



Photos submitted

Mari-Ann Drevvatne took first place in the International Natural Bodybuilding Association national competition in August. It was the first competition she has ever entered.

Building her body of work

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It is not everyday you enter your first major competition, win and are then selected to represent your country.

But that is just what first-time bodybuilder Mari-Ann Drevvatne achieved on Aug. 25 when she entered the International Natural Bodybuilding Association national competition held in North Vancouver.

Competing against 30 body builders from across the country, the 36-year-old came second in the Junior Masters 35 to 39-year-olds section and third in the Open section.

Drevvatne will now represent Canada at the INBA Natural Olympia X in Natural Body Building in Greece in November.

"This is my dream," Drevvatne said.

"It's been my dream forever to compete and I've finally achieved it and will be going to Greece.

"It's the highlight of any bodybuilder's career as it's the most prestigious bodybuilding competition in the world."

Drevvatne said because of the 'natural' tag line, each competitor was drug tested at the recent event and will certainly be again in Greece.

"This is totally clean bodybuilding, there are no drugs, no steroids, just your body and how you make it work for you," she said.

Drevvatne said one of the main things she enjoyed about the INBA bodybuilding competition, is that they are not just about showing off muscles but like women

to still look like ladies and not men.

A super svelte and sculptured body does not come without consistent dedication to what you are trying to achieve.

In the fitness industry for over 20 years and a certified personal trainer, Drevvatne has a long list of training and health qualifications under her belt, including accreditation in Nordic walking and as a scuba diving instructor.

She is also the owner of the B.C. Adventure Boot Camp, so even before she decided to compete in bodybuilding, Drevvatne had a buffed body.

"I believe anyone can achieve anything they want with their body," she said.

"I've always wanted to compete professionally and this is something I just always wanted to do, so after my

accident I had to build my body back up."

Drevvatne suffered numerous injuries in a 1996 car accident and was told by doctors to forget her career in fitness training.

"But I wasn't going to give up and now I've finally achieved what I wanted to do, compete," she said.

"And now I'm going to be Miss Olympia, I'm going for the Miss Olympia title."

But you cannot do just weights and exercise to be a bodybuilder it also takes strict discipline with your food intake.

Leading up to her first competition, Drevvatne ate a diet of dark leafed vegetables, a lot of white fish, such as halibut and very lean red meat, every three hours for five weeks.

Ten days before competing she changed this to weigh

protein shakes and four days later, only ate halibut, tuna, cod and egg whites.

And the day before competition she loads up on carbohydrates to give her body a totally buffed look.

"Everybody's body is different and acts differently and you just have to find what works for you," Drevvatne said.

Drevvatne's mentor is Cory Holly and she attends his nutrition institute in Burnaby, learning more about her body and how she can get it to its optimum level.

"There's no reason why you can't have a body of a 30-year-old when you're in your 50's," she said.

"I'm 36 and people are often surprised when I tell them that.

"They often think I'm in my 20's, which is great."

