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Export date: Sun Nov 1 2:08:52 2026 / +0000 GMT

Mulmur women defends world title in women?s physique bodybuilding championship

Written By James Gerus

Jessie Steinberg recently made her community of Mulmur proud after taking first place in the world championship for women's physique at a bodybuilding competition in Toronto.

Steinberg, 53, moved to Dufferin County in 2000. Prior to competing in bodybuilding competitions, she played semi-pro soccer, but two concussions in that sport led her to seek a different physical outlet.

It was when she was 45, taking her daughter to a gymnastics class, that another mom in the bodybuilding world suggested she give it a try. She took a chance on the sport in February of that year, and by October, she competed in her first competition.

While she was hesitant about undertaking such a daunting new skill, Steinberg explains, ?I felt like a fish out of water. But you know what? I'm learning something new, I'm 45, and I'm learning something too. It's good for my brain, and humble for my ego. Let's go!?

Steinberg is someone who oozes optimism and curiosity from every ounce of her being. On top of her commitment to athletics, she works a myriad of jobs that connect her to the community. She's well known as the founder of Leap Adventures - an educational team building organization that works with corporations and schools and gets them out of their comfort zones with team building activities.

Steinberg is a teacher for the Upper Grand District School Board, a part-time musician, works in disaster relief, and is working on a tree farm this holiday season.

Where does this entrepreneur of many trades get all this energy and motivation from? From two areas: One is looking after and respecting her body.

?I love when people sink into their bodies and know how strong they are,? said Steinberg, who doesn't drink or smoke. ?However you built your body, you built it ?? the way you feed it, move it, don't move it ?? and if you don't like how it feels lets get empowered to have it feel better!?

The other key factor is having a purpose and mission to help her community.

?Giving back to the community, creating community, its part of who I am and how I roll in the world. I want to walk around with generosity, kindness, and integrity,? said Steinberg.

That love of the body and zest for life keep her going and help her maintain a positive mindset as she won her latest competition.

On Nov. 8 she defended her title in the Ultimate Fitness Events (UFE) World Championships for all-natural bodybuilding in Toronto.

Steinberg competed in the women's physique category and gained five extra pounds of muscle just for the show. After winning last year, she was able to win again and is hoping to have a three-peat next year.

But regardless of the outcome, Steinberg said, ?In the end, this is about me showing up on stage with what I got, and in my world, I already won because I made it to the stage. Everything else is a bonus.?

The regimen to prepare for the competition is intense; when hinting at her diet and physical training to prepare for the show, Steinberg reflects, ?It's possible for women over 40 to build muscle. We just have to shift what we've always done. We have to eat differently and move differently. Instead of doing cardio, we actually have to lift weights.?

As a bodybuilder, Steinberg is committed to living a natural lifestyle and competing in competitions as a natural bodybuilder, despite the challenge of gaining muscle at an older age.

?If people choose not to go natural, they need to know what they're getting into,? she said, noting the side effects are what really concern her.

?The implications are huge. There's something to be said about being a natural bodybuilder and seeing how you can build muscle with what you got.?

Fortunately, Steinberg has many supportive people on her side. Even Popeye's Supplements in Orangeville supports her as an athlete and helps provide her with supplements and powders to aid her journey.

When asked if she has a favourite part of the body to work out, she said, while it's definitely not leg day, ?I love doing upper body, typically chest and shoulders are my (favourite).?

When asked if she has advice for others looking to take up bodybuilding at any age, she said to ?connect with somebody, connect with a coach. Someone who has been in it. And connect with someone who is also a natural.?