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MUSCLE & PERFORMANCE

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NICOLE WILKINS

Last year's runner-up
has big plans for this
year's Figure Olympia

HIGH- PROTEIN PITFALLS

We expose some
enduring diet myths

THE DEAL WITH DHEA

YES, IT'S
LEGAL.
HERE'S
WHY YOU
SHOULD BE
TAKING IT



TWICE AS NICE

With more than just a win at stake, Nicole Wilkins is aiming for a double celebration as she heads into the Olympia for her second title.

BY SOMMER ROBERTSON • PHOTOS BY ROBERT REIFF

Appearances can be deceiving. Take, for example, the number two. The weightiness of this trivial title number seems easy to dismiss until you consider two scoops of double-fudge ice cream, two one-hundred-dollar bills, two rockin' new Nike sneakers, to name a few. Why settle for one when you can have two, right? After all, as the old saying goes, "Good things come in twos."

That's the thinking behind Nicole Wilkins' every set and rep in preparation for the 2011 IFBB Figure Olympia. With a Figure Olympia title and two consecutive IFBB Figure International titles already under her belt, the only thing better than each win in Wilkins' eyes is both major titles in the same calendar year. "If I win the Olympia this year, it will be the first time in history a competitor has won both [titles] in the same year," says the 27-year-old personal trainer and online business owner. "That's what I'm aiming for."

Beyond the Norm

Some records are broken, others are annihilated. Such was the case at the 2007 NPC Team Universe Fitness and Figure Nationals, when Wilkins earned her pro card in the fitness and figure divisions, etching herself into the top spot in the sport's history books as the first competitor to garner both overall at the same national-level show. "I have to say I was surprised that I won both [titles]," says the Sterling Heights, Mich., resident. "I kind of knew I had the potential to win the fitness division, but when I won both, I was overwhelmed. It was a dream come true."

The record-smashing drive that propelled this 5-foot-5½-inch beauty into the pro ranks was a quality seeded by her parents at a very young age. "Both of my parents are very active, and my father, being a competitive athlete, always encouraged my sister and me not only to eat healthy but [also to] take part in sports," she says. Wilkins was a lifelong athlete and force gymnast until a meniscus tear to her left knee in high school threw her competitive career off-balance. "I began to rely on calisthenics and weights as an outlet for my energy after my second knee surgery, and I noticed that my body responded well to this type of training," she says. Guided by her gymnastics coach — who was also a powerlifter — Wilkins eventually took to more sophisticated moves such as squats, power cleans and deadlifts.

SNAPSHOT: NICOLE WILKINS

Birth Date: February 5, 1984

Height: 5'5½"

Weight: 125 pounds contest, 135 pounds offseason

Birthplace: Royal Oak, Mich.

Current Residence: Sterling Heights, Mich.

Career highlights:

2011 IFBB Figure International: 1*

2010 IFBB Figure Olympia: 2*

2010 IFBB Figure International: 1*

2009 IFBB Figure Olympia: 1*

2009 IFBB New York Pro, Figure: 1*

2009 IFBB Europe Show of Champions, figure: 1*

2008 IFBB Pittsburgh Pro, figure: 2**

2008 IFBB New York Pro Fitness: 3*

2007 NPC Team Universe Fitness and Figure Nationals,

fitness tall class and figure class B: overall fitness and

overall figure winner

2006 NPC Junior Nationals, fitness tall class: 2**

2006 NPC Motor City Classic, fitness and figure medium

class: overall fitness and figure winner

2004 NPC Novice Michigan, fitness and figure tall class: 1*

2003 NPC Western Michigan, fitness: 1*



Sweet Revenge

When self-doubt becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, Wilkins gets even. "I consider myself optimistic, and I always try to look for the positive in each situation," she asserts. "So this year, I have focused a lot on visualization and surrounding myself with people who can relate to my lifestyle and [who] support my career." Fortunately, Wilkins has managed to build a great support team helping propel her toward her goals, including her parents, friends, and her training and nutrition coach Kim Oddo. "[Oddo] has been my trainer and a dear friend since 2006," she says. "I honestly couldn't have done it without him."

With a strong first-place finish at the Figure International at The Arnold Sports Festival already in the books for 2011, Wilkins is well on her way to ruffling the pages of history this year. Even though her training recipe enabled her to secure the title in Columbus, Ohio, in March, she wants to add a little extra zest to the mix for the Olympia. "I'm giving every workout 110 percent," she says. "I will never leave the gym feeling like I could have given more. I'm working hard on making my arms leaner, abs more defined, and ham and glutes a little tighter. I'm very focused on September. In fact, because my offseason has been much shorter this time around, I feel like I've gotten a good jump-start on making the necessary changes for the stage. But the biggest difference is my outlook — I'm going to have fun!"

