

# THE EXPEDITOR

Official Newsletter of the British Columbia Powerlifting Association



## THE CURATED ARTICLE LIST:

Athlete and Club Profiles  
Equipped Powerlifting

## NEW LOOK, SAME NEWSLETTER

*by Shadie Bourget, BCPA Secretary*

Hello readers! Welcome to the first British Columbia Powerlifting Association (BCPA) Newsletter for 2019. Our goal is to provide BC's latest powerlifting news and content. This issue coincided with the 2019 BCPA Winter Open, hosted by Lynne Desautels. Lee Nguyen designed this year's logo, which was voted by the members as the logo contest winner. The BCPA Executive wants to congratulate all the athletes who competed during the Winter Open, and most importantly wanted to thank all the volunteers that came out to help. We appreciate it!

In case you missed it, BCPA did a pre-order on apparel at the end of 2018 and thanks everyone who ordered. There was also a draw to win some apparel; congrats to winners Arthur Field and Cherise Noullett, who each won a full Team BC kit. There will be another pre-order available this year, before CPU Westerns, on the BCPA Apparel webpage.

In this Winter 2019 issue, we are covering the recipients of the 2018 BCPA student bursary, and are pleased to introduce you to Bette Festing, Scorekeeper Chair and newly appointed Officiating Chair of the BCPA. There is also a very interesting segment on equipped powerlifting written by BCPA athletes. Yes, we are welcoming submissions from our members! If you would like to submit an article, or if there is a topic you would like us to cover, send us an email at [secretary@bc-powerlifting.com](mailto:secretary@bc-powerlifting.com). If you have not yet subscribed to our newsletter, make sure to subscribe on the BCPA webpage.

Thank you for reading! Good luck with your training and wishing you many personal bests along the way.



# BCPA CALENDAR



Photo courtesy of Lee Nguyen

## COMPETITION

## COMPETITION DATE

## REGISTRATION DATE



2019 BCPA Winter Open Powerlifting and Bench Press Championships (Burnaby, BC)

Feb 23-24, 2019

Closed



2019 CPU Nationals (Ottawa, ON)

Mar 4-9, 2019

Closed



The Legend of the Three Lifts (Burnaby, BC)

Mar 16, 2019

Closed



The Silverback Blitz (Richmond, BC)

April 13, 2019

Feb 17, 2019 at 2pm



Vancouver Island Powerlifting Championships (Victoria, BC)

May 5, 2019

March 10, 2019 at 6pm



2019 BCPA Men's Provincials Powerlifting and Bench Press Championships (Langley, BC)

Jun 22-23, 2019

TBA



Rally in the Valley (Kelowna, BC)

July 27, 2019

TBA



2019 BCPA Women's Provincials Powerlifting and Bench Press Championships\*

October 12, 2019

TBA



3rd Annual Lift the Rock Powerlifting Championships (Victoria, BC)

November 17, 2019

TBA

\*This year, the Men and Women Provincial Championships are divided into two events due to the large number of competitors. In order to be able to compete at CPU Westerns, athletes are required to obtain the qualifying total within the last two years, compete at BCPA Provincials within the last two years, and must also compete or volunteer at BCPA Provincials each year. However, because 2019 is a transitional year, for 2019 CPU Westerns only, women who have not yet competed at Provincials can compete at Westerns as long as they have achieved the qualifying standard and have competed at at least two BCPA sanctioned events.

## BCPA EXECUTIVE

President	Gabe Festing: <a href="mailto:president@bc-powerlifting.com">president@bc-powerlifting.com</a>
Vice President	TBA
Secretary	Shadie Bourget: <a href="mailto:secretary@bc-powerlifting.com">secretary@bc-powerlifting.com</a>
Treasurer	Lynne Desautels: <a href="mailto:treasurer@bc-powerlifting.com">treasurer@bc-powerlifting.com</a>
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# A SPECIAL THANK YOU...

TANNER BRAATEN

JUSTIN GRAY

The BCPA Executive and members would like to extend their gratitude to two volunteers who helped shape BCPA the way it is, and have worked assiduously in their respective roles for many years: Tanner Braaten and Justin Gray. Here is who they are in a nutshell.

Tanner Braaten is a caring coach and a dedicated athlete. He was the Vice-President and Club Development director of the BCPA Executive for the last three years and helped with various BCPA projects as well as helped with powerlifting club growth in BC.

Justin Gray is Provincial Category I referee and was the Officiating Chair for several years. He has been involved with the BCPA in various roles for over 10 years. Justin has made many improvements to the officiating role and standards in BC.

