

CARLA GARRETT

America's Strongest Woman Athlete

By Dr. Greg Shepard

Carla grew up in Santa Fe, New Mexico where she was a three-sport athlete at Santa Fe High School. She participated in Soccer, Basketball and Track. Carla was a High School All-American basketball player as a senior. She scored 23 points per game and grabbed 11 boards per game. In track, Carla was the best in the nation in both the shot and the discus. At that time, she was only the second person to ever throw the shot over 50 feet. Her best marks were 168-2 in the discus and 50-1/2 in the shot. In addition to throwing, Carla ran 100 meters in 12.5 and was District Champion in that event.

Carla has always been big. She never lifted in high school and so genetics had a lot to do with her successes and being 5-8 and 230 pounds. Every college in America wanted Carla but she chose Arizona because of Meg Ritchie. Carla remembered, "On my recruiting trip, we just kind of connected." Coach Ritchie was the head strength coach for the Wildcats and even now Carla speaks reverently about her mentor. "I owe my career to Meg."

Carla entered Arizona in 1984 and graduated in five years being red-shirted

before her senior year. Her best marks were a 198-5 discus throw and a shot put of 56-1. She was a 10 time All-American and still holds the PAC-10 discus record. Carla is a three-time national champion in both events.

"Meg was always on my back about Olympic Lifting," stated Carla. "So finally in 1991, I decided to try it." The result was phenomenal. A Snatch of 231 pounds and a Clean & Jerk of 303 pounds. She has now been on two world championship teams and travelled to Germany and Australia for those meets.

Carla is now an assistant strength coach at Arizona and has specific duties of training the women's basketball and soccer teams. She feels the Clean is vital to do for an athlete. "It builds speed, balance and explosive power. A lot of people really don't understand how important cleans are in building explosive jumping power. The clean is the most important lift for sports like volleyball, basketball and track."

Carla feels that weight training for women still has some misconceptions but is making progress. It won't make a girl unfeminine or build big bulky type muscles. Athletic weight training makes a woman more athletic, leaner, stronger, faster and more efficient without adding "bulk."

As far as the future, Carla is pointing

for the 1996 Olympics and hopes to qualify in the discus. She feels a throw of 200 feet should do it, something she has done many times.

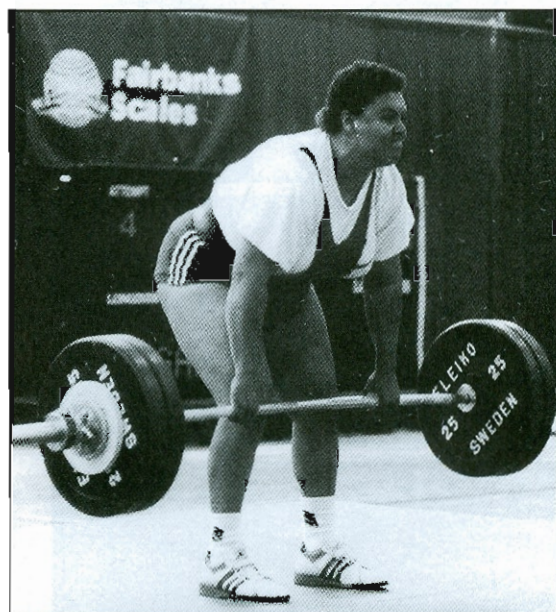
Because of Carla's size (5-9 260) and strength, the subject of steroids raises its ugly head. Carla bristles at this. "I am willing to get tested at anytime and anyplace. I have worked tremendously hard to achieve what I have achieved without steroids." Everyone should remember that Carla has always been big and strong. Anyone who can throw the shot 50 feet and run a 12.5 100 meter without lifting is going to do some phenomenal things when they start lifting, especially when they are teamed up with a coach like Meg Ritchie.

Carla's father was 5-10 and a 210 pound ex-pro football player. Her mother is 5-6 and only 140 pounds. "I've only seen my father three times in my life so my mother made the sacrifices for my success. My mother is a single parent, a friend, a supporter and both mother and father. She sees most of my competitions and next to Meg I owe my career to her."

