

# INTERVIEW

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

**TS:** Thanks for doing this interview Willie. Could you provide some personal information?

**WW:** My name is Willie Wessels. I have been a teacher for 17 years. My wife, Dione, is also a teacher, but now she stays home with our two girls Whitney (21 months) and Mackenzie (10 months). We live in St. Louis, MO and pray the Rams do better this year.

**TS:** Growing up, what sports were you involved with and what made you decide to get into the Iron Game?

**WW:** As with many weightlifters, I played every sport available to me. Those sports included football, basketball, track and field, and baseball. I did not have time for anything else. Once in college, I realized that playing sports was not my career, therefore, I concentrated on school. Since that time, I have needed an activity to release the extra energy and the competitive side of myself, and I chose weightlifting which was a perfect for me. I had always messed around with weights, but I didn't get serious with them until 1982. I started competing in 1985, and haven't stopped yet.

**TS:** As a powerlifter, what would you consider your greatest achievement?

**WW:** As a powerlifter winning

## Willie Wessels

as interviewed for PL USA by Tony Soucie

the Nationals and Worlds, in two different weight classes, meant a lot to me. Being the lightest man to ever squat a 1000 lbs. was also nice. Benching 661, totaling 2403 lbs, and being #1 in the 242 weight class in 1997 was the high-

light of my career. Now I coach Dione in powerlifting and I am having a great time. Training with Ernie Frantz were some of my best workout times.

**TS:** Recently you and your wife have become the head of the North

American Strongman Society (NASS). How did that come about?

**WW:** I have served as Missouri State Chair for 2 years. Bill Holland and I talked about the future of NASS for a while. This past winter, Bill called and asked me about taking NASS over. On 02/01/02, my wife and I did. I appreciate everything Bill and Linda have done for NASS and for Dione and myself.

**TS:** Could you elaborate a little about the NASS?

**WW:** NASS is the premier amateur strongman organization. NASS has grown a lot this year. We have 29 states involved now. The NASS State chairs are some of the greatest people I know. The competitors in NASS are unbelievable. They are strong and dedicated to the sport. Our website is [www.nastrongman.com](http://www.nastrongman.com). If you are interested in strongman competitions, please check it out. We have competitions for teens, women, masters, and open competitors. Thanks to sponsors like Rick Brewer from "The House of Pain" and Jeff Bach from "The Weak Get Eaten", we are able to provide a lot for NASS members.

**TS:** What are the future goals of NASS?

**WW:** For the future, we want to keep growing. We would also like to add some corporate sponsors. Getting NASS on television is one of our goals for the future along with continuing to develop strongmen and women so they can become professionals and have a shot at the "World's Strongest Man" and "Woman" title. We will continue to provide safe and fun competitions for all strong men and women.

**TS:** Thanks Willie. Any final comments?

**WW:** Be strong and train smart. See you soon at a NASS contest.



Willie Wessels pulling the "RV from Hell" at the 2001 NASS Illinois Strongest Man Contest.