

N i c k S c o t t ' 0 5

Recent Alumni Award

For completing your undergraduate degree in Business Administration at Ottawa University in 2005;

For overcoming a debilitating tragedy and discouragement;

For your life's devotion to inspire and give hope to others, transforming their disabilities into possABILITIES;

For your achievement as the only wheelchair bodybuilder in the world to hold professional wheelchair bodybuilding cards from two bodybuilding organizations;

For your additional achievements as a professional speaker, author, champion bodybuilder, wheelchair ballroom dancer, and personal trainer;

For being one of the only fitness trainers in the world to design workouts specifically for disabled athletes;

For your efforts to include wheelchair bodybuilding as the first professional disabled sport in the world to be contested on the same stage as other professional sports;

For your leadership in creating a wheelchair bodybuilding camp for teens at the Shriners Hospital of Chicago, the first ever of its kind;

For serving as CEO, president and founder of Wheelchair Athletics Foundation, which supports the wheelchair athletic experience through activities for children, adults and veterans;

For these and other notable accomplishments, the officers and members of the Ottawa University Alumni Association on this 25th day of October, 2013, proudly award you, Nick Scott '05, with the 2013 Recent Alumni Award.





Shriners Hospitals
for Children®

Chicago
Pediatric Specialty Care

Orthopaedics
Spinal Cord Injury
Cleft Lip & Palate

It is my sincere pleasure to recommend to you, Nick Scott!

Nick sustained a spinal cord injury (SCI) at 16 years of age. He was involved in a motor vehicle crash that resulted in paraplegia. At the time of injury, Nick was a robust, active, football playing teenage boy. Sustaining a SCI resulted in many changes for him including the use of a manual wheelchair for mobility. Nick struggled with his adjustment to injury and became sedentary, overweight, and depressed. But Nick is a fighter and with support, he came back with a vengeance not only for his own benefit but for the benefit of others, as well!

As the Director of the Spinal Cord Injury Program at Shriners Hospital for Children in Chicago, I have known Nick Scott since shortly after he sustained his traumatic injury. He has taken a tragic life event and turned it into an opportunity both for himself and for others. I know Nick as a patient, an athlete, a scuba diver, and even as a colleague. Nick has given much of himself to be a leader and mentor for young men and women with disabilities.

Nick delivers a story and a message that is powerful for those with disabilities! Dedicated to enhancing the sport of wheelchair bodybuilding, Nick has not only become an expert in the field, he has also committed himself to enhancing the lives of other young men and women with physical disabilities. Nick's positive energy and unstoppable passion for ensuring health and fitness helped him create the first ever Wheelchair Bodybuilding Camp at Shriners Hospital for Children, Chicago. This camp brought teens with spinal cord injury together for intensive health and fitness training. Nick led the group by teaching proper performance nutrition, strength training, exercise & bodybuilding routines, and by acting as a role model and showing that no obstacle is too great! Nick willingly gives back to the rehabilitation program that benefitted him through volunteering his time for this type of camp experience and by sharing his personal story as a motivational speaker for our patients, our staff, our Shriners, and our donors.

Vested in helping others with mobility impairments, Nick speaks openly and honestly as he willingly shares his personal experience to benefit others. Nick amazes people when they hear him speak and see his ability to put his vision into practice. In addition to our work together in the arena of wheelchair bodybuilding, Nick has also chartered new territory when he teamed up with a professional dancer and brought wheelchair to our rehabilitation center. He is setting a precedent for wheelchair ballroom dance – and willingly shared this new passion by teaching a Wheelchair Ballroom Dance Workshop for adolescents with spinal cord injury at Shriners Hospital, Chicago!

Nick's mission is to bring awareness and exposure to the sport of wheelchair bodybuilding and enhance overall fitness and participation in the community for those with mobility impairments. Nick is a professional bodybuilder, a motivational speaker, the founder and President of Wheelchair Bodybuilding, Inc., a peer mentor and role model to youth with SCI and mobility impairments, and an all-around fabulous individual! He has taken a traumatic life event and turned it into an opportunity to improve himself and the world!

When I think of the quote by Marshal Ferdinand Foch, 'the most powerful weapon on earth is the human soul on fire'.....I think of Nick Scott!!!"

Sincerely,

Sara J. Klaas, MSW, C-ASWCM
Director, Spinal Cord Injury Service



World Champion Wheelchair Bodybuilder Serves as Role Model to SHC Patients

It isn't every day you're offered the chance to meet your hero. For six Shriners Hospitals for Children patients, however, not only were they introduced to Wheelchair Bodybuilding Champion Nick Scott, but they spent a week learning nutrition and fitness techniques from the role model.

Nick, an Ottawa, Kansas native, was a patient at SHC from 1999-2003 after sustaining a T-12 spinal cord injury resulting from an automotive accident in August of 1998. Reflecting on the day he was told he was paraplegic Nick says, "A part of me died, yet another part of me was born." Having the choice to give up or remain positive, Nick graciously chose the latter.

In fall of 2005 Nick began bodybuilding, and soon became a pro in the sport entering and posing for championship competitions. Nick has since achieved prestigious titles such as USA Wheelchair Championship for Heavy Weight. Perhaps most impressive is Nick's entrepreneurship: he produced and manages the wheelchair body building website www.wheelchair-bodybuilding.com. As a Certified Fitness Consultant and Specialist in Performance Nutrition, Nick is both a fitness trainer and often a guest speaker at special events; most recently at our Chicago hospital.

November 3-7, 2008, served as Wheelchair Bodybuilding Week for spinal cord injury patients at SHC. The idea came from Spinal Cord Injury Medical Director Dr. Lawrence Vogel and Director of Spinal Cord Injury Services Sara J. Klaas.



Above, Nick (center) is pictured with the group as they complete an upper-extremity exercise during their visit.

