

# INTERVIEW

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

## JERRY TANCIL as told to Powerlifting USA by Tom McCullough



Jerry Tancil rams up a heavy bench press in Florence, South Carolina.

Jerry Tancil has to be one of the most amazing masters powerlifters I have seen in quite some time. Not only is he an outstanding lifter, but he is truly one of the best individuals you will ever meet. Jerry Tancil is 44 years old and lives with his wife Suzette in Georgetown, South Carolina where he works as a construction worker for BB & K Construction. When Jerry is in the house, every one has a good time.

**TM:** Jerry, how long have you been powerlifting and how did you get started in this sport?  
**JT:** I got started about 10 years ago because I wanted to put on some size. One day I wandered into a gym and watched some guys bench pressing. I was impressed at how much these guys were doing. At the time I only weighed about 200 pounds, so when they were done I walked over and put on about 135 pounds and nearly got squished to death. I knew then I need to change make some changes.  
**TM:** Is there any particular person who helped you when you first started?

**JT:** Yeah, about four years ago a fellow named Dwight Causey came into the gym where I trained and watch me bench 500 pounds on one of my bench press days. Dwight ask me if I had ever competed and said no I had never really thought about it. So before I knew it he had dragged me off to an ADFFA meet here in South Carolina. My first bench press was a state record and after that I was hooked.

**TM:** Is there a particular person who you admire and who inspired your lifting?  
**JT:** Oh, yeah, Danny McMillan! He is my hero. All you have to do is just watch him lift some time. He is one of the most amazing lifters I have ever seen. Not only is he a great lifter, he is one of the nicest individuals you will ever meet in your whole life. I met him in my second contest and he was just too nice. He is a great lifter and a great person and is now one of my closest friends.

**TM:** I sure can see where Danny's personality has rubbed off on you, Jerry. I realize you have accomplished quite a bit since your first day in the gym, but out of all of this what are you the most proud of?

years ago I went to Texas and visited the Inzer/Advance Designs factory. I saw a gray color I had never seen and asked them to make two shirts. I have been happy with them ever since.

**TM:** Any special techniques or secrets in using the bench press shirt that you would like to share?

**JT:** The most important thing is getting the right fit. Most people get a shirt that doesn't fit properly and just keep it. I always make sure mine fit exactly like I want it. The Inzer people never have a problem taking back my equipment and making necessary adjustments. Make sure you are used to training in your equipment. I always want to make sure I bench exactly the same in the gym as I do in a contest. To be honest the first time I had ever hurt myself I was lifting without equipment. It just about destroyed my shoulder. I couldn't lift much for about 4 months. I scared me because I thought I would never be able to train again. There is definitely a safety benefit in using the bench press shirt and had I been wearing it that day, I might not have ever been injured. I just got to have it.  
**TM:** What changes have you made in training gear since you started lifting?

**JT:** I'm excited about some of the new things I've seen! At the WPA Worlds I saw a few people using some of those new Inzer Valco shirts. I don't know... but I sure do like those things. The better the gear the more longevity we will have in the sport and the safer and more injury free you will be. I think gear is here to stay.

**TM:** Let's talk about food. Tell us a little bit about your diet and the supplements you use.

**JT:** Food? I like food! I eat only what I want to eat. I don't care what weight class I enter, whether it is the 275's, the 308's or the SHW's. I just go in and lift. I try not to worry too much about what I weigh or how much I eat. I just try to stay full. As far as supplements go, the only one I have found that works is creatine. Occasionally I will use it. However, nothing works any better than good food and lots of hard work. I'm not really too big on supplements. It seems like there is a new supplement out every week. It's

supplement out every week. It's

kind of hard to keep up with all of that and unless you have some pretty deep pockets you can't afford to try them all, especially with the results you get from using them.

**TM:** What has the sport of powerlifting done for you and your life?

**JT:** In the gym you learn how to set realistic goals and accomplish them. If you can apply this same thing to life you are able to do anything you want to.

**TM:** What do you like and dislike about the sport of powerlifting?

**JT:** You know, you hear a lot about the different federation problems and the politics, but people are still going to lift weights. It doesn't matter what these federations do, because there are still going to be people lifting weights in the gym and having a good time doing it. Despite all of the fighting, we can all still have fun in that gym and one can take that away.

**TM:** So what changes would you like to see in our sport?

**JT:** Quit all of this bickering! We are all powerlifters, no matter what federation we are a member of. As long as we are just out there lifting, it doesn't really matter what federation we are doing it with. We all start in the gym, we all still have to go to a gym to

eration to compete in where you are still allowed to have a good time. That is what going to a meet is all about. A few years ago I started lifting in the APA and love it. It's fun... it really is. I really have a ball going to their meets and that's what it's all about. They have a good set of rules, they don't give you anything, but they are not barbaric either. I have been in meets with other federations where they were so strict and so picky, that it wasn't fun. If I don't have fun, I just don't go back. And I never lifted in that particular federation again. It's got to be fun, that's the bottom line!

**TM:** As usual it has been a pleasure talking with you are there any final comments you would like to make or people you would like to thank?

**JT:** First off, I would like to thank my wife Suzette. She is my number one supporter and is behind me 100%. Without her I wouldn't be able to have as much fun as I am going to the Olympics. If you are doing drugs, just don't plan on going to the Olympics. If you are using them, have fun where you are.

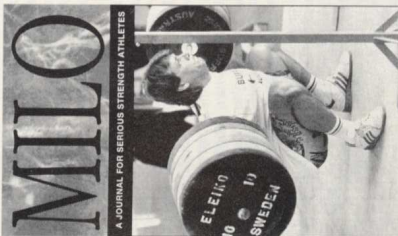
**TM:** Do you have any advice for lifters just starting out in powerlifting?

**JT:** Yeah... have fun! Find a federation record holders. But we're also the journal of first choice for every unsung hero who struggles for new PRs in his backyard, garage or basement.

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Melbourne, Australia (November 1993).  
91-kg Ivan Chakarov banged out a triple with 270 kg in the squat—impressive enough in itself, but even more so when you consider that it was a high-bar, close-stance, rock-bottom effort, and because he did it with no belt, no wraps, no spotters, we coined the phrase "no-no-no" to describe the style. The strength world would never be the same again, because now everyone knew what real squatting was all about. Chakarov went on to win the World Weightlifting Championships a couple of days later, securing his spot as a MILQ guy.

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