As they recently stepped down from their respective position, we wish both of them all the best in their future endeavors and professional careers. From the BCPA Executive, we would like to thank you for playing an integral part within the BC powerlifting community and the BCPA as an organization, and we thank you for all the work you have placed into growing the sport of powerlifting in BC. Your contributions do not go unnoticed and we appreciate your hard work. It was a pleasure working alongside of you and we are looking forward to seeing you in future competitions.



## 2019 WADA PROHIBITED LIST

**2019** LIST OF PROHIBITED  
SUBSTANCES AND METHODS

The Prohibited List is a cornerstone of the World Anti-Doping Code and a key component of harmonization. The List is updated annually following an extensive consultation process facilitated by WADA. The 2019 List is valid from 1 January to 31 December, 2019. Make sure you consult the revised list prior to taking any supplements.



# 2018 BCPA STUDENT BURSARY AWARD WINNER

Photo courtesy of Lee Nguyen

## MICHAEL BRION

*Michael Brion is a dedicated athlete and student, and he is one of the two 2018 BCPA student bursary recipients. Congratulations!*

*He most recently competed at the UBC Championships in January 2019 and won first place in Open 83kg with a 600kg total and 600.81 IPF Points. Here is a little bit more about his post-secondary education and his powerlifting journey, as well as future goals, via a few words he wanted to share:*

**"Powerlifting has provided me with an outlet during my studies, it's a portion of my day where I can escape the books and other stresses and just focus on training."**

"I am currently in my 5th and final term of a 20 month Registered Massage Therapy (RMT) program. I made a pretty big career change going into this program, leaving behind 5 years spent as an Electrician, but I knew that making the change and following a career path that I was more passionate about would pay off. I made the change because I have always had a passion for sport and athletics, and with sport and athletics inevitably comes injury. With the RMT program, it provided me with the opportunity to learn more about the human body down to the muscular level and beyond, and how everything works together. As an RMT I hope to be able to apply myself and my knowledge in a setting more catered to athletes, and other competitors dealing with injury or ailments. It would provide me with the opportunity to combine two of my passions together and give a chance for me to make a positive impact on many peoples lives.

I've been powerlifting for just over two years now, and I've just completed my 6th meet at the January 19, 2019 UBC meet. I got into the sport in October of 2016 at the Fall Classic in Abbotsford, and from there I was pretty much hooked. I love the competitive atmosphere, and pushing myself to the limit. Ultimately I would love to be able to compete

at Nationals at least once, but with school and licensing exams coming up later this year, I will have to wait until 2020. Powerlifting has provided me with an outlet during my studies, it's a portion of my day where I can escape the books and other stresses and just focus on training. Without it, I think I probably would have gone insane a long time ago.

Ultimately, I would like to give back to the powerlifting community. As an athlete currently competing in the BCPA, I haven't noticed many practioners who not only treat athletes, but also compete in it as well. Armed with my experience in the BCPA, and when I officially become an RMT, I would love to be able to apply my experience as an athlete and as a therapist to anyone who may need it. I will (hopefully) be officially licensed this coming september, and when that time comes I look forward to volunteering my time and my practice to the BCPA at local meets, or even pop ups at local powerlifting gyms. For now though, just as I apply myself to training, I must apply myself to my studies. Thank you to the BCPA for providing me with this years Bursary. I can't thank the BCPA enough for their generosity, but also all the time and effort they put in to allow every athlete to compete and showcase our hard work at each meet. So from me, and every other athlete in the BCPA, THANK YOU!

- Mike Brion"





Photo courtesy of LVD Media

# 2018 BCPA STUDENT BURSARY AWARD WINNER

## DENAE SWADDEN

*Denae Swadden is a very hardworking nursing student and athlete who is actively involved with the BCPA. She is also one of the two BCPA Student Bursary award recipients of 2018. Congratulations!*

*Her most recent competition was the 2018 Western Canadian Championship, where she achieved a 337.5kg total in the 72kg weight class. She is currently preparing for CPU Nationals in Ottawa and we wish her success in training and on the platform leading to her competition. Here are a few words from Denae, about the powerlifting community she discovered, while balancing her other passion in her post-secondary studies:*

"I feel honoured to have been chosen as one of the 2018 BCPA Bursary winners. Powerlifting has added so much to my life, and I am so grateful to be a part of such an amazing, supportive community.

At the moment, most of my time is consumed by school, as I am currently working towards becoming a registered nurse, my other passion in life. Despite the demands of school, making time for my training is incredibly important to me, as powerlifting has improved every aspect of my life. For one, it has given me a level of confidence and belief in myself that I never thought was possible. Secondly, it has directly improved my academic performance and my ability to provide the best care possible to patients by serving as an act of self-care, as well as a healthy and productive outlet for stress. Finally, it has brought some of the most supportive, caring friendships I have ever had into my life, helping me both in and out of the gym.

