

I'm the only person that's ever been through a transplant and qualified for Mr Olympia

BODYBUILDER OFF TO VEGAS CONTEST SOON

By EVA MILLETT

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A BODYBUILDER who rebuilt his life after a kidney transplant is preparing to stand alongside the world's best at the Mr Olympia competition.

Tyler Smith, 42, who owns Muscle HQ in Coalville, has qualified for the 2025 Mr Olympia Men's Physique competition in Las Vegas.

Only 50 athletes globally make it to the Olympia stage each year, with the Men's Physique division among the most competitive.

Tyler's achievement is all the more remarkable as he had a kidney transplant in 2018 at the age of 35.

The operation left him starting from scratch, but after four years off, he is preparing to compete against the best in the world. He will step on stage against much younger bodybuilders in what is widely regarded as the pinnacle of the sport.

"With my transplant, for someone who exercises and eats well, it's not the way it's supposed to go, but it's sometimes just the way cards fall in life," said Tyler.

"It made me a lot more aware of life itself and appreciating the smaller things.

"As athletes we want to push ourselves more and more, but sometimes you do have to realise we're not invincible and we do have limits."

Qualifying for Mr Olympia required a series of top-level results at professional competitions across the UK and Europe.

Tyler's consistency and determination saw him secure his place

among the elite line-up heading to Las Vegas in October.

"This is the Super Bowl of bodybuilding," said Tyler.

"It's the World Cup. As prestigious as it gets. To be competing at Mr Olympia is what dreams are made of for me, to even turn pro in 2020 was beyond what I could have imagined.

"So this is another level."

Mr Olympia is best known as the competition Arnold Schwarzenegger won seven times before going on to fame as an actor and politician, showing how success in bodybuilding can transform lives and open doors to new opportunities.

For Tyler, mental resilience has been just as important as physical preparation.

"Doctors put your health before everything of course, but at 35 I wasn't going to be told I couldn't do this any more. I didn't want to be finished forever.

"I knew if I took it easy, gradually built my fitness back up, I might not be able to get back to where I was before, but at least close.

There were days when the gym felt impossible, when I thought the mountain was too high. But if you keep showing up, if you stay disciplined, eventually progress comes."

Tragedy struck in

January this year when Tyler's cousin, who had donated a kidney to him, died aged 45 from a cardiac arrest.

"It's made this year's prep for Olympia a lot more difficult but a lot more focused," said Tyler.

"It disrupted things but you have to just keep that mental clarity and mental focus all the time and push through. I just kept saying to myself, 'No, he'd want me to do it'.

"He'd be giving me a slap around the face and saying, 'Stop being stupid. Get on with it'.

"So it was difficult, but at the same time, it kept me really focused to just keep pushing on.

"Olympia is for him and the family now. We all say I carry a piece of him forever."

Tyler is a central figure in the Coalville community through his work at Muscle HQ.

He bought the gym from his brother four years ago, and it welcomes people of all ages and backgrounds, with clients praising his supportive and inclusive approach.

"It was another dream of mine to open

Olympia is for the cousin who gave me his kidney and the family now. We all say I carry a piece of him forever

Tyler, above

a gym," said Tyler. "It's a good mix of people into all different kinds of fitness, it's not primarily a bodybuilding gym."

"I love seeing people achieve things they never thought they could, whether it's stepping on stage or just feeling fitter and more confident. That's what drives me every day."

With Mr Olympia just weeks away, Tyler is looking ahead to the strong competition he will face.

"I'm treating it as a free hit to be honest," said Tyler. "It's my first time, so there's no real expectations on my shoulders.

"I'd love to crack the top 15, so I've set myself small goals, but I'm just going to enjoy it and lap up the experience."

The 2025 Mr Olympia takes place from October 9 to 12 at Resorts World in Las Vegas. Tyler will compete in the Men's Physique division against athletes from more than 20 countries.

His presence marks the first time a Coalville bodybuilder has reached this level, and Tyler is the second oldest contestant competing.

"It's amazing to know that in the history of sport, I'm the only person that's ever been through a transplant and qualified for Mr Olympia," said Tyler.

"I really didn't want it to define me. But it's actually been part of a beautiful story."

News

Fly-tippers' mess costs thousands to clear up

A FLY-tip weighing around 25 tonnes has been cleared up.

Officials at Oadby and Wigston Borough Council have said the clean-up job cost them thousands of pounds to carry out.

The rubbish was found illegally dumped along Harrison Close and Magna Road in Wigston, with the date it was found not given by council officials. Items ranged from old household furniture to car parts.

Leicestershire County Council assisted with the clean-up operation, while the borough council has revealed it paid an estimated £10,000 for the tidy-up.

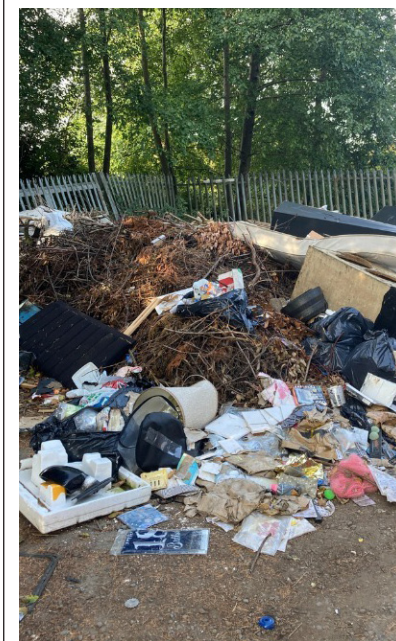
The discovery has led to the installation of CCTV cameras and signs at the site to deter future fly-tippers.

A borough council spokesman said: "Fly-tipping is illegal and carries a maximum penalty of five years' imprisonment or a fine of £50,000."

The county council said it has also cut back overgrown vegetation on their land to make the site more visible to further deter any future illegal activity. Local businesses are also helping to combat the problem by keeping the area under surveillance.

Investigations are ongoing into the fly-tip with the borough council saying it had "identified several companies and individuals" in connection with the incident.

Anyone with information should call the council on 0116 288 8961.



DUMPED: The 25 tonnes of rubbish was removed from Wigston roads
OADBY & WIGSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

YOUR LETTERS
PAGE 13



'WORLD CUP OF BODYBUILDING': Tyler, 42, will be competing in Mr Olympia