

INTERVIEW

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

O.D. WILSON

interviewed by
his trainer
and advisor,
Willie E. Jacobs

Somewhere on this planet a being stalks. We know not whether he is man or alien, but one thing we do know: he stands 6'5 1/2" and weighs 400 lbs. with 24" arms, a 60" chest, 47" waist, and 36" thighs. They call him the Nightmare. He's part a family of 12 from Haines City, Florida, and his mother's name is Bessie Mae. His strength is enormous. He is O.D. Wilson, the strongest powerlifter on the planet.

WJ: How long have you been working out with weights?
OD: Off and on, about 8 years. I have been seriously powerlifting about 4 years. I lived in Florida for 16 years and then went to the Army for 12 years where I began and then I moved to Durham, North Carolina.

WJ: Who inspired you to start working out?
OD: Well, I met this guy named Carlos Green when I was in the military in Europe. He asked me if I had ever thought about powerlifting. Like everyone else I didn't know much about it, so I asked what is powerlifting? He explained it to me so I gave it a try. I would go to meets and compete and would win because no one showed up in my weight category and I went on from there.

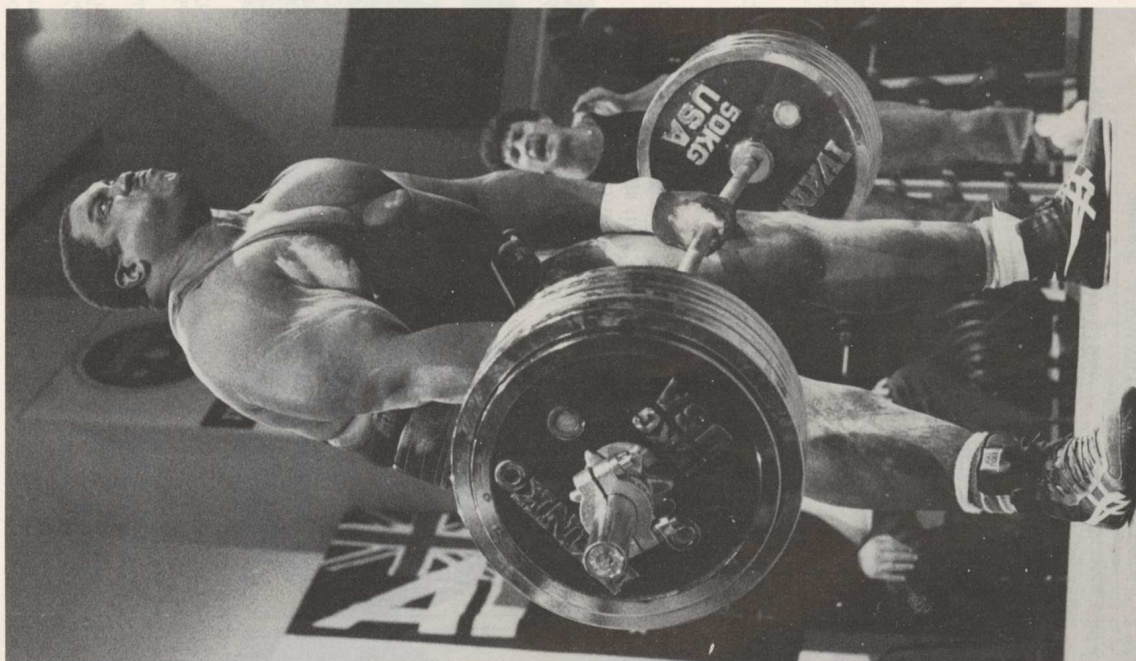
WJ: Most people would like to know how big you were before you started powerlifting. They know you are awesome now, one of the biggest men in the world and surely one of the strongest. How did powerlifting help you as far as power and strength?
OD: I was always heavy. When I started I weighed 280 pounds. Because I was in the military I was doing a lot of aerobics. You know, when you are in the Army you have to do a lot of running, walking and such. So it wasn't likely that I would gain a lot of weight, but when I got into powerlifting the Army let me see how far I could go and the weight started to come. It's something I'm comfortable with. I know I am unusual, being as big as I am.

WJ: Do you miss the service?
OD: I miss my friends, people like Gene Bell, Ausby Alexander, Steve Goggins, Robert Patterson, guys like David Pottaway, the whole powerlifting circuit. I learned a lot in the service and you can't give twelve years of your life to something and not miss it. As a whole I'd have to say I do miss it a little.

WJ: A lot of people are interested in knowing how you got so big.

OD: Yes, I got asked that question often. I guess a lot came from my mother and father. They are both big boned people and so my whole family is big boned. I had a lot of bad weight for a long time. When I say bad weight, I mean a lot of unnecessary body fat. People reading this article are probably saying 390 or 400 pounds is a lot of weight. It does sound like a lot, but I usually weigh out at about 425 or 430 pounds. I'm cutting down now due to my diet and from working hard in the gym. Basically, the work I did as a young man on the farm helped to build my strength and make me a powerful person. It was only when I started in powerlifting that I started to grow and put emphasis on strength and the power started to come in different areas. I am still learning the sport and still growing and I like it.

