

Bodybuilding -- Mother Nature's Way

Jeffrey Welker, DC

I read through the October 10th edition of Dynamic Chiropractic and noticed the article, "Chiropractors in Virginia and Connecticut Get Involved in the War Against Steroids." This article was of special interest to me because I held a "natural" bodybuilding competition this year.

As a doctor of chiropractic I strongly encourage physical health and improvement through diet, exercise, and chiropractic care. Due to the fact that my practice is geared toward athletic rehabilitation, I have been in a position to recognize a dramatic increase in the use of anabolic steroids and other growth hormones. I believe that as a chiropractor it is important for me to educate the public about the potential harm these drugs can do.

In order to spread awareness, I consented to be featured on two radio programs and one television program. All three programs focused on steroids and their abuse. These programs also provided me with an opportunity to explain the benefits of chiropractic and how conservative care can help improve performance as well as health.

The American Chiropractic Association (ACA) has pamphlets, posters, bumper stickers, and various anti-drug and steroid materials available. I have made my office a source for these materials at no charge for schools, athletic clubs, or other organizations who would like to distribute or display them.

Currently, I serve as the Idaho chairman of the North American Natural Bodybuilding Association (NANBA). This organization requires that all athletes be free from anabolic steroids and any other growth hormone for at least the preceding two years. To ensure the natural state of these athletes, polygraph and urinalysis testing is done prior to each competition.

On June 23, 1990, Welker Chiropractic sponsored the 1990 Golden Cup Natural Bodybuilding Competition. This competition was sanctioned by NANBA and was the first of its kind in the state of Idaho. I was very pleased with the outstanding athletes who participated. Trophies were awarded for first, second, and third place as well as for best poser and best physique. T-shirts were presented to all competitors.

It was quite intriguing to hear comments made prior to the competition. Almost every competitor in the event told me they were thrilled to have a chance to compete on an equal level against competitors whose training regimens were steroid free. It's exciting to see these athletes have an opportunity to be recognized and rewarded for their work, sweat, and determination.

On the other hand, I met with quite a lot of opposition as well. I received numerous threatening phone calls demanding that the competition be cancelled. One very distraught young man called and told me I was ruining his life because everyone would know he was taking steroids when he didn't enter the competition.

I will continue to hold a natural bodybuilding competition on an annual basis. I anticipate that each year's competition will surpass the success of the previous one. It is my hope that as more athletes move toward natural competitions, fewer lifters will train with steroids and other harmful elements.

If there are any other chiropractors involved in some aspect of bodybuilding and/or the promotion of natural athletics who would like information about the North American Natural Bodybuilding Association, please write to my office at 301 N. 27th, Boise, ID 83702 or call (208) 343-2584.

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