



FALL / WINTER
2025

NGA NATURAL *mag*

Drug-Free Athletes of America

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BODYBUILDER**

ANDREW BOSTINTO BREAKS
WORLD RECORD

**TRUTH
ABOUT
CALORIES**

QUALITY +
QUANTITY
MATTERS

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UNDERSTANDING NGA
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**+ SHOULD YOU CHASE
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Welcome

Letter from the Editor

The phrase “As long as you have your health” is commonly used to indicate that well-being has greater significance than material possessions. Natural bodybuilders tend to prioritize a healthy lifestyle, sometimes to a greater degree than the general population. NGA Founder Andrew Bostinto competed in the NGA Gator Classic at age 100 (see [page 24](#)), earning recognition as the world’s oldest bodybuilder. You can be sure that unnatural athletes will never reach 100!

This issue includes information for natural athletes and recognizes winners and participants from this season. The NGA is the oldest and most reputable natural bodybuilding association and offers this digital magazine for FREE.

Amy Marie Gomez, NGA PRO Wellness division, is the first Wellness athlete on the cover. Congratulations to Amy and be sure to read her story on [page 16](#).

For story ideas, comments, questions, or feedback, contact nga@nationalgym.com or call (954)-344-8410. Reader input is always welcomed!



Francine Bostinto
NGA NATURALmag
Publisher & Editor-In-Chief
NGA President

“NGA, the oldest and most reputable natural bodybuilding organization, established in 1979”.
- Andrew Bostinto, Founder & CEO, The National Gym Association, Inc.

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The Truth About Calories: Why Quality Matters as Much as Quantity



BY JOSH MILLER, BS, NSCA, CPT
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“Calories in, calories out.”
This is one of the most common phrases in fitness - and it’s not wrong. At its core, energy balance determines whether you gain, lose, or maintain weight. But here is the catch: not all calories are created equal. For bodybuilders, who demand both muscle growth and stage-ready conditioning, the quality of those calories can make or break results.

Quantity: The Foundation of Energy Balance

Before diving into quality, it is important to acknowledge that calorie balance does matter. If you consume more calories than you burn, you will

gain weight; if you consume fewer calories than you burn, you will lose weight. That’s the basic law of thermodynamics.

But bodybuilding isn’t just about gaining or losing weight - it’s about what kind of tissue you are adding or stripping away. If you eat 2,500 calories of fast food versus 2,500 calories of clean, whole foods, the scale may register the same, but your physique will not.

Quality: The Nutrient Density Factor

Calories are a unit of energy, but food is more than energy. It delivers protein, carbs, fats, fiber, vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients - all of which impact performance, recovery, and aesthetics.

- **Protein Quality**
30 grams of protein from chicken breast provides a

complete amino acid profile that supports muscle repair. Compare that to 30 grams from a processed source high in fillers, and the anabolic response is weaker.

- **Carb Quality**
100 calories of oatmeal fuels you with slow-digesting carbs, fiber, and micronutrients. The same calories from candy spikes blood sugar, crashes energy, and promotes fat storage.

- **Fat Quality**
Omega-3 fatty acids from salmon fights inflammation, improves recovery, and supports joint health. That same caloric load from trans fats equates to pure damage.

For bodybuilders, nutrient-dense calories mean better pumps, improved recovery, fuller muscles, and fewer health risks.

Hormonal Impact of Food Choices

Quality calories also influences your hormones - key drivers of physique transformation.

- **Insulin Sensitivity**
Clean carbs like sweet potatoes and rice keep blood sugar stable, allowing your muscles to absorb nutrients. Sugary junk food blunts insulin sensitivity over time, making fat loss harder.
- **Cortisol & Stress**
Micronutrient-rich whole foods help regulate cortisol. Highly processed diets can spike stress hormones, leading to muscle breakdown and stubborn fat.
- **Testosterone Production**
Healthy fats from sources like olive oil, nuts, and eggs support testosterone - critical for strength and muscle mass. Processed oils and hydrogenated fats have the opposite effect.

Performance & Recovery

Calories do not just shape your physique - they fuel your workouts. A 400-calorie pre-workout meal of rice, chicken, and veggies will power you through a heavy leg day far differently than 400 calories of pizza.

Clean Fuel Provides

- Sustained energy without crashes.
- Better pumps due to improved blood flow and nutrient delivery.
- Faster recovery from workouts thanks to reduced inflammation and higher nutrient density.

Poor-quality calories, on the other hand, leaves you sluggish, bloated, and struggling to recover.

The Mental Edge

There is also a psychological benefit to choosing quality calories. Eating clean fosters discipline, consistency, and focus - the same traits that separate average competitors from champions. Junk calories may satisfy in the moment, but they often lead to cravings, energy swings, and mental fog.

Finding Balance

Does this mean you can never enjoy a burger or a slice of cake? Not at all. Strategic indulgences have their place. But if 80–90% of your diet comes from high-quality, nutrient-dense foods, you will not only look better but feel better.

The takeaway is this: quantity sets the stage, but quality determines the performance. Bodybuilding is a sport of precision, and every calorie should be viewed not just as energy, but as an investment in your physique.

Final Word

Yes, calories matter. But for the bodybuilder chasing maximum muscle and minimal fat, the source of those calories matters just as much. Think beyond the numbers.

Prioritize whole, nutrient-rich foods, and you will find that your training, recovery, and stage presentation reaches a new level. After all, you’re not just feeding your body - you’re sculpting it. ■



NGA 24th Annual PRO/AM Mr. & Ms. Natural Philadelphia Championships

**Trevose, PA
March 29, 2025**

NGA Promoter & Chairman: Rev. Warren I. Egebo
www.naturalphillybodybuilding.com
ufta567@gmail.com

It took Paul Hadler five attempts to win the prestigious NGA Mr. Natural Philly title. But on March 29, 2025, Paul won the title of the NGA 24th Annual Mr. Natural Philly at the Radisson Hotel Philadelphia Northeast in Trevose, PA (a suburb of Philadelphia). He won his NGA PRO Bodybuilding card to add to his NGA PRO Master's card he had garnered in 2019.

The Bodybuilding LW winner was Orlando Figueroa-Sanchez of Philadelphia and the LHW winner was Mike Gerek who came all the way from Jackson, Wisconsin. Mike was also the Masters 50+ and Grandmasters 60+ winner. He had made a comeback after being away from the stage for 20 years.

In the PRO division, Kingsley Deslorieux bested a very deep PRO Bodybuilding class. Second through fifth in order were Jason Robinson, Anthony Casale, Umar Jones, and Dr. Alexander Puhalla. Kingsley, Anthony, and Alexander are all former Mr. Natural Philly winners.

In the PRO Classic Physique class, Jiejun Tan, formerly from China won the PRO Classic Physique Class followed in order by Jason Robinson, Umar Jones, and Dr. Alexander Puhalla. Jiejun was the only competitor in the PRO Men's Physique class. In PRO Bodybuilding Masters the winner was Jason Robinson from New Jersey followed by perennial competitor Umar Jones from Norristown, PA, Paul Hadler, and Carlos Martin.

In the Bikini Open class, the first place went to Kristina Aponte, second place was Christina Rodriguez, and third place was Dr. Judith Prophete, a retired obstetrician in her first Bikini contest at age 72!

The Bikini Master's division was won by Kristina Aponte followed by Dr. Judith Prophete. Figure Open, Masters, and Novice divisions were won by Tina Entenman. Long-time competitor Maria Ravida was runner-up in the Figure division.

In Men's Physique Open, the LW winner was Luke Gilman, who also won his NGA PRO Card in the Men's Physique posedown. Carlos Martin was runner-up in the LW class. Randy Lertdarapong was the first place competitor followed by Sung June Lee in the Men's Physique MW class. Micheal Trendowski "Michael Tee", back for a second year in a row, won the Men's Physique HW class with runner-up being Paul Hadler. Randy Lertdarapong took the Men's Physique Master class. It was a wonderful day for Kingsley Deslorieux when he won his second NGA PRO Card by winning the Classic Physique class. He was the Open MW winner followed by Michael Barto, Korbin Burkhardt, and Zack Schmidtt. The LW winner was Evan Gandhi in his first competition, with runners-up in order were Orlando Figueroa-Sanchez and Elias Alkfouf.

The Classic Physique Open HW winner was Paul Hadler followed by massive Stanley Anderson. Stanley was also the Master 40+ winner followed by Mark Hawkins.



Jason Robinson
PRO Classic Physique - Open
1st Place
PRO Classic Physique - Masters 40+
1st Place



Kingsley Deslorieux
PRO BB - Open
1st Place
Classic Physique - Open
1st Place
NGA PRO Card & Overall



Paul Hadler
PRO Physique - Masters 40+
1st Place
PRO BB - Masters 40+
3rd Place
Men's BB - Open HW
NGA PRO Card & Overall



NGA 24th Annual PRO/AM Mr. & Ms. Natural Philadelphia Championships

Trevoose, PA
March 29, 2025

NGA Promoter & Chairman: Rev. Warren I. Egebo
www.naturalphillybodybuilding.com
ufta567@gmail.com



JieJun Tan
PRO Physique - Open
1st Place
PRO Classic Physique - Open
1st Place
2 NGA PRO Cards



Luke Gilman
Physique - Open LW
NGA PRO Card & Overall



Orlando Figueroa-Sanchez
BB - Open LWT
1st Place



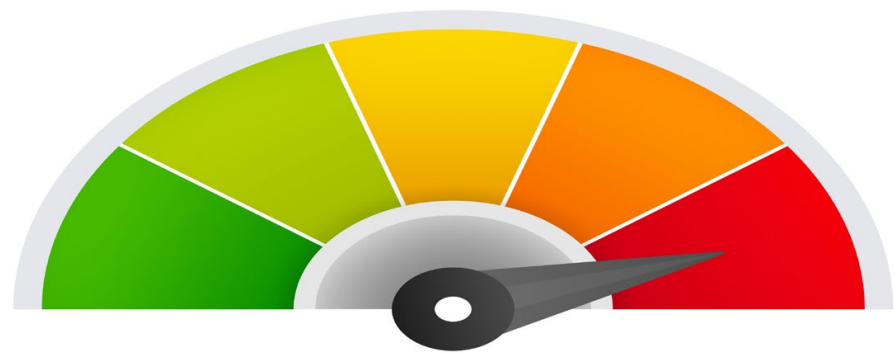
Tina Enteman
Figure - Open
1st Place

Best Abs went to Jiejun Tan and for the fourth time the Best Poser award went to Dr. Alexander Puhalla. Head Judge was Josh Miller. Head female Judge was Dr. Lorraine Depass. Other judges were Clint Brackbill, Marlo Diana, and Bryan Snyder. The Emcee for a second year in a row was Davey Jones. The DJ was Vinnie Abdou. Official SprayTanner was Tina Miller. The auditors were Michael Myrick and Paula Franklin.

