

Zack Gough: Grand Prix Natural Champion

ZACK Gough, of Rockford, entered his first body building competition 10 years ago after watching the Rockford show and becoming a Peak member. This past May Gough competed in the Rockford show and won the Grand Prix Natural Championships.

How long have you been a member of Peak and what do you like about Peak?

I have been a member for over 10 years. I like the fact that Peak has outstanding equipment and is open 24 hours, and the staff is great. I spent about two years coaching the Peak bodybuilding team, and we even won the team trophy in the Rockford show, so that was fun.

How long have you been involved in bodybuilding? What first got you involved in the sport?

I have been competing for about 10 years now, what first got me into the sport

was attending the Rockford show and just seeing how good everyone looked and wanting to be up on stage myself. Plus everyone told me I was too tall (I'm 6'6") to ever do well in the sport, I wanted to prove them wrong.

What is your favorite aspect of bodybuilding?

Probably just being able to change your body, seeing results. The sport is unlike any other, there's no team members and no one else to blame if you don't do well, and when you're on stage in front of hundreds of people it is a rush unlike anything else.

How many competitions have you participated in? Any favorite events?

This last show was my 14th competition, I have competed in the ESPN Mr. Universe in Miami, FL two times, that has been my favorite event probably because of the size of the show and the fact it's in Miami, which is a really fun city. I have to say the shows here in Rockford are a close second though just because all my friends and family are there cheering me on.

What was the most recent competition you won? What category did you compete in?

I just won the Grand Prix Natural Championships May 14th here in Rockford. I actually won every category and the overall, 5 trophies.

- 1st place - Men's Open bodybuilding
- 1st place - Men's Masters bodybuilding
- 1st place - Men's Classic Bodybuilding
- Overall winner - Men's Classic Bodybuilding Hard as a Rock Award

How often do you have to exercise per week? Any favorite classes or routines?

I go to the gym five or six days a week. I like bodyflow and yoga classes, I wish I could attend them more but I work a lot. I think lots of people

lose sight of flexibility in their overall health and strength training and I spend a ton of time stretching. I believe it is the key to avoiding injury.

I had major back surgery three years ago and thought I would never be able to compete again, much less win, so I had to take a step back and learn how to train smarter, not using as much weight but really focus on making the muscle itself work harder and not just move weight around.

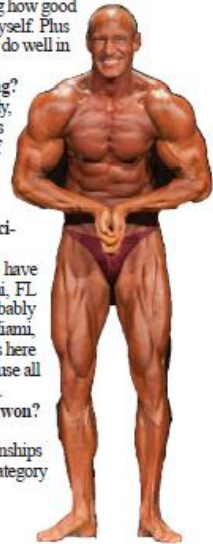
What keeps you motivated to stay disciplined?

Competitions definitely help me stay focused, it's like every show is a goal and something I'm trying to achieve when I'm training, so I have a purpose and am not just going through the motions in the gym. I try and make every exercise count, every rep, every set, and don't just go to the gym just to go to the gym, it's like I have a purpose.

What are some of your future goals both in bodybuilding and outside of the sport?

I will be going to the bodybuilding national championships to see how I stack up against the best in the country. I want to see how I do, I'm not expecting to win but it's always been my dream to stand on a national stage with the best. Outside of the sport I would love to get into physical therapy someday, I love studying nutrition and kinesiology. I love learning how each part of our body works.

I would like to also send a huge thanks to everyone who works at the Peak on State. The entire staff was very supportive and always encouraging every day I was there getting ready for the show, and when I was drained they would always help motivate me. Mike Koehl, the manager there especially, helped me out with some stretching techniques for my bad shoulders. I would also like to thank a couple Peak members Dr. Christopher Sliva and Brad Wolf who did my back surgery at the Rockford Spine Center, I wouldn't be competing without them.



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