While trying to balance school and powerlifting has been quite difficult, they are my two biggest priorities right now. This has made the sacrifices I've had to make in order to remain successful in both of these aspects of my life that much easier.

I can't wait to attend 2019 CPU Nationals. It is a goal I thought would take me years to achieve and I can't believe it's happening. I also look forward to further immersing myself in this great community through competing and volunteering at as many meets as I can.

I want to give a huge thank-you to the BCPA and to every person who has motivated, encouraged, and supported me thus far.

- Denae Swadden"



### 2018-2019 CPU Scholarship

The Canadian Powerlifting Union (CPU) awards up to seven (7) annual student scholarships of \$250 each. Two BCPA members were awarded one of them:

- Ryan Maclellan (Simon Fraser University)

- Tim Branch (University of British Columbia)

Congratulations for being two of the CPU scholarship recipients, and for your dedication to post secondary education and powerlifting!

# JACKSON SPENCER

## ATHLETE PROFILE



Photo courtesy of Loaded Bar Collective

"Define yourself by how you treat other people and yourself, not by how much weight you lift or what records you set."

## PART I

Jackson Spencer is the 2018 second highest Wilks male in BCPA and in case you did not know, he also won the -120kg 2018 IPF Junior World Powerlifting Championship in Calgary, AB. We were interested in finding out more about him, and wanted to ask him a few questions about his experience with powerlifting over the last few years, as well as his future plans. Thank you Jackson for your time and for sharing. Here is his mini biography.

**Age:** 23

**Height:** 6' in squat shoes ;)

**Weight class:** -120kg

**Best lifts/Wilks:** 352.5kg Squat, 200kg Bench, 340kg Deadlift, 890kg Total / 513 Wilks

**Favourite lift:** Squat

**Coached by:** Brian Minor

**Records:** Junior World Record Total. Open/Junior National Squat Record. Junior National Total Record (120kg)

**Best song when going for a PR:** Nothing gets me going in competition like "Can't be Touched" by Roy Jones Junior

**Training facility:** Genesis Athletic Club

**First competition:** Fall 2014

**How many times a week do you train?** 4 Times. 3x Squat 3x Bench 1.5x Deadlift

**How long have you been training for?** In the gym since 2011, powerlifting since April 2014



Photo courtesy of Loaded Bar Collective

# JACKSON SPENCER: PART II

**How many times have you competed? What was your best competition?**

12 CPU competitions, my best competition to date was the 2018 Classic World Championships where I became world champion and set a world record in the total.

**Do you have any goals for powerlifting (short or long term) and what are they?**

I competed at my first world championships in Texas 2016 and placed second after failing my final deadlift at lockout. I then set the goal for myself of winning a world championship as a junior. I competed at the world championships in 2017 in Belarus, but ultimately placed second again after I failed my final deadlift. After effectively losing twice in a row I decided that I was going to commit all of my resources to winning in Calgary 2018, which would be my final world championships as a junior lifter. I dedicated all that I could to proper training, rest, and recovery. I ate more and trained harder, sacrificing a lot of relationships with friends and family. Thankfully it paid off and I ended up winning in Calgary 2018, setting a world record in the process.

With that goal accomplished I decided it was time to focus on the real-world. Right now, my goal is to go to law school and start a career in that field. I wrote my LSAT in November and was accepted to University of Toronto Law School. I'm still waiting to hear back from UBC and Uvic, which are two more local and less expensive options, so the jury is still out on where I will be next year.

**What are your main motivations for powerlifting?**

Ideally in life your motivation to do anything should come intrinsically, not extrinsically. However, in reality, it's rarely that simple. I found that my motivation for powerlifting primarily came from a desire to compete and ultimately win competitions, because that is where I found the greatest joy. On the other hand, it's great to be a part of a community of likeminded people who are engaging in the same endeavor as you are. The people I've met around the world and the friends I've gained through powerlifting are amazing. That's a large part of why I continued powerlifting as long as I did. Winning competitions is great, but I think there is more to be gained from developing real connections with real people, who you can support and who can support you be the best version of yourself. Posting videos of your best lifts and getting fake internet people to like them doesn't hurt on the motivation side of things either ;).

**What is your best or proudest achievement?**

2018 Junior World Champion and Total World Record. Best Junior by Wilks in Canada.

**Who is your biggest opponent?**

I never really had any real competition in Canada, but on the world stage the best competitor I ever had the pleasure of sharing the platform with was Mark Macqueen, a fellow 120kg lifter from the U.K. We were tied on subtotal going into deadlifts, and we had pulled roughly the same in the gym leading up to the competition. I matched his 1st and second deadlifts, but couldn't keep up with him on the 3rd so he won the gold medal. I'm happy for him because he had his opportunity to win in 2017 and I had mine in 2018!