Participating patients came from Oklahoma, Kentucky, Indiana, Michigan and Illinois. Using the hospital as home base the week included daily workouts with Nick, outings to local fitness centers, massages from Advanced Physical Medicine, and nutrition training with SHC dietitians. We owe Sara our gratitude for charting a well-rounded itinerary and working with Nick to plan and run the event. A special thanks to Brad Rosell, Recreation Therapist; Mike Hannah, RN; Joel Lowrie, RN; Chris Ellis, CNA; Joe Krzak, Kinesiologist; Victoria Rosenfeld, Clinical Dietitian, and other staff who pitched in to help make the week a success.



Above, Nick Scott, Sara J. Klaas, and Brad Rosell are pictured with "the boys" as they pose in their Wheelchair Bodybuilding t-shirts.

Along with sore muscles, the patients came away from Bodybuilding Week with newfound confidence. Julio Maldonado Wilbanks, from Crown Point, IN, said, "I feel like I want to go home and do more and be more active. I picked up some great techniques this week, and watching the other guys challenge themselves encouraged me to do the same."

In addition to giving his time and talent, Nick worked with The Burn Machine, a company specializing in the asymmetrical barbell system, to donate five speed bags, three cross-trainers, and one ultimate burn machine to the hospital: equipment used for upper-body workouts. We salute Nick and our newest wheelchair bodybuilders for their examples in staying healthy, having a positive attitude, and learning to live life to the fullest.

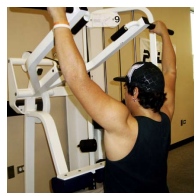
Robert O. Kuehn
Chairman of the Board of Governors, SHC - Chicago
Shriners Hospitals for Children
December 2008

Feel the Burn:

The Creation of a Wheelchair Bodybuilding Camp

Sara J. Klaas, MSW, C-ASWCM, Chicago, Ill., USA ¹ | Brad Rosell, MS, CTRS, Chicago, Ill., USA ¹ | Nick Scott, AA, Ottawa, Kan., USA ²

¹ Shriners Hospitals for Children – Chicago, Chicago, IL, USA | ² 2009 Heavyweight National Wheelchair Bodybuilding Champion



Objective

Assist adolescent males with spinal cord injury (SCI) in learning about health and fitness through wheelchair bodybuilding.

Design

A one week intensive camp that focused on increasing knowledge and skills around fitness, nutrition, and strengthening.

Participants/Methods

Six participants, ages 16-19 years, with no previous bodybuilding experience.

Results

Participants attended a week long camp that included workshops on nutrition, fitness, body-image, and overall strengthening as well as daily cardio and strength training. Participants learned about equipment and how to effectively access local health clubs. Bodybuilding techniques were taught and workouts were led by a USA Wheelchair Champion Heavy Weight body builder – a peer mentor. Personal trainers and a certified sports dietician assessed the participants individually and provided individual programs for each. To complete the camp experience, each participant showed their newly learned bodybuilding poses in a guest posing session. Program evaluations were completed. Likert scale responses showed a “very good” (4.3/5.0) overall rating. Participants found bodybuilding basics (4.6/5.0), cardio and weight training sessions (4.6/5.0), and a community outing for endurance and speed training (4.6/5.0) as the most beneficial activities. A high rating (4.4/5.0) was noted for an outing to a wellness center and healthy cooking class. Participants felt the outing to learn about healthy choices for nutrition at a nearby restaurant was least beneficial (3.0/5.0). Web-based training and follow-up with these participants by the peer mentor will be available post camp experience.

Conclusion

Providing creative and unique programs for those with spinal cord injury is essential in the pediatric setting. Using a positive peer mentor and offering a camp-like setting appears to enhance learning and make fitness fun.



Shriners Hospitals
for Children™

Bodybuilding Week Itinerary

Monday

2:00 pm Welcome meeting and Introductions
2:30 pm Bodybuilding Basics & Overview
4:30 pm Nutrition and Sports Dietetics Talk
6:00 pm Healthy Choices Dinner at Apple-Bees
7:30 pm Hang Time

Tuesday

8:00 am MedGem
8:30 am Cardio
9:30 am Breakfast
10:00 am Personal Fitness Consultations
11:30 am Lunch
1:00 pm Out-trip to Fitness Center
5:00 pm Dinner at SHC
6:00 pm Work-out & Burn Machine Representatives

Wednesday

8:00 am Breakfast
9:00 am Fitness Testing at Fitness Center
11:30 am Lunch
1:00 pm Out-trip to Hospital based Fitness Center
5:30 pm Cooking Class
7:30 pm Evening Massages

Thursday

8:00 am MedGem
8:30 am Cardio
9:30 am Breakfast: All You Need to Know about Supplements
10:30 am Weights
11:30 am Lunch
1:30 pm Laser Tag for Speed and Endurance
6:00 pm Dinner on the Road

Friday

8:30 am Breakfast with wrap up, reflections, and evaluation of the week
10:00 am Wheelchair Bodybuilding In-service and Guest Posing



Shriners Hospitals
for Children®

Wheelchair Dance Comes to Shriners Hospitals for Children® — Chicago



Reality shows like “Dancing with the Stars” captivate millions of American television viewers. The fascination with watching a newcomer learn to dance professionally has inspired many fans to pursue formal training. Patients with spinal cord injuries (SCI) at Shriners Hospitals for Children® — Chicago joined the craze by participating in the first-ever Wheelchair Dance Day in December.

The event was the brainchild of Sara J. Klaas, director of SCI services, and former patient Nick Scott, who is a professional wheelchair bodybuilder. Scott became involved

with wheelchair dance last year when he met Aubree Marchione, a professional dancer and actress. The two plan to compete in the Wheelchair Dancesport at the Paralympics in Germany in November 2010. Marchione was eager to teach wheelchair dance to the patients at Shriners Hospitals for Children® — Chicago.

“Wheelchair ballroom dance is an activity that has physical, mental and social benefits,” Marchione explained. “These kids get the chance to connect with other people while dancing, and it is an activity that integrates people with disabilities and people without disabilities, which I think is very important.”

Six patients – Tyler, Matthew, Jonathon, K.J., Kerstine, and Imperio – teamed up with hospital staff to learn dances from Scott and Marchione. After three hours of practice, the group performed in front of parents, patients, hospital staff and visitors. Then, Scott and Marchione took to the dance floor for the final performance.

