

# Tips From The Pros

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- Official Sponsor: Eagle Nutritionals
- Coach: Calvin Williams/Physiques USA

### **Journey to the Pro League:**

I began competing in NPC in 2015, after having just migrated from Trinidad and Tobago to South Carolina. Without a coach and much knowledge of the sport, I was able to perform and succeed on raw talent in the beginning, but had not tapped into my true potential until joining the coaches of Team Winklaar, based in Trinidad. From very early on in my competitive career, I had decided that I wanted to one day be an IFBB pro. However, the journey for a non-US citizen is a bit different. Although I was a national level quality athlete, I could not compete at any US national shows for my pro card and so, had only two options in the US: the Arnold Classic or the Amateur Olympia Las Vegas.

My coaches and I decided we would aim for the second, representing Trinidad and Tobago at the international event. However, in order to represent my country at the competition, a certain number of wins and level of consistency had to be proof that I was good enough. With the sponsorship of Eagle Nutritionals in 2017, I proceeded to compete in almost every NPC show in South Carolina, North Carolina and Georgia. I won my class 13 times, with 8 overall titles in the men's physique and classic physique divisions. I was so tired by the time I got to the final prep for the Amateur Olympia, but I knew this was the most important of all, and was my only shot at turning pro.

The event was the first of its kind and offered two pro cards to the top two overall men's physique athletes. I trained to win, but somewhere deep inside doubted that I would be one of two physiques at an international event, with over 150 athletes in the division, to earn that pro card. I remember being so angry and disappointed after making the first callouts in my class and being moved one off from the center to make space for the Brazilian that had beaten me some months before in South America. I stood backstage, feeling defeated and as if I had failed.

After a brief moment of despair, I realized how unfair and immaturely I was handling the moment. I had so much to be grateful for; the journey to that stage, my friends and family, sponsors and coaches; this moment was no different than any other,

I did my best and I would've made them proud. I comforted myself and chose to be happy with the idea of a second place finish if things turned out that way.

Then, the hopeful question popped into my head. Why not me? Why couldn't I win my class, move on to the overall round and be one of the lucky two today?

Sometimes you may become overwhelmed with the goals you set, and the physique you want to create. The process may seem slow and sometimes even far fetched. But the fact is, with every training session, with every rep, with every early morning run or late night at the gym, you are getting closer and closer to achieving that goal. That day, I had achieved my goal. In the space of a few minutes, I had graduated from an amateur to pro status.

However, I was a pro long before that title. I always say, being a pro is not just a title you earn, but is a mindset of discipline, sacrifice and determination, which you must possess. As an amateur athlete hoping to turn pro one day, you must adopt the mindset and work ethic of a pro and this will eventually make way for you on a stage and in a spotlight recognized by all. Your inner motivations and persistence manifests itself into something all will see; something that cannot be denied.

### **My closing advice:**

Enjoy the journey and the amazing community bodybuilding brings you into. If you're in it just for a trophy or title, you would've cheated yourself of the majority of what this world has to offer. I have made great friends in a number of states and countries; doors that are open to me if ever I visited and needed a place to stay. Also, be patient and stay committed to the process. Nothing happens before its time. And lastly, manage your passion. Passion is important in achieving dreams, but can become dangerous if it envelops your entire life. Make time for the people and relationships that matter, because at the end of the day, a win without someone to share it with is not a win after all.



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