Conan Stevens is seven foot tall, has the kind of physique that makes Arnold Schwarzenegger look like Ronnie Corbett and is bidding to become a global film star. Oh, and he has a pretty big IQ, too... Interview by ROBIN HEALEY

I may be wrong, but I'd put money on Conan Stevens being unique. Not only is he seven foot tall, but he's also a Mensan. And not only is he the only 7ft tall Mensan that I know about (maybe you know another one), but he's an actor, bodybuilder and former professional wrestling champion who, after a number of film and TV roles, is bidding to become a Hollywood action hero – one who could make his own hero, Arnold Schwarzenegger, look like Ronnie Corbett.

The Australian, born 38 years ago in Newcastle, New South Wales, is now based in Thailand,where he has already starred in a number of films and TV ads. He moved to the Far East because, he says, strong and tall men are more respected there and the film parts for people like him are more numerous. His unmistakable appearance has made him a well known figure in his adopted land and he is constantly stopped in the street by the locals who want to know more about him. "Compared with the amphetamine-fuelled idiots I had to deal with in Australia, living in Asia is paradise," he says.

And there is no doubt that the move to Thailand has brought the prospect of making it in Hollywood much closer.

Intrigued by the fact that anyone with such a body would need the boost that membership of Mensa can give, I contacted him and learned his story. I discovered that Stevens came from a family of tall people – his mother, uncle, father and brother are all tall – and Stevens was the height of beanpole football player Peter Crouch at just 16. Like Crouch he was also skinny and stooping with it. A self-confessed 'geek' who was more at home playing chess or computer games (he ran a computer shop many years later) than battling it out on the playing field or gym, he was continuously picked on because fellow students sensed his lack of confidence.