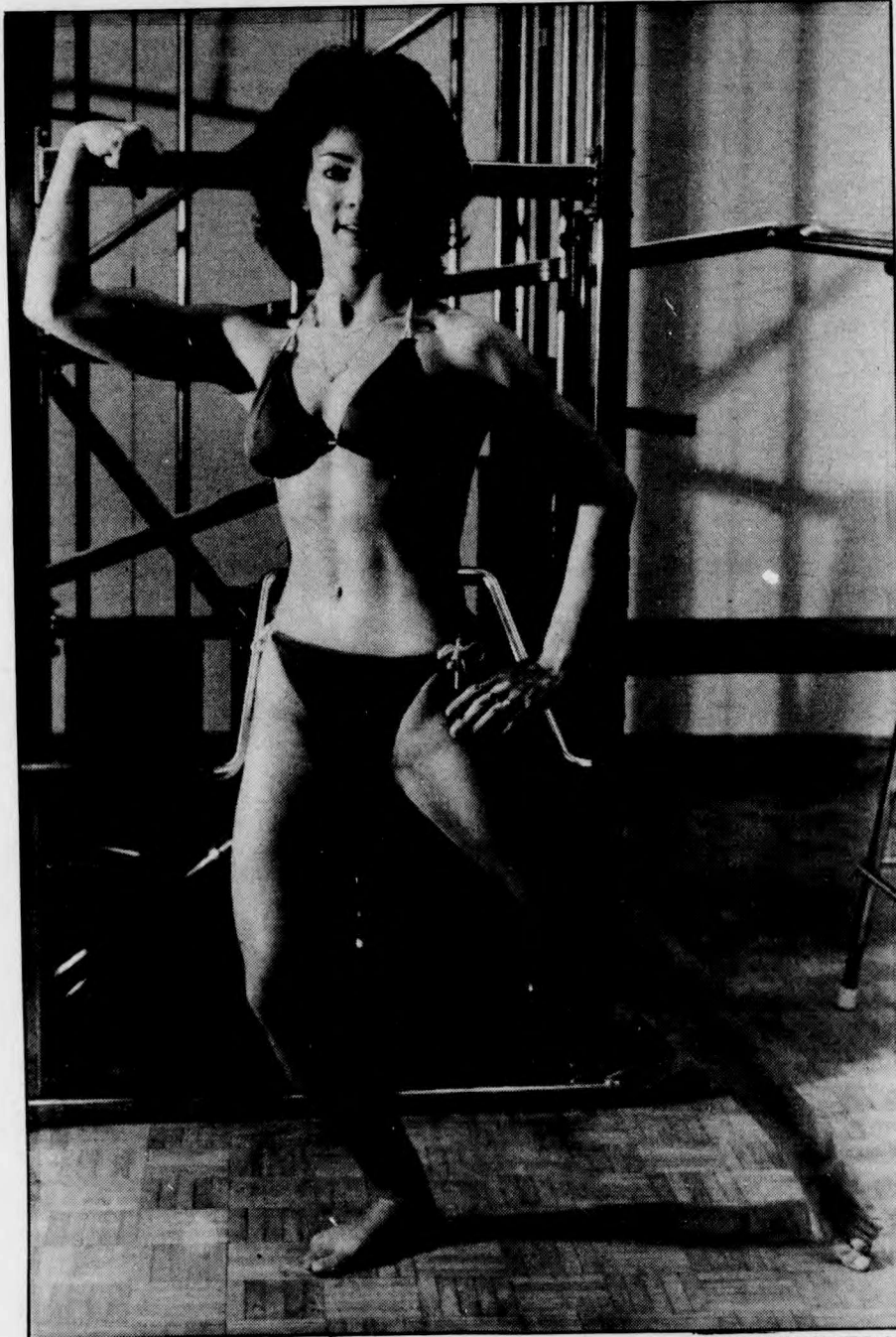
