

DOUBLE TROUBLE

Nicole Wilkins-Lee makes her mark on the professional figure and fitness ranks

NICOLE WILKINS-LEE DOESN'T SEEM ALL THAT TOUGH AT FIRST.

She's cute. She's sweet. She's polite. But don't be fooled. Underneath it all, the girl is as fierce a competitor as they come. It's why, when looking back on her first appearance on the national-level stage as a then-wide-eyed 20-year-old, she doesn't mince words.

"I got my ass kicked," Wilkins-Lee says of her 19th-place finish in her class at the 2004 NPC Junior Nationals.

"I was in the second- or third-to-last callout. I was embarrassed. But I wouldn't take it back. It was a learning experience."

So much of one that, three years later, at the 2007 NPC Team Universe and National Figure Championships, Wilkins-Lee was back on the national stage accomplishing an entirely different feat, at the other end of the spectrum — becoming the first competitor in history to earn her pro card by winning both fitness and figure overall titles in the same contest.

Now, as she prepares for the 2009 Figure Olympia, the second-year pro is coming off of the first win of her pro career, riding a wave of momentum as one of the fastest-rising stars in the business.

BY ALLAN DONNELLY
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
PAVEL YTHJALL



"Back and shoulders are probably my strongest bodyparts. My main focus is to build nice, round, lean muscle in the shoulder area. I still lift heavy on shoulder day to make sure my body stays even from top to bottom."

"I like bent-over rows, because I feel them all over my back. I'm not trying to put on muscle, so I keep the reps higher and the weight lower to focus more on the mind-muscle connection."

"I get bored easily. I always mix it up — I never like to do the same workout twice."

Name: Nicole Wilkins-Lee
Age: 25
Height: 5'5½"
Weight: 130 pounds
Birthplace: Royal Oak, Michigan
Current residence: Sterling Heights, Michigan
Occupation: IFBB professional figure and fitness competitor; gym owner
Career highlights: 2009 Europa Show of Champions figure winner; 2009 Fitness International, 8th; 2007 Team Universe fitness and National Figure Championships overall winner

NICOLE'S PRECONTEST WORKOUT SPLIT

MONDAY	Shoulders and triceps
TUESDAY	Chest, calves and abs
WEDNESDAY	Gymnastics
THURSDAY	Off
FRIDAY	Back and biceps
SATURDAY	Legs
SUNDAY	Off

