

TEAM GORILLA GIRLZ

TAYSIR ORTA

Women's Physique IFBB Pro

Age: 42, single mom of two daughters

Occupation: CNA caregiver, Gainesville, FL

Coach/Team: David Fenty, Team 44 Physique

Posing Coach: Cindy Reyes

COMPETITION HIGHLIGHTS:

- **2023 IFBB Professional League Daytona Pro** – Women's Physique Masters, 35+ 7th place; Open 10th place
- **2022 NPC National Championships** – Women's Physique Open, 2nd place, earned pro card
- **2022 NPC Monsta Classic** – Women's Physique Novice, 1st place; Open, 1st place
- **2021 NPC Daytona Classic** – Figure Masters 35+, 1st place; Open Class A, 3rd place
- **2021 NPC Florida State Championships** – Figure True Novice, 1st place, Masters 35+, 2nd place; Open Class A, 1st place

SPONSORS:

- **Gorilla Labz Athletics Apparel**
- **Crystal Bikinis**



“ I WAS 19 YEARS OLD WHEN I DECIDED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY ON A RAFT AND HEAD TOWARDS THE UNITED STATES.”



BACKGROUND

I was born and raised in Cuba. My mom put me into different sports because I was very high energy. When I started track and field, I discovered I was very fast and I loved sports. I was a really good sprinter and even went to Nationals in the 100 meters.

My dad was a musician, so he was allowed to travel all over the world. While he was traveling, life in Cuba was very difficult for us. We were very, very poor. There was no power and very little food. My dad decided he had to start his life over in the United States to build a future for our family. Then he could try to claim me to live with him in the United States. However, the Cuban government repeatedly denied my visa. They were not going to let me go legally. I was 19 years old when I decided to leave the country and head towards the United States. My neighbors and I built a raft out of tires. There were seven of us when we left and unfortunately only five of us made it. It was dark and I don't know what happened to the other two. Since we did not have a weather channel in Cuba, we did not know there was a hurricane coming through. We ended up lost at sea for seven days and finally landed in Mexico. We crossed the border and applied for political asylum. We were detained in Mexico for four days, but they notified my parents to sign an affidavit stating they would take care of me until I would become a legal resident or American citizen.

A NEW START

That was August 16, 2001. When I arrived, I did not speak any English. I had left everything and everyone I knew in Cuba. I literally had to start a new life. I got a job at University of Florida and a second part-time job at TJ Maxx. Eventually, I got married and had two beautiful daughters 16 months apart. Unfortunately, I experienced postpartum depression and did not reach for help, which led to divorce.

It was during the divorce that I started working out. I had not done any type of exercise for 13 years. I started dating a bodybuilder and he introduced me to the sport. We had planned on doing a show together, so I hired his coach. After having kids, I had let myself go and I was overweight so there were big changes in my physique. The boyfriend got jealous, so we broke it off, but I continued and did my first competition in 2021 placing 1st in both Figure Novice and Figure Masters 35+ at the NPC Florida State Championships.

The judges feedback however, was that if I wanted to continue in the Figure division, I would have to stop working legs. My quads were already dominant and I needed to bring them down and I was also a little too conditioned. My coach and I took the feedback and came back a few months later at the NPC Daytona Classic. Again, the judges said my legs were just too big for the division. I didn't want to stop working legs so, we decided I would move to the Women's Physique Division.

I love sports so much and I love to lift super heavy. I was planning to do a show in November but, I got sick. I was having digestion problems and getting bloated all the time. Two weeks before the show, I had to pull out. I went to my primary care doctor and was diagnosed with Diastasis Recti also described as an "abdominal separation." Surgery was scheduled right away and recovery was a slow process. It was at least six months before I could even begin increasing weights and really start training.



FINDING MY PLACE - ON STAGE

I found a new coach, David Fenty, Team 44 Physique. I actually hired his wife first to help me learn the poses for Women's Physique. David came in while we were posing and I told him what I was looking for, the restrictions I had as a result of the surgery, and my goal to compete at the 2022 NPC Monsta Classic which was only 16 weeks away. Since I was limited with weights, we pushed the diet and cardio and my physique completely changed to the next level. I qualified for nationals at that show and the feedback encouraged me to go to 2022 NPC National Championships. I had two weeks to prepare and I didn't even know what going to nationals meant at the time!

FINDING MY PLACE - OFF STAGE

Helping others is who I am. As a CNA Caregiver, I work the nightshift for one client. He has dementia and he calls me Darling because he can't pronounce my name, but every morning before I leave him, he says, "Thank you for taking care of me." That's it, that's all I need to hear. Even when I'm having a tough day or it's hot and I'm tired, when I hear him say those words, I know I did my job. I made his time better.

HOW DID YOU BECOME A PART OF TEAM GORILLA GIRLZ?

At the time, I was putting out a lot of social media content to inspire people, especially moms and women over 40. Mike Matassa, promoter of the Daytona Pro Am, told James Lord, co-owner of Gorilla Labz Athletics Apparel, about me, my journey, and desire to inspire others. James had a spot open on the team. Once he heard my story and understood that I had to literally fight for everything I have, he offered to sponsor me. I've known Mike through the posing seminars and as the promoter of the Daytona Pro-Am and I'm grateful to him for introducing me and I am so fortunate to be selected as a sponsored athlete on Team Gorilla Girlz.

THE FUTURE

I made my pro debut at the 2023 IFBB Professional League Daytona Pro placing 7th in Masters and 10th in the Open division. This year I am continuing to work on symmetry and the muscle gains the judges want to see on my back and shoulders. My first goal is to continue to compete as a Women's Physique Pro in both the Masters and Open categories. My second goal is to inspire other people. Qualifying for the Olympia, that's my American dream or maybe after a few more pro shows under my belt I will apply for the Masters Olympia.



It is an amazing feeling to know the success I have achieved so far makes all the hard work, sacrifices, and tears worth it. I enjoy being an ambassador for the NPC and the IFBB Pro League and I love helping at the seminars. I'm working to make my American dream come true.

Taysir, it takes a special person to be a caregiver in addition to raising two girls by yourself. And then go to the gym. And keep a positive attitude all while competing at an elite level. I don't know how you do it all, but I do know the impact you have on the lives of others is a beautiful gift and we would love to see dreams fulfilled.

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