The Official Photographer was Dave Tucker of DAHCimages.com

This was the last NGA Natural Philly contest promoted by Rev. Warren Egebo (24 years!) The new NGA Promoters will be Clint and Jenny Brackbill of Lewistown, PA. ■

Photos by: Dave Tucker of DAH-Cimages.com



TESTOSTERONE

Understanding the NGA Medical Exemption



BY SHILOE STEINMETZ R.PH.
NGA MEDICAL ADVISOR
NGA PRO BODYBUILDER
SHILOESTEINMETZ@YAHOO.COM

There have been many questions and misunderstandings surrounding the medical exemption process with the NGA. This article serves to provide clarity to those questions and misunderstandings. The NGA permits medical exemptions for athletes with a valid prescription for banned substances. If you are not familiar with the banned substance list, it can be viewed on the NGA website in section V under [NGA Bylaws](#).

The purpose of the medical exemption adopted by the NGA is to allow those who may otherwise be excluded from competition due to being prescribed a banned substance the opportunity to compete. There is a process that must be completed in cases such as this and there are NO EXCEPTIONS. This assures the continued integrity of the NGA and screens anyone who would try to circumvent the rules.

The first step when applying for a medical exemption is to check with the promotor to see if it is allowed in their show. If so, the next step is to download the form found on the website then complete and return it to the appropriate NGA Promotor 30 days prior to

competition. Section 1 is for the athlete to fill out and section 2 is for the prescriber to fill out and sign. This form should be returned along with a copy of the prescription and the latest lab results from the provider. Once the completed forms have been submitted, the process begins.

The medical exemption forms assist in the research and verification process to determine if a banned substance is being used for a legitimate medical reason. Every "red flag" is addressed and must be resolved before approval is granted.

These questions help assess whether the exemption request is valid:

1. Does the diagnosis meet standard practice guidelines?
2. Is the prescriber a reputable prescriber?
3. Does the dose make sense based on diagnosis?
4. Do the labs warrant use of the prescribed medication?
5. Is there any evidence of prior use of PED's that has led to the need for a banned substance?
6. What is the age of athlete if on TRT?

These are just some sample questions to be used as a guide when deciding if a medical exemption will be granted. A written prescription from a medical provider in no way guarantees approval. I have had patients come into my pharmacy demanding me to fill their prescription saying, "my doctor wrote it, you need to fill it" which raises multiple red flags. My response is "WRONG." If I cannot resolve the red flag, then the prescription does not get filled. It is necessary to verify that the prescription is valid, intended for an appropriate purpose, and safe for the patient. Screening for a medical exemption is the same.

The NGA aims to grant medical exemptions to those who qualify and prevent misuse of the system. Every case is slightly different, and some cases are easier than others to decide. For example, a 45-year-old male on a water pill for hypertension is more clear-cut case than a 30-year-old male on testosterone. Medical exemptions for hormones, specifically testosterone, are a much more tedious process.

What happens next?

The verification process typically requires approximately one week to finish, so it is necessary for the

preceding steps to be completed one month before the show. This allows adequate time to reach a decision about approval or denial. If approved, the promotor and athlete are then notified.

However, there is one additional note of importance. The athlete must still pass a polygraph or drug test on the day of the event. The polygrapher may tailor questions after knowing the athlete has an approved medical exemption and ask questions to determine if any deception was present in obtaining the exemption. Athletes taking TRT must still produce a urine sample that has a T/E ratio of 6:1 or lower. Consequently, a failed polygraph or failed urinalysis will result in disqualification with NO EXCEPTIONS. Athletes who fall into this category may want to consult with the NGA medical advisor on how to navigate this should it occur.

Hopefully, this provides a little more clarity on how the panel reviews and decides medical exemptions for banned substances.

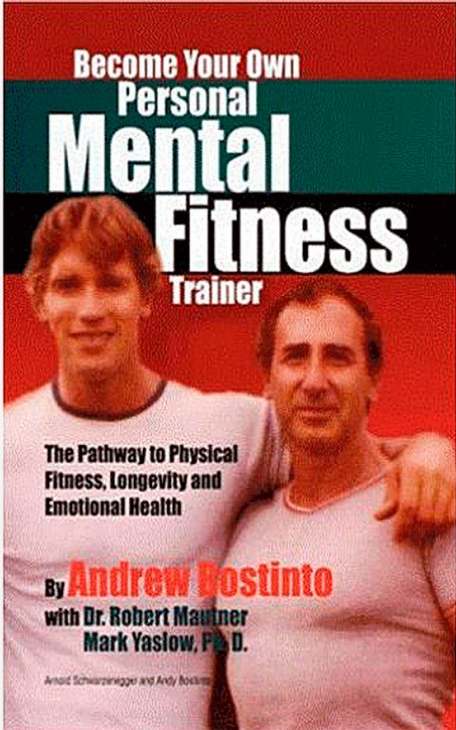
Contact the NGA with any questions or concerns regarding this matter, nga@nationalgym.com ■



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— Jack LaLanne

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NGA 4th Annual Amateur Extreme PRO/AM

Deltona, FL
April 19, 2025

Promoter: Matt Ammann
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[@mattammann1](https://www.instagram.com/mattammann1)



Kasey Mounts
Wellness - Open
2nd Place
NGA PRO Card



Keith Harvey
BB - Open MW
BB - Masters 40+
2 NGA PRO Cards & Overall



Lamont Ray, Jr.
Classic Physique - Open MW
NGA PRO Card & Overall



Lauryn Ziebart
Wellness - Open
1st Place
NGA PRO Card

The Center at Deltona came alive with energy, excitement, and an inspiring showcase of dedication and hard work at the NGA Amateur Extreme. From the moment the doors opened, the atmosphere was electric. A lively and supportive crowd filled the venue, cheering on every competitor as they posed under the bright stage lights. Families, friends, and fans gathered to celebrate the athletes' incredible physiques and

the journey each one undertook to reach this level of competition.

One of the biggest highlights of the event was the awarding of new NGA PRO Cards — a milestone achievement that marks the beginning of a new chapter for many competitors.

Behind the scenes, organizers and volunteers worked tirelessly to ensure the show ran smoothly,

creating a positive experience for athletes and attendees alike. Vendors, sponsors, and local businesses also showed tremendous support, adding to the festive and welcoming environment.

As the final trophies were handed out and the stage lights dimmed, it was clear that this annual event was about so much more than muscle and medals. It was a celebration of hard work, community, and the unbreakable spirit that drives every competitor to

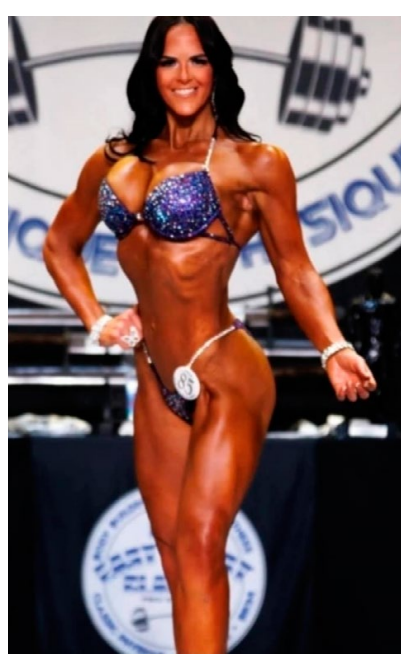
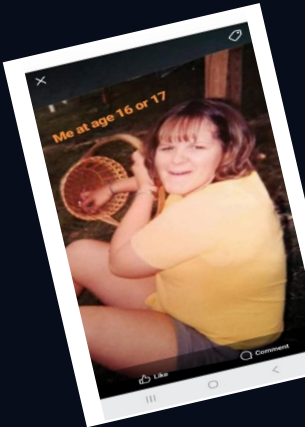
push past their limits. Congratulations to all the athletes who competed — you looked amazing, inspired us all, and made this year's show at The Center at Deltona truly unforgettable. We can't wait to see what next year brings!

We hope to see you at one of this years shows: NGA West Coast Classic 9/13/25 St. Petersburg, FL and NGA East Coast Classic 11/8/25 Deltona, FL. ■

Photos by: Shamir Webb

A PROMISE TO MYSELF

BY AMY MARIE GOMEZ



Amy Marie Gomez
NGA PRO Wellness – Open
2024 NGA PRO Universe Winner



My story does not begin with muscles, trophies, or confidence, it begins with curiosity, struggle, and a promise I made to myself long ago.

Back in 2003, I walked into a gym in Tennessee as a young woman fresh out of high school. At the time, I was carrying the weight of years of insecurity and a childhood that I spent feeling uncomfortable in my own skin. At one point, I weighed 210 pounds. After high school, I managed to drop down to 185 pounds, but something was still missing.

At the time, I was working in a gym and noticed

men and women moving with purpose. They were lifting, posing, sweating—and I could not help but be drawn in. I was curious. What was this thing called bodybuilding all about? And more importantly, could it be for me?

That curiosity changed the course of my life.

I got connected with my first trainer and started prepping for my first bodybuilding competition. It was not just the physical transformation that hooked me—it was everything else: the structure, the nutrition, the daily grind, and the mindset. The discipline required to succeed in bodybuilding was exactly what I needed in my life at that time. For the first time ever, I felt in control, and more importantly, I felt powerful.

That same year, I stepped on stage in Nashville, Tennessee, competing in my very first figure competition. From the moment I walked off stage, I knew that this was what I was meant to do. And it did not stop with just me. I became a personal trainer, and this allowed me to take my passion for fitness and health and use it to help others find their own strength.

From 2003 to 2008, I competed regularly, building both my physique and my purpose. But in 2008, I took a step back. Life shifted and I moved to Florida, took time to refocus, and bodybuilding took a back seat. But deep inside, I never let go of the dream.

I had once promised my younger self that if I ever returned to the stage, it would be at the age of forty. That promise never left me.

