



1985 Ms. National Fitness, Gea Johnson

PHOTO: BILL DOBBINS

Gea Johnson Captures Crown

Entries for the Solana-sponsored Ms. National Fitness Competition exceeded all expectations for the two-day happening at the Las Vegas Tropicana Hotel in November. It was another successful Wally Boyko Production — it was Wally's idea to create a female competition that falls somewhere in-between a beauty pageant and a body building contest; and to add a little zest to the 4th Annual National Fitness Trade Show. It worked . . . it received rave reviews . . . and it produced an 18-year-old blonde from Phoenix, Arizona named Gea Johnson as its winner!

Judging a contest of beauty is not an easy task. Imagine having to choose among contestants from all over the country to select the most beautiful woman of all! No doubt, judges of contests like the famed "Miss World" and the "Miss America Beauty Pageant" have a tough job. They must select the prettiest one with the most talent, poise & charm — all wrapped-up in a beautiful, sleek body.

Judges of competitions such as the "Ms. Olympia," "Ms. World," and the "Superbowl of Body Building" look strictly for top body composition — muscularity, symmetry, & cut — with magnificent style & polish. Body Building is a thing of beauty all its own, and requires the judges to have expertise of the sport.

However, judges of the First Annual Ms. National Fitness Competition in Las Vegas had two special attributes, in addition to those mentioned above, to look for in their search for a winner: the most fit and beautifully tanned body in the country! Neither of these qualities are found in beauty pageants or body building contests, making the Ms. National Fitness Competition the most unique and challenging event of its kind ever held.

On Friday evening, the pre-judging fanfare began. The only requirements in this unique competition were that each gal be sponsored by a Fitness Center, Racquetball Club, a Gym, or Tanning Salon; and that the owner or president of the sponsoring club be present in order for the entrant to be eligible. A line-up of 37 ladies entered the contest from numerous states throughout the country — New York, Illinois, California, Nevada, Arizona, Utah, Iowa, Ohio; including the well-known professional bodybuilder, Deanna Panting, who hails from Winnipeg, Canada.

The professions of the women were also numerous. There were

1985 Ms. National Fitness Finalists

	Name	Hometown	Age	Profession
1.	Gea Johnson	Phoenix, AZ	18	Student
2.	Mishay Santos	Richmond, CA	25	Pro BB/Model
3.	Sandy Riddell	Tempe, AZ	25	Firefighter, BB
4.	Dana Murdock	Salt Lake City, UT	23	Invest. Coun.
5.	Debra Stefan	Las Vegas, NV	25	Account Exec.



First four in the poise & grace round

PHOTO: TONY DUFFY



The five finalists, left to right: Debra Stefan - 5th place, Sandy Riddell - 3rd place, Gea Johnson - 1st place, Mishay Santos - 2nd place and Dana Murdock - 4th place

PHOTO: BILL DOBBINS



Mishay Santos, 2nd Place

PHOTO: TONY DUFFY



Sandy Riddell, 3rd Place

PHOTO: TONY DUFFY

at Solana Sponsored Ms. National Fitness Contest

fitness instructors and models; homemakers, receptionists, and sales representatives; a loan processor, an investment counselor, a firefighter, an admitting clerk, and an account executive. They ranged in age from 18 to 47; in height from 5'1" to 6'1"; and in weight from 96 to 145 pounds. There were blonds, brunettes, & redheads; with long hair, short hair, and medium length hair. They had but one thing in common: each was a beautiful gal!

The women were judged in three categories: 1) physique & tan, 2) poise & grace, and 3) talent. In the physique & tan round, the entrants posed for approximately a minute and a half wearing bathing suits to show proof of tan (either tan line or patch). For the poise & grace category, the ladies wore high heels & cocktail dresses; and were required to introduce themselves, their sponsors, and to tell the audience what they did to keep in shape. In the talent round, each contestant used her own creativity and performed a routine to the music of her choice. The majority of the routines were either dancing, gymnastics, or aerobics. The quality was very impressive, and the judges had a difficult pick on their hands.

On Saturday, afternoon, the contestants were again required to perform; only this time the competition was held in the famous Tiffany Theatre — home of the world renowned Follies Bergere at the Tropicana Hotel. Here, the massive stage set an exciting atmosphere for the show; and was complete with special spotlights, music, and decorations. Many of the gals experienced the thrill of a lifetime just to perform on a real Las Vegas show stage!

Finally the judges had narrowed the field to five finalists; and the audience's agreement with the judges indicated that the tough choices were good ones. Fifth place went to Account Executive Debra Stefan, from Las Vegas, Nevada; fourth place to Investment Counselor, Dana Murdock, from Salt Lake City, Utah; third place to Firefighter, Sandy Riddell, from Tempe, Arizona; the runner-up slot was filled by model Mishay Santos of Richmond, California; and the honors were taken by Gea Johnson, an 18-year-old student from Phoenix, Arizona! All received handsome trophies, and Solana awarded \$5,000 in prize money!

