



DEAR ROSA

HIGHEST PLACED PRO!

Dear Rosa,

I'd like to congratulate you on your recent placing at the Tournament of Champions in Anaheim, California. Sixth place is outstanding and you must be so happy.

I have been following your career since 2003 and you have been my inspiration since day one. This is the highest placing of your professional career and highest placing ever by an Australian Figure pro! How does it feel to be the highest placed pro Figure athlete in Australasia? It is so good that you have finally been recognised by the US judges.

I feel it is only a matter of time now before you qualify for the Olympia and I'm confident you will place high at the big show.

My question to you is, how did you keep yourself motivated the past year? It was obvious you were being overlooked at each show. What made you stick to your plan and keep fighting? I am just so inspired by what you have achieved, Rosa. Good luck for your upcoming shows. Australia loves you!

Jessica Thomas

Dear Jessica,

Thank you so much for your beautiful email. Wow! The 'highest placed pro Figure athlete in Australasia' sounds pretty good to me! Honestly Jessica, I just love what I do.

I picked up my first set of weights in 2003 and I have not looked back. I constantly set myself goals and work towards achieving them. Noth-

ing comes easy but I am a true believer that if you put in the hard yards, eventually it all pays off. Although disappointed on numerous occasions with placings, I never once thought about giving up. I knew it would only be a matter of time before the judges rewarded me so I stayed focused. I am not one to give up easily, that's for sure!

I won't deny the fact that I have made some huge improvements since I turned pro in 2007. I find the judges' feedback after every show extremely valuable and useful and I take all feedback on board. I am quite satisfied with 6th place at the TOC but I am looking forward to stepping out onstage again very soon and bettering that. Time to get back down to business.

Love,
Rosa

COMPETITION DIET

Dear Rosa,

A huge congratulations to you, girl. Wow, 6th place is just awesome. I can only imagine how you are feeling. You have always, and continue to, inspire me, Rosa, and I hope to follow your footsteps as I embark on a journey to compete in my first ever Figure show - the ANB Sydney Championships in May. I have spent the entire year of 2008 training heavy and trying to build as much muscle as possible. My question to you is, how far out of a show would you recommend dieting down? I have been told 16 weeks whereas others will stick to 12 weeks and some even as little as 10! I just want to

get this right, Rosa. I hope you can clarify this for me. Once again, well done on your recent achievement.

Charlie Dasha

Hi Charlie,

Thank you. Yes, I'm totally thrilled with 6th place. It was definitely one of my most memorable experiences to this day. I am hoping to better that at the upcoming Sacramento Pro Figure in California. Fingers crossed!

Now to answer your question. I would recommend sticking to the 12-week diet plan as it is your first show and I am unsure how your body will respond to the training and dieting. Personally, I can get ready for a show in 8 weeks, but I have also taken as long as 20 weeks to prepare. It all comes down to your body shape and size, how much muscle you are carrying, and the amount of excess bodyfat you need to lose.

It will also depend on what look you are working towards presenting to the judges. Some federations prefer a harder, more muscular appearance whilst others will tend to reward the softer and more shapely look. It's a tricky one, but I will generally say to girls that it's best to come in the shape you like and what suits you personally.

I am certain you will learn lots from your first show and the judges will also be there to provide you with feedback and suggestions for future reference. I have been competing as a pro now for almost two years and I am still learning! One thing is for sure though, I much prefer the tighter look. Not necessarily muscular, but toned and shapely with enough muscle to show



definition and a well-balanced physique. Good luck with your preparation and I trust you will enjoy the experience.

Stay Focused,
Love,
Rosa

FIRST FIGURE COMPETITION

Hi Rosa,

I would like to start off by saying your website is awesome!!! Now a little about myself! I am looking at competing in my first figure competition next year and would like to know the best way to get started.

I'm a very sporty person who worked as a fitness instructor for eleven years. I left the fitness industry in 2006 to pursue a different career path. Since then I have competed in three half marathons and two 10 km runs before falling pregnant last year. My baby is now seven months old and my training consists of cardio four to five days a week, plus weights two to three days a week. I'm coeliac and also lactose, yeast and sugar intolerant so my diet is pretty clean to start with. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,
Natasha Simmons

Hi Natasha,

Fantastic news! You are going to love this from start to finish. I won't lie to you in saying that it is smooth sailing, but put in the hard yards and you will find this journey extremely rewarding.

It sounds to me as though you are athletic and healthy to begin with and it wouldn't surprise me if you were already in great shape as it is. Eleven years is a long time to work in the fitness industry and I am sure you have plenty of knowledge and experience to ensure you present your optimum onstage.

I would, however, recommend you have someone guide you through the whole process to ensure you are on track for your show. I am a professional and even though I have competed in many shows in Australia, Europe and the USA, I still have someone who oversees my training and guides me right up until I step out onstage, then it's up to me! I've seen so many fantastic athletes mess up their contest preparation so to speak. Dieting will eventually take its toll and it is always good to have someone there when that happens to ensure you remain focused and that your body continues to respond to the intense training and dieting.

In order to get started with your preparation I



recommend you train with weights at least five days a week, working each bodypart once in that cycle. Keep your cardio at 20 minutes a day to begin with. Have at least one day off a week, maybe even two (Wednesday and Sunday) so that you are giving yourself enough time to rest and recover from the intense weight training.

I would like to see you build some good quality muscle before dieting down so give yourself at least six months to prepare for your first show (three months building muscle, three months dieting down). It's a good thing your diet is well-balanced and clean. All I can suggest is that you eat small frequent meals throughout the day in order to speed up the metabolism and

continually feed the muscle. I generally stick to six to eight meals. Make sure your morning meals are well-balanced with carbohydrates and protein and drink plenty of water throughout the day. I am so excited for you, Natasha, and look forward to seeing your pics!

All the best.

Love,
Rosa

REDUCE MY BODYFAT!

Hi Rosa,

Great to see you working with M&F! You have a fantastic physique. After a couple of kids and letting a stressful business and personal life get the better of me, I am finally taking back control of my body. While I don't have the structure to ever compete, I do build muscle well and would like to reduce my bodyfat. I have a good knowledge of nutrition, cardio and resistance/weight training. My question to you is, how do you keep your motivation high? How do you stay focused and directed on achieving your goals? Although it's relatively easy to stay motivated to train (my husband also loves hitting the weights) I do struggle with clean eating. Any advice would be much appreciated!

Sarah Palmer,
New Zealand

Hi Sarah,

Thanks! Good to hear you are putting yourself first for once. I sense a great deal of release coming from you and you should be proud doing so.

Competing is not for everyone but should you have the desire to do so at a later stage, anything is possible. There are many ways we can build and re-shape our bodies to create the desired look and structure. I am sure that with some work, you could make some huge improvements to your physique and we might possibly even see you on stage sometime - never say never!

I wish I could share with you some of the transformations I have made with several of my clients. You would be amazed. You would like to learn more about how I keep myself motivated? I love what I do and look forward to training every day. I have my sights set on an Olympia qualification and will do all the necessary work to reach my goals.

As they say, 'nothing comes easy!' I like to see improvement every time I step out onstage so I work towards that during the off-season and train as hard as I can day-in, day-out. Hubby and I will often hit the gym together and we tend to keep each other motivated throughout the day.



With regards to dieting, I tend to eat clean all year round and have one to two cheat days a week. Whilst dieting for a show I will always have a cheat meal here and there. It's about consistency and finding a balance that works for you. Set yourself some goals and try to be as creative as possible with your food.

Enjoy the challenge!

Love,
Rosa **M&F**

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