“Everyone did extremely well – standing partners too – and it was the fastest learning class that I have ever taught,” Marchione said. “I think all of them have potential to be really great dancers! The class was a lot of fun because everyone had such a positive attitude and was open-minded to learn something different, just like Nick was when I first met him.”

Shriners Hospitals for Children® — Chicago offers several other programs designed to expand the horizons of patients with spinal cord injury. One of those programs is GLAHM (Good Life and Healthy Mind) Camp, which is a week filled with makeovers, health and wellness education and nights on the town for young women. Wheelchair Bodybuilding Camp is offered to young men, featuring five days of learning about nutrition, fitness options and healthy living.

“These programs get our patients motivated to move and try something new,” Klaas said. “The ultimate goal is to inspire them and build their confidence. When they believe in themselves, they can tackle the challenges their lives throw their way.”

www.shrinershospitals.org

AROUND THE HOUSE

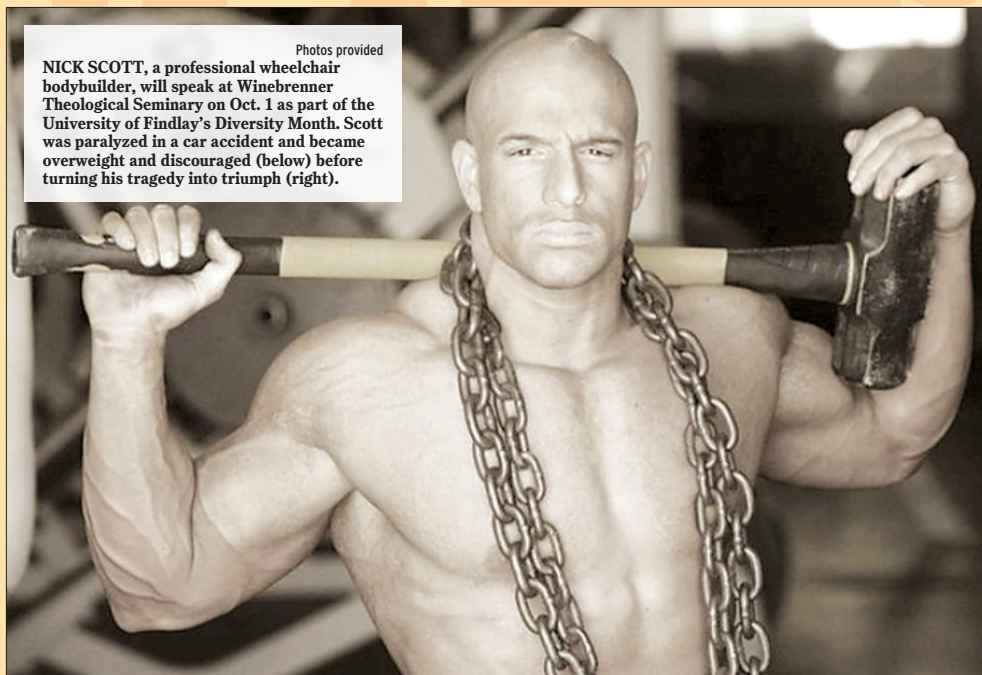
EEK! What to do when there's a mouse in the house | E4

WEEKEND

BETTER LIVING

Don't wait for a water problem to check your foundation | E8

'Anything is Possible! The Nick Scott Story'



Photos provided
NICK SCOTT, a professional wheelchair bodybuilder, will speak at Winebrenner Theological Seminary on Oct. 1 as part of the University of Findlay's Diversity Month. Scott was paralyzed in a car accident and became overweight and discouraged (below) before turning his tragedy into triumph (right).

Professional wheelchair bodybuilder to speak at UF Oct. 1

Professional wheelchair bodybuilder Nick Scott will present "Anything is Possible! The Nick Scott Story" as part of the University of Findlay's Diversity Month activities at 8 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 1, in Winebrenner Theological Seminary.

Admission is free. Community members are welcome. Doors open at 7:30 p.m.

At the age of 16, Scott was an ordinary teenager with an interest in athletics when a near-fatal traffic accident left him wheelchair-bound. After the accident, Scott became overweight and discouraged, but through determination and personal strength, he used his tragedy to turn his life into a triumph.

Now, Scott uses his insight to help others "awaken the beast within themselves" to achieve their personal goals. Scott has been in a wheelchair for all of his adult life, trav-

eled in a wheelchair and became a professional wheelchair bodybuilder, giving him a unique perspective.

Since March 2006, Scott has competed and guest-posed at nearly 100 bodybuilding shows around the world. Scott earned a WBFF Pro Card in July 2009, and in March 2011, he won the overall title at the 2011 NPC Wheelchair Nationals in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. After that, he earned an IFBB Pro Card in wheelchair bodybuilder. Scott is the only wheelchair bodybuilder in the world who holds two different professional wheelchair bodybuilding cards from two bodybuilding organizations.

Scott will arrive in Findlay directly from Las Vegas, where he will be attending a major professional athletes conference. He will compete in a major bodybuilding competition on Oct. 12.



A good time for a good cause

Grace Speaks fundraising event Oct. 5 at the Cube

The day of Oct. 5 is going to be a busy one at the Cube in Findlay as Grace-Speak.org welcomes the Detroit Red Wing Alumni Association to play in a charity hockey game to raise funds and awareness about the need for affordable speech therapy for children. But hockey is only part of what is happening that day as a full day's activities are planned for the entire family to enjoy.

Classic car enthusiasts take note as there will be a classic car cruise and show in the parking lot from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m. when the puck drops. Cruise-in registration of \$5 begins at noon.

The doors to the arena will be opened at 2 p.m. to give the public time to check out the silent auction and basket raffle items that will be on display in the arena concourse, the free children's activity room and Detroit Red Wing Alumni memorabilia. There will also be walk up ticket sales for admission to the game. General admission tickets will be available at the door for \$10.