**Any highlights in your powerlifting journey you would like to share?**

60% of the fun in powerlifting has to do with lifting. The other 40% comes when you have a few too many beers at the post-Nationals banquet, or vodka shots at the open-bar post-Worlds banquet in Belarus and tear up the dance floor with the greatest powerlifters in the world. There's something special about Geno Biancheri and 50 other world-class powerlifters who haven't done cardio once in the last 10 years, dancing in a shady Belarusian bar without shirts, spraying water bottles on each other. Yes, there are videos and they are every bit as amazing as you might think. If you haven't been a part of the shenanigans that take place at large events like Nationals and Worlds, make that a priority.

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"Ideally in life your motivation to do anything should come intrinsically, not extrinsically. However, in reality, it's rarely that simple."

# JACKSON SPENCER: PART III

## *How was your experience at World's?*

Every World Championship that I've been to has been an amazing experience. Meeting people from around the world that share a common passion makes it easy to make new friends and learn about different cultures. You don't get anywhere in this sport by being a jerk, so by and large everyone who goes to an international event is a certified beauty.

## *Do you have any role models?*

Anthony Bourdain. RIP. His cynical yet optimistic outlook on life and his love for travel has always inspired me to see more of the world and meet the human beings that inhabit it.

## *Do you have any tips for new or seasoned lifters?*

Believe in yourself and believe that you are always capable of more. If you're not going to do that, nobody else will. Set goals and commit yourself to them. Don't be afraid of failure. Care less what other people think. Define yourself by how you treat other people and yourself, not by how much weight you lift or what records you set.

## *We know you wanted to take a break from competing powerlifting, would you like to talk about this? Do you know when will be your next competition?*

I have decided to take an indefinite break from competitive powerlifting in order to focus on starting a career in law, and rediscovering old passions of mine, such as hiking, camping, snowboarding and Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. You don't realize how much time powerlifting takes away from your normal life until you have that time back again. Since June 2018 I've lost close to 40lbs and I feel amazing because of it. I sleep better, I move better, and I'm able to do way more fun things now compared to when I was slaving away in the gym, eating a pint of Ben and Jerry's a night, and sleeping 10 hours a night. I've rekindled old friendships, been able to go on more fun trips and say yes to things that I would never have been able to while I was powerlifting.

In April I'm going to Nepal to trek to Everest Base Camp, then will be traveling around India and Southeast Asia for as long as funds allow. Then in September I will either be at UofT Law or UBC's Allard Law School. My next powerlifting competition is the last thing on my mind and I'm okay with that.

I've been coaching for 3 years now, and I have a roster of 10 long-term athletes. I love helping people get into the sport and/or taking them to the next level of competition. Helping people crush PRs and get better at lifting brings me a lot of satisfaction. If you're interested in learning more, shoot me a DM.

## *And on a personal note, what are you doing for work at the moment?*

I work at Lululemon in Park Royal with a great crew of like-minded people and I work security at a bar on the North Shore a few nights a week.

## *Do you have any other hobbies/passions you would like to share?*

I have my blue belt in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, and I'm training 3-4x a week at Roll Academy in North Vancouver. It's been a refreshing challenge to say the least; going from being the best in the world at something to getting choked out by someone who weighs 60lbs less than you. Definitely planning on competing at a BJJ tournament soon.

## *And finally, a set of random questions...*

**What is your favourite food?** Sushi or a good steak.

**What is your favourite music?** All time favourite bands/artists are Black Sabbath and Billy Joel, but I'll listen to anything with good lyrics and a good vibe.

**What is the most ridiculous or interesting fact you know?** The mitochondria is the powerhouse of the cell.

**What is your favourite Pokémon and why?** Blue Eyes White Dragon, for obvious reasons.

**What is the (or your) biggest kitchen fail?** I tried to grind one of those Himalayan Sea Salt containers and took the lid right off ruining a perfectly good avocado toast. It was a sad day. I once also attempted to cook a tray of cookies on wax paper. Didn't work.

**Is hot-dog a sandwich?** What is the airspeed velocity of an unladen swallow?

**Is cereal soup?** Are rhinos really just chubby unicorns?

**Toilet paper. Under or over?** Really doesn't matter as long as it's there when you need it.



Thank you, again,  
Jackson, for letting  
us interview you.  
Good luck with  
your future plans!



Strength room AKA Gorilla Compound



Accessory room AKA Lion's Den



Seasonal rooftop gym AKA Eagle's Nest



Accessory room AKA Lion's Den

# POWERLIFTING CLUB FEATURE

## Junglegym

By Romus Izquierdo

Hey I'm Romus, and let me tell you the tale of the jungle.. Junglegym is a strength haven in Richmond BC. Three levels of gym that will get you some serious results (if you're not a lazy bum). The seasonal rooftop gym has all your vanity needs: A large mirror, dumbbells, a power rack, and benches. Below it is the accessory room with bodybuilding machines, cardio machines, turf, cables, and more power racks. And deep underneath, in the far corner of the building, is where the magic happens. Dubbed the gorilla compound, it is where our kilo plates, Ohio power bars, platforms, combo rack, and strongman equipment are held. This ain't no community center, boys 'n girls.

