

CASEY'S BACK IN ACTION

story by Clifford Brownfield

Casey Viator's self-inflicted exile was at an end. Back in competition at the N.A.B.B.A. Pro Universe, it was good to see bodybuilding's youngest Mr. America. For when he suddenly chose to remove himself from the posing light, no one felt that he had reached his peak. His fans wanted more, the sport beckoned, and Viator finally obliged. As to the whys and wherefors? Here's Casey to tell us in his own words.

M.D.: Why the absence from bodybuilding, Casey?

VIATOR: After you win the Mr. America, where do you go? You go to Weider. And Weider is a weird little octopus there in the corner. You know. It's kind of hard to be half-way associated with him. You have to just about get up to your hip boots before you can really be accepted and get square deals. This kind of thing bothers me. So that's more or less why. That's the main reason for my absence.

M.D.: What decided you to get back into competition?

VIATOR: Well, you get to a certain point in your life where you say, heck, if I don't do it now, I'll get old and regret it. That's the only reason I thought about rolling back in. But now you're faced with having to select, or trying to find an unbiased competition. This is really hard unless you're associated with people; people that are in the game for profit. It's rough. Just ask Szkalak. In most contests I could just about write predictions out. A guy won't stay in bodybuilding if he's getting jammed all the time.

M.D.: What decided you to finally get into the NABBA thing?

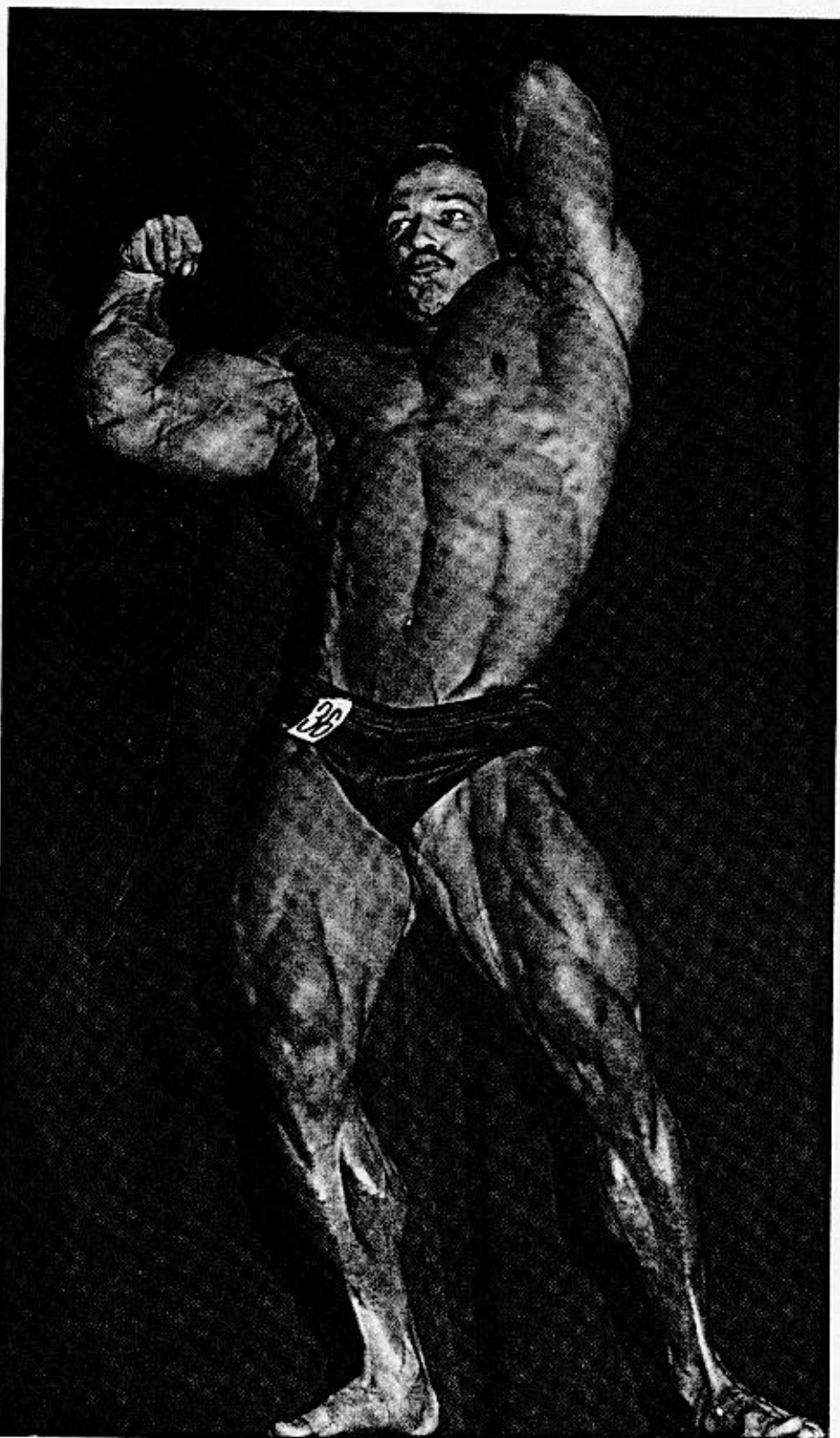
VIATOR: I felt that contest had a little meaning, and the people there treated me real good until I got off the plane in London. Then I began to feel a little bit of hesitation from everyone. As a matter of fact, before I put my posing trunks on I knew I had lost.

