

SARASOTA H.S. TEAM

AT THE JUNIOR OLYMPIC NATIONAL WEIGHTLIFTING CHAMPIONSHIPS



Sarasota's Team, kneeling, from left: George Lockett, Preston Heuberger, Ben Thomas. Standing, from left: Coach Bob Smithers, Jon Rissler, Paul Short.



Last minute instructions from Coach Smithers to George Lockett (seated), standing is Paul Short. Coach Smithers serves as an assistant football and strength coach at Sarasota High School.



Ben Thomas Snatched 220 with the Power Snatch style. He Clean and Jerked 319 pounds for a 539 Total and a second-place finish.



George getting the Clean in fine style. He snatched 187 pounds and Clean and Jerked 264 pounds. George took third.



Only a sophomore, Jon Rissler Snatched 176 and Clean and Jerked 236 pounds to garner a fifth-place finish



Paul completing a 225-pound Clean and Jerk. He also Snatched 165 and took eighth nationally.

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JUNIOR OLYMPIC NATIONAL WEIGHTLIFTING CHAMPIONSHIPS

SARASOTA HIGH SCHOOL

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Coach Smithers likes to have his football players compete to keep intensity at a high level in the off-season. He stated, "We really push it during the school year and work a lot on technique. We also lift in-season. All our athletes lift. It's mandatory for our baseball team, which was ranked third in the nation under Coach Clydes Metcalf."

All the athletes on the weightlifting team are football players. Football remains the number one sport but the weightlifting contests are both fun and challenging. Ben Thomas, a three-time state lifting champ, is 5-10, 230, and runs a 4.9 forty. He will play football at Henderson State in Arkansas. Paul Short, a senior with a 3.5 GPA, is 6-0, 198, and runs a 4.8 forty from his linebacker position. George Lockett, a lineman, is also a senior with a 3.0 GPA. He is a 6-0, 225, and runs a 5.0 forty. Jon Rissler, a 6-2, 200-pound sophomore, plays defensive end. He carries a 3.8 GPA and runs a 4.8 forty.

CLEAN & JERK CONTESTS

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elbows-in grip recommended by BFS. If you have Bench competitions, athletes tend to use form rather than technique for optimal Benching, which has greater carry-over value for other sports. (This can also be true of the Squat and Dead lift, if the coach is not careful.)

Fourth, Olympic-style weightlifting develops footwork. While power lifting requires athletes to plant their feet, weightlifting requires quick, coordinated footwork with heavy weights.

We believe our initial try at this format was a success. Our athletes enjoyed the Clean and Jerk and the feeling that comes with driving heavy weights overhead. We also found that, with proper training, weightlifting is very safe.

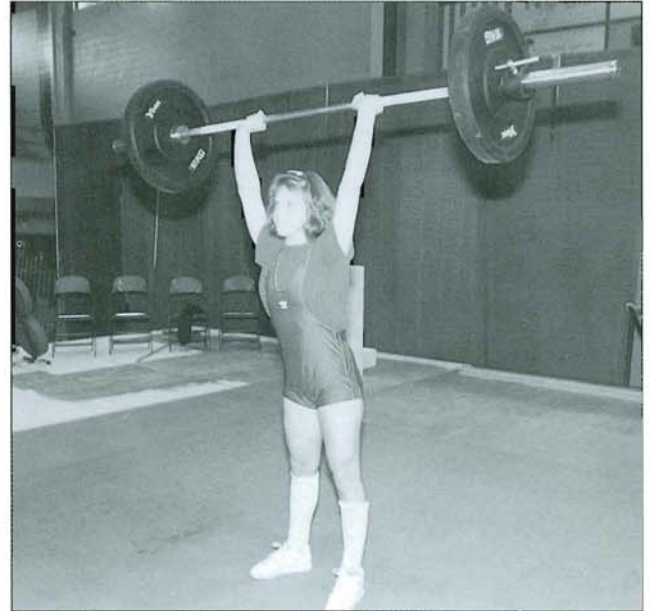
This past June, I had the opportunity to attend a weightlifting clinic at the United States Olympic Training Center at Colorado Springs. It was a great experience to be able to learn the technical aspects of weightlifting from the top experts in the United States. We will include the Snatch and some of its related movements in our program in the near future. We also learned that weightlifting is a great sport that athletes can enjoy after their team-sport careers are over. For those with elite potential, there are opportunities for international travel and competition.

Many coaches shy away from these lifts, thinking them dangerous or too difficult to teach. This is not the case. With a little training background, the lifts can be taught safely and effectively. The USWF has a variety of coaching resources available. Their video tapes, training manuals, and clinics are of the highest quality, and are relatively inexpensive.

For further information contact:

United States Weightlifting Federation
1750 E. Boulder Street
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80909-5764

CHRISTIE GREEN NATIONAL CHAMP



Christie competed in the 105-pound class and beat all the boys in the 12-to-13-year-old age group with a 99-pound Snatch and a 132-pound Clean and Jerk.

Christie Green is from Newnan, Georgia, and competed this past July in Boca Raton, Florida, at the Junior National Championships. Her father, Ben Green, is a competitive Masters lifter and has been training Christie since she was eight years old. Christie has been competing for one year and will be an eighth grader at O.P. Evans Junior High. "All the kids are supportive of me lifting," grinned Christie. "They don't think it's unfeminine at all. A few of my girlfriends are even starting to get interested in lifting."

Christie has tremendous technique, which explains why she can lift so much. She also built a strong base with Squats and Benches, with some plyometrics added for explosiveness. Christie is so good that she is in the top twelve American women lifters by formula. However, she's too young to represent the United States in international competition. That will have to wait until next next year when she turns fourteen. "My goal is to be at the World Championships when I'm fourteen, and then maybe the Olympics, if it becomes an official sport," Christie said hopefully.

I asked Christie about anabolic steroids. She exclaimed, "No way! It's like men taking estrogen (estrogen is a female hormone). I then asked with a twinkle, "Are you too young to have a boyfriend? She quickly looked at her father and laughed, "Yes sir."

Christie would like to be a Physical Therapist someday and seems to perceive life in proper perspective. My final question was to ask her what the most important thing was in life. She squeezed her father's arm and rested her head on his shoulder and said, "My daddy."