

INTERVIEW

Personal dialogue between
PL USA Magazine and the
Sport's Greatest Names.

The Best of Dan Austin by Judd Biasiotto Ph.D. & Army Ferrando of WORLD CLASS ENTERPRISES

To meet the IFF World Lightweight Champion, we went to Murfreesboro, Tennessee to see Dan Austin. Austin was there to compete in the 1987 U.S.P.F. or ADFPA powerlifting organizations. A multiple world champion and world record holder, Austin is one of the greatest powerlifters of all time. Now 500 lbs, a former All-American, he failed to pass the drug test at the ADFPA Nationals. Undoubtedly, the incident is the nadir of a powerlifting career that has been otherwise unblemished by a defeat or scandal. Consequently, it was Austin's fall from grace with the ADFPA that provided the opening question for our conversation.

WCE: Let's get some of the tough questions out of the way right at the start. For years you have been a proponent of drug-free lifting, yet in 1984 you tested positive for steroids. Would you explain the circumstances surrounding the aforementioned allegations?

Austin: 1984 was a year that went from sweet to sour, then back to sweet. It was while I was training for the USPF Senior Nationals that I decided to lift in the ADFPA Nationals. Two weeks after winning the USPF Nationals, I entered the ADF-

PA Nationals. I failed the polygraph test several times before I finally passed it. I really don't know why I failed the test. I had not taken any type of drugs. I had no medication. At the World Championships in Dallas, Texas, I was given a urine test; my sample was divided into two containers (A & B). Weeks later I received a call informing me that my "A" sample was positive. This was real. I got to me, and I was certain that someone was out to get me. I requested my "B" sample to be tested. It came up negative. My "A" sample had shown that I had taken Primobolan. I don't know how they came up with that. My supplements for the worlds were amino acids, a multi-vitamin pack, and (D.A.G.) Direct Absorption Glutadylars. Before I end this response, I would like to share with your readers an experience I had with drugs. In 1982, after finishing 3rd in the Senior Nationals, I was given a lecture on anabolic steroids from an individual who had been taking steroids for 12 years at that time and claimed that he had not experienced any type of side effects. He said if I did this, took that, then I could be the next Mike Bridges.

I said he was out of his mind. I like he was out of a medical journal and had me believing that everything he said was or could be true (my mistake). A month later I purchased two bottles of Winstrol. A month passed and I finally got up the nerve to try them. For two weeks, I took two tablets at lunch. Because I immediately looked for the quick results, but it never came. For two weeks I was drilled by heavy weights, and I became very discouraged, because I did not get the results fast enough - so I gave them away. This has been my only encounter with any type of drugs.

WCE: Do you feel wronged by how the ADFPA handled your case?

Austin: No, not at all. After I failed the test, the committee heard my plea and granted me another chance to take the test. They could have said no, because I had failed the test several times. I thought they handled it very well and I was very thankful for the second chance.

WCE: Now that you're once again in good standing with the ADFPA will you compete under the banner again?

Austin: Definitely yes. As a matter of fact, I will compete in an ADFPA meet this year.

WCE: It's been said that the great athletes are driven, obsessive even, yet your temperament seems anything but obsessive. Is there an internal drive in Danny Austin that is not overt or are you the antithesis of most world class athletes?

Austin: Dan Austin is definitely an introverted person. I believe in letting my lifting do my talking, staying

Book Review...the newest book from the pen of Judd Biasiotto Ph.D., and published by WORLD CLASS ENTERPRISES, is called, appropriately, **"POWER"**, and it is about all the many techniques that Judd has experimentally determined to be most effective in developing strength for Powerlifting. It is, as Judd states, "guaranteed to improve your lifting significantly". After 15 years of his own research, he must know something, otherwise how could a self-conscious 131 lb., "pair of plyers in shorts" squat an amazing 575 lbs. in competition. Judd is a natural athlete, using the available powers of modern science to improve his lifting, rather than drugs, and he has been one of the greatest performers in A.D.F.P.A. (American Drug-Free Powerlifting Association) history.