M.D.: How did you come to find that out?

VIATOR: From the people that knew what's going on. Some of the club owners and some people from Germany informed me too. So, sight unseen, I'd been beat. I was disappointed about the whole thing and I want to emphasize that the whole contest was a disappointment, especially the way it was run.

M.D.: In what ways specifically?

VIATOR: The disorganization; of even the height class. I see that Johns was in



the medium height class. Well I'm five foot eight, and the maximum height this class allows is five nine. Johns is a good three inches taller than I am, and I'm 5' 8" exactly. So, why have a height class if you can be in any one you want?

M.D.: How about the actual judging process?

VIATOR: It seemed to me that they were judging the whole contest based on the relaxed position. (At least this is the position in which we spent the biggest portion of our time.) This is the most absurd thing I've ever heard in my life. You don't compete in a physique contest by merely standing next to someone. As a matter of fact, that's the worst position for me personally. I was ready to go ahead and throw the biceps up and start comparing. I had the contest won, 100%, that way. As far as just standing relaxed, I didn't know the emphasis upon that type of judging predominated in Europe. It was something that I wasn't familiar with.

M.D.: Your detractors are going to have a field day, Casey. There'll probably be cries of sour grapes from Balboa to Brighton, but you know this going in. Why do you feel the contest was rigged? Why were you set up?

VIATOR: Well it goes way back, back into the Sergio thing when Pearl beat Olivia. There were a lot of toes being stepped on back in those days, including those of the people that were subsidizing the NABBA contest itself; people from America. When Sergio lost, these funds were cut all together. I can't name names, but I know this for a fact. This is what started the bad feelings between Oscar Heidenstam and all the rest.

M.D.: Do you think your association with Art Jones brought you some grief?

VIATOR: Definitely, definitely. If I had been a Weider man on another type of barbell man there'd have been no thought regarding economic competition. But to make a Nautilus-trained bodybuilder their champion, this they wouldn't do. It would edge into the profits they make from the sale of weights and conventional exercise equipment. In fact at the contest there are all kinds of their products on display. This contest is definitely commercial.

M.D.: Well how were you received by the audience? They surely had no axe to grind.

VIATOR: The prejudging was fantastic. I just went ahead and fired everyone up. I gave a very good presentation and the

audience went wild. So in spite of what I knew was coming, I'd have to say that the prejudging went halfway decent. But the show itself (the following day) was just absurd. They handed me Johns' height class trophy, and then took it back. I've never been in anything so disorganized in all my life.

M.D.: So no more NABBA contests?

VIATOR: Right. I thought the N.A.B.B.A. would be worthy of me going. You don't have to print it that way because it sounds bad, but that's the way I feel about it. I'm not trying to make enemies or impress people with my own sense of self-importance, but I hate the ladder-of-succession and slip-shod way things seem to be over there. I've never believed that "Casey's been over here three times, so let's give the title to him" is good for the sport. If I had to win a contest that way, I wouldn't be interested in it. You have to realize all of the time and expense that's lost from your private and professional life to really appreciate the efforts of any sportsman. I'm bitter because things totally irrelevant to the physique competition were allowed to interfere. The prestige that Reg Park, Bill Pearl, etc. brought to the N.A.B.B.A. is fading away. Soon you may see top flight Americans avoiding the contest completely.

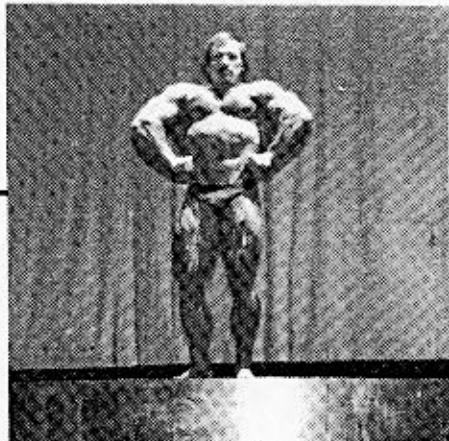
M.D.: How about contests in general? That only leaves you with Lurie or Weider (I forgot to mention Nubret's W.A.B.B.A.).