On January 12, 2024, my 40th birthday, I made the decision to go all in. I committed myself once again. From that day forward, every workout, every meal, every early morning, and late-night session was a declaration that age is just a number and that passion never fades—it just waits for you to come back to it.

In November 2024, I stepped back on stage after a 16-year hiatus—and I felt more alive than ever. The fire was back. The purpose was stronger. And the message was clear; no matter where you start or how long you pause, it is never too late to become who you are meant to be.

At 40, I am not just a competitor, I am a mother, a coach, a gym owner, and a walking example that resilience, discipline, and heart can take you anywhere.

The journey continues. And this time, I am just getting started. ■



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NGA 5th Annual PRO/AM Green Bay Hardbodies Championships

**Green Bay, WI
May 3, 2025**

Rev. Warren I. Egebo
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ufta567@gmail.com

NGA Promoters: Paul Hadler
hardscapeoasis@gmail.com

The 5th anniversary of the NGA PRO/AM Green Bay Hardbodies Championships was held on May 3, 2025, at the historic Meyer Theatre in downtown Green Bay. There were 48 NGA PROs and amateur competitors vying for cash awards and the chance to win their NGA PRO Cards in the largest show to date. It was a very lucrative trip for NGA PRO Jason Robinson from Philadelphia, PA winning first place in PRO Bodybuilding Open, PRO Bodybuilding Masters and PRO Classic Physique Open classes. Rob Sobieck of Hobart, WI was runner-up to Jason in the PRO Bodybuilding division. In the PRO Classic Physique Open division, Caden Freeman and Josue Nieves Galan were the runners-up. Caden received his NGA PRO Classic Physique card at the 2023 NGA Green Bay show and Josue won his PRO Classic Physique Card at the 2024 NGA Green Bay show. It was the second time that Caden Freeman won the “Best Poser Award” in the Green Bay show.

Josh and Beth Janzen, one of two couples in the show, both won their respective classes in PRO Men’s Physique Open class and PRO Figure Open class. The PRO Bikini Open winner was Juliana Bennin-Nair. Runner-up to Josh in the PRO Men’s Physique Open class was a local Green Bay competitor, Sam Manders. The “Best Abs” winner in the show picked by the audience was Jesse VanEss.

In the Men’s Physique division, novice Kenneth Fulham came in first place and his best friend, KC Sandidge, took second followed by KS Sandidge, and Landon McGuire. Landon might have been the most inspirational competitor in the show, having undergone three open heart surgeries in his life. Kenneth Fulham was the first competitor to win his NGA PRO Card when he bested four others in the Men’s Physique Open LW class. Runners-up in order were KC Sandidge, Taku Watanabe, Derrick Bauswell, and Landon McGuire. The Men’s Physique Open MW winner was Fayaz Nabizada formerly from Afghanistan now living in Green Bay. His runner-up was first time competitor Chad Hiland. The Men’s Physique Open HW 1st place competitor and Men’s Physique Overall winner was big James White of Appleton, who also won his NGA PRO Card. His runner-up was a very symmetrical Jaden Bemis, a local personal trainer.

The Classic Physique Open LW winner was thick chested Rob Sobieck followed by Taku Watanabe. The Classic Physique Open MW and Overall winner was Jesse VanEss winning his first of 2 NGA PRO Cards at the contest. Runners-up were Skyler Berk in his third Green Bay show, Faye Nabizada, and Chad Hiland. With eight in the HW class, first place winner Nick Sparachino won his NGA PRO Card. It was Nick’s second year in the Green Bay show. In the second through eighth placings in order were Jaden Bemis, Cooper Kohlbeck, Shaden Vandenhuevel, Sam Manders, Casten Bedora, Michael Weaver, and Brandon Dodge.

Now, on to the ladies. Jenna Vaughan won Novice, with Jessica Rivers, Savannah VanEss, Faith Ugaretz, Cheyenne Palzewicz, Lacey Hapf, and Abbey Abraham following. The Bikini - Open “Short” division winner, Overall winner and winner of an NGA PRO Card was Jenna Vaughan. The runners-up in order were Jessica Rivers, Natalie Weber, Cheyenne



Jason Robinson
PRO BB - Open
PRO BB - Masters 40+
PRO Classic Physique - Open
PRO Classic Physique - Masters 40+
Four 1st Places



Jesse VanEss
BB - Open MW
1st Place
NGA PRO Card & Overall
Classic Physique - Open MW
1st Place
NGA PRO Card



Savannah VanEss
Bikini - Open Tall
1st Place
NGA PRO Card



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Green Bay, WI
May 3, 2025

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Molly Tynan
Figure - Open
1st Place
NGA PRO Card



Nick Sparachino
Classic Physique - Open HW
1st Place
NGA PRO Card



Jessie Rivers
Bikini - Masters 40+
1st Place
NGA PRO Card

Palewitez, Andrea Brossard, Lacey Hupf, and Deidra Pahl. The Bikini Open "Tall" division winner was Savannah VanEss and winner of an NGA PRO Card. Her husband Jesse VanEss won two NGA PRO Cards in the show. The VanEss's were featured in an article in the local Green Bay News Times paper and on the Maino and the Mayor morning radio program the week before the show as the first couple to compete in the NGA Green Bay Hardbodies Championships. Savannah's runners-up in order were Faith Ugaretz, Brittany Shampo, Kristi Richmond, Amy Yahke, Lori McConchie, and Abbey Abraham. The Bikini Master winner and NGA PRO Card winner was Jessica Rivers of Rogers, Minnesota. The runners-up were Natalie Weber, Kristi Richmond, Andrea Brossard, Lorie McConchie, Amy Yahke, and Abbey Abraham.

The Figure Novice winner was Sarah Jaber. In the Figure Open class, Molly Tynan finally capped her NGA PRO Card after her fourth time in this show. Molly is from Fon du Lac, WI and teaches Kick Boxing. Molly's runner-ups were Sarah Jaber, Kristina Dyer, Kristi Richmond, and Lori McConochie. The Figure Masters winner was Krisi Rickmond, followed by Lori McConochie.

Haley Wheaton won Wellness Novice, with Andrea Brossard finishing second. Hailey Wheaton secured first place in the Wellness Open class, while sixteen-year-old Cheyenne Palzewicz achieved runner-up status as the youngest participant in the competition. Both won their NGA PRO Wellness cards. Third through sixth place in Wellness was Juliana Bennin-Nair, Brittany Shampo, Andrea Brossard, and Deidra Pahl. The Wellness Masters winner was Andrea Brossard. The only Women's

Physique competitor in the show was Alexandra Malsavage.

Bodybuilding Grandmaster winner was Micheal Gerek of Jackson, WI. He also was the over 60 Grandmaster's winner followed by the oldest competitor in the show, Dave Wilkerson of Rio, WI. The Bodybuilding Open MW winner was Jesse VanEss who also won his 2nd NGA PRO Card as the Overall Bodybuilding winner. His runner-up was high school senior, Hunter Bougie. The Bodybuilding Open LHW winner was Nick Sparachino, followed by Cole Vrechek, and Michael Gerek. The Bodybuilding Open HW winner with the "Best Legs" in the show was Cooper Kohlbeck, followed by Casten Bedora and Michael Weaver. Mr. Green Bay Hardbodies Natural for 2025 is Jesse VanEss! Jesse and Savannah VanEss both plan to compete in the 2025 [NGA Universe in Deltona, FL](http://www.ngauniverse.com) on November 15th.

The Co-Promoters of the show were Rev. Warren Egebo and Paul Hadler. MC and Head Male Judge was Bryan Snyder. The Head Female Judge was Amirah Spielman, along with Dale Jones, Deb Kastner, and Clint Brackbill who also were judges at this show. The Official Spray Tanner was Tina Miller. The Official Photographer was www.chickenortheeggphotography.com. The sound was by Vinnie Abdou, the expeditor was Dayshon "Prince" Taylor, and the videographer was Jenny Brackbill. The host hotel was the downtown Quality Inn, and the St Brendan's Inn hosted the after-show party. The 2026 show will be on May 2, 2026, at the Meyer Theatre. ■

Photos by: www.chickenortheeggphotography.com

SHOULD YOU “CHASE THE PUMP”?



BY DR. CHRISTOPH KLUPEL
NGA EDUCATION DIRECTOR FOR SE ASIA
ULTIMATE FITNESS ACADEMY (THAILAND),
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Most serious gym enthusiasts have at least occasionally experienced a pump in their muscles during their workouts, which can indeed be a gratifying and pleasurable experience. A good pump is said to provide us with a glimpse ahead of the future development of our muscles. And without doubt, pumped muscles look fuller, larger, and better, even if just for a short while; a pump makes us feel strong and powerful, and most bodybuilders equate a good pump with having a great and effective work-out. For those who have not yet had the pleasure of achieving a good pump, here is a brief explanation of this phenomenon:

The pump refers to the occurrence of more blood flowing into a muscle than can leave and rejoin the general circulation; this leads to a muscle or muscle-group's temporary engorgement with blood and results in a transient increase in muscle size. Such a pump is achieved by performing multiple high-rep sets (12-20+ reps/set) with low to moderate weight load, continuous tension, and short rest periods between sets, but it also depends on a number of



other factors mentioned below. The repeated subsequent muscular contractions lead to a temporary occlusion of the efferent veins of the working muscle, which restricts the amount of blood and metabolic waste products that can be removed. This causes blood to pool in the muscle, particularly in the interstitial areas between its muscle fibers, leading to swelling of the entire muscle belly and to pressure on the muscle's fibers, accompanied by a tight feeling of the overlying skin. At the same time, plasma is being drawn into the muscle cells to neutralize the acidity of accumulated wastes, such as lactic acid, hydrogen, and other metabolic byproducts, causing the individual muscle fibers to swell.

The question arises, whether “chasing the pump” is something worthwhile to actively pursue: is it just a temporary satisfying and enjoyable effect, or does “a pump” contribute to muscle growth?

Muscle-growth occurs via three different mechanisms: mechanical tension, metabolic stress, and myofibrillar damage. Progressively overloading your various body parts with heavy compound movements will ensure plenty of mechanical tension, usually also accompanied by some myofibrillar damage, to ensure significant muscle growth and increased strength, but such exercises are known NOT to bring about

what is most satisfying, near skin-bursting pump. This serves as proof that you can grow plenty of muscle without ever achieving a pump; exclusively focusing on “chasing the pump” should therefore not be your predominant endeavor in the gym.

