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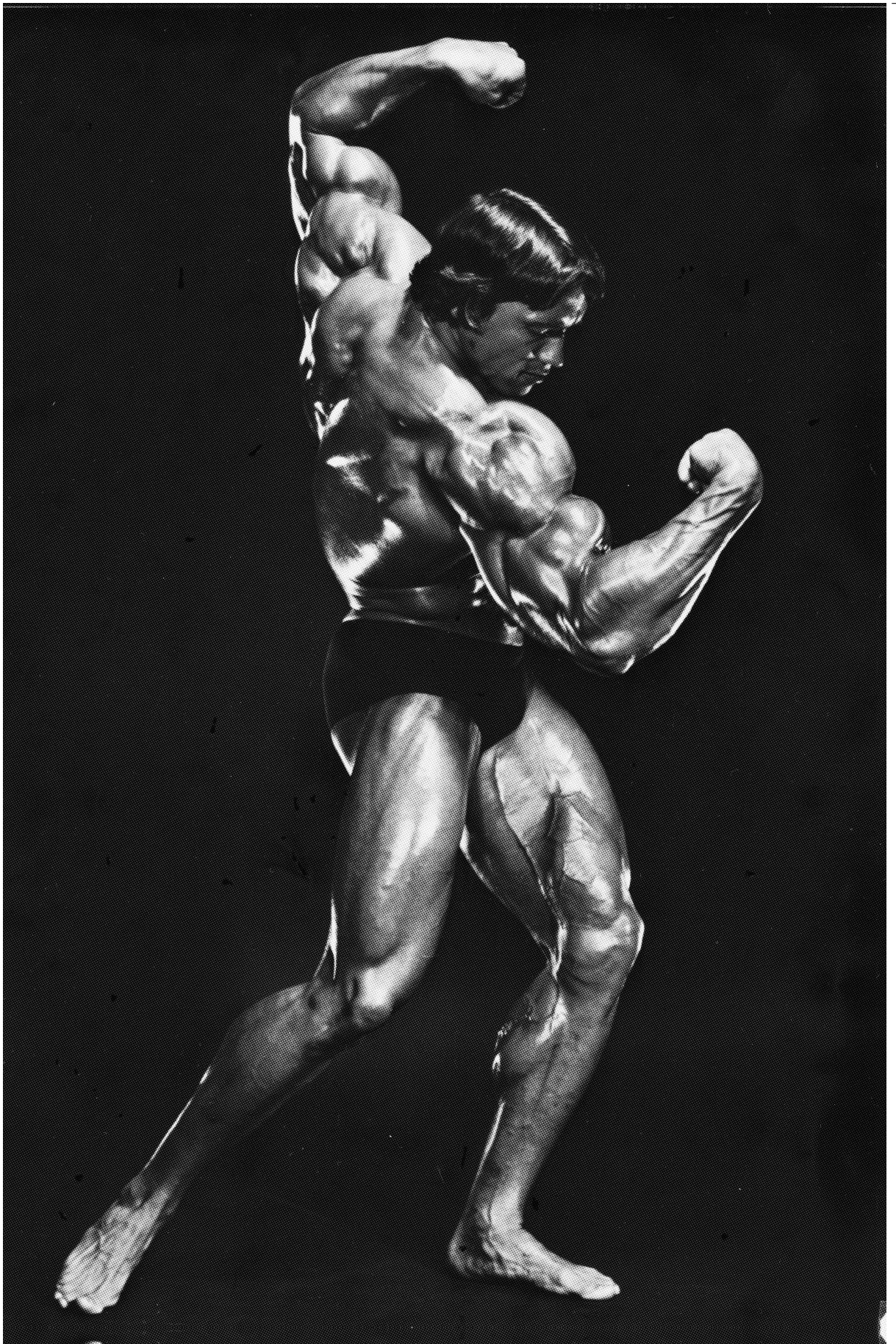
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# Arnold: The Education of a Bodybuilder

Arnold Schwarzenegger  
with Douglas Kent Hall

SIMON & SCHUSTER PAPERBACKS  
New York London Toronto Sydney



**SIMON & SCHUSTER PAPERBACKS**

Rockefeller Center  
1230 Avenue of the Americas  
New York, New York 10020

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Manufactured in the United States of America