VIATOR: You're right, it doesn't leave much. As far as the Olympia — I'm not interested in it. I'll quit before I go into something like that. I'd be right in the middle of a political thing again. I've seen too many people smashed in the dirt. Even if Szkalak wasn't quite as tight as he should have been, politics were against him all the way.

M.D.: What's in your future then?

VIATOR: There's plenty ahead for me, I'm optimistic and hard-working. I consider myself a jack-of-all-trades and I'm pleased with my role in the Nautilus system. In fact I've learned a great deal about people (and life in general) just because of this equipment.

I think I've plenty much proved my point as far as Nautilus is concerned. I've gone from training four to five hours a day to forty-five minutes three times a week. What with the results I've had, you'd think the world would be lined-up outside my door



But there's a lot of people with closed minds, and it's rough to get through the barriers formed after ten years of association with standard methods.

It's hard to change overnight, I had trouble myself, but the key is to realize when change is necessary. Adaption is a sign of intelligence, but sadly Nautilus doesn't compute to most people. They don't know what to do with their extra time so they return to the gym. It's as if they have nothing else to get done, nothing else that's interesting to them.

M.D.: Yeah, I hear you. In fact I'm a little ashamed that I haven't experimented more thoroughly with Nautilus myself. Mike Mentzer's been asking me to follow him through a workout and I guess I haven't accepted because I'm fearful of the challenge. By the way, how's Art (Arthur Jones is Nautilus inventor)? And what's your position down there?

VIATOR: Art is unbelievable; the most intelligent man I've ever known. He trains a little, looks good, and I'm sure he could do a 225 pound wrist curl right now. I'm going to stick with him. He's opening a video studio and he plans on producing programs that are distributed nationally. That's where I come in.

M.D.: You're talking about video-taped exercise programs?

VIATOR: You bet. This thing is just starting and if you know Art, you know that moviemaking is his first love.

M.D.: I remember his Wild Cargo . . .

VIATOR: Well that's what he's jumping back into. There've been some initial problems, but he's built himself up to where he can get back to the things he loves most.

M.D.: How's your training going now?

VIATOR: Just fine.

M.D.: Is there much difference between your current program and the one you use during contest preparation?

VIATOR: No. It's just a matter of intensity.

M.D.: Give me an outline of your training and I'll paraphrase your comments using barbell equivalents for our readers who don't have access to a Nautilus gym.

VIATOR: Ok, but keep in mind that some features of the Nautilus system can't be duplicated.

Casey's Workout Summary

CALVES

One-leg heel raises

1 set to exhaustion

(Approximately 50 reps with a 300 lb. resistance using a hip strap for support)

THIGHS

Squats

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

Leg extensions

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

Leg curl

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

Leg press

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

(Casey uses a machine for squats that features parallel support pads. Thus, no bar across his shoulders equals little distress to the thoracic vertebral bodies.)

BACK

Pullover across bench

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

Front lat-machine pulldown

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

Seated cable rowing

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

Barbell rowing

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

(The Nautilus system is great when working back because it enables an isolation that's difficult to achieve conventionally. Pullovers should be done bent-armed; front pulldowns, with straps and palms facing together; seated rowing; bent way forward with thumbs facing together; barbell rowing, with a medium hand spacing.)

CHEST

Dumbbell bench press

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

Bent-arm flyes

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

Decline dumbbell press

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

Dips with weight

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

(Using the Omni-bench press machine, Casey is able to stretch four inches more than a barbell would allow, and when doing dips he adds a 200 lb. resistance.)

SHOULDERS

Dumbbell laterals

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

Press behind neck

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

(Sometimes a sticking point will require Casey to do negatives. You can approximate this, after first completing the positives, by doing four or five reps with heavier dumbbells. Simply cheat them to the top and then lower as slowly as possible.)

ARMS

Seated dumbbell curl

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

Lying barbell extension

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

Dumbbell french press

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

Close-grip chin

1 set of 12 to 15 reps.

(The Nautilus multi-curl and multi-tricep give Casey a decided advantage over the first two exercises. The third should be done with a strap and set of cables, if possible, but a dumbbell won't really hinder you.)

FOREARMS

Palms-up wrist curl

1 set of 25 reps using 190 lb.