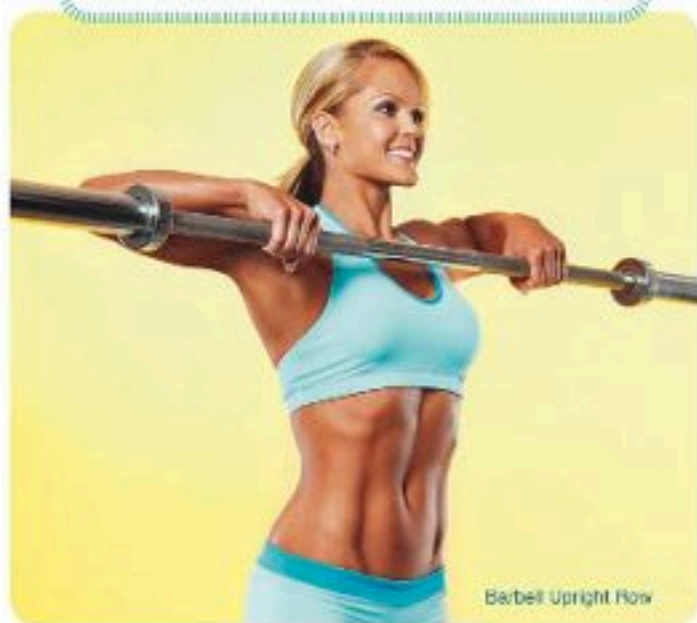
With her training and, more important, her mind now on point, Wilkins is a double threat for this year's competition. Perhaps for the first time in figure, she'll prove good things really do come in twos. ■

DAY 3: LEGS

Exercise	Sets	Reps
Barbell Squat <i>superset with</i> Jump Squat	3*	15 30
Dumbbell Walking Lunge <i>superset with</i> Alternating Jump Lunge	3	25 each leg 15 each leg
One-Legged Leg Press	3	20 each leg
Leg Extension	3	20
Lying Leg Curl	3	15
Seated Legged Deadlift	3	15

Cardio: Moderate-paced cardio on the StepMill for 45 minutes.

*Does not include warm-up sets. Warm-up consists of one to two of 15 to 20 reps each.



Barbell Upright Row

SUPPLEMENTS FOR SUCCESS

Behind every champion is a championship supplement regimen. These are what Nicole Wilkins relies on to help her get through the workouts and manage the diet that get her into — and keep her in — competition shape.



Met-Rx RTD 51

"These shakes are great when I'm on the go, which is most of the time. They're low carb, low fat and high in protein and are great for keeping the munchies at bay between meals."



Met-Rx Amped RTD

"Before workouts, I take Amped RTD. It's a blend of caffeine sources, along with green-tea extract, that gives me that extra push I need in the gym and in daily life."



Met-Rx Protein Plus Protein Bar

"These are my go-to choice when I'm traveling. Since you can't bring liquids through the security check, pack one of these high-protein bars in your pocket for a healthy snack."



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One-Arm Dumbbell
Lateral Raise

DAY 4: YOGA

Cardio: Fast-paced walk on the incline treadmill for 45 minutes.

DAY 5: CROSSFIT

Cardio: Moderate-paced run on the treadmill for 30 minutes, followed by a walk on the incline treadmill for 20 minutes.

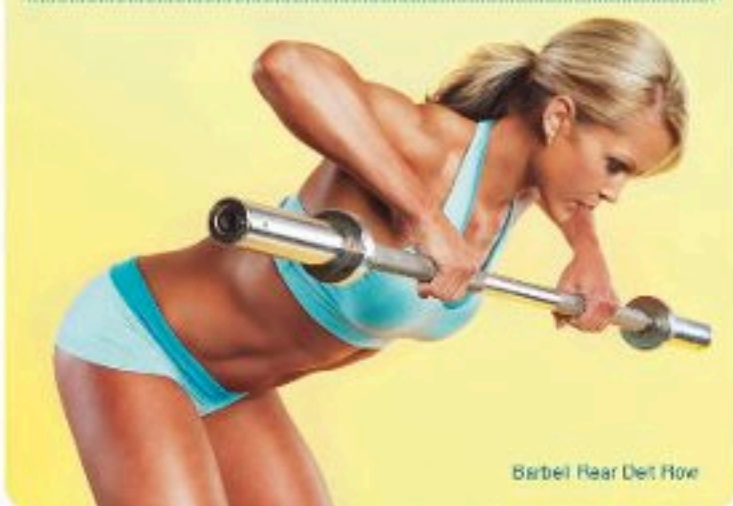
DAY 6: BACK

Exercise	Sets	Reps
Wide-Grip Pull-Up	3*	10
T-Bar Row	3	12
Seated Reverse-Grip Cable Row	3	12-15
Close-Grip Pulldown	3	12
Cable Pullover	3	15

Cardio: Moderate-paced cardio on the elliptical for 35 minutes, followed by sprint intervals (one minute at 10 mph; one minute at 4 mph) on the treadmill for 20 minutes.

*Does not include warm-up sets. Warm-up consists of one to two sets of 15 to 20 reps each.

DAY 7: REST OR YOGA



Barbell Rear Delt Row

