

NABBA Universe

The moment I received the letter to invite me to compete in Hamburg Germany, to stepping onstage in the international scene, can only be described to me as a real whirlwind of excitement and magic!

I am sure you will agree a crucial aspect of preparation for stage is: getting it all right! During the weeks after the nationals and before the universes I was researching how to prepare myself with the long haul flight aspect of the trip (would it affect my water retention, nutrition, and exercise). Thankfully NABBA was on hand to help me out with any questions that I had.



The real moment that it 'sunk in' (exactly what I was doing) was as the international flight took off, bound for Germany. Sure it was a succession of 6 flights with an hour at each of the stops in between, but despite being 38 hours of travel time nothing could dampen my excitement!

The really special part was that the hotel that we were staying at was a flurry of international competitors in the same competition. It was so exciting to catch glimpses of different teams all there for the same purpose. I had such a sense of purpose walking with the rest of the international NZ NABBA team, each of us in our branded tracksuits and our sports bag.



Finally the day arrived, the big day, and the words that Jim gave us before registration rang in my head during preparation: don't lose focus! With all of the exciting things going on I could see how this could happen: being

in a novel location (which incidentally due to the time of year included various Christmas markets and bakeries with sweetened cinnamon in the air)!

Our NZ NABBA team was fantastic, we all were on hand to help each other get onto the stage. Tanning, pumping up, preparation was all so smoothly done that the day could be enjoyed! It was nothing but excitement from each other all day.

Watching the various categories compete was really inspiring too. I really enjoyed the experience of seeing the different countries with different approaches to on stage preparation and posing.

For my category, there was a line up of 29 beautiful Shape ladies. This was a new category for the Universes and even included an element of an evening dress round. One of the most interesting things about this was that the posing was a little different, so allowed for us to experience a different way of showing our hard work and preparation.

When we received our Universe competition medals in the evening I could not keep the smile off my face. I have received invaluable experience and made great friends with my NABBA team mates. Competing in Germany is a moment that I will not forget for the rest of my life: its the stuff that dreams are made of! Now to work harder in the hopes to be selected again! I know I can improve on myself, so I shall see you all at the next NABBA show in 2013!

Athlete Report: Susan Baxter