

WHAT BODYBUILDING JUDGES LOOK FOR

1) **Symmetry** — the overall shape of the body. The best bodybuilders have wide shoulders, flaring lats, a torso that tapers down to a small waist, and thighs that flare dramatically between hip and knee.

2) **Proportion** — the balance of one part of the body to the others, of particular bodyparts to the rest. Is the development of the upper body proportionate to the rest? Is the size of the arms in proportion to the chest and shoulders? Is calf size balanced compared to thighs and arms?

3) **Individual bodyparts** — how well each bodypart is shaped and developed. Is there a line between the upper and lower pectorals? Is there a split between the biceps? Are all three heads of the triceps distinct and well developed? How about the various muscles of the shoulders, the back, the quadriceps and hamstrings? Which bodyparts are outstanding and which are weak points?

4) **Detail and Quality** — definition, separation, striations, cross-striations, hardness and muscle detail. How muscular and well defined is the physique? Is there distinct separation between the pectorals and deltoids, the delts and the arms, the four heads of the quadriceps and the line between the quads and the

hamstrings viewed from the side? Are striations and cross-striations clearly visible? Is there "anatomy chart detail" showing in all the important muscle groups?

5) **Presentation** — comparison posing and free posing. The ability of the bodybuilder to display physical development to its best advantage both in comparison posing — hitting the compulsory poses during prejudging — and how well designed and executed is the free posing routine.

6) **Overall Assessment** — factors such as attitude and comportment on stage, skin tone and quality, grooming, the fit and appropriate design of the posing suit.

DON'T SAY

"MUSCLE-BOUND!"

You hear the term "muscle-bound" all the time, but many bodybuilders don't realize it is actually a put-down. When you call somebody muscle-bound you're denigrating their athletic ability. You're saying that having big muscles makes a person slow, inflexible, uncoordinated and clumsy. And probably slow-witted as well.

It dates back to the days when coaches refused to let their athletes work out in the weight room. But those days are past. Just look at athletes like Nolah Ryan. Mr. Olympia Lee Haney trained heavyweight boxing champ Evander Holyfield for his title bout with Buster Douglas. If you think Holyfield is muscle-bound, you might ask Douglas his opinion.

Muscle-bound is also a phrase used by insecure, 98-pound weaklings to rationalize their own insecurities, their fear of individuals who are bigger and stronger than they are. If you can't lick 'em, make fun of 'em.

— Bill Dobbins