



South Roxana Strongman Competition Was The “First Of Its Kind”

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
March 24 2023 3:00 PM

SOUTH ROXANA - A strongman competition was held in South Roxana last Saturday at The Complex Training Facility. Owner Ryan Szymarek said the event was “the first of its kind” and so successful that they plan to host another competition later this year.

“The strongman event was the first of its kind for the gym and in South Roxana that I know of,” Szymarek said. “Even though the weather was terribly cold, we had a great turnout of around 70 people and 10 competitors from gyms around the Illinois and Missouri area.”

The event was sanctioned by United States Strongman (USS), which oversees all strongman events throughout the country. The competition featured the following weightlifting challenges:

- Deadman Barge Chain Pull - 600lbs and 1000lbs for 50ft, timed
- Tire Flip - 600lbs
- Yoke Deadlift for Max Weight
- One-arm Circus Dumbbell Press/Keg Medley - Circus Dumbbell 120lbs/140lbs, Keg 140lbs/225lbs
- Fire Truck Pull - 40,000 lbs for 50ft, timed

The small number of competitors across different weight classes meant most competed “against themselves” in their own division, but Szymarek said he did go head-to-head against a competitor from Jerseyville who beat him by just one point. Regardless, he said the event was very successful overall and that everyone, competitors and spectators alike, had a great time.

In fact, he said the event was so well-received that The Complex is hosting another strongman competition in December. It will be a charity event called “Hope for the

Holidays” and will be held Saturday, Dec. 9 at 9:45 a.m. at The Complex, located at 705 Biltmore Blvd. See the [event listing on Facebook](#) for more information.

Szymarek became the owner of The Complex after asking about a gym membership and learning from the owner at the time that the gym closed due to COVID. His ownership marked a turnaround both for the gym and for his own lifestyle.

“I decided to jump right in, and I walked out with the keys that same week and promised myself I would never miss a workout and better my life,” he said. “Fast forward to now - I have worked out for 96 weeks straight, lost a considerable amount of weight, trained and competed in this strongman event and set 2 personal records. I'm also wrapping up a 75 hard program in which I have worked out 2 times every day for 75 days straight.

“I decided to focus 100% of my life to health and fitness and helping others achieve their goals from what I have learned going through the process. We have grown from 20 members to around 120 in a short while.”

He described The Complex as “a full-access, 24-hour training facility with everything you would need to get in shape,” including over 3,000 square feet of turf, a 70' x 14' pitching net with a pitching machine and equipment, 2 soccer nets, cones, and lots of other training equipment. He added that they “train strongman every Sunday at 10 a.m. and welcome all levels to join us.”

To learn more about The Complex Training Center, visit thecomplexroxana.com or visit their [Facebook page](#).