40 39

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 77022558

ISBN 978-0-671-79748-5

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Albert Busek, 21, 25 (two), 29 (three), 37, 46 (two), 56, 67, 80, 83, 87, 102 (two),  
111, 114 (top right and bottom), 116 (two), 124 (top), 126 (two)

George Butler, 9, 101 (two), 120, 121, 122, 123

Cameracraft, 62

Caruso, 4, 98, 107, 115, 124 (bottom), 125 (two), 128, 129 (two), 130 (three), 131  
(two), 132, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141

Benno Dahmen, 114 (top left)

M. Glover, 78

George Greenwood, 92, 99, 103

Doug Hall, 133 (top), exercise photos

Frank Hollfelder, 34

Studio Arax, 18



*To My Mother*

*To Charles Gaines and George Butler, whose genuine  
enthusiasm, energy and talent changed the sport of  
bodybuilding and who I am honored to count among  
my closest friends.*



## Titles Won

- 1965 Jr. Mr. Europe (Germany)
- 1966 Best Built Man of Europe (Germany)
- 1966 Mr. Europe (Germany)
- 1966 International Powerlifting Championship (Germany)
- 1967 NABBA Mr. Universe, amateur (London)
- 1968 NABBA Mr. Universe, professional (London)
- 1968 German Powerlifting Championship
- 1968 IFBB Mr. International (Mexico)
- 1969 IFBB Mr. Universe, amateur (New York)
- 1969 NABBA Mr. Universe, professional (London)
- 1970 NABBA Mr. Universe, professional (London)
- 1970 Mr. World (Columbus, Ohio)
- 1970 IFBB Mr. Olympia (New York)
- 1971 IFBB Mr. Olympia (Paris)
- 1972 IFBB Mr. Olympia (Essen, Germany)
- 1973 IFBB Mr. Olympia (New York)
- 1974 IFBB Mr. Olympia (New York)
- 1975 IFBB Mr. Olympia (Pretoria, South Africa)

# Part One





## Chapter One

“Arnold! Arnold!”

I can still hear them, the voices of my friends, the lifeguards, bodybuilders, the weight lifters, booming up from the lake where they were working out in the grass and trees.

“Arnold—come on!” cried Karl, the young doctor who had become my friend at the gym . . .

It was the summer I turned fifteen, a magical season for me because that year I’d discovered exactly what I wanted to do with my life. It was more than a young boy’s mere pipe dream of a distant, hazy future—confused fantasies of being a fireman, detective, sailor, test pilot, or spy. I *knew* I was going to be a bodybuilder. It wasn’t simply that either. I would be the best bodybuilder in the world, the greatest, the best-built man.

I’m not exactly sure why I chose bodybuilding, except that I loved it. I loved it from the first moment my fingers closed around a barbell and I felt the challenge and exhilaration of hoisting the heavy steel plates above my head.

I had always been involved in sports through my father, a tall, sturdy man who was himself a champion at ice curling. We were a physical family, oriented toward training, good eating, and

## 14 Arnold: The Education of a Bodybuilder

keeping the body fit and healthy. With my father's encouragement, I first got into organized competitive sports when I was ten. I joined a soccer team that even had uniforms and a regular three-days-a-week training schedule. I threw myself into it and played soccer passionately for almost five years.

However, by the time I was thirteen team sports no longer satisfied me. I was already off on an individual trip. I disliked it when we won a game and I didn't get personal recognition. The only time I really felt rewarded was when I was singled out as being best. I decided to try some individual sports. I ran, I swam, I boxed; I got into competition, throwing javelin and shot put. Although I did well with them, none of those things felt right to me. Then our coach decided that lifting weights for an hour once a week would be a good way to condition us for playing soccer.

I still remember that first visit to the bodybuilding gym. I had never seen anyone lifting weights before. Those guys were huge and brutal. I found myself walking around them, staring at muscles I couldn't even name, muscles I'd never even seen before. The weight lifters shone with sweat; they were powerful looking, Herculean. And there it was before me—my life, the answer I'd been seeking. It clicked. It was something I suddenly just seemed to reach out and find, as if I'd been crossing a suspended bridge and finally stepped off onto solid ground.