However, this does not mean that “a pump” is entirely useless; after all, training in a manner that elicits an appreciable pump generates “metabolic stress,” which is one of the mechanisms proven to help with muscle growth. It causes blood to flood a muscle and to get trapped in there, while metabolic waste products, including lactate, inorganic phosphate, and hydrogen accumulate in the muscle cells, draw in plasma, and cause cellular swelling. One scientific theory holds that this cellular swelling stretches the muscle's cell membranes, prompting increased protein synthesis and decreasing protein breakdown, particularly in the fast-twitch IIb muscle fibers. Another theory suggests that the pressure caused by the excessive inflow of plasma may cause muscle fibers to perceive a threat to their membranes' integrity and to adapt by fortifying their cell wall structure to ensure survival. This will cause the muscle fibers' cellular walls to grow slightly thicker, and when this happens to the millions of adjacent fibers composing a muscle, it may result in noticeable muscle growth over time. In how far any of these theories prove accurate, science will yet have to be confirmed by further research.

Whatever may occur on cellular level, fact is, a good pump will over time generate a larger number of capillaries, which will facilitate the muscles' supply with more nutrients and oxygen and eventually result in larger pumps and more hypertrophy in the long term.

Another benefit of a decent pump regarding muscle growth is that it can help to stretch the tight connective tissue sheath surrounding each muscle known as fascia. In pumped condition, muscles press against their enveloping fascia; squeezing the working muscles at the peak of each muscular contraction and further stretching them, when they are totally pumped and engorged with blood, can expand their fascia tissue, and give the muscles more room to grow. The increased training motivation prompted by achieving an almost skin-bursting pump should also not be underestimated.

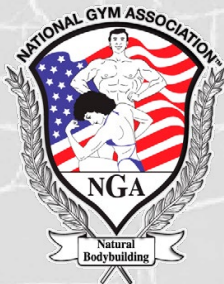
Without doubt, achieving a great pump always indicates proper muscle engagement and a good

mind-muscle connection, which will contribute to muscle growth. A good “mind-muscle connection” is accomplished by prioritizing how a movement feels, instead of moving as much weight as possible; it is also vital to focus on maximally squeezing a muscle at its point of peak contraction instead of just moving it from point A to point B.

Despite its various benefits, don't “chase the pump” at the cost of neglecting to progressively overload your muscles with heavy compound movements; rather maintain an appropriate balance by spending at least 80 % of a body-part's training on heavy compound exercises, while dedicating just about 20 % or less to lighter pump-training after all your heavier work has been completed. Most suitable to end any muscle's work-out with a good pump are isolation exercises for that particular area, which allows us to experience a peak contraction at some point, such as biceps curls, triceps extensions, pec-deck flyes or cable flyes, etc. Performing such exercises with moderate weight and 12 to 20+ repetitions for several sets, keeping continuous tension on the respective muscle, and allowing for minimal rest between sets will be your best bet to get an amazing pump. Another option to produce a decent pump is to perform a few sets of an exercise movement starting with a weight that provides adequate overload, before dropping off weight to about 50% and carrying on these “drop-sets” until muscle failure occurs.

Factors that play an important role for achieving a great pump and should therefore be optimized are an effective warm-up, abundant hydration before, during and after work-outs, increased sodium intake, complete recovery from previous work-outs with muscles' glycogen stores fully replenished, and a high-quality complex carbohydrate pre-work-out meal, consisting of taro, yams, pasta, whole grain bread, or similar.

Last, but not least, certain pre-work-out supplements containing L- Citrulline, L-Arginine, Potassium Nitrates, Creatine Monohydrate, and/or Glycerol, are also highly effective at producing incredible pumps during training and can even help to sustain this highly motivating pump experience up to several hours after your work-out. ■



The NGA 15th Annual Gator Classic PRO/AM

Deltona, FL
May 10, 2025

Promoter: Matt Ammann
www.ngagatorproductions.com
[@ngagatorproductions](https://www.instagram.com/ngagatorproductions)
[@mattammann1](https://www.instagram.com/mattammann1)



L-R: Matt Ammann, NGA Promoter; Andy Bostinto, NGA Founder and World's Oldest BB; Francine Bostinto, NGA President



Dan Mercado
Classic Physique - Open HW
NGA PRO Card & Overall
BB - Open LHW
NGA PRO Card & Overall
Classic Physique - Novice
BB - Novice



Rosa Warner
Bikini Model - Open
Bikini - Novice
Evening Gown



PRO Classic Physique - Open
L-R: Phillip Merritt, Alexander Puhalla, Nigel Eldridge, Anthony Arena

This year's NGA Gator Classic was one for the history books - a powerful reminder of what makes this sport, and our community, truly extraordinary. Held in front of a packed, energetic crowd, the event brought together dedicated athletes, enthusiastic fans, and a moment that will be talked about for years to come.

The highlight of the night - and an inspiration to everyone in attendance - was the appearance of our organization's founder, Andrew Bostinto. At over 100 years old, this remarkable man not only graced the stage but competed for the first time ever in the

Master's Over 100 division. A World War II veteran and now officially recognized as the oldest living competitive bodybuilder, he showed the world that true strength knows no age limit.

As he stepped on stage, the crowd erupted in a standing ovation. Many were moved to tears as they watched him hit his poses with pride and determination. His story - from serving his country during WWII to founding an organization that has shaped countless athletes' lives - is a testament to a lifetime of resilience, discipline, and an unwavering belief in the power of the human spirit.

Beyond this historic moment, the show itself was a stunning display of peak physiques and fierce competition. Every athlete looked phenomenal, bringing

their best to the stage and reminding us of the dedication it takes to step under those bright lights. The audience's energy was contagious - cheering, clapping, and celebrating every flex and pose.

Vendors, sponsors, and volunteers came together to make this show the best yet. The production was seamless, the atmosphere was electric, and the sense of community was stronger than ever. From new athletes to seasoned pros, everyone left feeling inspired and motivated for what's next.

As we reflect on this incredible night, we are honored to celebrate not just the winners, but every competitor who brought their passion and hard work to the stage. Most importantly, we are humbled to stand alongside our founder - a living legend whose

legacy reminds us that age is just a number, and true champions never stop showing up.

Thank you to everyone who came out, competed, and supported this unforgettable event. We cannot wait to see you all next year - let's keep making history together! ■

Photos by: Shamir Webb

NGA West Coast Classic
9/13/25
St. Petersburg, FL

NGA East Coast Classic
11/8/25
Deltona, FL



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The Risk Factor Of Steroid Use

The use of steroids, particularly anabolic steroids, by athletes has been associated with various effects on health and overall well-being. Anabolic steroids are synthetic forms of the male sex hormone testosterone, sometimes used by athletes to improve performance and increase muscle mass. Here are some potential risks related to steroid use:

Health Risks

Steroid use can lead to various health issues, including cardiovascular problems such as high blood pressure, increased risk of heart attacks, and strokes. It can also negatively impact the liver, causing liver damage and even liver cancer. Additionally, steroids can affect cholesterol levels, leading to an increased risk of atherosclerosis.

Hormonal Imbalances

Steroids disrupt the body's natural hormone balance. In men, this can lead to decreased testicular function, reduced sperm production, and breast enlargement (gynecomastia). In women,

it can cause masculinization, such as deepening of the voice, excessive facial and body hair growth, and disruptions in the menstrual cycle.

Psychological Effects

Steroid use has been associated with mood swings, aggression, and irritability. In certain instances, this may contribute to the development of psychiatric conditions such as depression and anxiety. The phenomenon known as "roid rage," in which individuals exhibit increased aggression, has been described anecdotally.

Addiction and Dependence

Prolonged use of steroids can lead to physical and psychological dependence. Athletes may find it difficult to stop using steroids due to withdrawal symptoms and the fear of losing the physical gains they made while on the drugs.

Virilization (in Females)

Female athletes who misuse steroids may experience irreversible masculine effects, such as

a deepened voice, facial hair growth, and a more masculine physique.

Increased Injury Risk

Steroids can increase muscle size and strength, but they may also lead to weaker tendons and ligaments, making athletes more susceptible to injuries, such as tendon ruptures.

Banned Substance

The use of steroids is not permitted in most sports and may lead to suspension, fines, or impacts on an athlete's reputation.

Long-Term Health Consequences

The long-term use of steroids can have lasting effects on the body, such as joint problems, osteoporosis, and cardiovascular disease.

Legal Implications

In certain jurisdictions, the use of anabolic steroids for non-medical purposes is prohibited by law, and athletes found in violation may be subject to legal penalties.

Overall, the dangers of using steroids for athletic enhancement far outweigh any potential short-term benefits. Athletes should focus on training, nutrition, and natural means of improving their performance rather than resorting to dangerous and illegal substances like anabolic steroids.

Consulting with qualified medical professionals and sports trainers is essential for athletes seeking to maximize their performance safely and effectively. ■



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NGA PRO/AM Kentucky Natural Classic



Lexington, KY
May 24, 2025

Promoters: Josh & Melissa Miller
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Rebecca Labad
NGA PRO Card & Overall
L-R: Melissa Miller and Josh Miller, NGA Promoters



Joseph Pasateri
BB - Open
Classic Physique - Open
Overall
2 NGA PRO Cards



Madison Watson
Bikini - Open Tall
1st Place
NGA PRO Card & Overall



Classic Physique - Open
L-R: Darius Wilson, Kaegan Holbrook, Keshawn Herron (NGA PRO Card), Zach Steffen, Bishwas Bhatt, Bryan Maynard

The 2025 NGA PRO/AM Kentucky Natural Classic delivered an unforgettable night and proved to be an incredible celebration of natural bodybuilding, fitness, and competitive spirit. Held at the iconic Rupp Arena in Lexington, Kentucky, the event drew a strong turnout, with full classes and an electric atmosphere from start to finish. Competitors arrived ready to display their best physiques, bringing unmatched energy and dedication to the stage. As always, it was an honor to promote a show that highlights excellence in natural physiques—proving once again that elite-level competition can be achieved without performance-enhancing substances.

This year's competition brought together a mix of

seasoned pros and hungry amateurs, with a remarkable 13 NGA PRO Cards awarded across multiple divisions. Every athlete brought their "A-game," making the judges' decisions both challenging and exciting.