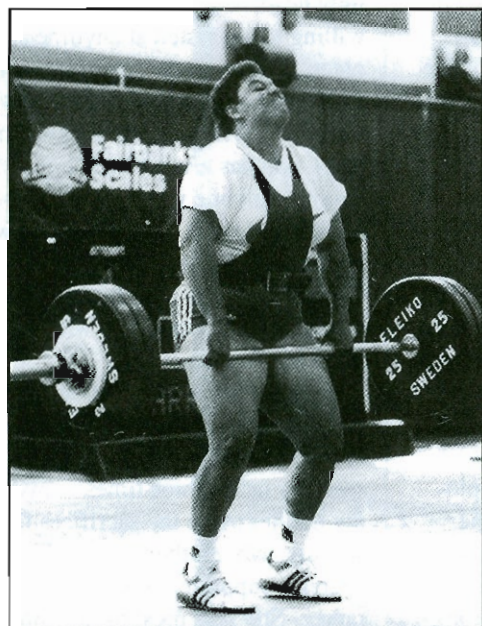
We thank Carla for her honesty, grit and determination. She has worked hard and is a pioneer in women's strength training. We wish her well in her quest for greatness in the 1996 Olympics and in life. (Continued on next page)



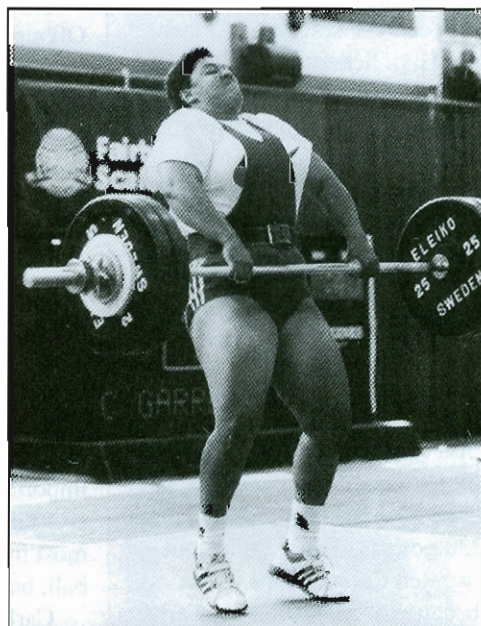
STAGE #1: Carla is beginning movement is very good. I like her stance. It is a perfect jump stance. The bar is almost touching her shins which is perfect. Her arms are straight and her hips are low with a good locked-in lower back. The only position that could be questioned is her head and eyes. However, as long as the hips and lower back are good the head position is not as important at this stage. You will notice that her chin is away from her chest which is right.



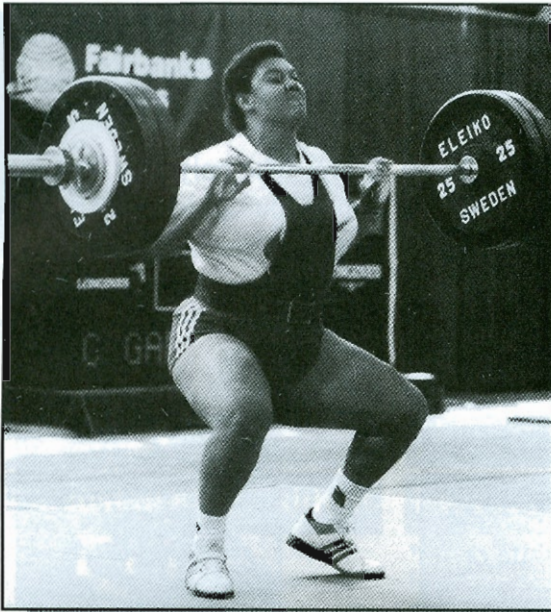
STAGE #2: Now, Carla's eyes, head and chin are really good. Arms, hips, lower back and shoulders are all good. She is getting into a jumping position so she can begin the most important phase of the clean.



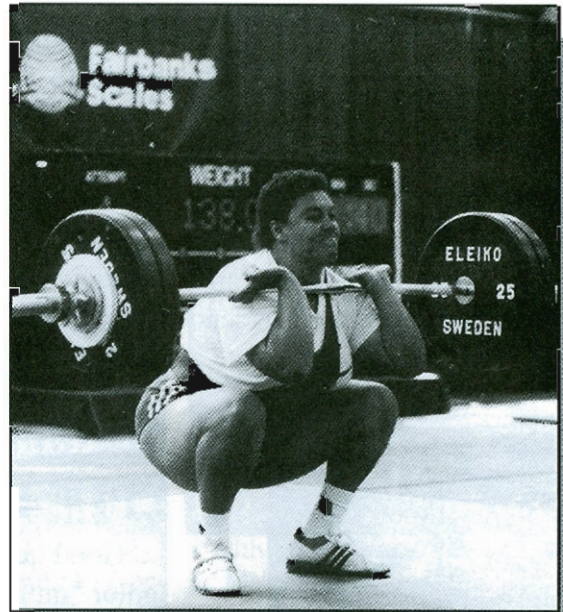
STAGE #3: The bar is against her thighs with the arms still straight which is exactly right. For those of you who have difficulty getting the bar into the thighs, try rotating your wrists forward around and over the bar. Carla's right wrist offers the best view. You may want to exaggerate this wrist position at first in order to get the hang of it. Carla is also beginning to shrug her shoulders which helps move the bar even higher. Her chin and head position is very good