I started lifting weights just for my legs, which was what we needed most for playing soccer. The bodybuilders noticed immediately how hard I was working out. Considering my age, fifteen, I was squatting with some pretty heavy weight. They encouraged me to go into bodybuilding. I was 6 feet tall and slender, weighing only 150 pounds; but I did have a good athletic physique and my muscles responded surprisingly fast under training. I think those guys saw that. Because of my build I'd always had it easier at sports than most boys my age. But I had it tougher than a lot of my teammates and companions because I wanted more, I demanded more of myself.

That summer the bodybuilders took me on as their protégé. They put me through a series of exercises, which we did together beside a lake near Graz, my hometown in Austria. It was a program they used simply to stay limber. We worked without

weights. We did chin-ups on the branches of trees. We held each other's legs and did handstand push-ups. Leg raises, sit-ups, twists, and squats were all included in a simple routine to get our bodies tuned and ready for the gym.

It wasn't until the end of the summer that I got into real weight training. Once I started, though, it didn't take long. After two or three months with the bodybuilders, I was literally addicted. The guys I hung out with were all much older. Karl Gerstl, the doctor, was twenty-eight, Kurt Manul thirty-two, and Helmut Knaur was fifty. Each of them became a father image for me. I listened less to my own father. These weight lifters were my new heroes. I was in awe of them, of their size, of the control they had over their bodies.

I was introduced to actual weight training through a tough basic program put together by these bodybuilders. The one hour a week we had trained for soccer was no longer enough to satisfy my craving for working out. I signed up to go to the gym three times a week. I loved the feel of the cold iron and steel warming to my touch and the sounds and smells of the gym. And I still love it. There is nothing I would sooner hear than the sound of heavy steel plates ringing as they are threaded onto the bar or dropped back to the rack after a strenuous lift.

I remember the first real workout I had as vividly as if it were last night. I rode my bike to the gym, which was eight miles from the village where I lived. I used barbells, dumbbells and machines. The guys warned me that I'd get sore, but it didn't seem to be having any effect. I thought I must be beyond that. Then, after the workout, I started riding home and fell off my bike. I was so weak I couldn't make my hands hold on. I had no feeling in my legs: they were noodles. I was numb, my whole body buzzing. I pushed the bike for a while, leaning on it. Half a mile farther, I tried to ride it again, fell off again, and then just pushed it the rest of the way home. This was my first experience with weight training, and I was crazy for it.

The next morning I couldn't even lift my arm to comb my hair. Each time I tried, pain shot through every muscle in my shoulder and arm. I couldn't hold the comb. I tried to drink coffee and spilled it all over the table. I was helpless.

"What's wrong, Arnold?" my mother asked. She came over



*Me at sixteen, doing a front biceps pose*

from the stove and peered at me. “What is it?” She bent down to look closer as she mopped up the spilled coffee.

“I’m just sore,” I told her. “My muscles are stiff.”

“Look at this boy!” she called out to my father. “Look what he’s doing to himself.”

My father came in, doing up his tie. He was always neat, his hair slicked back smooth, his mustache trimmed to a line. He laughed and said I’d limber up.

But my mother kept on. “Why, Arnold? Why do you want to do it to yourself?”

I couldn’t be bothered with what my mother felt. Seeing new changes in my body, feeling them, turned me on. It was the first time I’d ever felt every one of my muscles. It was the first time those sensations had registered in my mind, the first time my mind knew my thighs, calves and forearms were more than just limbs. I felt the muscles in my triceps aching, and I knew why they were called triceps—because there are three muscles in there. They were all registered in my mind, written there with sharp little jabs of pain. I learned that this pain meant progress. Each time my muscles were sore from a workout, I knew they were growing.

I could not have chosen a less popular sport. My school friends thought I was crazy. But I didn’t care. My only thoughts were of



going ahead, building muscles and more muscles. I had almost no time to relax and think about bodybuilding in any other terms. I remember certain people trying to put negative thoughts into my mind, trying to persuade me to slow down. But I had found the thing to which I wanted to devote my total energies and there was no stopping me. My drive was unusual, I talked differently than my friends; I was hungrier for success than anyone I knew.

I started to live for being in the gym. I had a new language—reps, sets, forced reps, presses. I had resisted memorizing anatomy in school; now I was eager to know it. Around the gym my new friends spoke of biceps, triceps, latissimus dorsi, trapezius, obliques. I spent hours going through the American magazines *Muscle Builder* and *Mr. America*. Karl, the doctor, knew English and I had him translating anytime he was free. I saw my first photographs of Muscle Beach; I saw Larry Scott, Ray Rountledge, and Serge Nubret. The magazines were full of success stories. The advantages of having a well-developed body were incomparable. Guys like Doug Stroll and Steve Reeves were in the movies because they had worked out and created great physiques.