Palms-down wrist curl

1 set of 25 reps using 80 lb.

STOMACH

Situp

1 set until proper "feel" is reached

Leg raise

1 set until proper "feel" is reached

(The Nautilus system will soon include an abdominal machine. Though in it's prototype stages, Casey must still depend upon the old standbys like you and me.)

GENERAL COMMENTS

Casey trains his entire body three times a week; his entire body in a single forty-five minute workout. He takes no breaks and his resting pulse is 46. His sustained heart rate is 160 with a peak of 200 or more reached after squats. To supplement this program, Casey runs (not jogs) varying intervals and will add negatives to his training should he feel a plateau has developed.

For his N.A.B.B.A. appearance he began training a full year in advance. He started, weighing 185, and hit 217 the day of the contest. There is no cutting-up period for Casey because he does not over-eat. He watches calories carefully and keeps foods in a ratio of 5:4:1 (protein, carbohydrates, fat). Casey seldom uses supplements, but when dieting severely will take a B-complex.

M.D.: Do you get many visitors out your way?

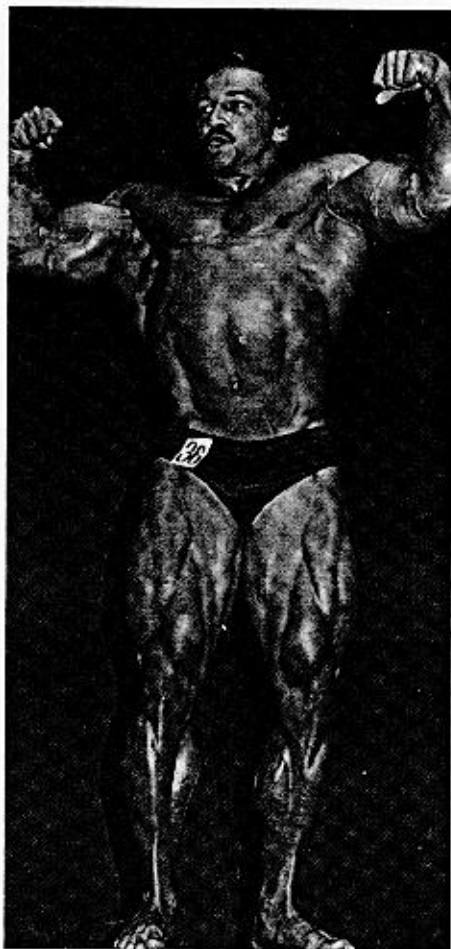
VIATOR: Oh, definitely. Frank Zane was down a while back and we got into a conversation about those old low-sugar blues. But a lot of people come down here that don't really quite understand what's going on. We talk about Nautilus for a while and usually end the conversation with me saying that it doesn't really make too much difference whether they understand or not. Because maybe the next generation, or the one after that will be the one to pick it up.

M.D.: You seem to have the sort of patient confidence that comes after many years of waiting your turn. And yet I know you're only twenty-seven. Your exposure through the sport and relationship with Art Jones must account for a good deal of your education. Maybe you'll want to write a book about your experiences?

VIATOR: I feel that I'm capable of writing, but at this time it would be drudgery for me to sit back and pound my brain. I'll do it someday — when I start slowing down. But at this pace, it's too hard.

M.D.: Well Casey, is that it? Will there be any other stage appearances? Is there anything else going on?

VIATOR: I'd like to start doing some exhibitions, guest spots, here and there. Then people could judge my physique without anything political getting into the



way. It would be easy for me to tell how I was doing by simply gauging their reaction.

Right now I'm also training for the Olympics. I am working to make the team for the winter games, trying to gain a berth in the two-man bob sleds. I've got just about the right amounts of size, speed, and strength for the pusher. Teamed with an experienced driver, we should do just fine.

Following this interview I had the opportunity to discuss several of its aspects with Boyer Coe. Boyer knew Casey early on and remembers his drive and incredible ability to grow as a teenager. When I explained Casey's bitterness about bodybuilding's "ladder of succession" Boyer knew full well what was meant. Still he felt that the rapidity of Viator's wins had set an unrealistic precedent and that there was little likelihood for its continuation.

No doubt about it, bodybuilding's a rough game; especially rough on those who cry "I'm the greatest." For the greatest is as delicate and unenduring as sheer lace. The greatest is the result of a single, seven-headed panel. The greatest is a political reality for whom time has no respect. The greatest is a fiction of the immature. So return to the interior joys of bodybuilding Casey. Johns didn't beat you, no one can do that but yourself. ♪

Casey is back!!

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