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TAFs Interviews Franco Columbu: Movies, Bodybuilding & Conquests!

Randy Jennings

Congratulations to Franco Columbu for his big award and induction into the 2013 [International Sports Hall of Fame](#) ceremony! on Friday, March 27th, we were invited to cover the awards ceremony, which was also attended by the Sardinian Strongman's best friend, Arnold (The Oak) Schwarzenegger. The interview below was conducted in two locations: inside of his Santa Monica chiropractic office (where I was accompanied by Brandon of TAFs in early January) and in Ohio at the International Sports Hall of Fame ceremony (accompanied by Ryan of TAFs).



For any of you newbies here who have never heard of Dr. Franco Columbu, let me shed some light on this marvelous man's career. But come on, wouldn't knowing Arnold but NOT ever hearing of Franco be the same as knowing of Zeus but never hearing about Hercules? Franco is legendary and if you look up in the stars at night, you can see his constellation in the shape of an expanded hot water bottle. Watch Pumping Iron again if you don't get the reference!

Franco has been Arnold's best friend for many decades and he was The Oak's leading training partner. He even had nice cameos in Conan and The Terminator. Not only is this Sardinian strongman just a good friend and action star, he is also an international stud as the winner of Mr. Italy, Mr. Europe, Mr. International, Mr. World, Mr. Universe and Mr. Olympia. Today, Franco is a champion Chiropractor in California. In his office in Santa

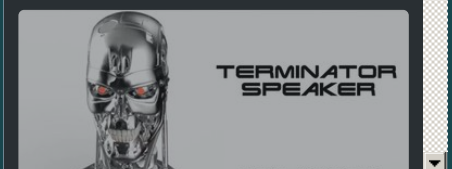
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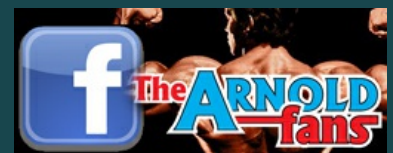
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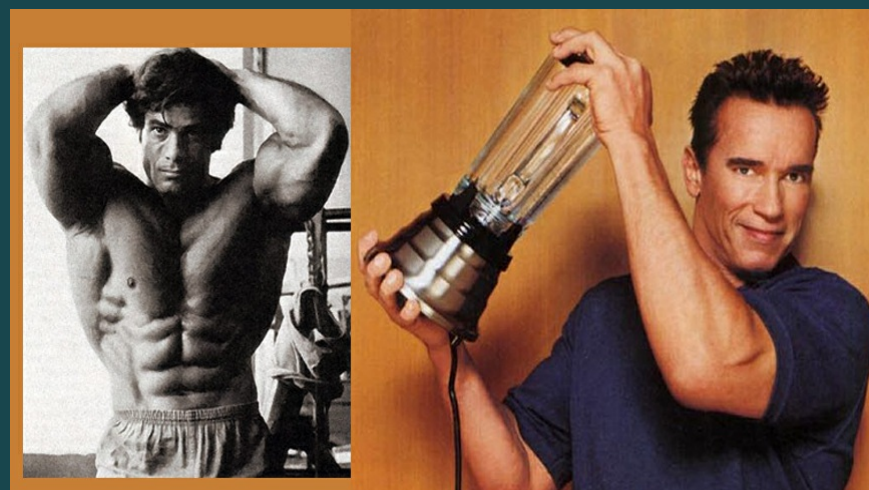


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Monica, he's surrounded by many awards, degrees, film posters, props and trophies. He took a break from his patients to talk with TheArnoldFans. We sat across from Franco at his desk and asked him several questions.

TheArnoldFans: Franco, is it true that you and Arnold would eat desserts like cherrie pies? Arnold tweeted that you'd have a lot of cherry pies.

