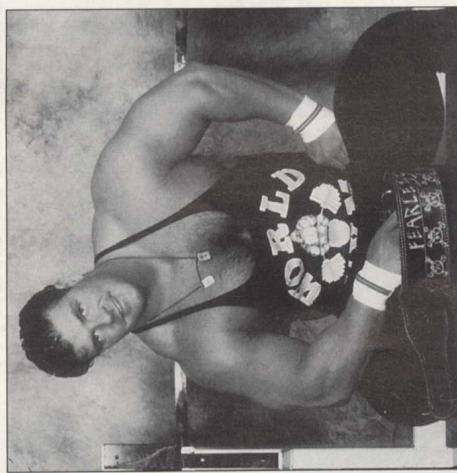


# INTERVIEW

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

## J.M. Blakeley as interviewed for PL USA by Mike Lambert



(this extensive interview is continued from last month issue, page 92)

enjoyment of it. I ended up with a missed lock out at 601. Referee Carl Smith had the bar pulled by the spotters on uneven extension. I was working my way up with it, and I definitely think I could have locked it out, but I didn't get the opportunity due to my right arm fading a little bit on me. Then I did it. I dieted all the way down to 220. I went to an IPA meet, a national qualifier, at Kenny Letzner's and Ralph Roloff's gym in Oceanside, New York. I ended up with 560 at a bodyweight of 219. It was a very big day for me, as I had just killed myself to make weight, and I had a real nice meet. I felt really, really good about that one. Then I did the Ohio State full meet. Of course, I took some token lifts. It was the APF Ohio State meet by Dean Gilt in Chillicothe and got a state record 615 at 241. Then I went to Jamie Harris' meet in Pittsburgh, PA. At that IPA Monster Bench Press, I ended up with a tricky 629 lbs. at 241. The Grimwoods were there and they actually weighed out all the plates. I wanted exactly 630, which was my goal for the day, and they got as close as they could. The face value of the bar was 625, which is what I was credited with, but the actual weight was 629 exactly. From there I went out to Kenny Lain's meet, the only non-scheduled meet I went to that year. It was the Boadest Bench in Texas. I wanted to go, because I wanted to meet Ken. I ended up with a nice 620 at 240 lbs., and I missed a 650 lockout because I just wasn't strong enough. I just couldn't squeeze it, but damn, I came close. Again, I locked my left, and couldn't squeeze out my right. I started working on that specifically in training. I went back to an IPA meet at Iron Island Gym in Oceanside, New York and got a real satisfying 645 at a bodyweight of 239. This is something I am very proud of. I brought my strength up, and that was my goal for the 242s. I had achieved it and I felt great about that. Then I finished out the year going over to Vienna, Austria, for Carl Smith's EPWC/APC World Cup for Bench Press. I did it for fun, and enjoyment, and to get

some international competition. Boy, I was surprised by how strict the judging was over there, amazingly strict. I ended up with my opener - 611, and I thought I was good for about 650, and they talked me into trying to break the 300 kilo barrier, 661. I gave it two good efforts, but they pulled them both on uneven extension because, again, the right was dragging a little bit. I think I could have squeezed the last one out, but they're so very strict over there that they pulled the weight right off me. That's a synopsis of what happened last year for me. **ML:** I hear you've done some sports modelling - for what kind of products, and how did you get into that line of work? **JM:** As far as the sports modelling, I've done a good bit of it. I live in Columbus, and I've made a lot of good connections here with some people who've been very good to me. I've modeled for stock photos. In fact this month's issue of *MUSCLE & FITNESS* has me on page 140 at the bottom of an article about Bodybuilding and the Mind. I didn't have anything

to do about writing it, I'm just there at the bottom to add color. I've had a couple of stock photos in *MUSCLE & FITNESS*. I've had lots of shots in all the muscle mags in advertisements for different clothing companies, like NO LIMITS. The Michael Scott Agency is up in Delaware (OH) and I'm pretty good friends with those guys and they try to squeeze me in whenever they can. I get in catalogs of weight belts, the GNC catalog, stuff that's related to fitness. Usually I model when I'm a little lighter, down in the 220s or light 242s. I don't do too much modelling at 290. I do it for fun - it's a blast. I have a good time with it, and that was to go after my dreams. What I'll do afterwards, my good kudos, but there's a lot of good options out there for me. Ideally, I would like to bridge the gap between research on strength and actual practical applications. There's an unsettling lack of knowledge about strength. We have great knowledge about aerobic, fitness, cardiovascular exercise and not a great body of know-