When I started powerlifting, I wondered where all the strong people trained, and turned out they were scattered at different gyms, like nomads searching for an oasis. I thought "man, maybe I can make that oasis a reality". With a little bit of luck here and lots of elbow grease there, pop goes the jungle on Jan 1st 2018!

Members can expect the dopest hype you'll get while lifting: people would literally stop a conversation and yell at you "UUUP!", then continue their chat like afternoon tea. All the while everyone supports each other giving each other tips. At Junglegym, everyone's welcome, everyone's wild.



"At Junglegym,  
everyone's  
welcome,  
everyone's  
wild."

# BETTE FESTING

## BCPA OFFICIATING & SCOREKEEPERS' CHAIR

Bette Festing started weight training in high school and has continued with it ever since. She was introduced to powerlifting in 1997, instantly fell in love with the sport, and had her first competition in that same year. She competed a few more times, including at her first National competition in 2000, and even hosted various competitions before becoming a BCPA referee. After taking a break from the sport to start her family, she became involved again with the BCPA in 2012 and started taking on a more active role, not only with competing but with co-directing and officiating at competitions. Bette became a CPU National referee at the 2016 Western Canadian Championships.

Within the BCPA, Bette has held many roles. She took on the role of Records Chair in November of 2015 and continued with that role until August of 2018, where she became the BCPA Officiating Chair. She also currently is the BCPA Scorekeepers' Chair. She works with dedicated volunteers to run the scoreprogram that is used at competitions and created the Score Table Manual which sets out all the different positions at the scoretable and also outlines their roles in more detail.

In becoming more active with the BCPA, Bette has been able to acquire many friendships with the BCPA and the CPU. Within her different roles, she has been able to utilize her skills outside of her career, help maintain high standards within the BCPA and foster a supportive community within our province.

### RULES CLINIC

Bette Festing hosted a Rules Clinic following the BCPA AGM on January 27. The goal of this clinic was to go over all of the IPF rules and all of the new rules that have come into effect. This was an opportunity for members to learn more about the rules as it applies to them in a competition. Following the clinic, there was an opportunity for any member to take the BCPA Category 2 Referee Exam.

It is encouraged that if anyone is wishing to take the exam, they study all of the IPF Rules and review both the BCPA and CPU Constitution and By-Laws. Becoming a good referee means more than just knowing the rules; it takes experience in the sport, both as an athlete and a volunteer, to understand the rules fully. Taking those concepts allows you to use your judgment properly and in turn, become a good referee.

If you would like to become a referee within BCPA or if you have any questions about referring, email [officiating@bc-powerlifting.com](mailto:officiating@bc-powerlifting.com).

### SCOREKEEPER'S CLINIC

The scorekeeper is one of the most important volunteer positions at a competition. They help to keep the scoretable organized and make sure that all of the lifters' attempts are recorded correctly, while having knowledge of the rules.

Bette is looking to host a few Scorekeeper's clinic throughout the year. An email will be sent out to all interested members in the future with available dates, so please make sure you email [scorekeeper@bc-powerlifting.com](mailto:scorekeeper@bc-powerlifting.com) to let us know you are interested in the clinic. During the clinic, Bette will introduce the scoreprogram that is used and will discuss how to use it in the detail.

If anyone has any questions about this clinic, feel free to email them to [scorekeeper@bc-powerlifting.com](mailto:scorekeeper@bc-powerlifting.com).



# EQUIPPED POWERLIFTING

BY SOME STRONG BCPA EQUIPPED ATHLETES



## Zack Currie

### WHAT IS EQUIPPED POWERLIFTING?

Unracking a squat with 100+ lbs above your raw max. Locking out weights on the bench that you didn't think you'd ever be able to touch, Equipped lifting is not dead. At first glance, it seems like equipped lifting is a thing of the past, that only a small group of people still keep it alive. Behind the scenes, you'll find the equipped world is the most welcoming and supportive atmosphere you've ever experienced. It truly is a team effort both inside and outside of competition. I started by getting into a bench shirt, and was excited to try something new. The shirt bite, the pressure, the broken blood vessel.. it all seemed so extreme, but was so rewarding. I found there was a huge support system in the equipped world, everyone is excited for you to try it and sign up for your first full equipped meet. It was quite difficult to gather quality technique advice on equipped lifting as there are fewer resources out there. But, once you meet a core group of like-minded people, they are more than happy to share their experiences. I love to lift, and equipped lifting took my training to the next level. You have to be focused, disciplined and prepare for the fight of your life. One mistake, one miss groove, that's all it takes to miss a lift. The stakes are high but there is no feeling quite like it. Equipped lifting is the next step in your powerlifting journey.