Start time for the hockey game is 3 p.m., but the fun and activities don't stop there. The game is going to be played in two halves instead of the traditional three periods. During the intermission, the fans in

the stands will be entertained by a performance by the Gliding Stars of Findlay. At the end of game, after announcing the silent auction, 50/50 and basket raffle winners, those that purchased the \$50 VIP tickets will head to the VIP tent outside the arena to enjoy dinner, drinks and dancing, catered by Bistro on Main and entertainment by The Funk Factory until 9 p.m.

Proceeds raised from the day will benefit Grace Speaks, Chromosome 18 Registry & Research Society and Gliding Stars of Findlay.

For further information, contact Nicole Leslie, treasurer of Grace Speaks via email at NML1110@hotmail.com, or phone at 419-348-4083. Information is also available online at www.Grace-Speaks.org.



Grace Speaks is a nonprofit charity organization named after 6-year-old Grace Leslie who is afflicted with Chromosome 18Q Deletion. It affects her motor skills and severely affects her ability to speak. The purpose of Grace Speaks is to raise funds to help defray the cost of speech therapy in the Hancock County area. Grace Speaks also gives back to the organizations that have helped Grace along the way, most notably the Chromosome 18 Registry and Research Society based in San Antonio, Texas, along with the Gliding Stars of Findlay. Information regarding Grace Speaks, Chromosome 18Q Deletion, and the Gliding Stars of Findlay can be found by logging onto www.Grace-Speaks.org.

FHS alumni show their school spirit

An army of laughs



Wheelchair bodybuilder featured in TIME magazine project

By CRYSTAL HERBER



A wheelchair-bound Ottawa athlete can chalk up another accomplishment. He now has been featured in a national magazine.

Black-and-white photos and a four-minute video augment a short essay for TIME magazine that tells the story of Nick Scott, 30, Ottawa, and his struggle to become one of the top wheelchair bodybuilders in the world. Approached last March by a TIME magazine photographer, Scott said he was happy to tell them his story and the story of the sport he loves.

“We met up and they interviewed me and it went in the direction of where originally they wanted to do a story on my life, but I asked them if they would do a story on wheelchair bodybuilding instead and they accepted it,” Scott, nicknamed The Beast, said.

Eager to shed light on the little-known sport of wheelchair bodybuilding, Scott said he was excited

about the opportunity to allow the TIME staff access to his passion. Scott played a key role in the development of the first-ever competition for the certified International Federation of BodyBuilders (IFBB) Pro Wheelchair Bodybuilders. He said he hopes the additional exposure through the TIME project will help more people become aware of the sport and show their support.

The project, which began last March, was posted on TIME’s website — <http://lightbox.time.com/2012/10/15/wheelchair-bodybuilders/?iid=lb-gal-viewagn#1> — earlier this week. Since then, Scott said, he has received several emails about how his story has inspired people.

“Everybody is just really positive about the response because they never that knew there was such a thing, and it really opens their eyes that there’s really no excuses,” Scott, who was

paralyzed from the waist down after a 1998 automobile wreck, said. Scott was 16 at the time of the crash that changed his life.

The TIME photographer, Lauren Fleishman, employed the use of shadows and light to illustrate the intense sport of wheelchair bodybuilding. The black-and-white images show many bodybuilders in various stages of the bodybuilding competition, from pre-show preparation to posing practice to the awards ceremony. The photo essay was meant to show bodybuilding in a new light, Fleishman said in the essay.

“In showing a different side to it, it’s a way of connecting people, a way of changing their perceptions about the sport,” Fleishman said in the essay.

The project documents Scott and several other wheelchair bodybuilders at the 2012 IFBB Pro Wheelchair championships Oct. 13 in Houston, an event open only to Scott and the dozen other men who have qualified as pros. Scott took second place in the event, making him the second best wheelchair bodybuilder in the world.

After seeing the project, Scott said he was very pleased with how more than six months’ worth of work turned out.

“I loved the video, and I love how everything came about. They did an amazing job,” Scott said. “I remember the morning I saw it I called her at like 6 o’clock my time, which is like 7 o’clock their time, and we talked and I told her my thoughts and that I was so blown away by everything.”

Wheelchair Bodybuilders Muscle Their Way to the Top

By Lily Rothman



When he was 16, Nick Scott was in a near-fatal car accident. He was left paralyzed from the waist down. Nonetheless, Scott, now 30, is also known in certain circles—namely, the wheelchair bodybuilding world, a universe in which his is perhaps the most recognizable face—as “The Beast.” The Beast isn’t sure of his bench press limit, only because he hasn’t yet stopped reaching for more weight. The metaphor’s an obvious one, but true: “If you want something bad enough, nothings gonna stop you from not getting it,” he has said.

And The Beast wants to spread the word: he was instrumental in the

creation of the first-ever competition for certified International Federation of BodyBuilders (IFBB) Pro Wheelchair Bodybuilders, which was held last fall. The 2012 IFBB Pro Wheelchair championships took place Oct. 13 in Houston, an event open only to Scott and the dozen other men who have qualified as pros. Harold Kelley was named the winner in 2011 and 2012.

Photographer Lauren Fleishman has been documenting the sport for over a year, including that first competition. She first heard about wheelchair bodybuilding via a phone call from her cousin, who works in a hotel where a bodybuilding event took

place. “I got so excited that I hung up the phone and began researching the sport,” she says.

Fleishman says that when she first began exploring the topic, she noticed that almost all of the photographs of bodybuilders, at least the ones that she could find, portrayed the participants in an almost grotesque manner. She wanted to avoid that look. “In showing a different side to it, it’s a way of connecting people, a way of changing their perceptions about the sport.”

Wheelchair bodybuilding competitions date back about 15 years, and both amateurs and professionals compete in worldwide events throughout the

year. After following the participants for months, Fleishman says that, besides the normal suspense that comes with any competitive event, there’s another layer to it. “Seeing what being on stage does for them, they really, really shine,” she says. “You have a whole range of reasons why they compete, but the dedication and perseverance is really inspiring.” And it’s not just on stage: last May, in a Walmart in Texas, Fleishman accompanied Scott—the de facto spokesman for the sport—when he went to purchase batteries for his wheelchair, which is rigged to light up when he performs. Outside the store, a teenage boy, also in a wheelchair, approached Scott to say that he hoped one day to be like him. “You can obviously see that Nick has muscles,” says Fleishman. “The kid was impressed. It was a really nice moment to see that.”

