

# SUGAR AND SPICE

by Bill Smiley



## Czechs are tough

Even a banker couldn't find a bad Czech these days, as those brave and sturdy people, international underdogs, are the cynosure of the world's admiration. It takes guts to shout insults at a man holding a gun on you.

As in any other country, of course, there are bad Czechs as well as good ones. But good and bad, they have been giving Big Brother a hard time of it.

Remembering Hungary, the Czechs had enough sense not to tackle the wolf with bare hands. For the same reason, they knew there would be no help from elsewhere, if they did. But they managed to make themselves as indigestible as possible for that same wolf.

It's not the first time the country has been thrown to the wolf. In the late thirties, the British and French threw them to a German wolf, while the big Slavic brother to the east turned a blind eye.

It must be a bitter thing to be a Czech. Here you are, a good, honest Bohemian. After World War I, you are thrown in with those lousy Slovaks and told you are now a citizen of a brand new country. So you work like a dog for fifteen years and turn your country into one of the finest examples of democracy in the world.

Then you are betrayed. By whom? By the great democracies. Then you are bullied and tortured and starved for seven or eight years by the German invaders.

The war ends and the Germans leave. The Russians don't. When they finally get out, you try to put the pieces back together. It looks as though it might be possible. But you are on the wrong side of a certain curtain.

So the Communists stage a coup and for the next decade or so you are a communist. But you have a love of freedom and independence and you chip away at the iron blanket until a crack of daylight appears. And you are betrayed again. By whom? By the great communist powers.

It's enough to make a saint cynical. And don't think the

Czechs aren't. But don't give up on them. They are tough, passionate and practical and some day they're going to come up smelling of roses.

Tough? There's a Czech dentist in Toronto who was tortured by the Gestapo, hung up on meathooks and has the scars to show it. He was going home for a visit this summer. I hope he didn't.

Passionate? Put four Czechs together, start a political discussion, and in five minutes you'd swear they were going to kill each other. I had some Czech friends in prison camp and they fought furiously, Czech against Slovak, communist against republican. But they turned a solid front to the rest of us, and to the Germans.

Practical? One of these friends was Andros. His second name had no vowels. Something like Mrckzy. When the Germans marched into Czechoslovakia, he stole a plane and escaped. He fought with the R.A.F., was shot down and captured. He expected to be shot any day.

Did he sit around and brood? Not he. From empty powdered-milk cans, he manufactured a magnificent still.

And when the rest of the camp sat around on New Year's eve drinking their stinking prune wine, he and his friends sipped pure potato whiskey. I've always been glad I was one of his friends. It was like vodka.

He was an avowed communist then, but a good chap. He wasn't shot. Not then. Not by the Germans. They didn't get around to it. I wonder what he's doing these days?

And I wonder about two other friends of those days, Rostislav Kanovsky of Buckovice 74, Morava, and Joe Zvolensky of Galanta. I just looked up their names in my tattered old P.O.W. diary, and said a little prayer for them. Freedom fighters of a generation ago.

Perhaps their sons are shaking their fists at Russian tanks, or running an underground radio. Let's say a little prayer for them.

# THE SPORTS BEAT

By Glen May



## Sailing at Acapulco

Undoubtedly the highlight of the Olympic Games of 1968 will be a visit to Acapulco. This world famous resort city will house the sailing competition on fabled Acapulco Bay.

Acapulco is situated 240 miles from Mexico City on the Pacific Coast.

I visited this picturesque resort last year, and even today, I can vividly recall much of its beauty and history.

During the Spanish Period Acapulco was the point of departure for the Orient. The storied "China Clippers" used to anchor in the bay, heavy with expensive and beautiful goods from the East. These goods were shipped to Spain.

The bay lies at the base of a mountain range and you can wonder at the numerous small bays and coves which are unquestionably breathtaking.

One of the world's most eye-catching harbors is Puerto Marques, which, according to stories, was used by Sir Frances Drake to conceal his ships after attacking the Spaniards. Today this harbor is world famous for its lobster.

Acapulco Bay itself has white sandy beach everywhere. The most popular beaches are La Condesa, Revolcadero, Playa Bruja and Hornos. I stayed at Hornos Beach, famous for its crashing surf and shallow water.

A "must" in Acapulco is La Quebrada. It is here that teenage divers plummet 100 feet into a shallow inlet which is set on fire at night. This is perhaps one of the most memorable sights you will ever witness.

The thrill of a lifetime awaits the tourist at Pie de la Cuesta. It is at this beach that the pounding surf creates an unbelievable natural spectacle. Although the law prohibits, you can flirt with death and attempt to swim in the high waves. I tried it — once.

The sunsets here are famous around the world. Each day

hundreds of tourists arrive to watch the sun sink. This beach is "beauty unlimited."

In Acapulco there are 270 hotels. The total capacity of the rooms number over 7,000 with rates ranging from \$2 to \$40 a day. Most have private swimming pools, but with the wonderful beaches, who cares? The outstanding hotels are the Acapulco Hilton, the Caleta, El Presidente, the Elcano, the Casablanca, Club de Pesca, the Ritz, the Majestic, the Brisas and Pierre Marques.

The hotels have joined in the plans of the Organizing Committee of the Games and have turned over all their available space for the month of October to the Accommodations Control Office of the Committee. The Committee will co-ordinate the work of hotels and travel agencies in order to serve tourists in every possible way.

More than \$800,000 have been invested in the Acapulco Yacht Club to make it ideal for the sailing competitions.

About the only problem a tourist will encounter is lack of time. Acapulco offers such a wide variety of excitement and interest that it is virtually impossible to accomplish everything you set out to do.

Entertainment is superb each evening and offers something for all ages.

Acapulco's climate is almost ideal throughout the year. However, away from the beach you will find it quite hot in summer months, although the sea breezes help maintain temperatures which are not unbearable.

**The Olympic sailors will not encounter strong winds. Naturally, this will make for perfect racing.**

Mexico will offer much for the visitor during the Games, but of all the Olympic sites this year, Acapulco will definitely be the most beautiful and offer the most to the spectators and athletes.

WEAR A SEATBELT WHILE DRIVING