STYLIST: PAULINE NORDIN; HAIR AND MAKEUP: RACHEL HALSEY;
LOCATION: RT TRAINING CENTER, EL SEGUNDO, CALIFORNIA



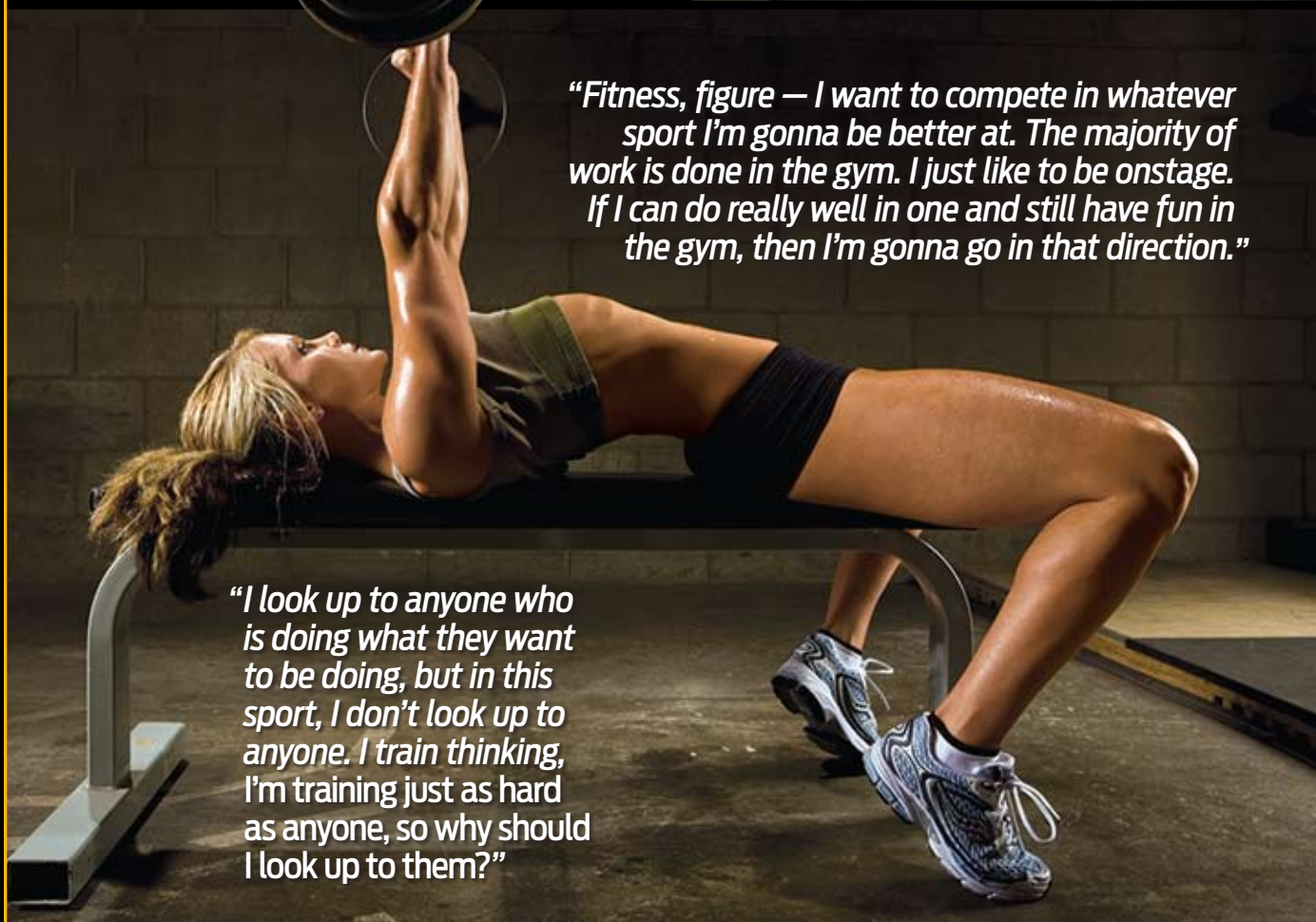
"I'm not a sore loser; it's part of the game and it makes you a stronger competitor. I always want to get right back in the gym and train that much harder, because I want to win the next time out."

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"Fitness, figure — I want to compete in whatever sport I'm gonna be better at. The majority of work is done in the gym. I just like to be onstage. If I can do really well in one and still have fun in the gym, then I'm gonna go in that direction."



"I look up to anyone who is doing what they want to be doing, but in this sport, I don't look up to anyone. I train thinking, I'm training just as hard as anyone, so why should I look up to them?"

"I always want to get better, but if I do the best I can in every show, I know that's all I can ask for. When you're onstage, it's not really your decision. I believe that I have the potential to win the Olympia someday, but if I don't do it, I'm not gonna be disappointed. I think I would like to just train my ass off and see what happens." **FLEX**

**NICOLE'S
PRE-OLYMPIA
LEG ROUTINE**

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Lying hamstring curls	3	12-15
Stiff-leg deadlifts	3	15-20
Jump squats	3	30-60 seconds
Walking lunges	3	20-40
Lateral board jumps	3	15 per side
Leg extensions	3	20-30
Standing/seated calf raises	3*	15

NOTE: Wilkins-Lee performs cardio six or seven days a week, ranging between 40 minutes and two hours.
* She does one set with her toes pointed straight ahead, one set with her toes pointed in and one set with her toes pointed out.