This issue's special segment on equipped powerlifting includes articles written by:

**ZACK CURRIE**

**MEHAR BHOGAL**

**COLE THEVENOT**

**JOHN WESLEY CUMMINGS**



**We asked a few BCPA athletes to share their tips on equipped powerlifting.**

## Mehar Bhogal

**WHY DO PEOPLE DO IT? DOESN'T IT HURT? ARE THEY EVEN LIFTING THE WEIGHT? ISN'T THAT EGO LIFTING?**

### 1. Fear and Adrenaline

Raw and equipped powerlifting can be paralleled with a comparison of street racing versus Formula One. There is no doubt that the former is fun and brings an adrenaline rush, yet, it lacks the consequences of what Formula One offers. Both disciplines focus on maximizing speed to cross the finish line as fast as possible; however, the consequences of a hairline mishap are much grander in F1 racing due to the technical demands. Likewise, equipped powerlifting not only demands maximal raw strength and power, but also requires immense focus while one's head feels ready to explode as the gear painfully bites into skin – a lack of this focus, and any technical deviation, simply results in the bar racing onto one's skull. Equipped powerlifting is for those seeking everything raw powerlifting has to offer, and more.

### 2. Working Not Only Hard, But Smart

Equipped powerlifting is known for being the 'genetic equalizer'. As raw powerlifting continues to explode in growth, more genetic outliers arrive with enormous lifts. For raw powerlifting in 2014, a 3x(+) bodyweight deadlift was considered extremely impressive; much like a 400-450 Wilks was. Recently, it has become commonplace to see 3x bodyweight deadlifts and 400+ Wilks being achieved at local competitions; and World team members pulling near 4x bodyweight, often with a Wilks score of 500+.

Unlike the genetic anomalies who are quick to dominate raw powerlifting, equipped powerlifting's necessity for technical mastery over simple brute strength results in an approach of working extremely smart (as well as extremely hard). Jaroslaw Olech, a 74kg Open lifter in his mid 40s, has remained undefeated for 15 years as Open champion and 2x World Games Champion. Blaine Sumner remains untouchable with a bench press nearing 1,000lbs and total closing on 3000lbs – not due to solely a reliance on genetics and hard work, but due to incredible technical proficiency in addition to the two.

### 3. Community

Raw powerlifting's greatest attraction is the ability to do it with minimal help; a commercial gym member on their own has enough resources to prepare nearly completely optimally for a raw competition. For equipped powerlifting, the supramaximal loads and technical requirements of oftentimes mean a community of support can have a grand effect on results. Technique tips, cheap (or often gifted) equipment to friends, and help adjusting equipment are all part of equipped powerlifting. Although a community is not necessary (as proven by World Games Champion Mike Turscherer largely training solo), it offers a great deal of physiological and psychological support that equipped powerlifting can benefit greatly from. Any lifter looking to enter equipped lifting is more than welcome to contact me and come down for a training session to dabble in the gear, or just see what its all about.



Photo courtesy of LVD Media



# Cole Thevenot

## EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET STARTED WITH EQUIPPED POWERLIFTING

Many people know what equipped powerlifting is, but not many know where to start when selecting gear or even how to use the stuff. There is a plethora of questions that arise when selecting gear; what type of squat suit should I buy; a narrow or wide stance suit? Should my bench shirt sleeves be angled sleeve or straight sleeve? How tight should my gear be? What size should I get for shirts and suits? What kind of knee wraps should I use? Etc. You get the idea. I hope with this article I can lend a helping hand at getting you started into equipped powerlifting if it's been something you have considered trying!

There is a ton of different types of suits and shirts on the market which makes gear selection quite complex. If one particular type of squat suit or bench shirt worked exceptionally well in comparison to the others then you likely wouldn't see any other type of gear on the market. It's about finding what works FOR YOU. Equipped experts such as Blaine Sumner constantly tweak their equipment and try different pieces/sizes to find out how they can get the most out of their gear. Fitting your gear to your body type and lifting mechanics will allow you to lift more weight safely.

As a general guideline when selecting a squat suit stance, pick something similar to your raw squat stance. My feet are typically wider than my shoulders while I'm squatting raw, therefore I use a wide stance suit. The support from the suit allows me to widen up my stance even more and sit into the squat better. More narrow stance raw squatters would likely benefit from a narrow stance squat suit and descending down rather than 'back'. Look up Natalie Hanson and Dmitry

Semenenko to see the difference between a narrow stance and wide stance squatter.