But there has been one drawback to immersion in the wheelchair bodybuilding community during her year of photographing the project—and, as the work continues, it may only get worse. “It’s really hard,” Fleishman says, “because you want them all to win.”

Nick Scott ready to
pump some iron





STAYING STRONG

BY ARIELLE CASTILLO

CATASTROPHIC INJURIES
MAY HAVE ROBBED THEM OF
THEIR ABILITY TO WALK,
BUT FOR PARTICIPANTS IN
THE LITTLE-KNOWN SPORT OF
WHEELCHAIR BODYBUILDING,
THE KEY TO PHYSICAL PROWESS
IS MENTAL TOUGHNESS.

A

NICK SCOTT STARED AT A HOSPITAL CEILING, HIS HAND HOVERING NEAR A BUTTON delivering intravenous pain-killers, he pondered what seemed like the end of his life not long after it had begun. At just 16 years old, his personal history now was cleaved almost neatly into two halves — not unlike his spinal cord.

It was 1998, and Scott, a typical heartland high school football star, had been piloting his Buick Skylark across a bridge to team practice near tiny Pomona, Kan., when his left front tire blew out. Jerking the wheel quickly to avoid colliding with an oncoming car, he veered into a ditch instead. The impact threw him from the car, which then flipped five and a half times, clipping him and breaking his back in the process. Once a varsity lineman, he now faced life as a paraplegic with a T12-L1 lower-spine injury, with specialists concluding he would never regain use of his legs.

Now, at age 31, he still avoids eye contact while discussing the emotional depths to which he plunged in the aftermath. “After my accident,” he says, “I felt like I had nothing.” But while doctors wrote him off as forever physically broken, Scott’s body says otherwise. Meaty forearms connect to swollen biceps; thick trapezius muscles squeeze out of the neck opening of his T-shirt. Pass by him quickly, and you’d probably think he was a near-contest-ready bodybuilder who just happened to be sitting down.

In fact, that’s what he is. Scott is the most visible athlete from an underground sport that encapsulates all of the drama of the human condition: wheelchair bodybuilding. If bodybuilding is a fringe pursuit, its wheelchair subculture is even more fringe within it — but it’s also more inspiring.

At a scattered handful of events throughout the country, a hard-core clan of paraplegic athletes — defined for competition purposes as anyone with impairment in both legs — gather to show off iron-honed physiques and even more ironclad will. When so many people

make excuses for their lack of physical activity, Scott and his cohorts show them up with one flexed, oiled pec.

“I was put in a situation, and I was dealt a hand. You can look at it

as negative or positive. But the reality is: It doesn’t really matter,” Scott says. “To leave a legacy, you’ve got to do stuff that’s unheard of. You have to do the unthinkable and do the stuff you fear. That’s what this is about — pushing beyond.”

Scott is the closest thing the sport has to a celebrity, boasting tens of thousands of YouTube views and sponsorships from companies like MusclePharm and BodyBuilding.com, the sport’s largest Web portal. Though he lives in exurban Ottawa, Kan., he travels constantly, evangelizing at fitness events and motivational speaking gigs. He’s even got a snappy nickname: “Beast,” which he sports on a license plate tacked to the back of his neon-lit competition chair. But he’s far from the only competitor in the sport.

In fact, its organization predates his participation. South Florida bodybuilding promoter Frank Dalto mounted the first official wheelchair bodybuilding show, the NPC Wheelchair Nationals, in 1994. In the ’90s, the sport’s stars included names like Ludovic Marchand and Victor Konovalov, whose ascent dovetailed neatly with that of the Internet — and a new generation of wheelchair athletes looking to overcome their circumstances.

Most of today’s wheelchair bodybuilders, Scott included, arrived at the sport through the magic of search engines, but all came through different paths to physical improvement. Some are former athletes in various sports looking for new challenges under new conditions. Some are longtime wheelchair users coming to formal exercise for the first time. Others battle to overcome neurological difficulties they’ve faced from birth.

Still, all compete in classes divided only by weight — which means, on top of everything else, there’s an uneven playing field for competitors. “It’s crazy how in the same sport, you’ve got two injured individuals looking at it from two different perspectives,” says Neil Picone, a 32-year-old wheelchair bodybuilding middleweight champion and overall champion from Clinton, N.J. “But so many good things come out of this that an able-bodied athlete couldn’t even fathom.”

Beyond just the physical benefits, the competitions provide people with renewed purpose at a moment when there often seems to be little. Scott’s road to redemption,

PUMPING IRON: Scott before (top) and after (bottom) his weightlifting regimen





FROM LEFT: Scott with Arnold Schwarzenegger at the 2009 Arnold Sports Festival and dancing with Aubree Marchione at the 2010 IPC Wheelchair Dance Sport World Championships in Hanover, Germany

for example, started with the basic bench press, a move he had loved doing in his high school gym. He recalls relearning the movement all over again. His center of balance had shifted; he no longer could press his feet against the ground and drive through them for support. But as he added weights to the barbell, his confidence grew, and he eventually began to win bench-press events in which he was the only entrant in a wheelchair. “To have something to strive for,” he says. “That’s what really snapped me out of my depression.”

The strength, both mental and physical, he found there soon drove him to work harder through rehab — and, despite his prognosis, he regained some use of his upper legs, walking across the stage to retrieve his high school diploma in 2000. A few years later, when he discovered wheelchair bodybuilding while surfing the Web, the challenge of focusing on physique rather than just brute strength seemed almost absurd, but not inconceivable.

Picone recalls a similar glimmer of hope in 2007. The then-26-year-old lost control of his Yamaha R6 motorcycle during a track race, hitting a concrete wall, severing his spinal cord and fracturing several ribs and neck vertebrae. “I remember laying in the hospital bed and just Googling stuff I could do. Everything I came across didn’t really stick with me as much as the bodybuilding did, because it was one of those sports where you couldn’t really fathom somebody in a chair being able to accomplish it,” he says. “I thought, ‘Wow, that’s got to be a huge pain in the [butt] — so I’ve got to do it.’”

