

# Bodybuilding best watched from afar

From page 20.

affirmative.

Before we started our workout at Forever Fitness in Aurora, Mr. Doyle, the gym's co-owner, talked about the ego-based world of competitive bodybuilding and the Keswick bodybuilder he is training for the MuscleMania competition in July.

"Why are you making that face?" asked Mr. Doyle, seeing the grimace I made when I looked at the poster advertising the event.

The man's waist appeared to have been swallowed by a massive chest and two extremely powerful legs.

"Nothing, really," I gulped. "It's just a man who's built like that is very intimidating and slightly unattractive."

"True," he said, "but men could look at you and think you're unattractive. It's all about personal taste."

Ouch! I swallowed a bit of pride.

However, I quickly realized if my ego was the only thing to take a bruising that day, I would survive the workout.

At least that was the idea. "I have to break you in," said Mr. Doyle, a former competitive bodybuilder and provincial and national Mr. Fitness champion.

"I have to teach you the exercises," he clarified with a smile, seeing the blank expression on my face.

"You have to develop your basic muscle groups — your chest, back, shoulders, arms, legs and abs.

"You have to develop each

group. It would be silly, depending on your shape, to have huge legs and no upper body," he said, as he got me working on some bicep curls.

After a few sets, we travelled to a tall piece of equipment that would strengthen my tricep muscles.

"Put your back flat against the padding, spread your legs slightly apart and then, with your arms by your side, slowly push down the bar," Mr. Doyle said.

*If I were training you, you'd be here an hour, doing two sets of 12 of everything we just did, with a one-minute breather between sets, plus a half-hour of cardio.*

I did as instructed, but after my third or fourth rep, I felt as though my shoulders were going to collapse and I could barely hold on to the bar, let alone push it.

"Your triceps burn, don't they?" Mr. Doyle asked.

I nodded, focusing on bringing my heart rate down to normal.

"Your muscles are on fire because of electric impulses," he explained. "All this is new to you ... take a breather."

Next up: bench presses and squats.

Lying on a bench with Mr. Doyle helping me lift a stan-

dard 45-pound Olympic bar above my head, I could only wait for the torture to end.

Foolishly believing I had more lower body than upper body strength, I welcomed the opportunity to further develop my quads.

With at least a 30 lb. bar resting on my shoulder, I bent my knees as low as they would go.

That was the easy part. Getting back up, however, was a different story.

After a gruelling 30-minute session, my body crying for mercy, I made my escape.

"If I were training you, you'd be here an hour, doing two sets of 12 of everything we just did, with a one-minute breather between

sets," he said, "plus a half-hour of cardio."

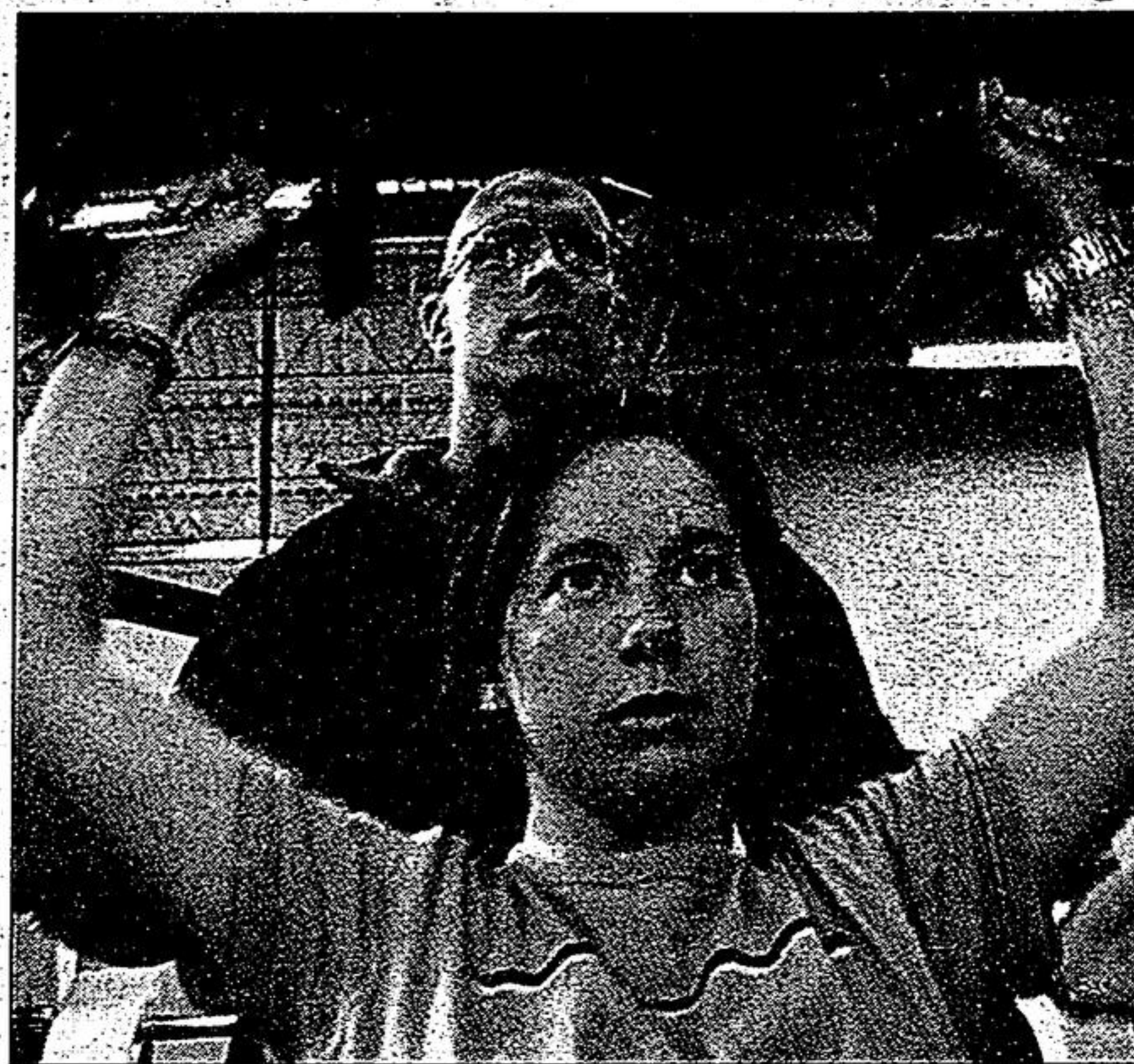
There is a God, I thought.

Before leaving the gym, I overheard one bodybuilder ask another, "Hey man, do you think I need more rear deltoid development?"

I shook my head, realizing the sport truly is in a league of its own.

For me, bodybuilding will remain something to be admired and, judging by the hard bodies I saw last Wednesday, I'm OK with that.

*Been There, Done That is a regular column highlighting the exploits of staff who try to keep up with experts in a wide variety of recreational activities.*



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Staff writer Stefania Rizzi pumps it up with the help of Steve Doyle of Forever Fitness in Aurora.

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