In one of those magazines I saw my first photograph of Reg Park. He was on a page facing Jack Delinger. I responded immediately to Reg Park's rough, massive look. The man was an animal. That's the way I wanted to be—ultimately: big. I wanted to be a big guy. I didn't want to be delicate. I dreamed of big deltoids, big pecs, big thighs, big calves; I wanted every muscle to explode and be huge. I dreamed about being gigantic. Reg Park was the epitome of that dream, the biggest, most powerful person in bodybuilding.

From then on in my mid-teens, I kept my batteries charged with the adventure movies of Steve Reeves, Mark Forrest, Brad Harris, Gordon Mitchell, and Reg Park. I admired Reg Park more than the others. He was rugged, everything I thought a man should be. I recall seeing him for the first time on the screen. The film was *Hercules and the Vampires*, a picture in which the hero had to rid the earth of an invasion of thousands of bloodthirsty vampires. Reg Park looked so magnificent in the role of Hercules I was transfixed. And, sitting there in the thea-



*Reg Park*

ter, I knew that was going to be me. I would look like Reg Park. I studied every move he made, every gesture. . . . Suddenly I realized the house lights were on and everyone else had walked out.

From that point on, my life was utterly dominated by Reg Park. His image was my ideal. It was fixed indelibly in my mind. All my friends were more impressed by Steve Reeves, but I didn't like him. Reg Park had more of a rough look, a powerful look, while Steve Reeves seemed elegant, smooth, polished. I knew in my mind that I was not geared for elegance. I wanted to be massive. It was the difference between cologne and sweat.

I found out everything I could about Reg Park. I bought all the

magazines that published his programs. I learned how he started training, what he ate, how he lived, and how he did his workouts. I became obsessed with Reg Park; he was the image in front of me from the time I started training. The more I focused in on this image and worked and grew, the more I saw it was real and possible for me to be like him. Even Karl and Kurt could see it. They predicted that it would happen within five years.

But I didn't think I could wait five years. I had this insatiable drive to get there sooner. Whereas most people were satisfied to train two or three times a week, I quickly escalated my program to six workouts a week.

My father was baffled by my eagerness. "Don't do it, Arnold," he said. "You'll overtrain, you'll overwork yourself."

"I'm all right," I said. "I'm doing it gradually."

"Yes," he said. "But what will you do with all these muscles once you've got them?"

"I want to be the best-built man in the world," I said frankly.

That made him sigh and shake his head.

"Then I want to go to America and be in movies. I want to be an actor."

"America?"

"Yes—America."

"My god!" he cried. He went into the kitchen and told my mother, "I think we better go to the doctor with this one, he's sick in the head."

He was genuinely worried about me. He felt I wasn't normal. And of course he was right. With my desire and my drive, I definitely wasn't normal. Normal people can be happy with a regular life. I was different. I felt there was more to life than just plodding through an average existence. I'd always been impressed by stories of greatness and power. Caesar, Charlemagne, Napoleon were names I knew and remembered. I wanted to do something special, to be recognized as the best. I saw bodybuilding as the vehicle that would take me to the top, and I put all my energy into it.

Six days a week, I trained, constantly working to increase the amount of weight I could handle and the length of time I could stay in the gym. I had this fixed idea of building a body like Reg Park's. The model was there in my mind; I only had to grow

## 20 Arnold: The Education of a Bodybuilder

enough to fill it. My dreams went beyond a spectacular body. Once I had that, I knew what it would do for me. I'd get into the movies and build gymnasiums all over the world. I'd create an empire.

Reg Park became my father image. I pasted his pictures on all the walls of my bedroom. I read everything about him that was printed in German; I had Karl translate the English stories for me. I studied every photograph of him I could get my hands on—noting the size of his chest, arms, thighs, back and abdominals. This inspired me to work even harder. When I felt my lungs burning as though they would burst and my veins bulging with blood, I loved it. I knew then that I was growing, making one more step toward becoming like Reg Park. I wanted that body and I didn't care what I had to go through to get it.

That winter my father informed me I could only go to the gym three times a week—he didn't want me away from home every evening. To get around his curfew, I put together a gymnasium at home.