Still, Picone and his peers may have not realized just how much of a pain it would be at the outset. For the average bodybuilder outside of a wheelchair, bringing one’s “best package,” or a winning physique, to the stage is an unpredictable and often heartbreaking art. Athletes are judged totally subjectively, on factors like individual muscle shape and fullness, size and “conditioning,” the layer of fat covering the muscles. Even the quality of one’s stage tan can increase or decrease the total score.

To compensate for differing levels of leg function, wheelchair bodybuilders are judged only from the waist up. Still, because no two athletes have the exact same abilities or limitations, there’s no standard program for building a championship torso. “It’s been an uphill battle figuring out how to get around the gym differently and figure out all the main exercises without injury,” Picone says. “There are a lot of variables with balance and what-not to figure out now.”

“TO LEAVE A LEGACY, YOU’VE GOT TO DO STUFF THAT’S UNHEARD OF. YOU HAVE TO DO THE UNTHINKABLE AND DO THE STUFF YOU FEAR. THAT’S WHAT THIS IS ABOUT — PUSHING BEYOND.”

What’s more, there are virtually no trainers or competition coaches in the field yet who specialize only in wheelchair bodybuilding. Picone, for one, chose to hire a traditional bodybuilding trainer, Greg Peterson, at the famously hard-core Diamond Gym in Maplewood, N.J.

Others largely go it alone, piecing together training information from the Internet and figuring out their own move modifications. That’s partially what led Scott to start his website, WheelchairBodybuilding.com, which has, since 2006, grown to be more or less the official Web hub of the sport. “I know how difficult it is when you don’t have anything,” he says. “Nobody really helped me get into bodybuilding. I would ask people, but it was confusing.”

Like any other bodybuilder, wheelchair participants usually focus on one or two body parts per workout, hitting the gym most days of the week. Many basic exercises that are often done seated anyways, with dumbbells — say, lateral raises for the sides of the shoulders — generally can be performed without major changes.

Some moves, though, require a little more maneuvering. Rather than hoist himself onto a separate bench for

incline dumbbell curls, Scott might slide slightly down in his chair to approximate the effect. To do a lat pulldown to work his upper back, he pushes himself upward from his chair, grabs the pulldown bar and swings his body onto the bench below it, all in one motion. Scott also trains his upper legs, despite the fact that they go unjudged in competitions, by pulling himself onto a leg-press machine, positioning his feet and driving through his quadriceps.

"Any body part has at least one exercise that is a pain in the butt," Picone says. "Over time, you do become accustomed to the transfers, movements, balance and form issues. It's all second nature now."

All the hard work combined with an often Spartan diet of low fats, low carbohydrates and low variety all lead to the final goal: competition. And for wheelchair bodybuilders, there aren't many opportunities. The most well-known, without question, remains Dalto's show held annually in March in Palm Beach County, Fla. It's sanctioned by the largest federation for amateur bodybuilders, the National Physique Committee (NPC). In 2006, another NPC-sanctioned amateur show, the USA Wheelchair Championship, debuted in Metairie, La. While wheelchair athletes are welcomed at a handful of other federations' amateur events, these two are virtually the only ones in which an entrant is guaranteed some competition.

Finally, in 2011, Scott helped create the first pro competition for wheelchair bodybuilders, sanctioned by the NPC's parent body, the International Federation of Bodybuilding and Fitness (IFBB). Held in conjunction with an existing annual bodybuilding show hosted by promoter Lee Thompson, it's the one place where wheelchair bodybuilders have a shot at winning money. (First-place finishers collect \$3,000,

to compete in a separate division but, with the exception of a couple of athletes like 25-year-old Fallon Turner from Texarkana, Texas, females remain largely absent from the sport.)

In 2012, the year Picone won his pro card at the Wheelchair Nationals, the next to be kinged seemed like Adelfo Cerame Jr., a 30-year-old from Long Beach, Calif. Determined to make 2013 his year, the former forest firefighter who was injured in a 2005 car accident started his serious preparation

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some six months before the competition and deemed himself contest-ready two months prior to the actual event. He was the picture of zenlike happiness at the competition's prejudging, the morning session before an actual bodybuilding show where most of the placing decisions are actually made and where tensions often run high thanks to last-minute dehydration and carb depletion.

Cerame, instead, lounged in a black sweat suit, joked easily with friends and downed a slice of salty cheese pizza before hitting the night stage. Shirtless and covered in gold-flecked body paint, he happily hammed it up in his posing routine, shaking his ponytail loose and letting his shiny, black locks flow over his shoulders. Between required poses like the "front double bicep" — the quintessential bodybuilder arm flex — he lifted himself off his wheelchair seat, wiggling his hips in time to blaring hip-hop. It was enough to show off a shredded, ultra-defined torso that scored him the win for both his middleweight class and the entire show.

His showing also demonstrated the

good-natured feel of the wheelchair side of bodybuilding. Whereas bodybuilding can be isolating for many competitors, for wheelchair athletes, it's largely about camaraderie. "The whole pro thing was just a personal goal, like a bucket-list thing," Cerame says. "I never put it up on a pedestal or pushed anyone out of the way just so I could get it."

Indeed, most competitors seem to feel a responsibility to grow the sport, even as they pursue other personal and professional endeavors. Picone guest-poses at regular bodybuilding shows and gives speeches in his area, as does Cerame. Both counsel the recently injured.

Scott, meanwhile, earned a bachelor's degree in business administration in 2005 and has made promoting wheelchair athletics his life's work. He's pretty much the only wheelchair athlete to constantly press the flesh at major fitness-industry events, like March's Arnold Sports Festival March in Columbus, Ohio. There, he manned the booth for TeamBodyBuilding.com, shaking hands with an endless line of fans who discovered him online and networking with other mainstream companies for potential partnerships with wheelchair athletes.

His efforts are creating a noticeable breakthrough in the fitness industry. "The industry of bodybuilding itself hasn't been built for the wheelchair athlete," says Mick Skinner, the marketing-events and sponsorship manager for BodyBuilding.com who gave Scott his first major sponsorship in 2008. "[Nick] forced them to reconsider all of that, which, in all honesty, I don't think they wanted to do."