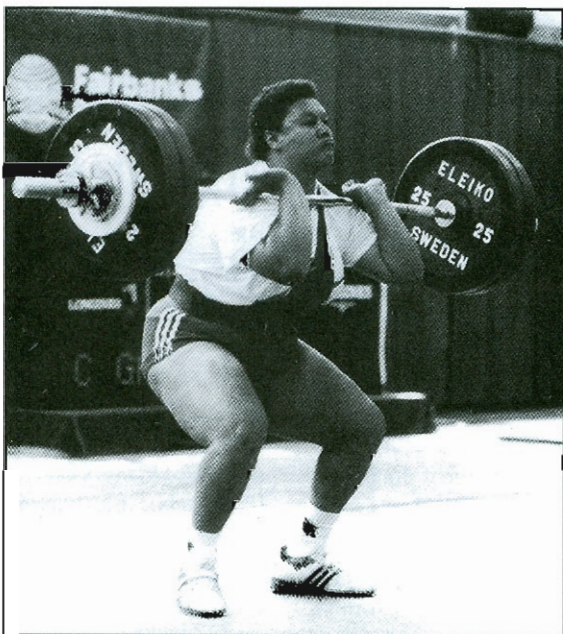
STAGE #4: Now, Carla is going for it! She is trying to jump straight up in the air with over 300 pounds! Look at her feet. Her heels are 3-inches off the ground! It is difficult to say what happened a split second later but if her knees did not completely extend, they should have. If they did not, Carla would then be capable of cleaning even more weight. Her chin, head and eyes are right on target.



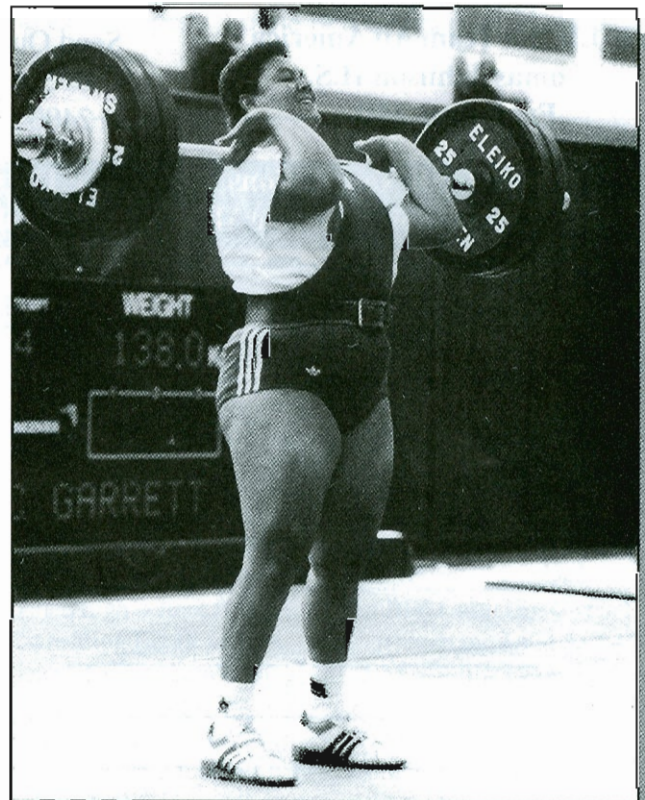
STAGE #5: Instead of power cleaning the weight, Carla will Squat Clean the weight. She is in competition and once you perfect the technique you can Squat Clean more than you can Power Clean. Her chin and head position remain excellent. Many athletes will lose a clean at this point because their head and chin are down. It appears that Carla's right knee is slightly in and not directly over the foot as it should be. This is a problem with many women athletes and should be carefully coached. This incorrect position is weaker and causes undesirable pressure on the medial collateral ligament.



STAGE #6: Now, Carla has reached the low point of her front squat position. Toes are pointed out for balance and the feet are now firmly planted. Some might question the little finger. Don't worry about it. This often happens. However, it is a minor hassle to adjust the bar in preparation for the jerk phase. The only thing I could say to Carla on this rock solid position is to try to sit a little taller.



STAGE #7: She's powerfully recovering in this photo as she squats upward to a standing position. You have got to fight the elbows to keep them up and to always attempt to keep as upright and straight as possible.



STAGE #8: There it is! A magnificent 138 Kilogram Clean.(303 pounds) Carla Garrett, America's strongest woman athlete!