Men's Bodybuilding Highlights

One of the biggest stories of the night was Joseph Pasateri, who had a phenomenal evening of competition. Pasateri claimed victory in Bodybuilding Masters 40+, Bodybuilding Open MW, and Overall Bodybuilding Champion, earning his NGA PRO Card in bodybuilding. His dominance did not stop there. He also took home Classic Physique Open MW, Classic Physique Masters 40+, and Overall Classic Physique, securing a second NGA PRO Card in Classic Physique.

In the Bodybuilding - Masters 50+ division, Paul

Toney emerged victorious, also capturing the Bodybuilding Open LW title and earning his NGA PRO Card. Cooper Kohlbeck claimed his NGA PRO Card by winning the Open LHW division.

The Men's Overall Bodybuilding showdown featured Paul Toney (LW), Joseph Pasateri (MW), Cooper Kohlbeck (LHW), and Micah Clare (HW). In the end, the Overall title went to Joseph Pasateri, capping off his incredible run.

Classic Physique Standouts

In Classic Physique Open, the LW title and NGA PRO Card went to Keshawn Herron. The MW class was once again dominated by Pasateri, while Micah Clare secured the HW win. In the Overall battle, Pasateri's

flawless presentation and conditioning earned him yet another title for the evening.

Men's Physique Champions

The Men's Physique Open divisions were equally competitive, with Bishwas Bhatt taking the LW title, Dan Otterson claiming the MW crown, and Noe Fonseca winning HW. In the Overall showdown, Otterson's combination of symmetry and stage presence earned him the win and his NGA PRO Card.

Women's Divisions – Strong, Competitive, and Inspiring

Figure was stacked with talent this year. The Overall came down to Class "A" winner Rebecca Labad and



NGA PRO/AM Kentucky Natural Classic

Lexington, KY
May 25, 2025

Promoters: Josh & Melissa Miller
www.kentuckynaturalbodybuilding.com
KyNaturalBB@gmail.com





BB - Open LW
L-R: Michael Lee, Keshawn Herron, Paul Toney Bishwas Bhatt, Kaegan Holbrook



Dan Otterson
Physique - Open MW
1st Place
NGA PRO Card & Overall

Noe Fonseca
Physique - Open MW
1st Place



PRO Bikini - Open
L-R: Brooke Broz, Ashley Losen, Jeanette George, Mallory Laskowski, Danielle Smith



Reese Norbie
Wellness - Open
NGA PRO Card

Isabel Acker
Wellness - Open

Crystal Pasley
Wellness - Open
NGA PRO Card

Class "B" winner Nubia Hawkins, with Labad taking the title and her NGA PRO Card.

Bikini brought both beauty and precision to the stage. The Overall battle featured Class "A" winner Lee Yun and Class "B" winner Madison Watson. Watson emerged victorious, earning her NGA PRO Card.

Wellness was another highlight, with two NGA PRO Cards awarded. Crystal Pasley and Reese Norbie both earned professional status, with Norbie taking the Overall title.

Women's Physique also saw two new NGA PROS - Molly Tynan and Rebecca Labad - with Labad

claiming the Overall win in this category as well.

PRO Division Results

The PRO divisions brought the house down with elite-level performances from start to finish:

- PRO Bikini Masters - Jeanette George
- PRO Bikini Open - Jeanette George
- PRO Figure Masters - Danielle Smith
- PRO Figure Open - Molly Tynan
- PRO Women's Physique Open - Honey Arnold
- PRO Wellness Open - Jordan Hampton
- PRO Men's Physique Open - James White
- PRO Classic Physique Masters - Jason Robinson

- PRO Classic Physique Open - Austin Baird
- PRO Bodybuilding Masters - Jason Robinson
- PRO Bodybuilding Open - Daniel Kennedy

A Celebration of Natural Excellence

The 2025 NGA PRO/AM Kentucky Natural Classic was more than just a bodybuilding show - it was a testament to the dedication, discipline, and sportsmanship that define natural competition. Every athlete, from first-time amateurs to seasoned pros, showcased the results of months - and in many cases, years - of hard work.

Promoting an event like this is always a privilege, especially in a venue as legendary as Rupp Arena. The energy, the talent, and the camaraderie on display

were nothing short of inspiring. To every competitor, coach, and supporter - thank you for making this year's event one to remember.

Natural bodybuilding is alive and thriving, and the 2025 NGA PRO/AM Kentucky Natural Classic proved it in spectacular fashion. With 13 new NGA PRO Cards awarded and countless moments of excellence, the bar has been set even higher for the future. We can't wait to see what next year brings! ■

Photos by: Ken Montgomery and J.C. Norton

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Screening for RED Flags

Injury is not inevitable in strength and hypertrophy training. The management of overall workload and the ability to implement various training modifications can allow strength and physique sport athletes to continue making progress while mitigating pain and reducing the risk of injury.

Before implementing training modifications to manage pain, it is crucial to rule out red flags that may indicate a more serious underlying condition. Red flags are clinical indicators suggesting the possibility of serious underlying pathology, such as fractures, malignancy, infection, or neurological compromise. Identifying these red flags is crucial to determining whether further diagnostic workup or referral is necessary.

A history of cancer, accompanied by persistent pain and unexplained weight loss, raises the possibility of malignancy. Additionally, pain that appears in individuals under 20 or over 50 may hint at fractures or malignancies, requiring further examination.

Another warning sign is pain that worsens at night or remains unchanged by rest or positional changes. This pattern can suggest conditions such as cancer, infection, or even an abdominal aortic aneurysm, all of which are far beyond the scope of musculoskeletal pain. Some red flags can even present systemic symptoms, such as fevers and chills, which could suggest infection.

Not all red flags present as pain, and some are of neurological origin. Saddle anesthesia, or a loss of sensation in the perianal region, along with bladder or bowel dysfunction, may point to cauda equina syndrome, which is a medical emergency requiring urgent intervention. Similarly, progressive limb weakness or numbness could suggest spinal cord involvement.

A history of severe trauma, such as a motor vehicle accident or a significant fall, increases the likelihood of fractures, particularly in older adults or those with osteoporosis. Additionally, individuals who have been on prolonged corticosteroid therapy or are immunosuppressed, whether due to medication or underlying disease, are at a higher risk of fractures.

While individual red flags can be nonspecific, their collective presence increases concern. A patient with a history of cancer, unexplained weight loss, and night pain, for instance, has a significantly higher risk of serious pathology. As always, it is crucial to balance caution with clinical judgment. Despite their importance, red flags should not be viewed in isolation. Many have low diagnostic accuracy on their own, and overreliance on them may lead to unnecessary imaging and interventions. Instead, they should be considered within the full clinical picture, guiding the decision to investigate further or refer to a specialist. By systematically screening for red flags through history-taking and physical examination, clinicians can differentiate between routine musculoskeletal pain and potentially serious conditions, ensuring patients receive the right care at the right time. ■

About The Author: Nicholas M. Licameli, Doctor of Physical Therapy, NGA PRO Natural Bodybuilder. Every single thing he does, Nick believes in giving himself to others in an attempt to make the world a happier, healthier, and a more loving place. He wants to give people the power to change their lives. Nick graduated summa cum laude from Ramapo College of New Jersey with his bachelor's degree in biology, furthered his education by completing his doctoral degree in physical therapy from Rutgers School of Biomedical and Health Sciences (previously the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey) at the age of 24, and has earned professional status in natural bodybuilding. Love. Passion. Respect Humility. Never an expert. Always a student. Love your journey.

Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAWF5BmaJ_WFAh2aqsOg8g

Instagram: [@nicklicameli/](#)

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2025 NGA Natural PRO Olympian and Amateur Mr. & Ms. California

Folsom, CA
June 29, 2025

NGA Promoter: Johnny "The Motivator" Carrero

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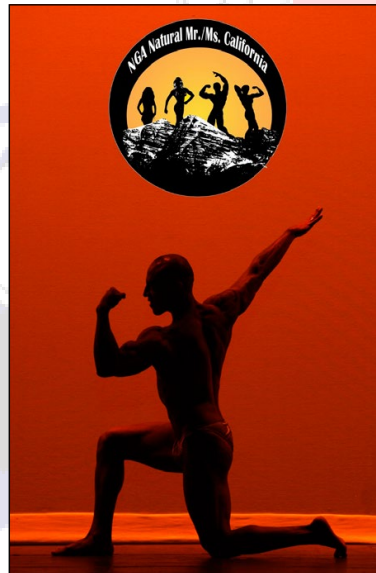
Abisai Gonzales
BB - Masters 40+
Winner



Elijah Simmons
BB - Open
1st Place
NGA PRO Card



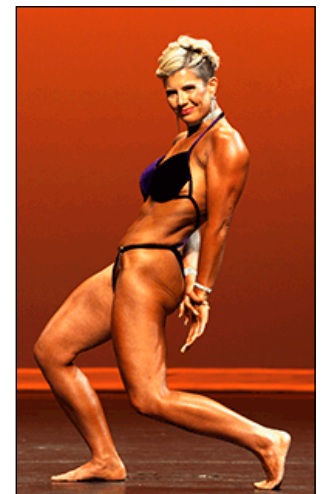
Lindsey Fontana
Bikini - Open
1st Place



Lydia Strunk
Physique - Open
1st Place



Mitchell Rotter Sieren
Physique - Open
1st Place



Sarah Nolte
Figure - Open
1st Place

The 2025 NGA True Natural Mr. & Ms. California PRO Qualifier took place on June 29th at the Jill Solberg Performing Arts Center in beautiful Folsom, California. This show was made possible, thanks to the Main Sponsor William Schmidt from CFI and his generous sponsorship! Each competitor's performance began with a silhouette of themselves in the pose of their choice. Every year more creative silhouettes have emerged.

The show started with a 10-minute video of 62 bodybuilders who have died too young (60 years of age down to the age of 19) due to steroid and diuretic use. I raised awareness about the harmful side effects of these drugs, which caused many tears.

The first division was the Bodybuilding Masters, Abisai Gonzalez took first place with his defined

symmetrical body and performance. Second place went to Peter McGuinness who improved so much from his last show years ago. Ralph Allen Jr. landed third place.

Next up was Figure Open, Lydia Strunk graded first place and Best Performance with her definition and poise. Second place was Lisa Bettencourt. Lisa dropped over 60lbs to make the stage. Male Physique Open was up next. This division was extremely hard to judge, everyone looked great. First place and Best Performance went to Mitchell Rotter Sieren. Hien Phan took second place by a single point. Third place went to Emmanuel Payne, and fourth place was Peter McGuinness.