To put it bluntly, as Judd always does, "Dumbo just quit," meaning the lessons science has learned, your competition will be doing so. One of the great secrets of his success has been an obsessive attention to proper form. Judd has watched his 575 squat lifting perhaps 1000 times, and he mentally rehearsed the lift. He once put 35 pounds on this attention to form in the lift. On the stronger, by paying of this book, is the astonishing degree of self-analysis that went into the accomplishments of this "weekend strong" in the world", Judd's entraining writing style winds you through a myriad of subjects, from the amount of time you should rest between sets, to flexibility, training, and biorhythms. It is a very worthwhile addition to any lifter's library. Mike Lambert

WCE: Presently I'm still here at A.P.S.U. Earlier in the year there was only small talk, nothing serious at that time.

WCE: With all the factionalism in powerlifting, (the USPF, ADFPA, APF, IFF, Lifetime Drug Free) how do you see the future of the sport?

Austin: Because I try to see things from a positive point of view, I think the sport of powerlifting will continue to grow. How far the sport can or will go depends on the lifters. We are the ones who make the sport, and we must do whatever we can to expose the sport to the public and media.

WCE: Your best total is what, and how much further do you think you can go?

Austin: 1620 in the '87 Senior National Championship. I don't think I've come anywhere near my capability. I'm more of a conservative lifter, so it's just a matter of time before my big total comes.

WCE: As an individual who is friendly, loved the sport, loved the competition, and did whatever he could to help promote the sport of powerlifting.

WCE: Ausby Alexander has totalled 1700 and is obviously a threat to your title if he were to go back to 148. Who else do you see as serious challengers to your title?

Austin: I'm one who takes every meet seriously and I don't relax until the last deadlift has been pulled. My biggest challenge will be myself, but if I had to pick someone, I'd say Bob Bridges, or Randall Kea, if he moves up.

WCE: What are your future goals as a powerlifter?

Austin: To stay healthy and compete as long as I can. If I do what I'm capable of doing, winning will take care of itself.

WCE: It's been rumored that you're in line for a job as a strength coach for a professional team. What exactly is your status?

WCE: The poundages have increased so dramatically in the last half decade - to what do you attribute such a radical jump - equipment, training, drugs?

Austin: There is no one key factor. There are a lot of things that both help and hinder. The top factor, folks get by equipping the right equipment, training, and nutrition. I'm sure that's true. It was unavoidable, but I'm sure it was Bridges and now it's Coan. Make a prediction for us who do you foresee as the next "Great One"?

Austin: This is a tough one. I see Ed Coan as the top lifter as long as he wishes. I'm going to copy out on this one because Ed is young and has a lot of years ahead of him, but I think the next "Great One" will emerge from the 165 lb. wt. class.

WCE: If you had to pick a "Dream Team" of the best team today to represent the U.S. in the worlds - all politics aside, who would it be?

Austin: 123 - Lamar Gant, 132 - Joe Bradley, 148 - Ausby Alexander, 165 - Gene Bell, 181 - Mike Bridges, 198 - Larry Kuc, 220 - Ed Coan, 242 - John Kuc, 275 - Doug Furnas, SHW - Bill Kazmaier.

WCE: If you had any advice to give a novice powerlifter, what would it be?

Austin: Be patient, concentrate on technique, don't sacrifice form for weight. Build a good solid foundation. I'll tell young lifters to run their own life, make their own decisions, because their health is the most important thing they have. No money or trophy is more valuable.

WCE: What are the high and low points of your career?

Austin: My high points I would say were winning the Nationals, Worlds, and totaling over 1600. My lowest point is when I went through the 1984 drug issue.

WCE: Considering everything - championships, injuries and the gang at Greenville Athletic Club, Nick Stralange and the gang, James Callaway, and Bob Platt and Thro-

Austin: No. Every time there has been failure, I've looked at it as a motivation factor and after thinking about it for awhile, I ask myself, what must Dan Austin do to improve himself?

WCE: Are there any closing comments you'd like to make?

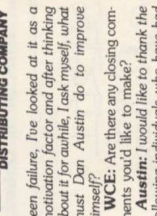
Austin: I would like to thank the following individuals who have had an impact on my lifting career. Mike Apps, Mike Hawkins and the gang at Greenville Athletic Club, Nick Stralange and the gang, James Callaway, and Bob Platt and Thro-

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