

DEAR ROSA

THE NEXT LEVEL

Dear Rosa,
I would like to take my body to the next level. By that, I mean train hard and diet with the intention of competing early next year. I have been following your career for quite some time now and I am so amazed at the way your body has changed since you first started competing. It is obvious weight training and cardio is the best way to go in order to achieve maximum results. My question to you is what competition should I be aiming for?

There are a few federations out there and I need to make sure I choose the right one for me. I hope you can point me in the right direction? I would ultimately love to compete alongside you. I saw your pictures from the Arnold Classic in last month's issue taken by Gary Phillips and I am so inspired! Thank you Rosa.

KAITLIN,
QLD

Hi Kaitlin,
Thank you for your kind words. I love hearing that I have inspired others to pursue their dreams. I remember when I first started competing, I told Paul (President IFBB Australia) and Carole Graham that I wanted to take it all the way. Here I am now, at the top of the sport and still no signs of slowing of down.

Being a part of the IFBB has opened up an entire new world to me with endless opportunities. There was never any doubt in my mind that this is who I wanted to compete for and represent. The best fitness professionals in the world are all IFBB pro's. If your goal is to one day compete on the Arnold stage or simply to be the best you can be, IFBB is the only

federation you should even be considering.

There are so many different divisions to choose from and levels. The novice division in figure has become increasingly popular over the past couple of years with the new guidelines being introduced. Women can achieve optimum results that can be maintained all year round. The judges are favouring a fit and well-toned, healthy look that is liked by many. It is a look that encourages females to get in shape, incorporating weight training and plyometrics into their day to day routine, building some muscle, however not excessive and maintaining their over all feminine appearance. I am absolutely thrilled with the new IFBB guidelines because so many more women can now achieve the body of their dreams giving them the opportunity to reach high and achieve what they thought was never possible.

A female's body should be symmetrical and curvy and that is what we promote in IFBB Pro Figure. You have given yourself plenty of time to prepare for your first show, which is ideal. The next IFBB event is this October in Queensland followed by the NSW and Australian Championships in Sydney. This would be a great opportunity for you to see the different divisions and to decide which suits you best. I'll be there judging and would be delighted to chat so please stop by and say hello. I'd recommend you prepare for the Australasia in April 2011. That would give you enough time to build some muscle if needed, shape and tone. I hope I have been able to clear any uncertainties for you and look forward to meeting you at an upcoming IFBB show.

Love,

Rosa

SOME PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

Dear Rosa,
Closer to a competition do you change your programme for the final couple weeks? I am just not sure if I should be lifting heavy, doing higher reps, etc. Everyone I ask seems to have a different opinion and I have no idea what I should be doing. I hope you can put my mind at rest. I am starting to go nuts with this whole preparation thing!

CATHERINE,
ADL

Hi Catherine,
In all honesty it depends how I am looking at the time; if I am holding water or a little extra weight than I normally would. I will increase the reps or perhaps even incorporate plyometrics two to three times per week.

If you are starting to look a little 'stringy' or over depleted, increase your food amounts, especially carbohydrates and reduce cardio and repetitions. One thing to keep in mind is that each contest preparation will be different. What may have worked one time may not be so effective the second or third time.

The best way to go about it is to take pictures from week to week and compare to ensure you are moving in the right direction. It is vital that symmetry is on the mark as well and that your glutes and hamstring tie in are visible. Try and keep your body as conditioned as possible all over making sure that attention is given to each bodypart. Judges will always reward a well-balanced and toned physique and that includes hair, make-up, skin tone...the lot.



JULIO ARENAS

DEAR ROSA

CONTINUED...



GARY PHILLIPS

So most importantly relax and enjoy the experience, as stress will only hinder your success.

Love,

Rosa

FIRST PHOTO SHOOT

Hi Rosa,
I have my first photo shoot coming up and I wondered if you could give me some tips and/or pointers. I am quite nervous and don't really know what to expect. You look so beautiful in all your pictures. Has it always been easy for you at photo shoots? It sure does look like it!

TATIANA,
NSW

Hi Tatiana,
Gosh.... I do remember my first photo shoot ever and that was with Gary Phillips (www.garyphillipsphotography.com) in Melbourne. I can't say I was nervous but more excited and perhaps slightly anxious. The shoot was a huge success and Gary definitely produced some of my best shots ever.

It helps when the photographer is experienced and passionate about the sport. Gary knew exactly how to bring the best out of me and he was a pleasure to work with. I can't say shooting is easy but it sure does help when you connect with the photographer.

With regards to some tips for your up-coming shoot, I have put together a small list that will help you prepare. It's always best to have all bases covered in my opinion, to avoid stress and unnecessary mishaps.

Things to keep in mind:
» Start exfoliating one week out
» Tan two days before shoot to ensure tan is perfect

» Your make up should be applied prior to the shoot, unless someone is booked by the photographer. If the shoot is personal, I will always have my make-up artist apply my make up at home, this way no valuable time is wasted at the location. Make sure you wear lashes!
» Pedicure and manicure is a must!

Things to pack:
» Body oil and creams. These are applied to your skin at the commencement of shoot to ensure the skin does not look dry. I use Jan Tana body glaze as this tends to last for hours.

» At least one small meal and snacks as well as a bottle of water

» Four to five outfits for the shoot

» Posing shoes as well as trainers

» Hair spray and make-up in case of touch-ups

» Sun glasses if an outdoor shoot

It's always good to speak to the photographer prior to the shoot to discuss the concept. Don't forget to look up the address as well..... being on time is vital.

Love,

Rosa **M&F**

Rosa-Maria Romero is Australia's most successful figure competitor and looks forward to answering all your questions! Email your questions now to: rose@fitrose.com



JULIO ARENAS