

# 2024 *30<sup>th</sup> Annual* Granite State Open



**BODYBUILDING ~ FIGURE ~ BIKINI ~ PHYSIQUE ~ FITBODY ~ COUPLES**

***INBF SANCTION / WNBFF PRO QUALIFIER***

What a whirlwind of excitement, and change. Celebrating 30 Years as New Hampshire's Premier Bodybuilding and more Competitions is fantastic. We had a heck of a season this 2024, with so many athletes joining the ranks and so many moving on to Pro status or simply, evolving in and out. The newcomers are adept and carry with them the benefit of on-line coaching as well as eclectic stage skills. The Old timers set the bar and keep the quality of competition sharp.

As always, the Granite State Open is available to all Natural athletes, of all affiliations and tends to draw from throughout New England and beyond. This year proved the same. We also had the benefit of a fabulous guest poser this year, Joe Farese, a WNBFF Pro Master World Champion. He presented to the athletes and audience with the artistry of a well honed and conditioned bodybuilder, as well as making a verbal address to all about the benefits of Natural competition. Every athlete nodded in agreement and the bodybuilders celebrated together with a high five across the Division. Many accepted the insight and continued their journey to the World Championships in Boston!

The best part about the GSO is that the folks who attend are all well meaning and kind. There is an instant sense of good will, healthy camaraderie and respectful competitiveness. That lends itself to whom will earn the team award. This year, an enthusiastic team with a boatload of spirit were the recipients and we thank Suzette Montiero and her participants for their devotion and hard work.



L.J. Turtle Promotions 

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From Figure Newcomers Kailyn Aguiar and Vicki Rousell, to Overall Figure Masters Erin Letsky, a show trend appears: Novices return and do well! Erin won the Novice Bikini Division in 2020 and has returned to the stage each year, adapting her body and peak seasons to always present a lovely and elegant style. This year, she edged out Carrie Winn, the Figure Masters Short Class winner for the Overall. We adore seeing Novices gain experience and move up with their knowledge, confidence and preparedness from show to show. Where experience defines the Debut and Novice, so do the Open athletes vie for Overall titles and a chance to earn a Pro Card. Our Open Figure Women were stage ready, striking in poise, quarter turns, stage walks and conditioning. Well appointed tans, hair, make up and smiles too, brought the beauty and fitness acumen to a very competitive match. The short Class was captured by Heather Schofield and she went heel to heel against tall competitor Olivia Stewart. Ms. Olivia won the Ms. Figure GSO title and huge hug from Mom, who later took the Masters Bikini Short Class. These two prove, health and well-being are ageless!

Bodybuilding is the true blood of all physique sports. Folks go to the gym and work on their body, they eat and train and sleep to sculpt their form into contest ready shape. It is the “flex everything you’ve got” true enthusiast who shines in this division. We were honored by brand new talent and competitive open classes. Alike Figure, the novices were ready! Congratulations to the Debut Champ Alex Jones-Peron and Novice Winner Colton Murphy. We know we will see



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them again! Taking the Masters Men Title 50+ was Lindsay Fink. This gent is hardcore dedicated! In the Open three weight classes, spirits ran high and the competition was thick. We look forward to seeing Joel Valez, our Middleweight Class winner and Best Poser, return and continue to rock the house with his expressive personality. A true gentleman of the sport is Mike Ventura, from check-in to stage, his demeanor was sheer joy to be around. Mike took the lightweight class and proved strong in the overall pose down, coming in just behind Joel.

The ladies proved just as mighty, with a superbly strong Masters Bodybuilding Division full of experience, mature muscle and stage savvy. Kudos to the beautifully tapered Christine Fleming, who slayed this talented line up. Next up, the Open Women's Bodybuilding, where Christina continued her win to take the Tall Class. Christina and Erica Van Lugen, the short class winner, posed long and hard. Erica nailed the Best Poser award and Christine came away with the Overall title. Symmetry, muscularity, presentation. Check, Check, Check. Two champions who reinforced the fact that you can be muscular and still very feminine!

Pulling back from density and adding a bit more flare, a little less supercut, we cheered on the FitBody Division. These heeled athletes competed in quarter turns, and flexed a variety of mandatory poses. Once again, beauty and brawn blended to show how flexible the industry has become. Taking the short class, Heather Schofield. The



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tall Class was well earned by Kristy MacMillan. Both of these women continued with stage walks and more quarter turns to see Kristy edge out the win and become the new reigning Ms GSO Fitbody.

When it comes to beauty, style, grace, flare, finesse and sass, sure, we all think Bikini. Well, the guys have it too, and to our joy the Men's Physique competitors were polished and conditioned at this GSO. This proved to be another Novice experience of success as we observed Mike Stockwell win here and move up the ladder with wins throughout the season. It never hurts to get your feet wet and sharpen as you continue! Once a novice on this stage, returning champ Domenic Clements was thrilled to win the Overall Men's Physique Division. Domenic is also a fabulous fun guy who paired with Samantha Stephens for the Couples Competition. Joining two other pairs, these folks had fun in mandatory comparisons, muscular poses and creative routines. All hands were clapping as Kristy MacMillan and Matthew Bourke won, edging out the stylings of returning champs Carrie Winn and Steven Durost.

Speaking of Bikini, our glam squad for the GSO did a fantastic job with Hair and Make-up, Tanning and glazing. Special shout out to Shauuna Legatos and Ryann Healy's team at Golden Standard Spray Tans for their professional skills. The Field was full for all Divisions in Bikini and Short Masters Elana Baron gracefully edged out Tall Masters Melissa Stewart for the Overall Title. In the Open, Cassandra Pan worked diligently and with fun and flare to hold her first place



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Short Class demeanor though another comparison round with the Tall Class winner Amanda Cence. Both of these women carried themselves beautifully and Amanda took with Win. The ladies hugging and congratulating each other is always a great sign of fair play and a good showing.

The GSO has hung in and cobbled through many changes and exciting challenges. This season we were proud to be a warm up and qualifier to the WNBF Worlds, held in Boston. Many of the athletes were invited to compete there, having placed in the GSO, and many Pro Qualified to bring their best package forward to a field of international competition. It has been and always will be the theme of the GSO to be a springboard for interested athletes, to continue at a higher level in the industry, to find success in a personal best, or to add another notch to their ongoing love of competition.

And, as always, we state that it takes a village. The Turtle team are a close group of forever-loyal friends that volunteer to bring you a seamless day. The sponsors and supporters offer valuable amenities and services to make the GSO worthy of your attention. Thanks from the bottom of our hearts to the Star Theatre, Chris Luici and Steve Workman for giving us just what we needed. Love and spiritual energy is sent year round by Julie Van Meter, Stage management executed by the incomparable Lisa Irish, Gift Cards for custom suits are generously provided by the most talented Maggie Keaveny, Turtles tux is from Tuxedos and Suits with style, Yummy meals support volunteers to the Dinnerhorn/Bratskellar, The Goat, The



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Gaslight restaurants. The day was fully appointed by the excellent photography and services of Shawn and Michelle Black of Couture Black. Their support throughout the year with show production, Athlete communications, artistry and talent is SO appreciated by GSO recipients. There are dozens of friends and helpers along the way, from set up to break down, amenities and kindness. We thank you.

Until we see you next October 18<sup>th</sup> for the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual GSO, please keep in touch!

Love and light to all, Ms Turtle



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