

MIGUEL RUELAN

as told to *Powerlifting USA* by Jim Douglas of *Powerbuilders Gym*

Miguel is a 165-pound powerlifter who, over the years, has developed into a bench specialist, with a PR of 501 pounds. Miguel has a best competition squat of 507 pounds and deadlift of 562 pounds. He has been the Michigan USAPL state chairman for four years. He is a doctor of chiropractic practicing in Flushing, Michigan, outside of Flint. He is forty-two years old and powerlifting is a large part of his life.

Miguel, first I would like to thank you for all that you do for Michigan powerlifting. Two of my best friends have been state chairmen, so I know a little about the effort and sacrifices—it is quite a commitment. My good friend, lifter, former state chairman and hall of famer Mario Torrez recommended you for an interview, and I am glad that he did. Tell us a little about your family and your life.

I have a wonderful wife Heather, and two children: Diego who is 8 and Dallas who is 5. My wife is a personal trainer at the YMCA and a National Figure competitor. I get great support from my wife and family. I grew up in New Jersey and then attended Palmer Chiropractic College in Iowa. I met my wife in Iowa and we chose Michigan to live in because it is half way in between Iowa and New Jersey.

That seems to be lucky for those of us in Michigan. Tell us a little about how your lifting career began.

I began at 132 pounds at age 15 in high school; after a couple of years I became pretty good at all three lifts. After graduating at 16, I won three consecutive New Jersey state powerlifting titles. I then backed off of the competitive lifting for a while during chiropractic school.

Where do you train now?

Mostly at home. I have a 1,500 square foot training space and tons of weight and equipment. Sometimes I train at the YMCA and sometimes we travel to other gyms.

Do you have regular training partners?

Yes, I have the same training partners that I have had for over ten years. We coach and motivate each other. On Saturdays or Sundays we also get together with guys from Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, and other areas of Michigan for coaching sessions. Marvin Coleman, Horace Lane, Bruce Edwards and I have been together for over ten years; they are all very accomplished lifters and have helped me a lot.

Besides these training partners, who else has influenced your lifting?

Early in my career in New Jersey Ray Benemerito was a big influence. As a bencher, Mike Hara has been another big influence.



Miguel Ruelan at a recent bodybuilding competition (Miguel Ruelan photos)

MIGUEL RUELAN »

Do you participate in any other sports besides powerlifting?

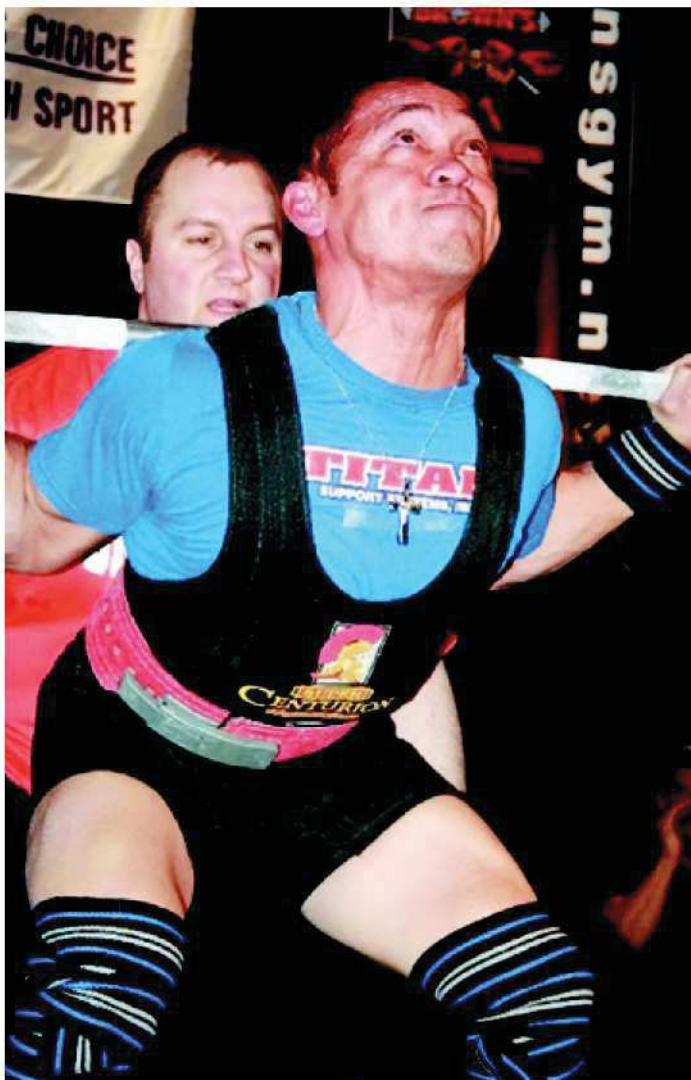
I have recently been successful at participating in some bodybuilding competitions; I probably will continue that to some degree. I am also a very avid golfer with a 9-handicap.