Then it was time for the Black Dress Transformation division, which was created by Bing Saez, the promoter of the NGA Tahoe International PRO/AM. This division highlights changes that individuals have made to their physical and mental health, as well as the role of trainers in supporting these outcomes.

Dee Evans was the trainer for Cori Nix and Angela Boynton, and these two ladies are looking forward to gracing the stage next year as competitors!

Next up was the Bikini Open, Lindsey Fontana gets first place and Best Performance in this division. Second place went to Jessica Faye Duarte. Then came Female Physique Open. Sarah Nolte, who started as a Black Dress Transformation four years ago (2022), competed in 2023, 2024, and now is the winner of the 2025 NGA True Natural Ms. Physique California and is taking the Best Poser award. Second place was Lisa Bettencourt.

The next division was the Bodybuilding Open. The 2025 NGA True Natural Mr. California is Elijah Simmons. Elijah brought a full package to the stage with his muscularity and shredded physique as he becomes the next NGA PRO! We are looking forward to seeing him in future NGA PRO shows. Second place went to Abisai Gonzalez. Emmanuel Payne captured third place; this was Emmanuel's first competition but not

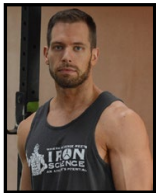
his last. He is fired up to win this show next year. He brought down the house with his posing routine that also awarded him Best Poser in the Bodybuilding division. Fourth place was Hien Phan. This was also his first time competing and with a little more practice, he will be a force to be reckoned with. Fifth place went to Mitchell Rotter Sieren.

We then came to Team In Training to end our show. Team In Training was also founded by Bing Saez, promoter of the NGA Tahoe International PRO/AM. This division was to highlight the Trainers and/or Gyms that have individual athletes compete in the show as a team which must consist of at least four athletes. Team Motivator, led by Johnny Motivator, brought a fun, energetic choreographed routine to end the show. The team was Emmanuel Payne, Lisa Bettencourt, Peter McGuinness, Hien Phan, and Mitchell Rotter Sieren.

This was an outstanding show, and we look forward to next year's show! ■

Photos by: Blendz Media

TWO COLOSSAL PILLARS FOR HIGHER PLACEMENT THAT ARE OFTEN MISSED



BY CHAD ADAMOVICH, CSCS
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CHAD@IRON-SCIENCE.COM

Getting to the stage takes considerable time, focus, and energy. It is an extremely rewarding experience for many, all while wanting to bring your best to the stage. I have been to 100’s of shows over the years and noticed that there are two pillars where many athletes miss the mark. The reason for this is because they typically did not commit to the conditioning necessary to be “lean enough” or their posing is not up to par. There are other factors to scoring, but these two tend to be the biggest. Below, I will discuss some strategies that may help an athlete be successful.

CONDITIONING

This is the hard part of prep, but one of the most important. Too many athletes could place higher if they achieved the proper conditioning level for their

division. You can have everything else in place like posing and muscle mass, but if your conditioning is lacking in natural bodybuilding, you will not place as high as you could have. Hunger once you are stage lean is a whole new level of mental challenge but there are some key takeaways for higher rates of success:

- Give yourself more time in prep. I see a lot of athletes on stage that could have used another month or more of prep. Doing the 8–12-week blanket “bro” approach to prep is not going to work for 99% of athletes since they are not lean enough to begin with.
- Plan and base your prep timeline on your current body composition. Then, add a few weeks for life events happening like getting sick which tends to slow progress down. Athletes typically need months of prep rather than weeks to be top tier in conditioning. Doing this will also lower an athlete’s stress levels by providing more time to be ready.
- Hire a professional coach. A professional coach will typically have the education to help you establish

About The Author:

Chad Adamovich is owner of IRONSCIENCE; a bodybuilding-focused coaching business for prep and “off-season” development. He is also the Director of Training and Development for over 49+ clubs across the US, developing other professionals in the field. He has spent over half a decade with his pursuit of education in Exercise Science and Sports Nutrition. In addition, he holds the credentials as a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist (CSCS). Chad has an unparalleled passion for the research, science, and application behind sports performance, nutrition, and hypertrophy. He has devoted the majority of his life to helping athletes at the youth, collegiate, and pro level in numerous sports. His experience is vast, included being a Director for Athletic Republic and more. To get additional free professional training advice, follow on Instagram @ironscience_pro web: www.iron-science.com email: chad@iron-science.com

realistic and healthy guidelines for prep. Uneducated and low experienced coaches will drive an athlete into the ground with extreme approaches to dieting and training. A good coach will also be there to keep your head on straight. Even with all my education, credentials, and experience, I still hire someone for this because we need an outside perspective. We are our own worst enemies when trying to think clearly while deep in prep which is also known as “prep-brain.”

POSING

With conditioning and everything else under control, you can ruin an amazing physique with poor posing. I have seen top level physiques place lower simply because they did not practice posing enough. Posing is an art to bring out your best, so take it seriously. To assist with this process, below are some pro tips:

- Know your division and organization. There are similarities between organizations, but there are also some differences. Make sure you do your homework on this because you will get docked points if you do not pose the way the organization wants you to.
- Practice, practice, practice! You can never get enough of this. You need to present your physique in the best way possible consistently, so it becomes

a habit by the time you hit the stage. In addition, you need to build your conditioning on this so you are not shaking like crazy on stage when you typically must hold for longer periods of time. I recommend starting out at 30 second holds for a couple rounds 2–3x week early in prep and then build up from there.

- Hire a coach! You need that outside perspective. It is quite easy to see who has a coach and who does not when athletes are being judged. A good posing coach can also give you poses outside of mandatories that look best on you since not every pose is going to work with your physique. There are also minute details and tweaks that a coach catches to make you look better. Part of posing is hiding weaknesses to bring out strengths within your physique. A little tweak in the leg, torso, wrist, etc. can make a massive difference in how you look.

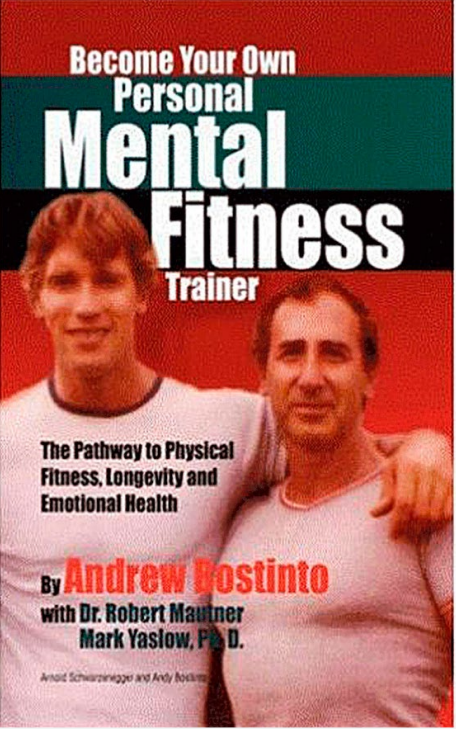
Both conditioning and posing are pillars in the sport to make sure you nail it for the win. I have seen great physiques lose because of poor posing. I have also seen great posing, but the conditioning was not there. There are other areas within the scoring, but these two by far are the biggest reasons for lower placements. Use the tips above to get you going in the right direction and you will be well on your way to a potentially better placement. ■



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Nationally recognized as one of this country’s top physical fitness professionals, Andrew Bostinto’s experience in weight training, lecturing, writing, teaching and personal training spans over six decades.



“*“Mental Fitness” employs fitness training for the purpose of direct, self induced change for the better. It’s purpose is to go much deeper than physical training alone.*

— from the Introduction

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— Jack LaLanne

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NGA 12th Annual Mr. Anthracite Natural NGA 8th Annual Mr. Coal Natural Championships

Pottsville, PA
July 12, 2025

NGA Promoter: Rev. Warren I. Egebo
www.naturalphillybodybuilding.com
ufta567@gmail.com



L-R:
Rev. Warren I. Egebo
NGA Promoter

Samuel Shapiro
Classic Physique - Open MW
1st Place
NGA PRO Card & Overall

BB - Open MW
1st Place
NGA PRO Card & Overall



Maddix Kovacs
BB - Open MW
1st Place
The New NGA Mr. Anthracite



Abisai Gonzalez
Physique - Open LW
1st Place
Classic Physique - Open LW
1st-Place
NGA PRO Card & Overall
BB - Open LW
1st Place
NGA PRO Card
Best Abs

The NGA 12th Annual Mr. Anthracite Natural and the NGA 8th Annual Mr. Coal Natural Championships were held on July 12th at the ballroom of the Pottsville Hotel in downtown Pottsville, PA. This dual show is a closed and open Super Pro Qualifier in northeast PA. The closed portion of the show (Mr. Anthracite Natural) is open to only those male competitors who work, live, or go to school in the five county area of NE PA known as the Anthracite Coal region (the counties of Lackawanna, Luzerne, Northumberland, Carbon, and Schuylkill). The Mr. Coal Natural is open to male competitors anywhere.

The 12th annual winner of the NGA Mr. Anthracite Natural was Mattix Kovacs of Orwigsburg, PA. Orwigsburg is located right outside of Pottsville and Mattix, who possessed outstanding leg development, was the first winner from Orwigsburg in the history of the contest. His runner-up was Logan Burns of Blakely, PA. They would repeat this order in the Classic Physique Open MW division of the Anthracite show. A very tall and symmetrical Kyle McCulough of Covington Township, PA (near Scranton, PA) was the winner in the Classic Physique HW Division in the Anthracite class.

The Men's Physique Novice winner in the Mr. Coal portion of the show was Anthony Williams of Philadelphia. In the Coal Men's Physique Open LW class, the winner was Abisai Gonzalez from Salt Lake City, Utah. His runner-up was Anthony Williams. The MW

winner was Logan Burns and the HW winner in the Men's Physique Coal division was Michael Trendowski. Micheal repeated his win from 2024 in the Coal Men's Physique Open HW division. His first runner-up was Marc Charpineta from Philadelphia. For the Overall and NGA PRO Card, the winner was Logan Burns in the Men's Physique Coal class. The Men's Physique Masters 40+ class winner was Marc Charpineta. In the Novice Coal class, we had brothers Brandon and

Hayden Smay from Julian, PA. Brandon was first, and his brother Hayden was second in the Classic Physique Novice division, an order they would repeat in the Bodybuilding Open division. In the Coal Classic Physique Open LW division, Abisai Gonzalez took the top spot followed in order by Dan Cusmano from Zionsville,



NGA 12th Annual Mr. Anthracite NGA 8th Annual Mr. Coal Natural Championships

Pottsville, PA
July 12, 2025

NGA Promoter: Rev. Warren I. Egebo
www.naturalphillybodybuilding.com
ufta567@gmail.com

PA, perennial competitor Orlando Figueroa-Sanchez of Philadelphia, Brandon Smay and Hayden Smay. Since he was first place in this division with five in a division, Abisai Gonzalez earned his NGA PRO Card. In the Coal Classic Physique Open MW division, a super ripped Samuel Shapiro from Cinnaminson, NJ was the class and Overall winner, earning his first of two NGA PRO Cards at the show. His runner-up was Mattix Kovacs, third place was Micheal Gerek all the way from Jackson, WI and in fourth place was Logan Burns.

