

Derina Katia Wilson

IFBB Pro Fitness, Bayshore, NY

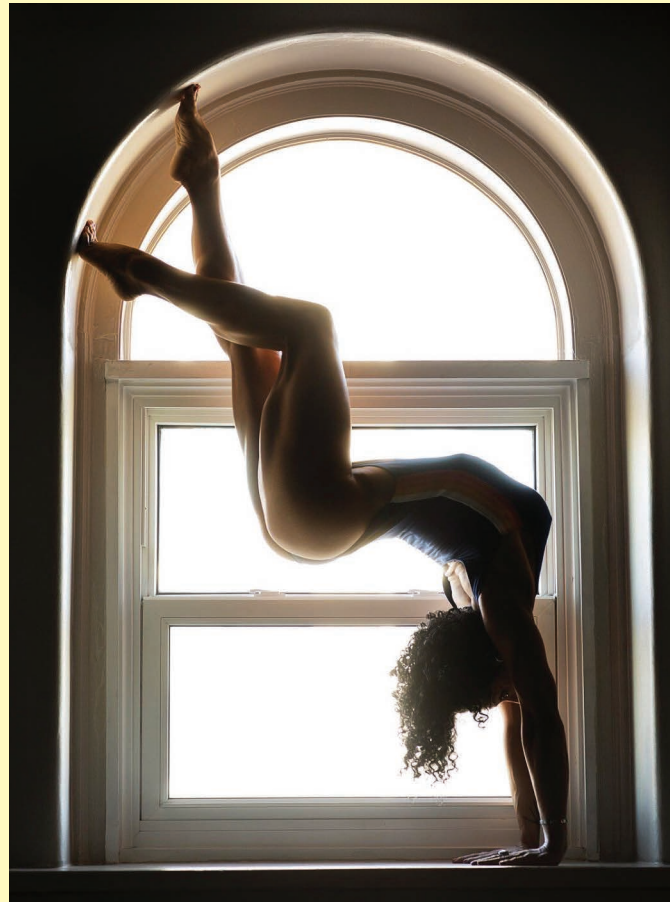
Category & Competition Highlights:

- 4th Place Arnold Classic 2020
- 2nd Place Chicago Pro 2020
- 10th Place Mr. Olympia 2020
- 2 International Arnold's
- 2 Arnold Classics
- 3 Mr. Olympia

Sponsors:

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A background in competitive gymnastics gave Derina a strong foundation for many sports leading up to bodybuilding's fitness category. Watching the declining health and eventual passing of her parents made her determined to take better care of herself. Derina says, "I now compete in honor of them to show them how their support of me throughout my gymnastic years, has now turned into my career and my passion."



My journey began as a little girl. I was asked to try out for the local competitive gymnastics team at 6 1/2 yrs old. I was accepted onto the Level 8 team and by the age of 13, had quickly advanced to an Elite Level. I eventually turned down an offer to Bela Karolyi's Olympic training camp in Texas, due to injuries. In high school, I played Volleyball, was a Cheerleader and performed in Theatre. I completed an Associates Degree in Theatre while competing in Coed Cheerleading and Fencing.

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I coached gymnastics, taught yoga and Pilates and competed in springboard diving on scholarship, while attending Queens College, where I received a Bachelor's Degree in Physical Education. A friend and now and forever coach Lena Squarciafico tried to convince me to compete on the bodybuilding stage for 15 years, but being a caretaker for both parents I had a lot on my plate. It wasn't until my

fathers passing, that I was ready to put the time and effort into bodybuilding. I competed in my first NPC show, won the overall title at the NPC Team Universe and earned a IFBB Pro card. Two weeks later, I made my pro debut at the Tampa Pro. I've had 5 years of competition bliss with some of the most amazing and uplifting women in the world! This sport has allowed me to be a part of an elite group of strong women as well as given me the opportunities to work as a fitness model, which has always been a dream of mine.

Losing both of my parents was absolutely devastating. A year after my mom passed, I was diagnosed with Stage 1 Breast Cancer, but I had already committed to the 2018 Arnold Classic. My oncologist cleared me to compete where I placed 6th in the world. My first attempt at a double mastectomy was the day after I came home from the Arnold. I suffered a life threatening allergic reaction to the Rocuronium (muscle relaxant used during surgery). My body blew up like a balloon and my blood pressure dropped to 50/10. After a month of testing and learning of my allergy, I finally had the double mastectomy surgery. I was fortunate to avoid chemo and radiation since no cancer was found in my lymph nodes. The tumor shrank 75% due



to what I believe, was taking high doses of Cannabidiol (CBD+THC) for two months. My recovery took half the amount of time they said it would, and three months later, I was ready to go! I was invited back to the Arnold Classic two years after cancer surgery and this time I placed 4th!! It was one of the biggest challenges of my life, but one of the most rewarding. My comeback after battling breast cancer and having a double mastectomy, will forever be one of the most memorable moments of

my career. I truly feel like I have a good support system in place but it's hard. I live alone and am single, so some days, it can be a lot to battle by myself. Those who truly know me, understand that my dedication to this sport is what helps me get through the hard times. It sounds cliché, but I've learned to trust the journey and enjoy the process.

Sadly, during my prep for the Mr. Olympia 2020, my Black English Bulldog named Bubba, (named after my fathers nickname), suffered from a ruptured disc in his lower back making his back legs paralyzed. After spine surgery this past August, laser therapy, physical therapy, and a new wheelchair, he has not yet gained the strength to walk. Being a single mom to a handicapped 50lb fur baby during a pandemic, and having arthritis myself, I pick him up 4 times a day to help him empty his bladder. It was and is super challenging, but I have all of the belief in the world, that he will regain his ability to walk.



When I began this journey, my goal was to continue to move my body in the same way I had when I was younger, but with more awareness, as a woman in my mid 30's and now 40 years old. I continue to strive towards that goal. For 2021, I am planning for a wonderful year competing in the IFBB Pro League. If someone asks for my top tip, I would say, take time to understand the changes your body makes before and after a show. Your body cannot be healthy staying at a very low body fat for long periods of time, so you must be kind to your body when you are in the off season to not look at yourself with any negativity but to enjoy each season and how your body continues to grow in strength and have fun!



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