Tell us a little about your work as a chiropractor and how does that impact and affect you and your lifting career.

My practice is in Flushing, Michigan. I have another chiropractor working there and nine massage therapists that work there. We see about 350 patients a week—it is a busy practice. My chiropractic practice impacts my lifting and my lifting impacts my chiropractic practice. My awareness of health and physiology and neurology and mobility influences my training and helps me to avoid injuries and recover from injuries that I do receive. My experience with heavy training helps me better diagnose and treat my patients.

Tell us about the commitment of being the Michigan USAPL state chairman.

I am trying to make the USAPL in Michigan a lifter-friendly sport for all athletes—beginners and elite lifters, young and old. Nothing against any of the other past state chairmen, but nationally there are so many organizations that it has become a much more competitive market than in the past. I am very much pro powerlifting in Michigan and am good friends and keep in contact with other state chairmen and lifters from other organizations within the state.



Miguel is a successful powerlifter, bodybuilder, and chiropractor...

There are so many rules in powerlifting, especially when you cross different organizational barriers. If you could add or delete any rules, what would they be?

That decision gives me some personal conflict because I enjoy lifting assisted/equipped. I believe raw lifting is the best chance for us to unify.

So do you believe that raw, unassisted lifting is our best chance of becoming an Olympic sport?

Yes, I really do, and I am for the Olympic direction for powerlifting. I believe there is way too much diversification and that needs to diminish for us to unify.

As mostly a bench specialist now, how do you train the other two lifts when preparing for a bench meet?

I still train hard sets of five repetitions in the squat and deadlift, but I don't wear supportive suits. I will wear a belt and sometimes wraps for safety.

Do you utilize any innovative training devices?

Yes, we use board benching and chains and bands to increase and decrease resistance. I do not put on a bench shirt until about six weeks out from the meet.

What training methods do you use?

Most of the time I train four days a week. Heavy squats and light deadlifts are one day. A second day is heavy bench and light bench assistance work. The third day is heavy deadlifts and light squats, and the fourth day is light bench press and heavy bench press assistance work.

Do you vary your training in the off season?

Yes, I perform lifting with more of a direction towards cardiovascular training and conditioning training. I do super sets, or higher repetitions, and lots of core exercises.

Miguel, do you believe in supplementation, and if so, which ones?

Yes, I do. I take a daily multi-vitamin every day along with joint supplements. I also drink 1½ gallons of water each day. Also, I am a firm believer in Glutamine for quicker recovery.

Do you perform better during training or at a meet?

I think everyone performs better in training because you have your best buddies there and you are in your comfort zone and on your own schedule. Competitions will take a little out of a person especially on the mental side.

What is your greatest motivation?

Health—I want to compete well into my sixties and seventies, and remain healthy while I am competing. This also motivates me to be active with my family well into my older years.

What advice do you have for the young lifters or beginners out there?