The house we lived in was three hundred years old. It had been built originally by part of the Royal family. Upon moving out years before, they had stipulated that two people should inhabit the house: the Chief of Police for the area around Graz, a position my father held at that time, and the ranger in charge of all forests in the vicinity. For a hundred years it had been the custom for these two people to stay there. Our family lived upstairs and the forest ranger had the downstairs.

The house was built like a castle. The floors were solid and the walls were about five feet thick. It was a good place to have a gymnasium. The walls and floor could take the punishment of heavy weight. I had the basic equipment, such as benches and simple machines, designed and welded for me. My weight room was not heated, so naturally in cold weather it was freezing. I didn't care. I trained without heat, even on days when the temperature went below zero.

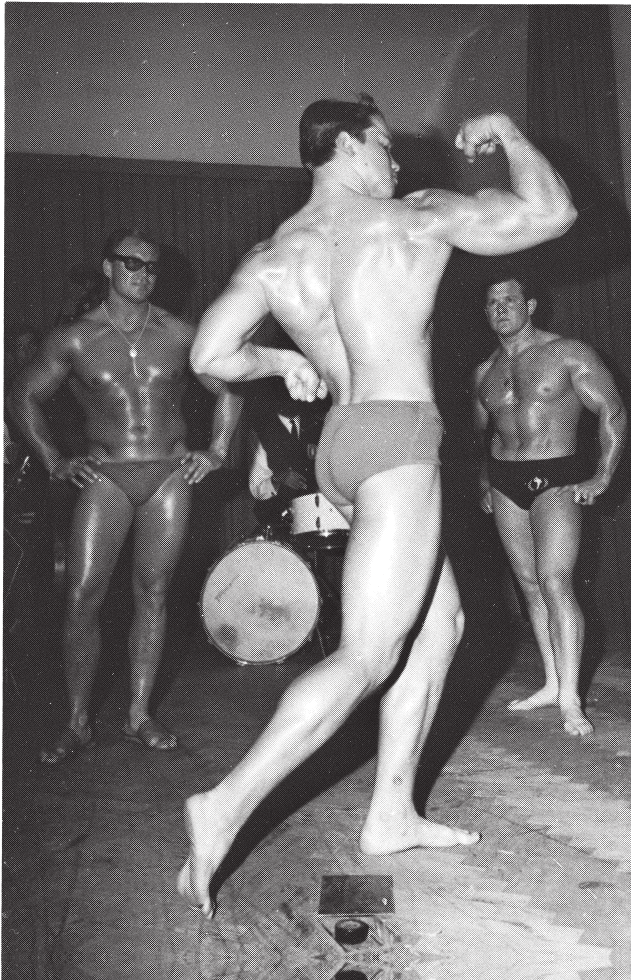
Three nights a week I went to the gym in town. I either had to walk or ride my bike eight miles home after ten o'clock. I didn't really mind the eight miles. I knew it was helping my body, increasing the strength of my legs and lungs.

The only real problem I had with training at home was to get



someone to work out with me. Already, since my experiences at the lake, I was a strong believer in training partners. I needed someone not only to teach me but to inspire me. I trained better, harder, if I was around someone whose enthusiasm was as strong as mine and who would be impressed by my enthusiasm. That first winter, I trained with Karl Gerstl, the doctor who had helped me with my initial program. Aside from his usefulness as a translator, it was especially helpful to be around Karl. He knew everything about the body. He was serious and worked hard. We trained the same way, except our goals and our diets were different: I wanted to gain weight, to bulk up; Karl wanted to lose it. But Karl gave me the boost I needed.

There were certain days when something held me back and I didn't train as hard as on other days. That was inexplicable to me. Some days nothing could hold me back. Other days I'd be down. On the down days I couldn't handle anywhere near my



*A rear view of me  
at sixteen*

## 22 Arnold: The Education of a Bodybuilder

normal amount of weight. It puzzled me. Karl and I discussed it. He had read a great deal of psychology (at fifteen I barely knew the word, though his argument made good sense and in fact helped lay the foundation for my later thinking). “It’s not your body, Arnold. Your body can’t change that much from one day to the next. It’s in your mind. On some days your goals are just clearer. On the bad days you need someone to help get you going. It’s like when you ride a bicycle behind a bus and get caught up in the slipstream. The wind sucks you along with it. You just need some prodding, some challenge.”