Increasing the sport's visibility, Scott and his peers hope, will motivate more people to their own individual greatness, whether they use a wheelchair or not. "I remember what it was like to first be injured. It sucked; it was freaking horrible. I had a busted neck, shattered ribs. But like anything, you come back stronger, and I'm a better person today because of all the nonsense and all the struggles, all the long nights and the pain," Picone says. "That's the one thing I hope someone can take away from me. Just do something that you love, that you've got a passion for, and run with it. I think that's all any of us wants." ■

@ To learn more about wheelchair bodybuilding and to get more information about training and competing, visit www.wheelchairbodybuilding.com

with smaller purses going to runners-up.) But in order to compete, an athlete first must receive an IFBB "pro card," a distinction earned by taking the overall win at one of the two NPC shows' open divisions.

For serious competitors, that's become the holy grail. For every champion at the Wheelchair Nationals, there are other hopefuls nipping at his heels. (Women are invited

ARIELLE CASTILLO is a freelance arts-and-culture writer based in Miami whose work has appeared in *Spin*, *Billboard*, *Rolling Stone*, *The Independent*, *Flaunt* and other publications. Her favorite lift is the dead lift.

Pomona native tries, dominates wheelchair ballroom dancing

By MEAGAN PATTON-PAULSON



The more opportunities you take, the more doors start opening.

That's what Pomona native Nick Scott says he has learned during the past few years of his life, especially with his most recent adventure — wheelchair ballroom dancing.

After a 1998 car accident, Scott was told it would be physically impossible to ever walk again. But he didn't let that diagnosis immobilize him.

He proved the doctors wrong when, with the assistance of crutches and his old football coach, he walked across the stage during his high school graduation in May 2000.

Scott went from 300 pounds and feeling defeated to physically fit and one of the greatest wheelchair bodybuilders — eventually becoming a

leading champion and promoter of the sport.

Now Scott, Ottawa, has been busy taking the wheelchair ballroom dancing scene by storm. He and his partner, Aubree Marchione, Philadelphia, have been dancing together since last June, and are currently undefeated in the country, he said.

Scott met his dancing partner at a modeling shoot in Ohio. The two exchanged business numbers, and about a week later she showed him a recording of an episode of "Dancing With The Stars," that she had recently been featured in.

"When I saw that, I was like, 'Wow!'" Scott said. "It was amazing."

The two have danced in Philadelphia, Kansas City, Columbus,

Ohio, and even Hanover, Germany.

They've even competed against JoAnn Fluke — another Ottawa native and co-founder of Groovability Inc., which provides a venue for individuals with physical disabilities in the Greater Kansas City area to dance with non-disabled partners.

"We compete against her and her partner, and she can't beat us," Scott said jokingly. "It's a friendly rivalry kind of thing, but it's funny how we both live here."

Last May, Scott published a book about his life, "Journey," and his story also was featured in a book, *Body by Design*, written by Kris Gethin.

That book is a 12-week diet and exercise program backed by real-life success stories, including Scott's.

On another front, however, Scott has decided to close his Ottawa business — Nitro Supplements, 401 S. Main St., Suite 2. The business opened last February, and offers protein powders, vitamins, minerals, fat-burners and healthy fats. Its last day of business will be Jan. 31, Scott said.

He's closing, he said, to focus on other opportunities.

"I was just getting too many different offers, and I want to focus my life on something else," he said.

His next adventure? Films, TV and movies, he said.

"I just like getting involved in a bunch of things and keep pushing, pushing, pushing and thinking about what's next," Scott said.

turning

into

"Back in August of 1998 I was involved in an accident that forever changed my life. The left front tire on my vehicle blew out and the vehicle rolled five-and-a-half times before coming to a stop. I was ejected through the driver's side window and eventually collided with my vehicle in mid-air." The outcome of the accident was a broken back and a damaged spine at T12 L1, requiring titanium rods to be vertically bolted to his spine. "I was diagnosed as paraplegic and told that it would be physically impossible to ever walk again. That day a part of me died; yet, at the same time, another part was born."

THE ROAD TO RECOVERY:

At a pivotal point in his life, Nick Scott had some choices to make. Where others may roll over and let life take the proverbial wheel, he chose to take control of his destiny. As a paraplegic, life would be different, but it wasn't over. With a "Lemons into lemonade" attitude, he reinvented himself and continued to push the limits of his physical boundaries. "At that point, it wasn't about the glass was half-empty or half-full; I was just grateful to have a glass. In the beginning, I used to ask myself repeatedly "Why me?" Over time I realized that I had been given the gift of a second chance."