At right... O.D. had an IPF World Record of 892 up this high at the 1988 Worlds.



WJ: I'm aware that you have made changes in your diet and the way you approach your workouts. Has this helped you?
OD: Yes, basically I feel it is helping. I was in the military, stationed at Ft. Bragg they gave me all the time I needed to get strength and power, but unfortunately I did not have anyone who understood powerlifting so I was gaining a lot of "bad" weight again. Now that you are guiding me with my nutrition and my workouts, this has helped me a lot. I can feel myself getting stronger. I feel that there will be something done in the next competition that I will attend that will be written in the record books. I feel very positive about my weight program right now.

WJ: Getting away from powerlifting for a minute, how did you get the name "The Nightmare"?
OD: It's ironic you would ask that question. Where I used to live we had a neighborhood crime watch program. I would always get the word three in the morning. One morning I was standing in the shadows under the street lights and I had this bat on it was reflecting an awesome figure on the wall, almost like Freddy Kruger. My lady friend told me "You look just like a nightmare." I said this is a pretty cool name, so it kind of stuck with me. I guess you could say I'm a "good" nightmare.

WJ: That's good. I feel it fits you well. People would have to see you to appreciate just how awesome you really are. Do you have any interests other than powerlifting?
OD: Outside of powerlifting I do a lot of community work. I visit orphanages, schools and I try to be around young people as much as I can. I do as much as I can to inspire our kids because they need as many positive role models as they can get. As far as other sports are concerned, I play racquetball, basketball and I swim. This is unusual for someone who weighs 400 pounds, but I can do these things and enjoy them.

WJ: What kind of supplements would you suggest that someone in powerlifting take?
OD: Well, everyone's body metabolism is not the same. I found that I was eating a lot of the wrong foods and taking the wrong combinations of supplements. The new diet that you have worked out for me has

OD: Like I said before, I only know what I know. I guess you could say "only my hands easier knows my strength."

WJ: Do you feel you have improved greatly since your last competition?
OD: I feel that I have improved as far as being in better condition, my strength, my strength routine when you're preparing for a contest?

OD: When I'm preparing for a contest, my focus becomes my main focus, everything else becomes secondary. My daily routine is extremely intense. When I go into what I call a power mode, that's when I start increasing the heavy weights and doing fewer reps and fewer exercises. I work no more than 5 main muscle groups.

WJ: Whom do you consider to be your greatest competition at this next meet in Hawaii?
OD: I never lift against competitors. I always lift against opponents. I just concern myself with opponents. I just pick a number and try to beat that number and if anyone else beats that number then he's just flat out a better man than I am that day.

WJ: As a battered child, who was told you would not walk again, against these odds, how do you feel now as a prize winning powerlifter?
OD: It's kind of weird, because I was in the hospital laid up for over nine months, with doctors telling me all kinds of things that I would never be able to do again. You get awful scared. I feel real good about the way I came out of it. I went through some real intensive leg surgery, and today doctors can't explain the reason I am able to walk and lift the kind of weight that I can. I guess the Lord came in to play on that and I just thank him for being able to get my legs and strength back together. Now I just want to be the best that I can.

WJ: How do you feel about training partners?
OD: I feel training partners are essential. Even though I am a self-motivator, you just can't go into the gym everyday ready to move heavy iron. In the beginning, I didn't have a good training partner. What I mean is I had a lot of people pushing me, but they were not actually training with me. I met two guys that were really able to push me to my utmost potential because, like I said before, you may come in the gym some days and not really feel like lifting. If you have good partners they will pump you up when you don't feel like lifting. I have two training partners, Ralph Pflizer and James Perry. I saw them in the gym one day training and I saw potential. We have been lifting ever



O.D. Wilson with his trainer Willie Jacobs, who provided both the photographs reproduced on this page, since, I expect big things from them in the future. They are superheavyweights as well.

WJ: Who are some of the heavyweights that you look up to and admire?
OD: I don't know a lot about the guys that were doing this say ten or more years ago. I've been into this one or two about eight years, but I've read a lot about Jim Williams and I think he was probably the best benchmarker ever lived and I feel that you just have to look up to Bill Kazmaier. He was doing things that were just unheard of in powerlifting. His record stood for eight years and I was happy to be in the one that broke that record. I also look up to the guy that got me started, Carlos Green.

WJ: What would you like to see in the future for O.D. the "Nightmare" Wilson?
OD: Well I've done some parts in movies and I really enjoy that, so I would like to be available for parts that fit my personality and size. I also like being of service to people. At the moment, I am the bodyguard for Ray Mercer, the Olympic Gold Medal winning boxer.

WJ: Is there anything else you would like to tell the readers?
OD: In closing, I would like to say set your goals high and reach higher. Beware "The Nightmare" is coming to a gym near you.

O.D.'s BACK ROUTINE:

- Deadlift 135x10, 225x8, 315x6, 405x5, 495x4, 650x3, 700x5, 800x3.
- Bent Over Rowing Barbell 135x8, 205x8, 275x8, 315x8. Shoulders Shrugs 225x10, 315x10, 405x10, 500x10.
- 600x10. Cable Rowing 130x8, 200x8, 300x8. Lat Pull Downs 100x8, 200x8, 300x8.