Karl was right. Every month, I had at least a week when I didn’t really want to train and I questioned myself: Why should I train hard if I don’t feel like it? These were the days Karl pulled me out of it. He’d say, “Man, I feel great today! I want to do bench presses. Let’s do twenty-five instead of twenty. How about a contest? Ten shillings to the one who does the most bench presses.”

It worked perfectly. He forced me to get off my butt, to get my sluggish body moving. It became extremely important to have somebody standing behind me saying, “Let’s do more, Arnold. Come on—another set, one more rep.” And it was just as important for me to help somebody else. Watching him work out, encouraging him, somehow drove me on to do an even tougher set.

I discovered that the secret of successful workouts had to do with competition. For me there was never any monkey business. I wanted to compete in bodybuilding. The small competitions with Karl took me from day to day. But my first goal was to win Mr. Austria (in the end, I never even entered the contest—by then circumstances had already taken me beyond it). This initial goal inspired me to increase my program and steadily work harder. My training sessions stretched out to two hours a day. I kept adding weight, increasing the number of reps, bombing my muscles furiously.

From the beginning, I was a believer in the basic movements, because that was Reg Park’s preference. At the times Reg hadn’t accelerated his workouts for some major competition, he would stay with the basic exercises—bench presses, chin-ups, squats, rowing, barbell curls, wrist curls, pullovers, leg extensions, calf raises. These were the movements that worked most directly on

all the body parts. I was following his example to the letter. And as it turned out, I could hardly have chosen more wisely. The basic exercises were creating for me a rugged foundation, a core of muscle I could later build upon for a winning body. Reg Park's theory was that first you have to build the mass and then chisel it down to get the quality; you work on your body the way a sculptor would work on a piece of clay or wood or steel. You rough it out—the more carefully, the more thoroughly, the better—then you start to cut and define. You work it down gradually until it's ready to be rubbed and polished. And that's when you really know about the foundation. Then all the faults of poor early training stand out as hopeless, almost irreparable flaws.

I was building up, bulking, going after the mass, which to me meant 250 pounds of sheer body weight. At that time, I didn't care about my waist or anything else that would give me a symmetrical look. I just wanted to build a gigantic 250-pound body by handling a lot of weight and blasting my muscles. My mind was into looking huge, into being awesome and powerful. I saw it working. My muscles began bursting out all over. And I knew I was on my way.

## Chapter Two

Before long, people began looking at me as a special person. Partly this was the result of my own changing attitude about myself. I was growing, getting bigger, gaining confidence. I was given consideration I had never received before; it was as though I were the son of a millionaire. I'd walk into a room at school and my classmates would offer me food or ask if they could help me with my homework. Even my teachers treated me differently. Especially after I started winning trophies in the weight-lifting contests I entered.

This strange new attitude toward me had an incredible effect on my ego. It supplied me with something I had been craving. I'm not sure why I had this need for special attention. Perhaps it was because I had an older brother who'd received more than his share of attention from our father. Whatever the reason, I had a strong desire to be noticed, to be praised. I basked in this new flood of attention. I turned even negative responses to my own satisfaction.

I'm convinced most of the people I knew didn't really understand what I was doing at all. They looked at me as a novelty, a freak. My actual acceptance was limited. There were certain so-



cial groups in which the people were intimidated by bodybuilding and felt they should talk down to me. They tried to point out weaknesses in the sport and argued why a person shouldn't do it. I've been through these trips all my life. There's a certain kind of person who always says, "My doctor tells me lifting weights is bad for your health. . . ." In the beginning, it was kind of hard for me to handle. I was young and impressionable. I knew I wanted to do it so badly nobody could stop me, least of all people I wouldn't even bother to count as friends, but many times I did question it. I wondered why I was so different, why I wanted to do something a lot of people didn't like and even made fun of. If you played soccer, everybody loved you; you were a hero. And they gave you anything.

People recognized my athletic talents; but my choice of a sport confused them. They shook their heads. "Why did you have to pick the least-favorite sport in Austria?" they always asked. It was true. We had only twenty or thirty bodybuilders in the entire country.

I couldn't come up with an answer. I didn't know. It had been instinctive. I had just fallen in love with it. I loved the feeling of the gym, of working out, of having muscles all over.

*Studio poses at sixteen*

