



# DEAR ROSA

ROSA-MARIA, AUSTRALIA'S MOST SUCCESSFUL FIGURE COMPETITOR, IS DELIGHTED TO HAVE JOINED THE TEAM AT MUSCLE & FITNESS AND LOOKS FORWARD TO ANSWERING ALL YOUR QUESTIONS! EMAIL YOUR QUESTIONS NOW TO: [ROSE@FITROSE.COM](mailto:ROSE@FITROSE.COM)

## HITTING THE WALL

Hi Rosa,

If it isn't too much trouble would you mind giving me a few tips on training and diet to get me through the next few weeks? I was going well with everything, but have hit a bit of a brick wall. I haven't been training quite as much and I feel like pigging out on carbohydrates all the time! Any advice to get me back on track would be great.

Thanks,  
Emma

Hi Emma,

First of all welcome to Team FITCHIX. I am excited to be training you and helping you prepare for your first ever competition. Your contest day will come around before you know it.

Right now you are in the bulking phase of your contest preparation and it is perfectly fine to enjoy some of the foods you like. I do not expect you to diet all year round, that is simply impossible and it will drive you crazy. Feel free to eat your favourite foods here and there. Now is the time to eat and lift heavy in order to build on your frame and shape your body. You need energy to train and you get energy from the food and supplements you consume. It's simple, eat and grow! In the off-season I follow a strict diet

which is high in protein and carbohydrates but if I feel like eating a muffin or something sweet, I won't think twice about it and you shouldn't either. Before you know it you will be 12 to 16 weeks out of your show and this privilege will be gone, so enjoy it while you can. I would like you to stay focused and remind yourself why you are doing this. Read through fitness magazines and have a look at pictures of athletes that inspire you. Why not purchase a DVD and practise some posing every now and then? Take one day at a time and make each training session just as intense as the previous. It is normal to have off days but try not to get stressed about it. You have made the decision to compete and have commenced the journey. There will be highs and lows but it is important you enjoy every moment of this experience and I promise you, this will be a journey you will never forget.

Go for gold,  
Rosa

## MY FIRST COMPETITION

Hi Rosa,

I would just like to comment on your fantastic body! I am so interested in your thoughts on competing. I am 35 years old, have been training and committed these last twelve

months, and am thinking of entering a competition. Would you suggest aiming for a contest after a certain time training or would you know when it feels right?

Thanks for your time,  
Katrina McDonald

Hi Katrina,

Thank you for the compliment! I have been lifting weights now for five years and the changes I have made to my physique over this period are amazing. Training with weights has definitely changed my life and I love it.

People will always give you different opinions as to how long it actually takes to get ready for a contest. Honestly, everybody is different and the final decision is ultimately yours. I picked up my first set of weights in April 2003. My second child was just about to turn one. I went on to compete that same year in October (six months later) and won the Australian WNSO/ANB National Figure title!

In total it took me about twelve weeks to bulk and shape my body followed by another twelve weeks to trim down for the show. I remember being 100% focused and determined to do well so I put my mind to it, trained super-hard, ate really well and did everything by the book. The results were more than what I expected. My aim

was to place in the top five but to win it was a dream come true. It actually didn't sink in until a few weeks after the show.

It sounds to me as though you have been training hard and I am certain you have gained some muscle in twelve months. Why not enter a competition in 16 weeks' time? This will give you plenty of time to prepare for a show.

My advice to you is yes - give it a shot and give it all you've got.

Best of luck,  
Rosa

## SHOULD I FEEL GUILTY?

Dear Rosa,

I feel guilty on my rest days. How necessary is it to take a day off from training?

Sammy Nichols

Hi Sammy,

Please don't feel guilty at all. It is just as important to rest as it is to train. Remind yourself that your body grows whilst you sleep. When we train we push our bodies to the limit and the challenge and strain on our physiques can often lead to microtears in some of the fibres.

Basically when we allow our bodies to rest we are healing any of the damage done as well as rebuilding the cells used to exercise. If we continue to train with no allocated rest time, our bodies will eventually deteriorate making it impossible to maintain a consistent training routine and workout schedule. Rest is good! Listen to your body, rest when needed and I can assure you, you will have greater benefits in the long run.

Keep fit,  
Rosa

## INSPIRATIONAL!

Dear Rosa,

You are an inspiration to female bodybuilding. I am looking into competing with the IFBB but would like details of your journey to the pro level. What competitions and qualifiers did you do in getting your pro card and what would you say are the difficulties Aussie girls face in the US market?

Thanks for your help,  
Sara Picken-Brown

Dear Sara,

First of all thank you! It makes me happy to know I have inspired others to lead a healthy lifestyle and to follow my footsteps. Bodybuilding has changed my life for the better and I am confident it will be a huge part of me for many years to come.