"This was the very first contest I ever entered in my life!" exclaimed vivacious

Gea Johnson, the newly-crowned Ms. National Fitness. At 5'6" and 120 pounds, Gea's complete presentation won her the title. She has excellent body shape & tone, an abundance of natural grace & poise, a beautiful face, a great smile, and a fabulous tan! Her well-spoken, easy-going manner; and overall confidence create an air about her that is a real crowd-pleaser.

"I recently joined the speech team at school," explained Gea, "and it might have helped me to do better in front of an audience."

Gea is a Senior at Washington High School in Phoenix, Arizona, where she is President of her class. She holds an eighth place scholastically in her class and maintains a 4.0 grade average. She has studied French for five years, and hopes that the foreign language experience will help her with a future career. Gea enjoys sports, and is an outstanding track athlete with the Stars & Stripes Track Club.

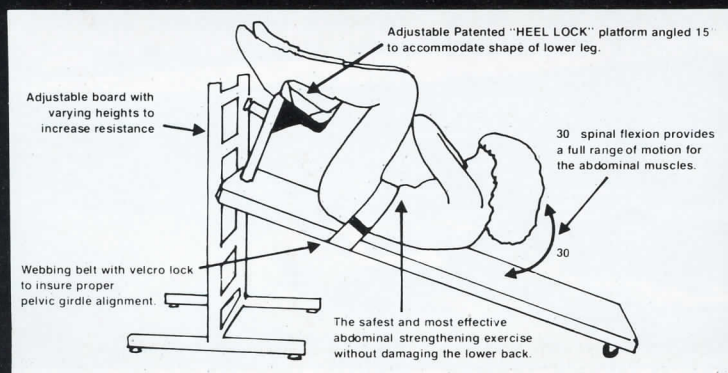
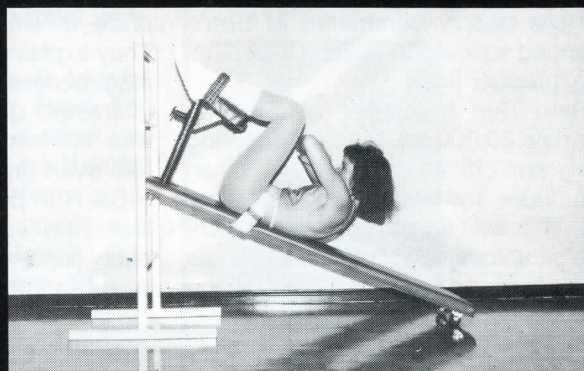
"I'd like to get into the sport of bodybuilding," says Gea; "but I decided to enter the Ms. National Fitness contest because this was the first contest that

Continued on page 54 ►

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wasn't really body building and yet wasn't just a beauty pageant. I love the whole idea of the contest . . . it is good for other girls like myself that are physically fit, but are definitely not body-builders." Gea trained for one month to prepare for the competition under the

sponsorship of the Jerry Doyle Health Club in Phoenix.

At 18 years of age, Gea is the oldest of five children in her family — three girls and 2 boys. "Our family is really close," she says, "and we're all really supportive of each other. My 17-year-old sister,

my Mom and my Grand Dad came with me to the Las Vegas show — they gave me a lot of encouragement."

Gea Johnson will reign as 1986 Ms. National Fitness until the next competition, which will be held at the National Fitness Trade Show in the Fall of '86. "I'm sure there will be a lot of girls competing next year — especially since everyone knows what the contest is all about. In fact, I'll bet the competition will get tougher and tougher each year," says Gea. "I'm really excited . . . I think it's great!"

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INDUSTRY NEWS from page 37

senior level corporate executive to exchange ideas, share their expertise, and explore common positions on important issues. One of the Committee's principal goals is to enable women to take stronger roles in the creation and management of this country's economic resources.

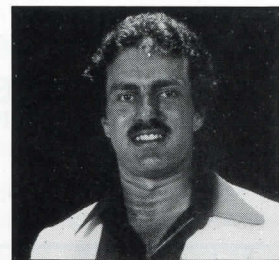
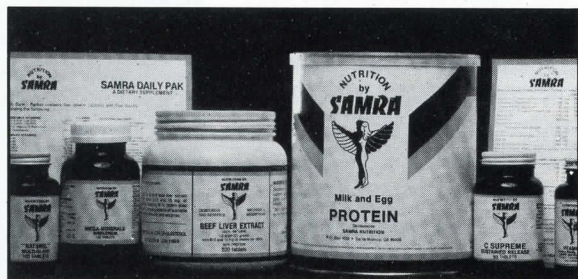
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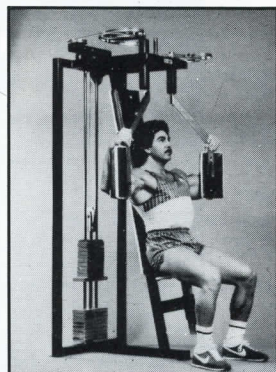
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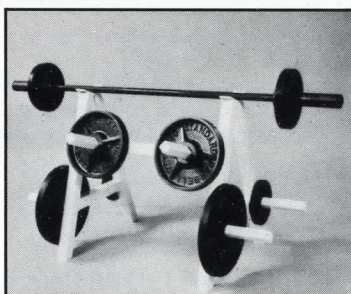
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