

# Angyal With Wings

By **SANFORD GOLDBERG**

Fireman, Engine 282

**C**HAMPION runner on land, national titleholder and Olympic sculling contender in the sea and three times decorated Marine pilot in the air. That's Fireman Joe Angyal, of H. & L. 116, a blazebeater for the past 10 years.

Now 32 years old, the former U.S. Marine pilot shot down 15 Zeros over Rabaul and led a division of his squadron on 95 missions against Jap forces in the northern Solomons. For his cool leadership and daring courage under fire, 1st Lieutenant Angyal was awarded two citations and a special commendation from Marine Commander, General Vandergrift.

Joe used track and cross-country jaunts to build up his legs and improve his wind for sculling, the sport which was, and still is, his first love. However, he took to running so naturally that he helped the Millrose A.C. win four Junior Metropolitan and a Junior National Championship at the regular six mile distance. He also won many prizes in the shorter races at one mile and half-mile in A.A.U. and Municipal Athletic Championships.

## Skillful Sculler

Angyal's real hobby is sculling. This is the art of propelling a small boat by a short, single oar called a scull. For the past 15 years Joe has maintained a virtual monopoly over the lightweight scullers of the nation while still holding his weight at 142 lbs. He started in 1934 and produced such a string of victories that his record of booting home winners would make Eddie Arcaro or Ted Atkinson look like amateurs. Mrs. Angyal uses up four large jars of silver polish monthly shining up the huge collection of 497 cups, medals, trophies and assorted bric-a-brac her loving son has amassed since he started paddling his own canoe.

In the lightweight class (under 145 lbs.) Joe won 14 national championships and twice stepped into the heavyweight division, smiled gently at the tall, strong and heavy gents, then proceeded to give the big boys a thorough shellacking taking home the national championship title on two different occasions in that open division.

Among Joe's prized trophies is the

*Colorful Career of New York Fireman—Track Star, Marine Corps Ace and Leading Sculler*



Joe Angyal doffs his fireman's togs and gets ready for a training run in his light shell.

medal awarded him for defeating Joseph Burke, now University of Pennsylvania rowing coach. In 1939, 1940 and 1941, Burke was the acknowledged heavyweight champion sculler of the world, twice winner of England's Diamond Sculls championship. Angyal was the only man in the world to beat Burke during that period and to prove to all that it was no accident, Joe also smashed the course record.

And all this training and competing was done on Angyal's off-time. He lost a few races because the night before, while on duty, his company would get a worker and Joe would take his snootful as would the rest of the boys. Last May 30th, at the Decoration Day Regatta on the Harlem River, following a smoky fire the night before, Joe took a half-dozen strokes and collapsed. The doctor examining him stated that Joe had a bad case of smoke poisoning and told him to take it easy for a few weeks. The following week, after inhaling the grand atmosphere of Queens County,

Joe resumed his winning form on Philadelphia waters, coming home first in two races. Despite this, he still works a fireman's regular schedule and prays for a quiet night before his races. His prayers must have been answered for his 1947 string of victories extended through 1948.

## Olympic Trials

Teaming up with Art Gallagher of the PennAthletic Club, Joe entered the national doubles championships last July. Rowing at the Olympic distance of 2000 meters (1¼ miles), these races were to serve as the Olympic tryouts and to the winners went the honor of representing the United States at Wembley, England. Anxious to see that flaming torch that marks the opening of the Olympic Games, Joe and his partner met the cream of the country's scullers. Sectional champions from the northwest—south—southwest—intercollegiate, and club titleholders—fought it out amongst themselves, with no quarter asked, and none given.

For five days, Angyal and Gallagher swept through heats, semifinals, quarter-finals and on the last day, under a blistering July sun, this gallant pair blazed through to a smashing victory. With the national championships tucked under their belts, Joe and Art joined the U.S. Olympic squad and sailed to England aboard the S.S. America.



"Penthouse! Phooey! Hydrant inspection is the cream job."