Set realistic goals, and find a good training partner to make yourself accountable. You have to be accountable to each other to both show up and to put out maximum effort. Also to search out and to listen to those lifters that have more experience; everyone can always learn more from others all the time—I sure do.

What have been some of your biggest challenges?

Motivation at certain times, and also the big numbers of the other lifters. Also, having time between the family life and the powerlifting life, it does become tough as the state chair and a competitor.

What are some of your personal lifting goals? To be competitive into my fifties in the open division. Mike Hara at 51 did a very competitive bench at 165 lb., that is one of my goals.

Name one of your most memorable competitions?

The 2001 USAPL Bench Press Nationals; I was a dark horse. No one knew I was there, especially after missing my first two attempts. There were three big 148 lb. benchers: Joe Mukite, Lance Slaughter, and Peter Wong. I took an unpredicted third attempt to take the lead on the advice

of my three training partners, and made it. That put me ahead and I ended up the national champ.

That was pretty risky decision making.

Yes, but my training partners knew me that well and had all the confidence in my abilities.

What was one of the most memorable competitions that you observed?

The 2009 Men's and Women's World Championships in Luxemburg. I was an assistant coach and our heavyweight needed to place at least 5th or better for the USA team to win. He took 4th and the USA team won its first ever IPF Men's Team World Championship.

Are you preparing for any meets in the near future?

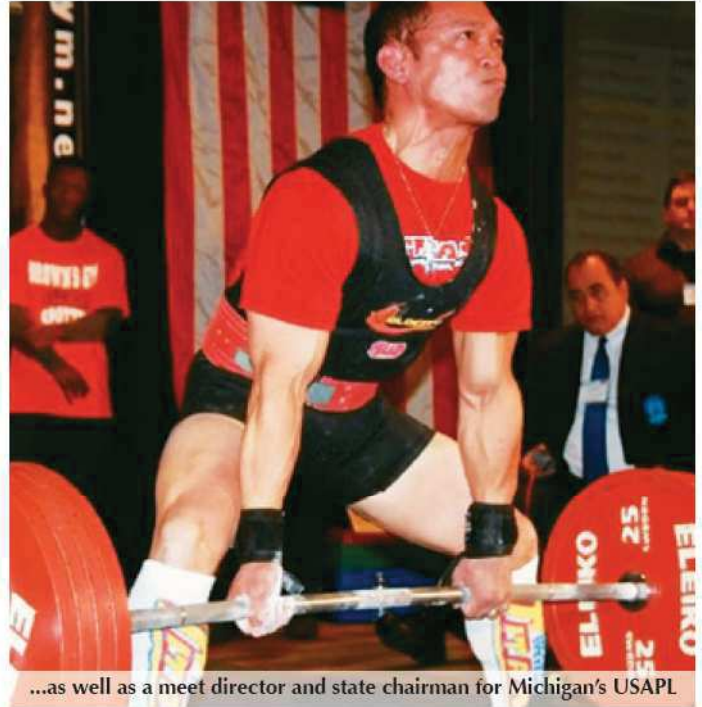
Yes, I am. I will be the meet director as well as lifting at the Michigan Push/Pull Meet in May; competing at the ADFPF Single Lift Worlds on June 25; another full meet in July; the USAPL Bench Press Nationals September 3rd in Florida; and guest lifting at the Michigan State meet in October. And somewhere in between there I am planning on doing another bodybuilding contest as well, probably in August.

That is a very busy lifting schedule, and helping your training partners along the way. How did your trip to Orlando to help your training partners go?

They did really well. Everyone received first place gold, and convincingly too.

Thank you very much Miguel for the interview. I hope this can help to inspire some new lifters and keep some older ones going longer.

I would like to say special thanks to my sponsors: Titan Support System for the best gear around and Flushing Back & Neck Care Center, my



...as well as a meet director and state chairman for Michigan's USAPL

training partners, my beautiful and supportive family, and the blessings from GOD who gives me my strength. «

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