When comparing the learning curve between squat suits, deadlift suits, and bench shirts, it is often believed that bench shirts require the most patience and time to learn because the margin for error is greater. Selecting an 'easier' shirt to start with is often recommended as the bench groove changes quite drastically from a raw bench. Bench shirts such as a Titan F6, Fury, or Katana can be a good place to start learning whereas a Super Katana or a LCC (low cut collar) would be a significant step up. Bench shirt sleeve angle is also an important detail to consider when selecting a bench shirt. Correctly selecting the right style can save you from lost pounds on the bar or potential injury. Angled sleeves are reserved for benchers with a larger arch while straight sleeves suit flat back benchers better.

Knee wraps are usually lifter dependent. There are wraps that are thicker and have more rubber properties in them which can make them difficult to work with and take a lot of effort to pull the slack out of to get a proper wrap done. There are also thinner wraps with less elastic material that can make it easier for the person wrapping to handle. The best way to find out what works best for you is to try out different types of wraps in training and see what feels best for your style of squatting. Use them with the suit and without the suit to break them in and get a feel for how they work. Make sure that they are 2m wraps and on the IPF approved list to ensure they are legal for competition.

(continued on next page)

# Cole Thevenot

## CONT'D

You have probably heard that "tighter gear is better". The truth is, it depends. It is true that tighter gear helps you lift more weight. Tighter suits anchors to the leg better, a smaller chest plate resists the bar more as it gets closer to the chest, and tighter sleeves don't ride up the arm and twist while lowering the bar which helps with allowing the shirt to work. However, the tighter that your gear is, the stronger you are going to have to be in order to handle it. Hitting depth and getting a clean touch is incredibly important for competing and if your gear is too tight you will have a tough time doing both. Pick a suit and shirt size that coincides with your body type and size. You can find sizing charts on websites that sell powerlifting gear. Once you have properly sized gear AND you can squat to depth and touch in a shirt

CONSISTENTLY, then, and only then, can you make adjustments to the gear to get more out of it. Be sure to check the IPF rule book to know what modifications can and cannot be made to gear to ensure it remains legal for competition.

Once you've selected your gear and made sure it fits, it's time to start training! Equipped training can take a while to get used to. My advice would be to start light and build up gradually each week. Be sure to have competent spotters and, if you're fortunate enough, an experienced coach or training partner that has experience with equipment! Try to lift to standards (hitting depth and pausing benches) as frequently as possible so that there is less chance of missing a lift in a meet.

# John Wesley Cummings

## EQUIPPED POWERLIFTING - THE DARK SIDE

If your training is feeling stale, you're looking for new challenges in the sport, or just love the feeling of being rewarded for time devoted to honing your craft - equipped lifting might be right up your alley. Here are a few reasons some of us love the equipped side of powerlifting:

1) Equipment levels the playing field between technicians and pure raw strength athletes.

There are a ton of variables you can play with in equipped lifting to get the most out of your gear - the lifter who is able to manipulate the best combination of technique with equipment tweaks can compete with those who have that pure, raw, freaky strength. In a way, equipment creates more of a level playing field and can be more rewarding than raw lifting for athletes who are relentless in their pursuit of technical mastery. If you're more of a technician in powerlifting, this side of the sport is definitely worth giving a try.

2) The thrill of handling supramaximal weights.

The feeling of walking out a weight that seems far heavier than you might be able to handle. The brief moment before getting the "start" command before an equipped bench when you feel every kg of the weight in your hands that is 120, 130, 140+% of your raw bench max. When you

still hit those heavy lifts with precise technique in your equipment - that's the unique thrill that comes with equipped lifting. Once you start nailing technique with weights far above what you thought you could handle you might start to get hooked.

(continued on next page)



# John Wesley Cummings

## CONT'D

3) There's just more to it and it always keeps things interesting!

Once you go down the rabbit hole there's a lot more troubleshooting, optimizing, and brainstorming to find ways to improve technique and lift more weight. Whether it's different equipment brands, bench shirt collar heights, tighter shirt sleeves, tighter straps, wide stance suits, close stance suits, stiff wraps, stretchy wraps, the list goes on and on but there are just more variables to work with! There's always room for a new tweak here and there and it always keeps things engaging.

4) Teamwork.

Equipped lifting encourages more of a "team" atmosphere to training. Powerlifting training used to be more about club members getting together to train so that everyone had help with wraps, strapping up, bench boards, getting equipment on (and off), and spotting due to the riskier loads being handled. Equipped lifting turns things into

more of a "team sport" where every team member is involved with each other's performance and the gym atmosphere that comes with that can be awesome.

