

Mr/Ms Minnesota Bench Press Open

6/15/01 Minneapolis Convention Center

July 14th 2001

Director Cal Lundberg

A few months ago I was approached by Dennis Green to with an idea of bringing Powerlifting together with a Bodybuilding show. I found this idea interesting to say the least. The show that we where going to become a part of was the Mr/Ms Minnesota Bodybuilding show. This as many of you might know is a well established event in the bodybuilding world. What made this idea even more interesting was that this bodybuilding show was drug tested one. It looked like both events would work well together.

The event details where agreed on and we proceeded ahead. The one draw back we had was the late promotion of this event. The event was only advertised a month ahead of time. This effected turnout, but it did not effect quality.

This event took place in downtown Minneapolis at the Minneapolis Convention Center. When I got to the venue I could not believe what I saw. Fans of the bodybuilding show where already flowing in. The platform for our contest I saw was already being set up. When I walked in I had to look around a few times. The venue would be great for a national meet that could easy hold thousands of people. On one side of the venue there was a large stage for the Bodybuilding show, at another corner I saw a rock band getting ready to play. I also saw many tables selling everything from drinks, food, cloths and books. This event looked like the Lollapalooza of strength.

I walked around and got a chance to talk to some friends from both sports. I talked with some of the competitors that where getting ready for the body building show. Many of them where very interested in what we where bringing to the show and wanted to know more about Powerlifting. Our

conversations also turned towards drug testing. I found it surprising given the stereotypes that many have about Body Building and the use of drugs. It became clear that Bodybuilders and Power lifters alike share the same goal to be drug free.

Our event was to start and I found myself running around helping people get bench shirts on. I was called to the platform to judge and the lifting began. I was joined by Steve Johnson and Shawn Cain. Spotters and loaders where Tony Williams (and I forget the other guy's name). Marv Gordon and Sandra Perron were helping out lifters to the platform and Jim Cahill announced.

I first noticed teen lifters Joshua Grant and Dan Pope. Both lifters where under 165 doing some awesome weight. Dan finished with a 290 just missing 300 on his 3rd attempt. Josh managed to blast up a 325 for a state record (upon age verification). The well known 181 master lifter James Marispini came to stage looking like he meant business. Very intense he came to stage and set up. With the most narrow grip I have ever seen a bencher have he attempted 370 but missed it. For some reason it looked like he didn't have the strength for it. I thought for a second that he opened up too high, boy was I wrong. James came back and destroyed 370 for a second and got 390 for a third for the best lifter award.

Other great lifting I noticed was Keith Belisie from Wisconsin. Keith has done great things in full Powerlifting meets and it seems he has improved one of the great strengths that he has with a very solid 405 bench.

Jake Prazak 220's from Iowa came to stage and loaded a very large 385 bench. He took 385 for a ride but missed his pause. It seemed he had plenty of power left in him. He then loaded the bar to 415 then 420 for his second and third attempts which met the same fate. I hope to see him back again next year, he shows promise.

Newcomer Kelly Franklin came to represent the women in this contest started out with a 250 bench. This lift came up very easy and many in the crowd screamed out "put some weight on the bar". After the lift she had a very visible smile on her face and did just that. She made her second attempt of 285 and rode it up very easily. This breaks the women's 198+ record by 85 pounds! For her 3rd she took on 300 pounds but ran out of gas. I would say that will be the lift she gets at her next meet

This event shows some major promise for the future. I look forward to seeing many new faces at this meet next year. Thanks everyone for coming out and making this happen.

Brad Madvig