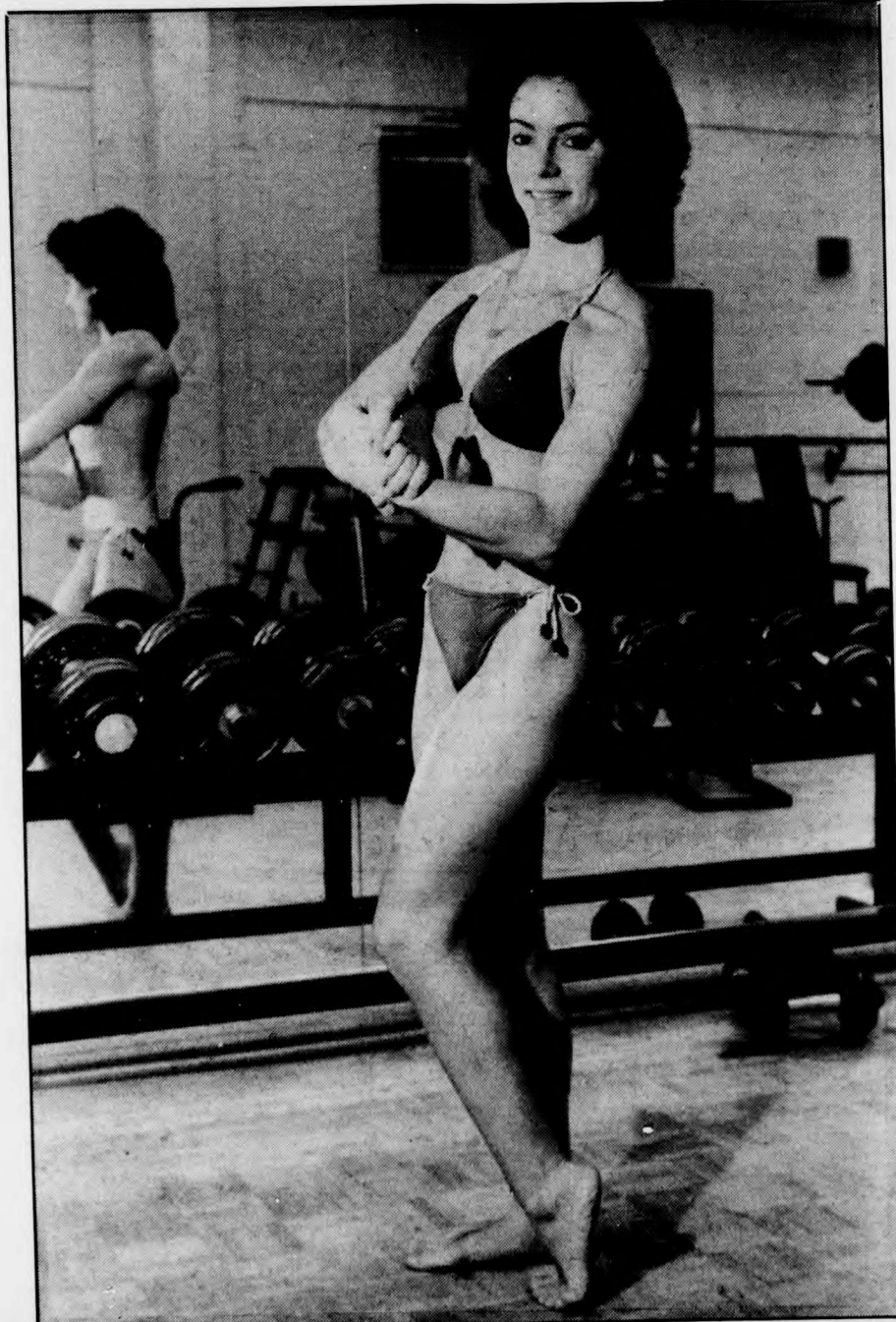