If you're thinking of delving into "the dark side" of the sport here are a couple good first steps to getting started:

A) Find some gear! Check the For Sale Forum on the CPU Website and different Buy & Sell groups on Facebook. Ask around the BCPA for used gear - lots of the equipped lifters are eager to see this side of the sport grow again and are likely willing to part with their older equipment for cheap!

B) Try to find some more experienced equipped lifters to train with once in a while! Even if you just get together to train with them once a month, you'll be able to take the things you've learned and practice them.

C) Keep at it! It takes time to learn the technique but once you hit that first clean squat/bench/deadlift with more weight than you've ever handled you'll be asking for more weight on the bar in no time.

**Thank you Zack, Mehar, Cole and John Wesley for contributing to this special segment on equipped powerlifting.**

## BCPA AT CPU NATIONALS 2019

*Here is the full BCPA athlete roster going to CPU Nationals in Ottawa, ON from March 4-9. Good luck to all BCPA athletes!*



Dave Borrel M Junior 66  
Joshua Romero M Junior 74  
Liam Wharton M Junior 74  
Oliver Williams M Junior 74  
Owen Pite M Junior 74  
Satveer Rai M Junior 74  
Graeme Gerlach M Junior 83  
Logan Tarasoff M Junior 83  
Blake Taylor M Junior 93  
Landyn Hickmott M Junior 93  
Matthew Lewis Vena M Junior 93  
Mehar Bhogal M Junior 93  
Cameron St. Amand M Junior 105  
William Buhler M Junior 120  
Cosmin Olteanu M M1 83  
Ryan LaFortune M M1 105  
Scott Robertson M M1 120  
Andrew Bryant M M2 83  
Gordon Sjodin M M2 93  
Steven Reade M M2 93  
Donald Lovell M M3 66  
Brian Rock M M3 120  
Tom Cragg M M4 74

Benjamin Yu M open 59  
David Lee M open 59  
Andrew Lang M open 66  
Daniel Nhung M open 74  
Bryan Wong M open 83  
Bryce Thomson M open 83  
Jeremy Klaus M open 83  
Ryan Maclellan M open 83  
Divine Wekwa M open 93  
George Shami M open 93  
Jan Betsayda M open 93  
Jason Bell M open 105  
John Wesley Cummings M open 105  
Ryan Gallo M open 105  
Sumeet Sharma M open 105  
Angus Lennox M open 120  
Laine Jackart M open 120  
Ben Borger M open 120 plus  
Eric Brust M open 120 plus  
Greg Young M open 120 plus  
Jason Klaus M open 120 plus  
Sean Hayes M open 120 plus  
Tanner Braaten M open 120 plus  
Troy Martins M open 120 plus

Lily Riggs F Junior 72  
Olivia Lim F Junior 84  
Magdalena Kijak F M1 57  
Wendy Yamazaki F M1 57  
Carmela Smythe F M1 63  
Leigh Anne Swayne F M1 72  
Meghan O'Connell F M2 57  
Katherine Lawrence F M2 84  
Monica Wille F M2 84  
Bonney Rempel F M2 84 plus  
Monica Ma F M3 47  
Pat Kowal F M3 72  
Stephanie Needham F M3 84  
Denise Sopena F open 47  
Rafaela Kirloss F open 47  
Carla Angela Rasing F open 52  
Colleen O'Toole F open 57  
Cynthia Leighton F open 57  
Jenna Sabino F open 57  
Angela Welch F open 72  
Denae Swadden F open 72  
Jessica Bill F open 72  
Karina Calaminos F open 72  
Victoria Clayton F open 72  
Letitia Marien F open 84

# NEWS AND INFO



## ADVERTISE IN THE BCPA NEWSLETTER

Are you a business or an individual and you would like to advertise in the next issue of the Newsletter (June 2019)? Contact BCPA [secretary@bc-powerlifting.com](mailto:secretary@bc-powerlifting.com) for more information about this opportunity.



## 2019 STUDENT BURSARY AWARD

If you missed your chance to apply in 2018, be sure to be on the lookout for the information in early to mid-2019 and apply for the 2019 bursary. Two \$500 bursaries are to be awarded!

## BCPA APPAREL

There will be a pre-order for BCPA apparel this year, in time for Westerns 2019 (Westerns date will be announced by CPU in March 2019). Tentative pre-order date for Team BC apparel will be set for June 2019.

We will also be launching a limited edition t-shirt! Keep your eyes open for this launch!

## FIRST TIME LIFTER OR INTERESTED IN POWERLIFTING?

Happy to hear! We'd love to tell you more! A comprehensive guide and everything you need to know is on this web page: <http://bc-powerlifting.com/first-time-lifters/>

Be sure to consult the BCPA Clubs & Gym page to find a registered powerlifting club or a powerlifting-friendly gym near you.