The Bodybuilding Open division was the most competitive of the show. The Bodybuilding Open LW division followed the same sequence as the Coal Classic Physique Open LW division with Abisai Gonzalez earning his second NGA PRO Card for winning first place in a division that had five competitors. His runners-up in order were Dan Cusmano, Orlando Figueroa-Sanchez, Brandon Smay, and Hayden Smay. Samuel Shapiro repeated first place win in the Bodybuilding Open MW Coal division as he had done in the Classic Physique Open division. His runners-up in order were Mattix Kovacs, Michael Gerek, and Logan Burns. The only LHW competitor in the Coal Bodybuilding Open division was a much-improved Jesse Kimmel of Pottstown, PA. Jesse had been the HW winner in the 2024 Coal HW division. When Abisai, Samuel, and Jesse did the mandatories and pose down for the Overall title, it was Samuel Shapiro who won his second NGA PRO Card as the 2025 NGA Mr. Coal Natural.

The Head Judge was Bryan Snyder with other judges being Dr. Alexander Puhalla, Dr. Lorraine DePass, Marlo Diana, and Jason Robinson. Tabulator was Clint Brackbill. Official Spray Tanner was Tina Miller. The expeditors were Vince Cardamone and Paula Franklin.

Best Abs was won by Abisai Gonzalez, and the Best Poser award went to Kyle McCullough. The Spirit of the Coal County Award went to the Gallina family of

Alburtis, PA. Alessandra Gallina, ticket taker for the show, accepted the award on behalf of the family.

This was Rev. Warren Egebo's last promotion of the Anthracite Natural/ Coal Natural contest in Pottsville, PA. Another promoter may be taking the show to Scranton, PA in 2026. Watch the NGA site for more information about the NGA Anthracite Natural/Coal Natural show. There is some thought that the 2026 show might include a women's division for the first time under the name Ms. Diamond! ■

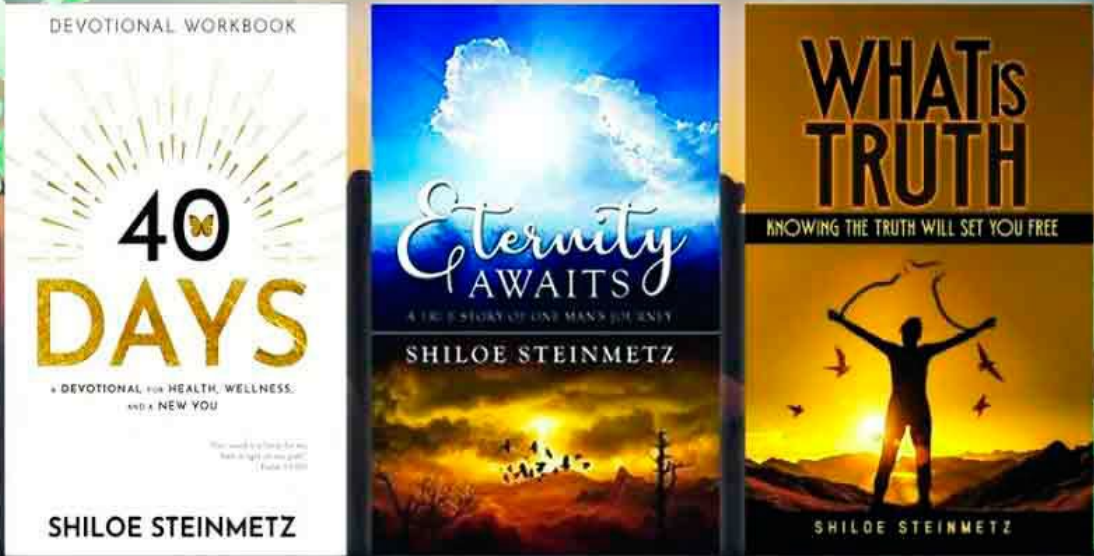
Photos by: Rev. Warren I. Egebo



Logan Burns
Physique - Open MW
1st Place
NGA PRO Card & Overall

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3. Drew Getz
- Classic Physique - Open MW
1. Juan Guzman
2. David Walcott
3. Brady Schwartz
4. David Sears
- Classic Physique - Masters 40+
1. David Walcott
2. David Sears
3. Greasy Belcher
- Men's BB - Open
1. Drew Kessler
2. Timothy Hall
- Men's BB - Masters 40+
1. Timothy Hall
- Overall
- Men's BB - Masters 60+
1. David Sears
2. Greasy Belcher
- Bikini - Novice
1. Emma Zepf
2. Carly Luebbbers
3. Brandie Back
4. Nina Cartagena
- Figure - Novice
1. Maronica Williams
- Men's Physique - Novice
1. Juan Guzman
2. Fred McCoy
3. Zachary Thomas
4. David Sears
- Classic Physique - Novice
1. Juan Guzman
2. David Walcott
3. William Van Schaik
4. Drew Getz
5. David Sears
- Men's BB - Novice
1. Timothy Hall
- 2025 NGA 15th Annual PRO/AM
- Green Bay Hardbodies Championships
- Green Bay, WI
- May 3, 2025
- Promoters:
- Rev. Warren I. Egebo & Paul Hadler
- PRO Bikini - Open
1. Juliana Bennin-Nair
- PRO Figure - Open
1. Beth Janzen
- PRO Men's Physique - Open
1. Josh Janzen
2. Samuel Manders
- PRO Classic Physique - Open
1. Jason Robinson
2. Caden Freeman

3. Josue Nieves Galan
- PRO Classic Physique - Masters 40+
1. Jason Robinson
- PRO Men's BB - Open
1. Jason Robinson
2. Rob Sobieck
- PRO Men's BB - Masters 40+
1. Jason Robinson
- Bikini - Open "Short"
1. Jenna Vaughan
- NGA PRO & Overall
2. Jessica Rivers
3. Natalie Weber
4. Cheyanne Palewitez
5. Andrea Brossard
6. Lacey Hupf
7. Deidra Pahl
- Bikini - Open "Tall"
1. Savannah VanEss
- NGA PRO Card
2. Faith Ugoretz
3. Brittany Shampo
4. Kristi Richmond
5. Amy Yahnke
6. Lori McConochie
7. Abbey Abraham
- Bikini - Masters 40+
1. Jessica Rivers
- NGA PRO Card
2. Natalie Weber
3. Kristi Richmond
4. Andrea Brossard
5. Lori McConochie
6. Amy Yahnke
7. Abbey Abraham
- Figure - Open
1. Molly Tynan
- NGA PRO Card
2. Sarah Jaber
3. Kristina Dyer
4. Kristi Richmond
5. Lori McConochie
- Figure - Masters 40+
1. Kristi Richmond
2. Lori McConochie
- Women's Physique - Open
1. Alexandra Malsavage
- Wellness - Open
1. Hailey Wheaton
- NGA PRO Card
2. Cheyanne Palzewicz
- NGA PRO Card
3. Juliana Bennin-Nair
4. Brittany Shampo
5. Andrea Brossard
6. Deidra Pahl

- Wellness - Masters 40+
1. Andrea Brossard
- Men's Physique - Open LW
1. Kenneth Fullem
- NGA PRO Card
2. KC Sandidge
3. Taku Watanabe
4. Derrick Bausurell
5. Landon McGuire
- Men's Physique - Open MW
1. Fayaz Nabizada
2. Chad Hiland
- Men's Physique - Open HW
1. James White
- NGA PRO Card & Overall
2. Jaden Bemis
- Classic Physique - Open LW
1. Rob Sobieck
2. Taku Watanabe
- Classic Physique - Open MW
1. Jesse VanEss
- NGA PRO Card & Overall
2. Skyler Berk
3. Fayaz Nabizada
4. Chad Hiland
- Classic Physique - Open HW
1. Nick Spartichino
- NGA PRO Card
2. Jaden Bemis
3. Cooper Kohlbeck
4. Shaden Vandenhuevel
5. Sam Manders
7. Michael Weaver
8. Brandon Dodge
- Men's BB - Open MW
1. Jesse VanEss
- NGA PRO Card & Overall
2. Hunter Bougie
- Men's BB - Open LHW
1. Nick Spartichino
2. Cole Vrechek
3. Michael Gerek
- Men's BB - Open HW
1. Cooper Kohlbeck
2. Casten Bedora
3. Michael Weaver
- Men's BB - Masters 50+
1. Michael Gerek
- Men's BB - Masters 60+
1. Michael Gerek
2. Dave Wilkerson
- Bikini - Novice
1. Jenna Vaughan
2. Jessica Rivers
3. Savannah VanEss

4. Faith Ugoretz
5. Cheyene Palzewocz
6. Lacey Hupf
7. Abbey Abraham
- Figure - Novice
1. Sarah Jaber
- Wellness - Novice
1. Hailey Wheaton
2. Andrea Brossard
- Men's Physique - Novice
1. Kenneth Fullem
2. KC Sandidge
3. Landon McGuire
- 2025 NGA 15th Annual
- Gator Classic PRO/AM
- Deltona, FL
- May 10, 2025
- Promoter: Matt Ammann
- PRO Men's Physique - Open
1. Anderson Moise
- PRO Classic Physique - Open
1. Nigel Eldridge
2. Phillip Merritt
3. Alexander Puhalla
4. Anthony Arena
- PRO Men's Bodybuilding - Open
1. Alexander Puhalla
2. James Wilczanski
- Bikini - Open
1. Rosa Warner
- Bikini Model - Open
1. Rosa Warner
- Figure - Open
1. Alena Dunham
- Figure - Masters 40+
1. Alena Dunham
- Men's Physique - Open LW
1. Andres Pacheco
- Overall
- Men's Physique - Open MW
1. Christopher Brown
- Men's Physique - Masters 40+
1. Christopher Brown
- Classic Physique - Open MW
1. Hugo Sanchez
- Classic Physique - Open HW
1. Dan Mercado
- NGA PRO Card & Overall
2. James Wilczanski
3. Edward Wordner
4. Alex Couture
- Men's BB - Open LW
1. Bill Mora
- Men's BB - Open MW