sports



Photos MARIO SCATTOLONI



Fuse Room Venus mounts wings of muscle

By MARK ZWOLINSKI

About a year ago, Sherry Hislop looked in the mirror and decided it was time for a change.

At a mere 168 cm (5'3") and 52 kg (115 lbs.), Hislop considered her bodily possessions to be flabby, dull, and about as startling as pear sitting on a kitchen window sill.

In her home town of Chomedey, Quebec, no one noticed her when she donned her favorite swimming wear. They didn't even kick sand in her face.

Then came the membership in the "Centre Culture Physique" in Chomedey, run by former Mr. Canada Raymond Sancousy.

Today, things have changed—er, ah, developed. Hislop, now pursuing an Administrative Studies degree at York, owns a completely rebuilt 118 pounds packed into a rippled and strikingly-toned frame that would make Charles Atlas or Arnold Schwarzenegger do a double take.

She hopes to turn a different set of eyes though, those focused from a table of judges at the Miss Laval Body Building Championships where her newly-acquired muscles will be put to the test.

"You can take body building and, depending on your interests, achieve many goals," Hislop says. "I was always watching myself, always dieting. I thought I looked okay but underneath I was still soft."

"Then I saw a girl in a competition who had big legs but they weren't fat. They looked good, really defined. So I went out and bought a second hand set of weights and started training at home. It wasn't easy at first, especially in getting acquainted with the training. But I know what I was then and where I want to go now."

Results like Hislop's have swayed many women toward body building as their method of achieving and maintaining attractive and well-toned bodies.

At gymnasiums all over Toronto, the number of women involved in weight training and body building exercises is on the increase.

Hislop, who confesses to being a "big" eater, has supplanted an old-line calisthenics program with vigorous two-hour-a-day, six-day-a-week sessions in the "Fuse Room" at Founders College, which she has neatly woven around her academic timetable.

While maintaining an intense bodybuilding schedule, she finds that her body overhaul hasn't detached her from femininity, a rumor that often causes beginners to think twice before lifting their first barbell.

However, the moment Hislop relaxes from a lift the muscles disappear from view, leaving her just an extremely well-built young woman who looks alluringly feminine in her everyday street clothes.

"A lot of women are turned off by weights and bodybuilding," she says. "Granted, there's a lot of hard work involved, but that's only to get results. There is simply no way a woman can develop muscles to the same extent as a man."

Like most successful bodybuilders, Hislop's diet consists mostly of foods like fish, chicken, plenty of fruit, vegetables, and whole grain foods. She avoids "white death"—sugar and salt, which causes bloating that adds weight and makes muscles smooth rather than defined.

But Hislop's appetite, now curbed towards sensible cuisine to coincide with her program, has only been dampened slightly.

There is the matter of slaking a new hunger for achieving the ultimate body, and that means competing in a supercharged world of Danskin-clad bodies pumping iron for dollars, and yes, the chance at breaking onto the Hollywood scene as so many successful bodybuilders such as Rachel McLish have done lately.

"There is definitely a very personal kind of pressure once you decide to compete," Hislop says. "In one way you have to battle with yourself. You have to say to yourself 'I want to be better at the next competition than I was at the last one.' It involves constantly looking back at your old body and seeing how far you've progressed."

"A second pressure, and probably the more difficult of the two, comes when you're up against other girls. Body builders often measure themselves in terms of how successful other body builders are. I often look in the mirror and psyche myself up, thinking of what it will take to be better than the best."

Being a newcomer to the competitive side of body building hasn't fazed Hislop, nor has it distracted her from her daily routine. In her very first competition back in October 1983, she managed to place third in the lightweight division (114½ lbs. and under) in the Junior Canadian Womens Championships at Scarborough's Cedarbrae High School, a scant seven months after she christened her new body with its first workout.

While she hasn't competed in the past three months, her weight training program has undergone a preparatory transition which entails an eight to 10 week period where she will concentrate on the elimination of body fat, a process that will see Hislop drop from her normal weight of 118 pounds to a feathery 108 pounds of hopefully solid muscle.

In the meantime, a full-sized mirror and a make-up kit see regular use, along with a mandatory string bikini and a bottle of baby oil that will anoint her body through the phases of her posing routines.

Hislop will be judged in three categories—an initial symmetrical round where judges look for equilibrium in the development of muscle groups, a secondary round centred on the five obligatory poses, and a final 90-second freestyle pose round, choreographed to music, where she will strike her best composites.

She admits to a certain trepidation about competing in the Miss Laval Championships, but that is only because she is not satisfied with her current physique.

In fact, no body builder is entirely satisfied with their bodily state of affairs. The body is always under construction.

"I still have a long way to go before I get the body I want," she says. "The way to keep going in body building is never to be satisfied. My first goal was to get my legs in shape. When I got them to a maximized point, I look in the mirror and see my arms need work. It goes on like that with all the parts of the body—it's never ending."

"You never build the perfect body, but you can get close. I want to get as close as possible."

Muscle bound

York's Sherry Hislop is the pride of the Fuse Room but she is looking to tone her 5'3" frame for the Miss Laval competition this March.

