

2007 Europa Super Show Women's Bodybuilding Results

Contributed by Steve Wennerstrom, Editor-at-Large
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The gigantic Dallas Convention Center in downtown Dallas played host to Ed and Betty Pariso's Europa Super Show with women's competition in bodybuilding, fitness and figure taking center stage on Friday night. As an event the Pariso's have nursed into what is now one of the fastest growing contests in the country, the turnout in all three divisions was packed with outstanding contestants.

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In the bodybuilding category two weight class divisions divided a field of 23 total contestants with 11 lightweights under 135 pounds, and 12 heavyweights over 135.

Winners in each class would earn invites to the Ms. Olympia, and the competition within each class was at the highest level in terms of physical conditioning the pro ranks has seen in several years at a Olympia qualifier.

The Lightweights - Mah-Ann's in the Money

Said a relieved Mah-Ann Mendoza as she clutched her trophy backstage after topping the lightweight division, "I did three hours of cardio to get down to the lightweight class, but it was worth it." Indeed it was worth it as the 135-pound Mendoza captured her class against a superb group of contestants, and that three hours of cardio came as a last ditch effort to make weight.

For Mendoza, her victory was the second at the pro level having won this same event in 2004. As the former NPC USA overall champion in 2001, Mendoza has slowly, but steadily improved on her physique while using her age as a surprisingly strong base of support in the judges final decision. Having always shown solid balance overall, Mendoza's muscular cultivation seemed to be the benchmark that set her apart in this field. Mendoza proudly announced that she would be turning 48 this year, and in a post-contest wrap-up pointed out that how age need not be a deterrent to competitors who feel their age will become a handicap as they enter their 40's.....in her case as they approach their 50's.

With prior experience at both the Ms. International and Ms. Olympia, Mendoza's next visit to the Olympia stage in just seven weeks will not include a need for three hours of cardio to make weight as the will be no weight classes at Olympia. On the other hand, Oregonian is also smart enough to realize she will still need to go that extra mile to reach a level of condition and muscular detail to keep herself competitive in an even stronger field.

Hot on Mendoza's heels was a pro rookie – Debbie Bramwell. Fresh from winning the overall NPC Masters National crown in Pittsburgh just weeks earlier, Bramwell brought plenty of experience as a grizzled amateur veteran with a contest resume that includes multiple trips the national level, the San Diegan has blossomed in 2007, however, to show notable improvement in her overall structural balance as well as outstanding muscular detail throughout her physique. As highlights in her physique, Bramwell wowed the audience with her dynamic arms and a set of hamstrings to die for. Over she simply wasn't a muscle group that was lacking development or detail. As difficult as it has always been to enter the pro scene and win in on a first try, Bramwell came as close as possible in this classic battle.

Muscular quality of the most aesthetic kind, coupled with a strong stage presence helped Debi Laszewski - another newbie making her pro debut at this event – capture the third-place spot. As last year's light-heavyweight winner, Laszewski showed impressive muscle volume and balance on her 134-pound frame. Her overall look was dramatically different from both Mendoza and Bramwell, although the trio all weighed with one pound of each other with both Bramwell and Mendoza each weighing in at 135.

The top three competitors in this class continued to illustrate just how diversified muscular physiques of similar weights can be.

Rounding out the top five in this class was 2006 Olympian Dena Westerfield in fourth, and Brazil's Angela Debatin in fifth.

The Results

Mah-Ann Mendoza, USA

Debbie Bramwell, USA

Debi Laszewski, USA

Dena Westerfield, USA

Angela Debatin, Brazil

The Heavyweights - Tazzie's Long Trip to Victory

In this field of 12 contestants, it would be difficult to find more satisfied and fulfilled bodybuilder than Louisiana's Tazzie Colomb. An overall NPC USA winner in 1992, it took until this night for the colorful Colomb to crack the barrier and win her first pro contest. Chipping away for the past 15 years and competing at times over the 170-pound mark, Colomb brought herself into this event at 162 pounds – a weight that was as low as she had been since winning the USA. The effort seemed to work as the judges gave her the nod over several outstanding challengers.

Said Colomb about her contest prep, "I was told I was coming in too big and that I was losing my structural shapes, so I decided to bring my weight down to well below where I had been in the a long time. I knew I'd be real hard, but I like to show lots of definition anyway. That's what bodybuilding's all about."

Her hardness was what it was about for the judges too, as they awarded Colomb the Europa heavyweight crown.

In the chase for the runner-up positions, a pair of former overall national amateur winners – Th-Resa Bostick and Beth Roberts made stirring comebacks and succeeded in looking outstanding in their return to the competitive stage.

For Bostick, who now lives in Florida, her runner-up placing to Colomb was highlighted with a impressive level of muscle volume including staggering rear delts, and lats of the monumental variety. She was every bit the bodybuilder she was in 1999 when she won the overall USA crown in 1999. Without even one trip to the competitive stage since 2000, it looked like she'd never been away.

The same was true for Beth Roberts. An NPC National overall champion in 2001, Roberts had not competed in four years and managed to enter this event in her best shape ever. That fact is testimony to an impressive level of perseverance in putting herself in a level of shape that made her competitive in everyone's eyes. Showing striking muscle separation her quad groups, Roberts' frontal poses – and especially her front lat spreads – were eye-popping.

Judges were again challenged in their selections of placements for this duo as Bostick weighed in at 144, and Roberts tipped the scales a pound heavier at 145. The catch was their physiques were dramatically different, yet both outstanding in their own way.

Oklahoma firefighter Sherry Smith made her pro debut a memorable one at this event claiming the fourth spot at a well-conditioned 163 pounds. Fresh from her overall victory at the 2006 IFBB North American late last year, Smith will make a fine fit in pro line-ups especially when competes at events where there are no weight classes. Her physique is complete, and only needs to be tied down tight with her dieting prep when she takes the stage at major pro contests.

Sweden's majestic Marika Johannsen brought a somewhat less ripped look to the Europa show this year (as opposed to her-ultra-ripped condition in 2006), and the judges saw her in a more favorable light awarding her with a fifth-place finish. Johannson's 158-pound bodyweight showed excellent balance, although she didn't do herself any favors with an evening posing routine where her long blonde hair blocked all of her back poses and several of her side chest poses.

The Results

1- Tazzie Colomb, USA

2- Th-Resa Bostick, USA

3- Beth Roberts, USA

4- Sherry Smith, USA

5- Marika Johannson, Sweden

The Posedown – Mendoza Gets the Nod Over Colomb

As Mah-Ann Mendoza accepted her trophy for the overall Europa crown, it was a decision that was sure to fuel the fire of conjecture as to what style of physique judges would prefer. Mendoza and Colomb could not have been further apart in terms of physical similarities. Colomb outweighed Mendoza by nearly 30 pounds and was visibly harder throughout her physique. While Mendoza, at a compact 135 pounds showed pleasing lines and a level of muscle cultivation only a 47-year-old can display. The judges went with Mendoza's seasoned package leaving Colomb to wait another day for an overall title. "Another day" for Colomb may be the Atlantic City Pro contest coming up in September.