

## Los Alamos Bodybuilders Come Through at Competition

By Kent Pegg

Los Alamos is quickly becoming New Mexico's newest bodybuilding hot spot! In April, the Los Alamos Bodybuilding and Fitness Competition showcased twenty-three local competitors in the first ever show of its type in Los Alamos.

On Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup>, four of the competitors you saw in that show traveled to Albuquerque to compete in the Forever Natural Southwest Classic.

And compete they did!

Christopher Host, who lives in Atlanta, Georgia, but has trained in Los Alamos at the Los Alamos Fitness Center prior to his last three competitions in Albuquerque, brought home the most trophy hardware. He took first place in the men's open tall division, second place in the men's over-35 division, and was named the best overall poser at the event.

Host, looking heavily muscled and solid as a rock, competed at just over 200 pounds. You might remember Chris from his appearance as a guest poser at the Los Alamos Bodybuilding and Fitness Competition in April.

At that show, he weighed in at a pre-contest diet weight of just over 230 pounds. Through ten weeks of hard training and dieting he dropped thirty pounds to produce his winning look.

He dedicated his hard work and success to his wife, Jennifer, who just returned two weeks ago from a six-month tour as a physician in Afghanistan.

Also bringing home a first place trophy was Al Cucchiara. Al, who finished second in the men's masters and fourth in the men's overall at the Los Alamos Bodybuilding and Fitness Competition, won the men's over-55 category easily and finished an impressive fifth in the men's open, medium height class.

Debbie Jo Almager placed second in both the women's over-35 and the women's novice divisions. Like Chris, Debbie Jo trimmed down and built up muscle to make significant gains in the last ten weeks and improve on her fourth place finish in the women's masters, here, last April.

Deborah Cucchiara, who won the figure event in April, placed third in both the women's masters and women's open figure events. The crowd at the Kimo Theater grumbled as the results for the figure competition were announced, clearly believing that Debbie deserved to finish in the top two and may have won.

Judging is always a hot topic of conversation after bodybuilding shows. Different criteria are used for the bodybuilding and figure categories.

In the bodybuilding category, contestants are judged on four criteria: symmetry, muscularity, density, and posing routine.

In the symmetry round, judges look at the physiques and compare them based on their symmetrical shape and muscle balance.

The muscularity round calls for judges to seek a balance between muscle size and muscle striation when determining the contestant with the most muscular physique.

Density refers to the level of muscle fullness a contestant has as well as the development of hard muscles and the absence of body fat.

Finally, during the posing routine, judges are looking for poise, artistic presence, and the ability to present the poses correctly.

The figure competition also judges for symmetry and muscularity, but places more emphasis on proportion and overall appearance, and less on the absence of body fat.

The Forever Natural Southwest Classic is sponsored by the American Natural Bodybuilding Conference and requires all competitors to be tested for steroid and performance enhancing drug use. Each competitor must pass a polygraph test proving that they have never used any banned substances.

The benefits of natural bodybuilding are numerous and obvious. Using steroids or other enhancers destroys both the body and the mind and provides an unfair competitive advantage to those who use them.

Natural bodybuilding provides all the benefits of increased strength, size and endurance, and helps maintain an ideal body weight without any of the risks associated with enhancers.

In Los Alamos, the level of interest in bodybuilding has grown tremendously recently. And, with the success of the competition in April showcasing local talent and the triumph of the competitors in the Southwest Classic, that interest is sure to continue to grow.

Los Alamos has all of the necessary elements in place to become a dominant force in bodybuilding in the state of New Mexico. We have the facilities, the knowledge and the determined competitors necessary to excel in a way that could not have been imagined just a few, short years ago.

Remember, the 2005 Los Alamos Bodybuilding and Fitness Competition is coming back next March, even bigger and better than this year. So watch those diets, train hard, and then train even harder. With a little work, you too can get in on one of the hottest trends in the Los Alamos fitness scene.

Kent Pegg is a certified personal trainer and the co-owner of the Los Alamos Fitness Center. If you have any questions about the information in this article you can call him at 662-5232.