenrod. They then rented a 1983 Ford Escort and drove it to Tijuana through the Port of Entry at San Ysidro, California. Once in Tijuana, Fitton purchased various prescription legend drugs, including massive amounts of anabolic steroids. These drugs were concealed throughout the rented car.

At approximately 3:50 p.m. that same date, Fitton and Steenrod attempted to enter the United States at the Tecate Port of Entry. When questioned by Customs agents as to whether they had purchased any medicine in Mexico, they answered in the negative. A subsequent search of their vehicle revealed the drugs.

Fitton, a British citizen, claims to have been connected with the University of Auburn as a strength coach. Our investigation, however, has revealed that he has been one of the major sources of anabolic steroids in the United States sporting community for the last several years. Apparently, he has contacts all across the country and imports steroids to supply them. An analysis of Fitton's financial records, even though incomplete, reveals over a quarter of a million dollars in business last year.

Fitton's plea represents the first federal felony conviction relating to the importation and sale of anabolic steroids.

UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

NEWS RELEASE
November 12, 1985

For further information, call:
Phillip L.B. Halpern
Assistant U.S. Attorney
(619) 293-5277

News Release Summary

The United States Attorney, Peter K. Nunez, announced that apprehended fugitive Richard Anthony Fitton today pled guilty to additional charges before the Honorable William B. Enright. Mr. Fitton, a former powerlifting champion and coach for the British national team, pled guilty to two counts of Information No. 85-0949-E, charging him with bail jumping and possession of document making implements. Fitton also acknowledged, in a plea agreement filed with the court, his obligation to plead guilty to an information charging him with wilfully failing to file his federal income tax return.

According to Mr. Nunez, Fitton had previously pled guilty to conspiracy to import steroids, importing steroids, and making false statements to a Customs agent. Under the terms of his former plea, Fitton's maximum possible penalty was fifteen years imprisonment and/or a \$30,000 fine. However, Nunez added, Fitton failed to appear for his sentencing on March 25, 1985. After eluding capture for almost five months, Fitton was arrested in Albuquerque, New Mexico, by agents from the United States Marshall's and the United States Customs Service. When he was finally apprehended, Fitton had in his possession false identification documents, a false passport and a fraudulent document making stamp, which form the basis of the new charges. In addition, Internal Revenue agents discovered hundreds of thousands of dollars of unreported income. Nunez confirmed that today's charges carry a combined

additional penalty of up to eleven years imprisonment and/or a \$525,000 fine, bringing Fitton's total penalty exposure to twenty-six years imprisonment and/or a \$555,000 fine.

Mr. Nunez praised the efforts of the United States Customs Service and the Internal Revenue Service for its thorough investigation of the case. Moreover, he stated that the prosecution represents his office's commitment to vigorously pursue enforcement of illegal drug trafficking of all types from Mexico.

The case is being handled in this office by Assistant United States Attorney Phillip L.B. Halpern.

Defendant: Name: Richard Anthony Fitton Age: 36
 Address: 140 West College Street
 Auburn, Alabama
 Bail status: No bail.

Summary of Charges

1. Indictment 84-1071-E
 Number of defendants: 2
 Number of counts: 13

Violations and Maximum Penalties

Conspiracy to Import Merchandise
18 U.S.C. §§ 371 and 545) - 1 Count
Maximum penalty: 5 years and/or \$10,000

Importing Merchandise
(18 U.S.C. § 545) - 10 counts
Maximum penalty: 5 years and/or \$10,000

False Statements to a Federal Officer
(18 U.S.C. § 1001) - 2 counts
Maximum penalty: 5 years and/or \$10,000

Summary of Charges

Information: 85-0949-E
Number of Defendants: 1
Number of counts: 3

Violations and Maximum Penalties

Bail Jumping
(18 U.S.C. § 3146) - 1 count
Maximum penalty: 5 years and/or \$250,000

Possession of Document Making Implements
18 U.S.C. § 1028(a)(5) - 1 count
Maximum penalty: 5 years and/or \$250,000

Wilful Failure to File Income Tax Return
(26 U.S.C. § 7203) - 1 count
Maximum penalty: 5 years and/or \$25,000

Agencies:

United States Customs Service
Internal Revenue Service
U.S. Marshal's Service