

1980 Mr. Olympia

More has been said and written about this questionable competition than any other Mr. Olympia contest, and if you add these comments to the 1981 Olympia competition you get the most controversial two years in competitive bodybuilding ever. In my mind Arnold didn't deserve to win in 1980 nor did Colombu deserve to win in 1981.

Did I deserve to win? I was in great shape, but I could have been better. With my mind set on winning four Mr. Olympia titles I stood in my living room at our Palm Springs house looking out at the pool. It was early August, and I was right on schedule with my Olympia preparation. 208 pounds rock hard and angry about my life of deprivation and sacrifice.

"Oh hell, another 8 weeks of torture to look forward to" I said to myself as I kneeled to sit in the lawn chair near the edge of the pool. As I did the chair slid into the pool with me in it. I felt a hard bump in the groin and sunk to the bottom, dazed. Crawling out there was blood gushing from my penis. The bulbous urethra was smashed. Christine rushed me to the hospital, "keep saying your mantra" she advised.

Four hours later the doctor showed up, he'd been golfing. The nurses had been taking turns squeezing my penis to control the bleeding, but it wasn't working too well. Finally, the doctor taped me in such a way that pressure was put on the urethra area. The bleeding stopped, a catheter was inserted, and I went into shock.

Passing out, I thought I was dying. There was a lot of light, and I felt free of all cares and worries. "I could check out right now" I thought and then woke up in hospital bed. I was there at least a day (don't quite remember) and didn't know what to think or do. So, I called Arnold. He'd given me contest advice for the last several years and I really need it now.

"The word is at Gold's Gym that you took so many steroids your dick exploded!" Arnold laughed. I expected derisive remarks from the Gold's animal pit contingency and explained my situation. "What do you think I should do?" I asked the Oak.

"You should go to Australia and defend your title" he told me. "You are training hard, are you going to compete?" I asked. "No, I'll be there doing the TV commentary for CBS" he told me.

To further compound bad advises, my doctor told me I'd be OK to compete in 8 weeks. As it turned out I lost a good 15 pounds because of the accident, the extra muscle mass I'd added was gone. Would I be good enough to win?

A catheter had been installed in my urinary tract and it was anything but comfortable. "How long does this need to stay in?" I asked my doctor. "Six weeks is normal." He answered. "How about 6 days, I have to train for the Mr. Olympia". So out came the catheter and I went home feeling skinny and weak.

Immediately I called Canada as I had a posing exhibition scheduled for the following weekend. No way I'd be able to do that without having trained for it, I better cancel I thought. But I learned they couldn't get a replacement, so I had to do it. Then lying on my sofa, the bleeding started up again and lasted 12 hours.

Phoning my doctor, he told me a small blood vessel probably ruptured and to just stay still until the bleeding stops. "The problem is that you don't know how to be sick. You need to realize your condition before you can heal." He was right I accepted my fate.

It was a lot of lying around for the next few days. Should I even go to Australia? Arnold and even my doctor said I'd be able to compete. Problem was I didn't know if and when the bleeding would start up once I began training. But I wasn't ready to start yet, a few more days of rest up to the Wednesday before we left for Canada, and I got in one workout which consisted of walking one mile. We flew to

Toronto, I posed, and the audience wondered how I ever won Mr. Olympia looking like I'd just gotten out of the hospital (which was actually the case). Then we flew to Calgary for a seminar, and I was exhausted. But after resting a few days at home I started weight training again. I'd lost a good 15 pounds, but my strength came back pretty fast. I'd do a set and then open my shorts to check if my penis was bleeding. Luckily, it wasn't.

Two weeks later I had an exhibition in Philadelphia and people who saw me in Canada couldn't believe the transformation. Talking with Robbie Robinson backstage, he told me he wasn't going to Australia to compete. "Why not" I asked. "I heard the contest is fixed for Arnold to win" he told me. I began to wonder if I'd made the right choice. Time would tell.

There was no way I could gain the muscle mass back in the remaining three weeks, I'd just have to go for maximum definition.

It was a long, long charter flight to Australia and all the competitors from the USA were on board. There was Mike Mentzer, cocky and sure he'd win, Dennis Tinerino preaching how he was saved in his jail cell by Jesus Christ after being arrested. Christ became his training partner and Dennis was confident he would win too. So was Chris Dickerson who thought he deserved to win since he'd been cleaning up in all the grand pris the entire year. Many were confident but I wasn't sure. I'd learned that hope was not enough but I hoped I was wrong. After all I was still Mr. Olympia.

But I knew although I was in great shape I wasn't as good as I could have been, and this made it more difficult to act like the winner on stage. I was feeling the stress and my face looked drawn and tired.

The morning before the competition there was a meeting of the competitors with the judges and officials at the Sydney Opera house where the contest was being held. "Same old crap" I said to myself. Having to listen to all this nonsense was unnerving and tedious since prejudging would be right after. The vote was to eliminate the under 200-pound class and I think this was the turning point in professional competitive bodybuilding. Now everybody had to weigh over 200 (the more the better) to stand a chance and they would only be judged in a single group all together. As the meeting dragged on Arnold and Mentzer began arguing. Mentzer said something derogatory to Arnold which I don't remember, and Arnold replied, "You didn't win Olympia last year because your waist was hanging way out, and you won't win it this year for the same reason." With that Mentzer lunged at Arnold and several of the officials including Bill Pearl broke it up.

Finally, the pre-judging started. As we stood outside the dressing rooms there was Arnold with his gym bag which removed all doubt that he'd entered. "Do you want to share a dressing room with me Frank? He asked. "Why are you going to try to psych me out?" "No were making a video (*Arnold's comeback*) and I thought you might like to be in it," Arnold retorted." "I'll pass" I answered and retired to a private room while Tom Platz joined Arnold for a co-starring role in his film. I wondered why Arnold had misled me and gave me the 'wrong advices.' Was he getting even for my statement on ABC tv when he asked me how it felt to win Mr. Olympia for the third time and I answered, "It feels even better than when I beat you for Mr. Universe?"