Franco: Yeah, put some half-and-half in there and a banana and we'd run the thing (blender) until it would make so much noise. BBBRRRRRRRRUM! We'd put it in the glass and go to the gym. We'd never fuss about it. Then we had guys like Frank Zane who says, 'I don't eat this and I don't eat that and you can not do that.' He (Zane) would take vitamins, and fish oils, and all that. I used to call him Mr. Pills, they would go on the table, he had pills for waking up, a pill for going to the gym, a pill for sleeping. And then there were all these vitamins. Then I learned that people went on a strict diet, like Frank Zane, with a meat and water diet. I never understood that. I mean, can you image me giving Arnold water and meat? Then I noticed in the gym they were training very slow. They were training like there was no energy. It took them a long time to understand that if you wanted energy, you had to load yourself with carbohydrates or you never get going. Protein gives zero energy. It just builds the muscle. If you want to go to the gym and do stuff, you better eat carbohydrates and carbohydrates burns fat. What some people do not know too is that the brain only feeds on carbohydrates and oxygen.



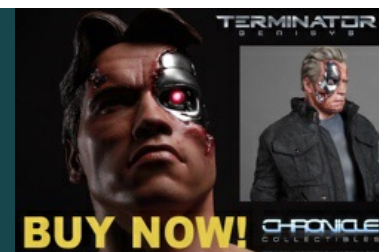
TheArnoldFans: What else was on the menu?

Franco: The food was very different. Like Arnold liked to cook hamburgers a lot, and I said, 'I don't like hamburgers, Arnold.' And then a couple times he used to burn them and then I said, 'oh good, now I don't have to eat them. It was very funny. And I used to just cook what came in my head, for example: steaks, pasta, big plates of pasta...eat lunch for pasta and just go to the gym and not even think about it, you know?

TheArnoldFans: Were a lot of your competitors bulking up by using steroids?

Franco: It was very simple with Arnold and I. When I said to Arnold, I heard they're taking some kind of steroid in the gym. He was like 'Come on, what do you want to do, train or take steroids?' I said, okay, let's go. Let's train. He pushed me to get to the gym. I put on more weights and then I pushed him to go heavier too. There was nothing better the way we did things (compared to how they did it). We were the best. We went forward so fast in the career. I mean so much improvement!



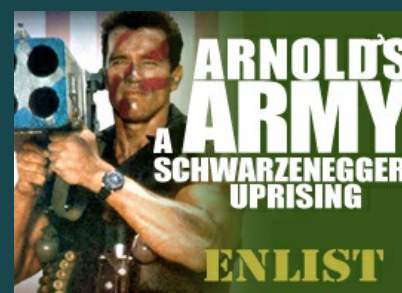


TheArnoldFans: Did the other bodybuilders try to psych you out or talk trash in attempts to lower your self-esteem on stage?

Franco: *It was funny, Frank Zane comes to me one day and says 'I'm going to beat you and I've beat Arnold.' I said that was an accidental problem. I said you won Arnold by accident. You will never beat me and you will never beat Arnold again...and its true. I competed against him probably 100 times and I beat him every time. Then he became used to it. When he'd see me he was like 'I guess i'm going to be second.' I said yeah, get used to it. (laughs). That's what made me and Arnold so good. We had personality, dynamics, we were excited to train!*



Arnold's Army



TheArnoldFans: You did some construction work with Arnold. How did that go?

Franco: *Joe Weider was a little stingy. Arnold got more money than I did. He got 80.00 a week and I only got 60.00. So that's why we needed more work and did some construction because we needed more money to buy food. But what I discovered was when we ate and did construction, we got continuous definition. Meanwhile the other*

Arnold will be better for Conan right now than then. Back then he was almost too young, almost like a kid. But now the way I see Arnold as Conan . . . well, you go back thousands of years; the guys in the tribes who were really wise and knew what to do to survive in the forest or against animals were the older guys. The most feared men in the tribe were the old guys."



Thanks for signing my Conan sword, Franco!! And thanks to Brandon Krum for accompanying me and recording the Santa Monica interview. His video segments of this interview will be included in Krum's upcoming Documentary titled ARNOLD'S ARMY! For more information on Franco, go to his official website at FrancoColumbu.com. You can even order some signed pictures from him! If you want to read our earlier interviews with Franco, click [HERE](#) to learn more of his bodybuilding days or click [HERE](#) to read about his film career!

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