

Bodybuilding gaining weight as sport

By Jay Wilbur
Of the Emerald

Striking a pose with both powerful biceps flexed, junior Dawn Smoot turns gracefully to reveal the rigid muscular definition of her back. Smoot and three other amateur bodybuilders performed a brief posing exhibition in the Esslinger weight room on Thursday as a preview for this Saturday's Emerald Cup Bodybuilding Competition at the Hult Center.

More than 70 athletes, some from as far away as British Columbia, will compete in one of the fastest growing bodybuilding competitions in the West. Twenty-five of those in the contest are women.

Saturday's event will mark Smoot's first performance on stage. A heptathlete on last year's University track team, Smoot is no stranger to competition or athletic training. She began training five months ago and now works out six days a week for almost an hour a day. She also runs for distance and swims. An injury sidelined her track career but allowed a different sport to grab her attention.

"Some friends and I went to a bodybuilding show in Portland in January. Afterward, they asked me what I was doing June 6. It took them three weeks to convince me to go for it," Smoot said.

Smoot added it took another two months of training before she told her parents about her latest pursuit. "They were really supportive," she said. "And my family and friends will all be there Saturday."

One of Smoot's supporters will be another bodybuilder, University physical education instructor Lynn Jacobson. Jacobson, who has been training for five years, will be making her return to competition after three years away from the stage. She competed from 1982 to 1984, but took time off to work on a master's degree.

Jacobson competed last week in the Rose Cup and placed third out of three finalists. "But it was great just to be back on stage," Jacobson said.

Her enthusiasm for the sport continues to grow. She is especially excited about teaching the first-ever bodybuilding course at the University next fall. Jacobson also enjoys the confidence that develops in her students over the course of a few months of weight training.

"About half the class are girls, and they find it really fun and exciting, trying something they didn't know they could do before," Jacobson said.

She added that the gym is the best place to meet people. "Everybody is trying to see who has the best ripped shirt."

Jacobson will compete in the Open Ms. Emerald Empire division, and Smoot will compete in the Collegiate Ms. Oregon division.

Other categories include Mr. Teen Oregon, Over 35 Mr. and Ms. Oregon, Collegiate Mr. Oregon, Novice Mr. and Ms. Emerald Empire, and Open Mr. Emerald

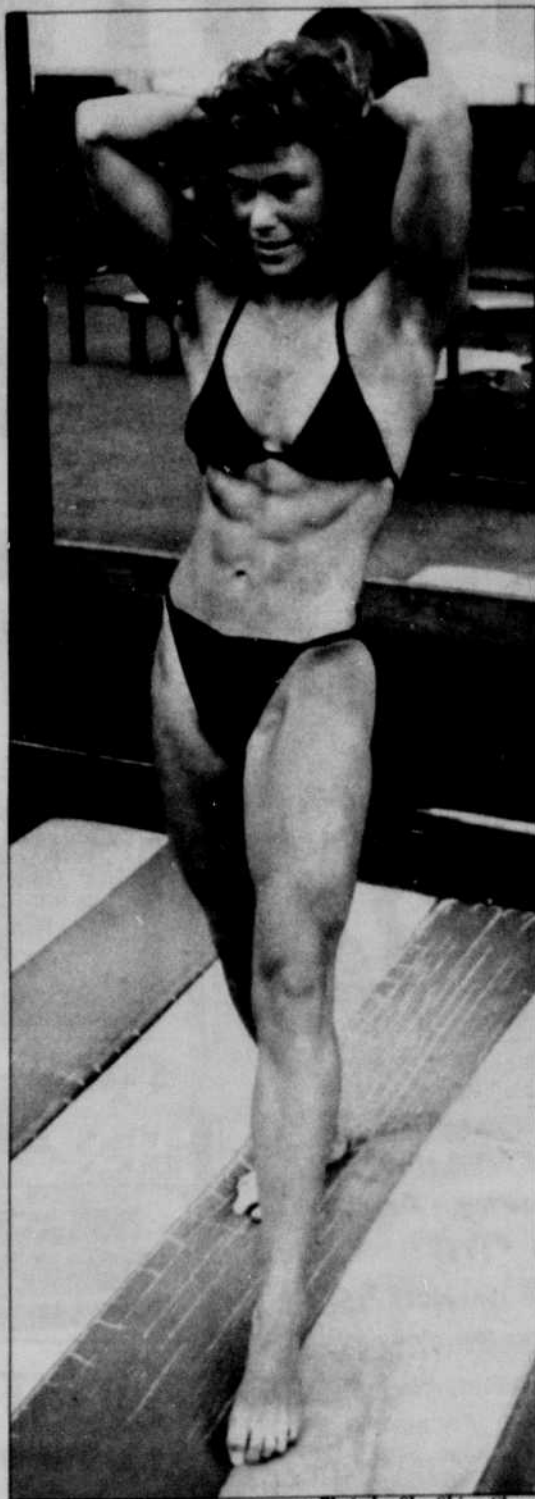


Photo by Shu-Shing Chen

Dawn Smoot flexes her abdominal muscles at a bodybuilding exhibition in the Esslinger weight room.

Empire. The early comparison judging will take place at 10 a.m., with the finals at 7 p.m. Mark Delp, owner of Delp's Gym and promoter of the event, encourages spectators to attend both events. Tickets for the morning show are \$5.00, but only \$2.00 with the purchase of a ticket for the evening show. Those prices range from \$8.00 to \$16.00.



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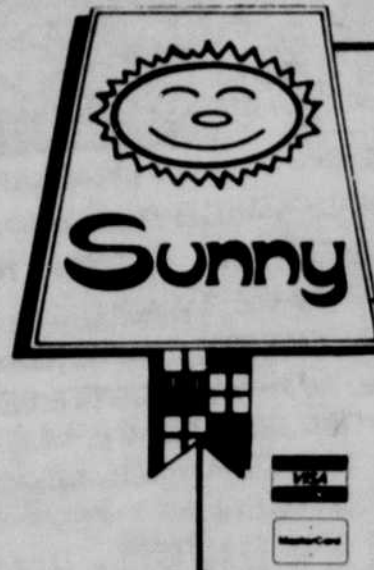
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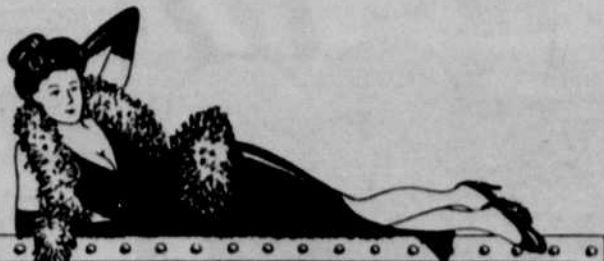
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