1. Keith Harvey
2. Lamont Ray, Jr.
3. Reuben Escobar
4. Hugo Sanchez
- Men's BB - Open LHW
1. Dan Mercado
- NGA PRO Card & Overall
2. Wordner Edouard
3. Michael Gerek
- Men's BB - Masters 40+
1. Keith Harvey
- NGA PRO Card & Overall
2. Bill Mora
- Men's BB - Masters 50+
1. Michael Gerek
2. Bill Mora
3. Alvis Vaughan
- Men's BB - Masters 60+
1. Michael Gerek
2. Alvis Vaughan
- Men's BB - Masters 70+
1. Alvis Vaughan
- Men's BB - Masters 100
1. Andrew Bostinto
- Bikini - Novice
1. Rosa Warner
- Evening Gowns
1. Rosa Warner
- Evening Gowns - Masters 50+
1. Susan Farrington
- Evening Gowns - Masters 60+
1. Susan Farrington
- Women's Transformation
1. Susan Farrington
2. Kelly Eastwood
3. Rosa Warner
- Men's Physique - Novice
1. David Vehar
- Classic Physique - Novice
1. Dan Mercado
2. David Vehar
- Men's Bodybuilding - Novice
1. Dan Mercado
2. Lamont Ray, J
- 2025 NGA PRO/AM
- Kentucky Natural Classic
- Lexington, KY
- May 24, 2025
- Promoters: Josh & Melissa Miller
- PRO Bikini - Open
1. Jeanette George
2. Ashley Losen
3. Mallory Laskowski
4. Brooke Broz

5. Danielle Smith
- PRO Bikini - Masters 40+
1. Jeanette George
2. Jennifer Gabbard
3. Danielle Smith
- PRO Figure - Open
1. Molly Tynan
- PRO Figure - Masters 40+
1. Danielle Smith
- PRO Women's Physique - Open
1. Honey Arnold
- PRO Wellness - Open
1. Jordan Hampton
- PRO Men's Physique - Open
1. James White
2. Emmanuel Quintana
3. Scott Huddleston
- PRO Classic Physique - Open
1. Austin Baird
2. Daniel Kennedy
3. Jason Robinson
- PRO Classic Physique - Masters 40+
1. Jason Robinson
- PRO Men's BB - Open
1. Daniel Kennedy
2. Jason Robinson
3. Daniel Serota
4. Kendall Johnson
5. Donald Moore
- PRO Men's BB - Masters 40+
1. Jason Robinson
2. Daniel Serota
3. Donald Moore
- Bikini - Open "Short"
1. Lee Yun
2. Julie Holloway
3. Kendra Schoffstall
4. Natasha Tackett
- Bikini - Open "Tall"
1. Madison Watson
- NGA PRO Card & Overall
2. Jordan Hampton
3. Sara Borden
4. Crystal Pasley
- Bikini - Masters 40+
1. Kendra Schoffstall
2. Thelma Bennington
- Figure - Open "Short"
1. Rebecca LaBad
- NGA PRO Card & Overall
2. Danielle Smith
3. Julie Holloway
- Figure - Open "Tall"
1. Nubia Hawkins
2. Honey Arnold

3. Natasha Tackett

Figure - Masters 40+

1. Honey Arnold

Women's Physique - Open

1. Rebecca LaBad

NGA PRO Card

2. Molly Tynan

NGA PRO Card

3. Daniel Smith

4. Brooke Broz

5. Natasha Tackett

Wellness - Open

1. Reese Norbie

NGA PRO Card

2. Crystal Pasley

NGA PRO Card

3. Alinson Yanez

4. Maria Mta

5. Alexis Watson

6. Isabel Acker

7. Juliana McCoy

Men's Physique - Open LW

1. Bishwas Bhatt

2. Bryan Mayanrd

3. Dedy Nurjianto

Men's Physique - Open MW

1. Dan Otterson

NGA PRO Card & Overall

2. Chris William

3. Zach Steffen

4. Harley Goddrez

5. Adnan Koura

6. Daren Spartman

Men's Physique - Open HW

1. Noe Fonseca

2. Darios Wilson

3. Chris Rankin

Men's Physique - Masters 40+

1. Dan Otterson

2. Noe Fonseca

Men's Physique - Masters 50+

1. Noe Fonseca

2. Chris Rankin

3. Daren Spartman

4. R. Brady Johnson

Classic Physique - Open LW

1. Keshawn Herron

NGA PRO Card

2. Kendall Johnson

3. Kaegan Holbrook

4. Bishwas Bhatt

5. Bryan Mayanrd

Classic Physique - Open MW

1. Joseph Pusateri

NGA PRO Card & Overall

2. Juan Guzman

3. James Williams

4. Zach Steffen

Classic Physique - Open HW

1. Micah Clare

2. William Yackey

3. Daniel Blaine

4. Darios Wilson

Classic Physique - Masters 40+

1. Joseph Pusateri

2. James Williams

3. William Yackey

Men's BB - Open LW

1. Paul Toney

NGA PRO Card

2. Keshawn Herron

3. Kagan Holbrok

4. Michael Lee

5. Bishwas Bhatt

Men's BB - Open MW

1. Joseph Pusateri

NGA PRO Card & Overall

Men's BB - Open LHW

1. Cooper Kohlbeck

NGA PRO Card

2. William Yackey

3. Daniel Blaine

4. Michael Gerek

5. Raymond Franklin

Men's BB - Open HW

1. Micah Clare

2. Frankie King

3. Timothy McQueen

4. Chris Rankin

Men's BB - Masters 40+

1. Joseph Pusateri

NGA PRO Card & Overall

2. William Yackey

3. Raymond Franklin

4. Michael Gerek

5. Michael Lee

Men's BB - Masters 50+

1. Paul Toney

NGA PRO Card

2. Raymond Franklin

3. Michael Gerek

4. Frankie King

5. Chris Rankin

Bikini - Debut

1. Madison Watson

2. Sara Borden

3. Vanessa Ruppel

4. Kendra Schoffstall

Bikini - Juniors

1. Vanessa Ruppel

Figure - Debut

1. Nubia Hawkins

Wellness - Juniors

1. Reese Norbie

2. Maria Mata

3. Isabel Acker

Men's Physique - Debut

1. Chris Williams

2. Zach Steffen

3. Bishwas Bhatt

4. Noe Fonseca

5. Harley Goddrez

6. Darios Wilson

7. Bryan Mayanrd

8. Dedy Nurjianto

Men's Physique - Juniors

1. Chris Williams

2. Bishwas Bhatt

3. Bryan Mayanrd

Classic Physique - Debut

1. Zach Steffen

2. Kaegan Holbrook

3. Keshawn Herron

4. Bishwas Bhatt

5. Bryan Mayanrd

6. Darios Wilson

Men's BB - Debut

1. Keshawn Herron

2. Kaegon Holbrook

3. Michael Lee

4. Bishwas Bhatt

5. Frankie King

Men's BB - Juniors

1. Keshawn Herron

2. Kaegan Holbrook

3. Bishwas Bhatt

Adaptive

1. R. Brady Johnson

2025 NGA Natural Mr. & Ms. California

Folsom, CA

June 29, 2025

Promoter: Johnny "The Motivator" Carrero

Bikini - Open

1. Lindsey Fontana

2. Jessica Faye Duarte

Figure - Open

1. Sarah Nolte

2. Lisa Bettencourt

Women's Physique - Open

1. Lydia Strunk

2. Lisa Bettencourt

Men's Physique - Open

1. Mitchell Rotter Sieren

2. Hein Pham

3. Emmanuel Payne

4. Peter McGuinness

Men's BB - Open

1. Elijah Simmons

NGA PRO Card

2. Abisai Gonzales

3. Emmanuel Payne

4. Hien Pham

5. Mitchell Rotter Sieren

Men's BB - Masters 40+

1. Abisai Gonzales

2. Peter McGuinness

3. Ralph Allen, Jr

NGA 12th Annual Anthracite Natural
Bodybuilding & Physique Championships

NGA 8th Annual Mr. Coal

Natural Championships

Pottsville, PA

July 12, 2025

Promoter: Rev. Warren I. Egebo

Anthracite

Men's Physique - Open MW

1. Logan Burns

Classic Physique - Open MW

1. Maddix Kovacs

2. Logan Burns

Classic Physique - Open HW

1. Kyle McCullough

Overall

Men's BB - Open MW

1. Maddix Kovacs

2. Logan Burns

Mr. Coal

Men's Physique - Open LW

1. Abisai Gonzalez

Best Abs

2. Anthony Williams

Men's Physique - Open MW

1. Logan Burns

NGA PRO Card & Overall

Men's Physique - Open HW

1. Michael Trendowski

2. Marc Charpineta

Men's Physique - Masters 40+

1. Marc Charpineta

Classic Physique - Open LW

1. Abisai Gonzalez

NGA PRO Card & Overall

2. Daniel Cusmano

3. Orlando Figueroa-Sanchez

4. Brandon Smag

5. Hayden Smag

Classic Physique - Open MW

1. Samuel Shapiro

NGA PRO Card & Overall

2. Maddix Kovacs

3. Michael Gerek

4. Logan Burns

Classic Physique - Open HW

1. Kyle McCullough

Best Poser

Men's BB - Open LW

1. Abisai Gonzalez

NGA PRO Card

2. Daniel Cusmano

3. Orlando Figueroa-Sanchez

4. Brandon Smay

5. Hayden Smay

Men's BB - Open MW

1. Samuel Shapiro

NGA PRO Card & Overall

2. Maddix Kovacs

3. Michael Gerek

4. Logan Burns

Men's BB - Open LHW

1. Jesse Kimmel

Men's BB - Masters 50+

1. Michael Gerek

Men's BB - Masters 60+

1. Michael Gerek

Men's Physique - Novice

1. Anthony Williams

Classic Physique - Novice

1. Brandon Smay

2. Hayden Smay

Men's BB - Novice

1. Brandon Smay

2. Hayden Smay

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