

INTERVIEW

Personal dialogue between
PL USA Magazine and the
Sport's Greatest Names.

MARKUS SCHICK

as interviewed for PL USA by Thomas Klose



German Bench Pressing Phenom Markus Schick has recently benched 485 weighing 151 lbs., and his goal is to break Greg Warr's record on September 28th in Wiesbaden. (photo courtesy T. Klose)

T.K.: When and where were you born?

M.S.: I am a Capricorn, born on the 20th of January 1970, in Russelsheim, which is near Frankfurt, Germany. I went to elementary and high-school. My sporting activities were limited and I participated only in physical education classes at school. I liked soccer very much, but as a dwarf, I was too small for my age-category team; no chance there. I did table tennis instead and played quite well.

T.K.: What is your occupation?

M.S.: After school I took part in educational training for the banking business, which normally takes 3 years in Germany. I was able to finish in 2.5 years and right now I work as a bank clerk.

T.K.: When did you pick up the barbell?

M.S.: In October 1991.

T.K.: The reason?

M.S.: I wanted to improve my fitness and intended to buy some kind of rowing-machine for my home. A friend of mine asked me to go to a gym with him instead, as there was better equipment and instructors. I agreed. As I introduced myself to the gym owner, the first thing he asked, was "have you ever done a bench press?". In my first work-out, at around 106 pounds bodyweight, I did 5 reps with 132 pounds.

T.K.: That is some kind of a beginning. You also had the luck to have a coach who knew about Powerlifting?

M.S.: Yes, the gym owner was none other than Udo Krueger, a national powerlifting champion, record holder, IPF world contender and, for me, Germany's best bench with a 485 at 198 without a shirt. He organized the first IPF World Bench Press Championships in Russelsheim 1991, by the way. Udo along with his brother Heiko have been my coaches to the present time and I owe them a lot.

T.K.: I imagine that you improved at a fast rate. When did you compete the first time?

M.S.: 2 months after I started training, I lifted in a gym meet. I made 171 pounds in the 114 lb. class.

T.K.: When was your first official meet?

M.S.: In March 1992. At our

annual county championships I pushed 198 at 114 and established a new German youth record. At the state championships here in Hessen I upped that to 237 lbs.

T.K.: What was your first national victory?

M.S.: In the summer of 1993. At the German Juniors Bench Press meet I improved to 281 lbs. at 114. This was also my first national senior record. The German Bench Press chairperson nominated me for the national squad and in December I represented Germany at the IPF World Bench Press championships in Hungary. I won the meet a personal best with 325 pound at 114.

T.K.: An incredible increase in performance. How did you do it?

M.S.: I wore the bench shirt the first time in a contest. This was the reason for the big jump.

T.K.: What titles have you won and what are your best lifts?

M.S.: IPF World Bench Press champion in '93 and '95, silver medal winner in '94. I was German Senior Benchpress Champion in '94 / '95 and won the Juniors twice. My best lifts are: 114 class - 319 lbs., 123 class -

363 lbs., 132 class - 402 lbs., 148 - 463 lbs. I also hold the official German records from 114 - 148.

T.K.: So, you are holding records in 4 consecutive weight classes, a record itself in Germany. What about the other competitive lifts?

M.S.: With very limited training I did a 352 lb. squat and a 253 lb. deadlift, the nemesis of all dwarfs.

T.K.: In some circles, I hear "ban the dwarfs". What is your opinion?

M.S.: It is a bad joke. I mean, have you ever heard that they want to ban the basketball giants, because they are so large. We, the dwarfs, have so many disadvantages. Now there is a sport where we can excel and some people want to get us out. They believe that our levers are not normal. It is really a joke.

T.K.: I think you are right. What was your greatest moment?

M.S.: Winning my first world title in Budapest

T.K.: The worst moment?

M.S.: The Worlds in Ostrava, where I finished second. I just got my opener with 363. A misload on my second, later seen on video, and a no-lift from the judges on the third, opened the door for Russia's Bogdanov, who won with

369 lbs.

T.K.: How do you train?

M.S.: 4 times a week. Heavy Benches on Monday and Thursday, plus assistance exercises: Incline press, dumbbell flyes, narrow grip benches and triceps push-downs. Off-season: 2-4 sets, 6-8 reps. Tuesday and Friday: Shoulders: Press behind neck or military press, lateral raises 2-4 Sets, 8-10 reps. Legs: Squat or leg press 2-4 sets, around 10 reps. 4-5 before a contest. I drop the reps in the bench press only. Triples and singles, sometimes to failure. I put on a shirt once or twice before a meet. I don't use percentages in training. I go by feeling. In the assistance exercises I use medium heavy weights, e.g., incline press 220 - 242 pounds, press behind neck 155 pounds.

T.K.: Nutrition?

M.S.: I try to eat a high carb/high protein diet. I take a protein supplement and a vitamin/mineral complex. I also use creatine shortly before a meet.

T.K.: Tell us something about your appearance at the Arnold Classic?

M.S.: Originally, I was there to coach Frank Pfraumer, but as I was preparing for a contest the following week, I asked Tom Waddle if I could train in Columbus. Tom asked Louie Simmons and somehow I was invited to lift. This was a heck of a powerlifting show with a great audience, even better than FIBO here in Germany. It was an honor to lift with those guys I only knew from the magazines. In this atmosphere, I hit a personal best of 462 lbs., weighing 142 pounds.

T.K.: Great lift. You are the only triple bodyweight bench in Germany. What is your opinion about American lifters? Who is the best?

M.S.: I have seen Anthony Clark lift in Columbus. He is number one in the world, no doubt about that. The plates in Columbus were weight and everything was legal.

T.K.: What are your plans for the future?

M.S.: In sports, I will first try to make 440 lbs. at 132 lbs. and eventually hit 500 lbs. in the 148 class. I will go back to school next year to improve my knowledge in the banking field.

T.K.: Thanks for the interview Markus, and all the best to you in the future.