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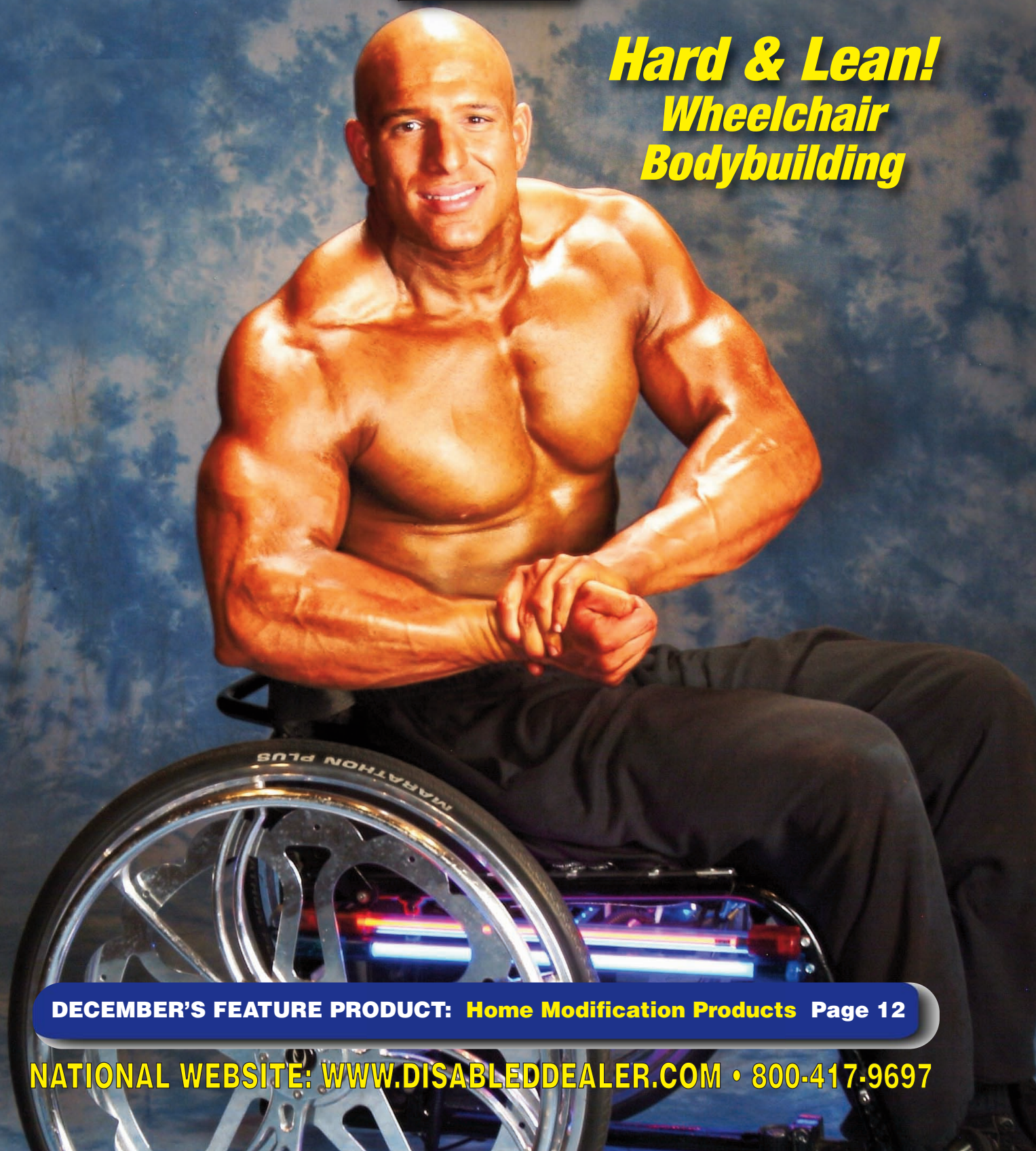


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Hard & Lean! Wheelchair Bodybuilding

by Stella Smith

Nick Scott is the foremost promoter of wheelchair bodybuilding. He is the founder and owner of the largest online wheelchair bodybuilding community www.wheelchair-bodybuilding.com, and a global promoter for the sport of wheelchair bodybuilding. As a wheelchair bodybuilder he is an active part of the bodybuilding scene, having competed in 24 shows in 19 national locations since March 2006.



Back in August of 1998 he was involved in an accident that forever changed his life. The left front tire on his vehicle blew out and the vehicle rolled five-and-a-half times before coming to a stop. Nick was ejected through the driver's side window, and eventually collided with his vehicle in mid-air. Nick was diagnosed as paraplegic (T12,L1) and told that it would be physically impossible for him to ever walk again. That day a part of him died; yet, at the same time, another part was born.

Wheelchair bodybuilding is very close to his heart because of the void it filled after his accident. Training in the gym helped Nick put the pieces of his life back together. All his goals for this sport come from the heart. Nick states "that's where bodybuilding lives, breathing new life into all of us".

Nick's mission is to bring more awareness and exposure to the sport of wheelchair bodybuilding, and he intends to lead by example. Wheelchair bodybuilding is his passion and his life. He has competed on stage at countless competitions and events, and has traveled across the United States to bring more awareness and exposure to the sport of wheelchair bodybuilding.

I asked Nick a few questions.

How does someone become a Wheelchair Bodybuilder?

You must have competed at least once. If you qualify, email me at nickscott@wheelchair-bodybuilding.com and I will add your biography to the Bios section of my website so everybody will know who you are. It's a great networking tool and you can be included for FREE!

What is the criteria to Compete?

To make things simple, just find a bodybuilding show that has a Wheelchair Division that you are interested in, fill out the entry form, pay the entry fee, show up at the show and compete. Each bodybuilding show is different and everything you need to know will be on that show's entry form. I have listed all the shows that I am aware of that have a Wheelchair Division on the Upcoming Shows section of my website. The 2010 schedule normally comes out around November/December and I will post them once I know.

What if someone has never competed before?

Once you read the entry form of the bodybuilding show you plan to compete in you will know exactly when and where you need to be. There are two parts to a bodybuilding show, Pre-Judging and the Night Show. During Pre-Judging you will go through a series poses. You will be lined up side by side to your competitor so the judges can compare you to the person next to you. In each bodybuilding show you are ONLY competing against the person next to you. Pre-Judging is when the Judges score you. The Night Show is for entertainment and for the fans. You will perform a routine to music and once everybody else has done their routine they will line everybody up and announce the placing. Whoever is the hardest, leanest, biggest and symmetrical wheelchair bodybuilder will win the show.

Nick also added "You have to be mentally strong and have a desire like no other. What separates Wheelchair Bodybuilding from ALL the other Wheelchair Sports in the World is that next year will be the first IFBB Pro Wheelchair Division! It will be the first time in History that a disable sport is on the same stage and spotlight as an able body sport. Wheelchair Basketball is one of the most popular sports for disable athletes but is nowhere close to the NBA. But with Wheelchair Bodybuilding, soon disable athletes will have the same status as Arnold Swarchenegger, competing on the same level of stage as he did. It will happen, because I'm the guy that has been pushing for it! Plus at the Pro Show the athletes will receive thousands worth in prize money and products."

For years Scott has been helping Wheelchair Body Builders around the world and those who want to train or just get in shape through his online training at www.nickfitness.com

Nick's final comment to our readers... "if you want to become a Wheelchair Bodybuilder contact me and I will help you achieve it!"