Secondly, congratulations on making the decision to compete. You will love it and it



will definitely go down as one of your greatest achievements. It sounds as though you are firm with your decision to compete for the IFBB. Great choice girlfriend! I am extremely proud to compete for the IFBB and to frequently represent Australia in the USA. I started competing in 2003 and was awarded my pro card in 2006 after placing 4th at the IFBB World Championships in Barcelona, Spain. My aim was to place in the top six as this meant I would instantly be granted pro status. To my surprise I placed 4th, making me the highest ever placed Australian female at this event. Here is a breakdown of my competition history:

**IFBB PRO FIGURE**

- 2008 Pittsburgh Pro, 14th
- 2007 Sacramento Pro, 11th
- 2007 Jan Tana Classic, 16th
- 2007 Colorado Pro, 16th
- 2007 California Pro, 15th
- 2007 Pittsburgh Pro, 19th

**AMATEUR FIGURE**

- 2006 IFBB Australian, 1st & overall champion (pro card accepted)
- 2006 IFBB Mixed Pairs Australian, 1st
- 2006 IFBB World Championships, 4th (pro card awarded). Highest ever placed Australian female in the sport's history.
- 2005 IFBB Australian, 1st & overall champion
- 2005 IFBB NSW, 1st
- 2004 IFBB Australasian, 2nd
- 2003 IFBB Australian, 2nd
- 2004 IFBB NSW, 1st



JULIO ARENAS

The NPFC/IFBB holds three major shows each year: the State and Nationals Championships and the Australasian. I would suggest competing in as many shows as possible especially if your aim is to obtain a pro card. As they say 'Practice makes Perfect' and the IFBB will always be looking for the best possible athletes to represent Australia on the world stage.

In 2007 a total of 170 pro figure girls competed throughout the year in the USA and I was ranked 51 in the world. The number of athletes at each show can vary from 16 to 35 on average.

Yes, it can be hard to crack the US market

so to speak, not only for Aussie girls but any female athlete in general. At the end of the day if an athlete looks good and presents a beautiful complete package, she will be awarded highly. Of course it is a subjective sport and opinions will always differ so it is important to stay strong and continue to pursue your dream.

Never lose sight of what you want and do what ever it takes to get there! I wish you all the luck in the world and look forward to hearing more about your achievements over the next twelve months.

Stay focused,  
Rosa **M&F**



GETTY IMAGES

Rosa-Maria Romero

# IFBB PRO FIGURE COMPETITOR

Cover Model, TV Presenter, Personal Trainer

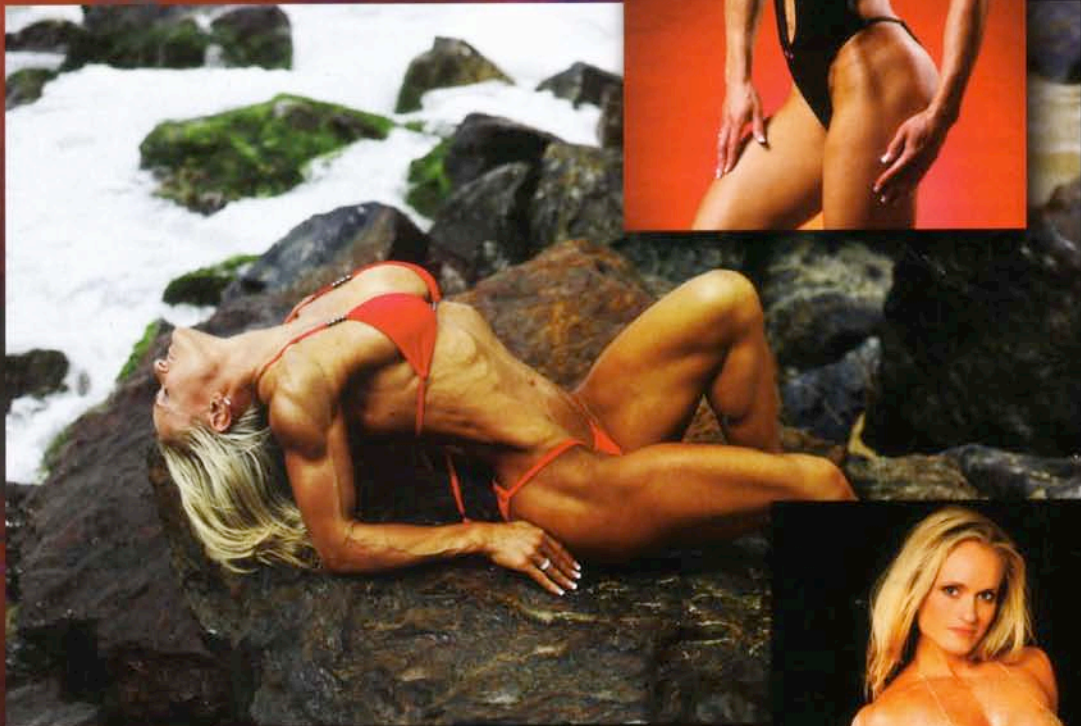


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