ledge about strength and power. I'd like to do some research about strength and power at a major university, and maybe be the strength coach there also, because I love doing that, and teach classes on the side as well. **ML:** Were you powerlifting training philosophies applicable when you served as Assistant Strength Coach for the Ohio State Football Team. Who are some of the great Ohio State athletes you've worked with? **JM:** That was a time when I learned a lot from the athletes, a lot from Steve Bliss - our Head Strength Coach, and a lot from our assistant coaches. It was a growing period for me. I was getting an influx of information from everywhere. I was in school, learning in classes about physiology and how the body works. I was learning about how to deal with athletes while training the guys. I call training. I learned about the tremendous powerlifting tradition here in Columbus. You can't live in Columbus and not know about powerlifting, because a lot of people here powerlift, more so than I've seen anywhere else. Definitely, some of the powerlifting philosophies were applicable to the strength coaching job at Ohio State, but some of them

were not. A lot of things weren't applicable because of the requirements that the athletes had to deal with. I worked with a lot of great athletes - not to name drop, but a number of pros came back to visit, and I got exposed to a lot of great training ideas. One thing I learned from a particular athlete, Chris Spielman, back in 1987/88, was intensity. I watched him train, I helped train him, I watched him play. I saw how he got prepared. From him I learned focus, I learned determination, I learned the value of having a single purpose. He was absolutely driven to do one thing - play professional football. Everything he did was a means to that end. **ML:** What image would you like to project to the general public, as a powerlifter? **JM:** I'd like to project a more athletic image to the public. I'd like to project a more intelligent image to the public, a more well-spoken image. I'd like to project a more accessible image, meaning being likable, as a sport and as a personality. Powerlifting is fun! I want to get people involved. I want to project confidence without coming off cocky. You've got to believe in yourself if you're going to put yourself under a big

edge about strength and power. I'd like to do some research about strength and power at a major university, and maybe be the strength coach there also, because I love doing that, and teach classes on the side as well. **ML:** Were you powerlifting training philosophies applicable when you served as Assistant Strength Coach for the Ohio State Football Team. Who are some of the great Ohio State athletes you've worked with? **JM:** That was a time when I learned a lot from the athletes, a lot from Steve Bliss - our Head Strength Coach, and a lot from our assistant coaches. It was a growing period for me. I was getting an influx of information from everywhere. I was in school, learning in classes about physiology and how the body works. I was learning about how to deal with athletes while training the guys. I call training. I learned about the tremendous powerlifting tradition here in Columbus. You can't live in Columbus and not know about powerlifting, because a lot of people here powerlift, more so than I've seen anywhere else. Definitely, some of the powerlifting philosophies were applicable to the strength coaching job at Ohio State, but some of them

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ple of metal. I want people to know about powerlifting's positives. I'm tired of all the negatives. We're not just muscleheads, we're not just fat stobs; there's plenty of guys out there who are athletic, intelligent, and well-spoken, and I think that's an image we need to project to the public to get more people involved and interested in what we're doing. Powerlifting is a blast. It's a wonderful sport for personal satisfaction, and I certainly think it can be accessible to the public, but the athletes themselves need to go a long way in projecting a more positive image. A "Bad Boy" image sells a little bit, but too much "bad boy" is not going to work. **ML:** You've been to some of the biggest bench meets in the world - which ones stick out in your mind and why? **JM:** I'm very grateful for some of the special invitations to so many great meets. I definitely talk to each meet director who invites me, in person, and thank them. All of them stand out in my mind, because each one was a building block. I learned something from each meet, but one that sticks out in my mind, clearly, mostly because of the emotional impact it

had on me was John Inzer's Greatest Bench in America. Some of the biggest names in bench pressing were there, and some of the biggest names in bench pressing were noticeably absent. It was a wonderful time, an absolutely first class meet, all the way. Every athlete was treated like they were a "somebody". I did very well at that meet. Emotionally speaking, I was so tuned into doing what I had to do that I was literally in tears between attempts. I knew that was my day to hit 700. That was my first time to attempt it, and I did miss it, and I know why I missed it - from reading some of my mental training books. I wasn't mentally prepared to hit it. I was physically ready, but not mentally ready. What a wonderful experience it was, and so physically "on", and a lot of it was because John just put on a hell of a meet. To pull off a gathering of so many great athletes with so much on the line, and so many great benches were attempted - I don't know if anyone will ever be able to pull that off again. It was wonderful to get some first hand experience in knowing who some of these great benchers really are. I learned a lot at that meet simply by watching people.

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