

# THIS CHICK CAN KICK YOUR ASS.... AND YOU MAY LIKE IT!

## SAMYRA ABWEH

INTERVIEW BY WADE ZENO  
PHOTOS BY GINA AVERSA AND JOHN WATKINS OF FEED ME FIGHT ME

**Age:** 20

**Height:** 4'11

**Weight:** 115 lbs

**Hometown:** Albuquerque, New Mexico

**Occupation:** Employee at Feed Me Fight Me

**Gym:** Recovery Athletics

**Current Max S/B/D:** 308 lbs/  
220 lbs/ 402 lbs

**Athletic Background:** basketball,  
dance, cheer, track and field,  
powerlifting

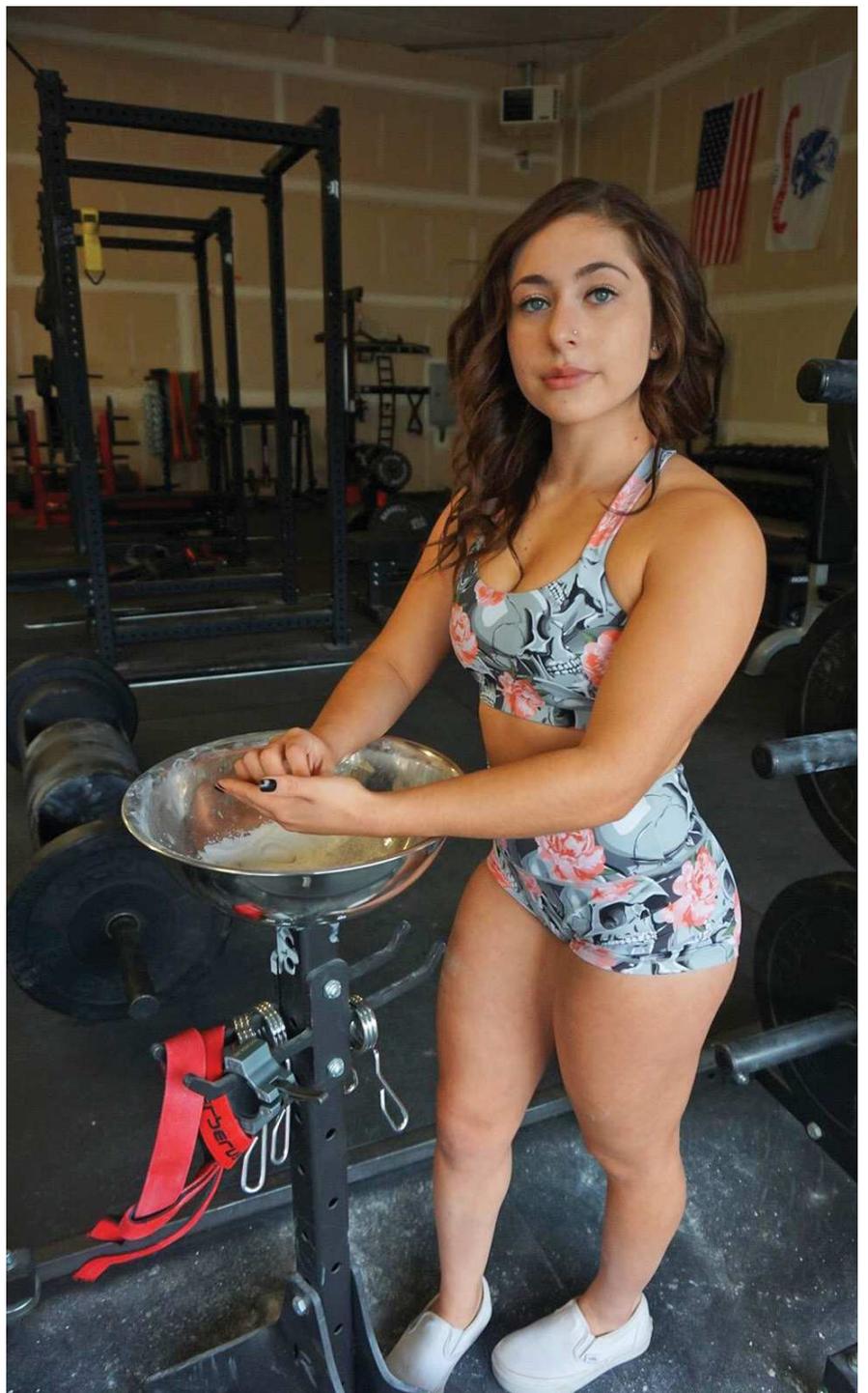
**Instagram:** @minimyraa

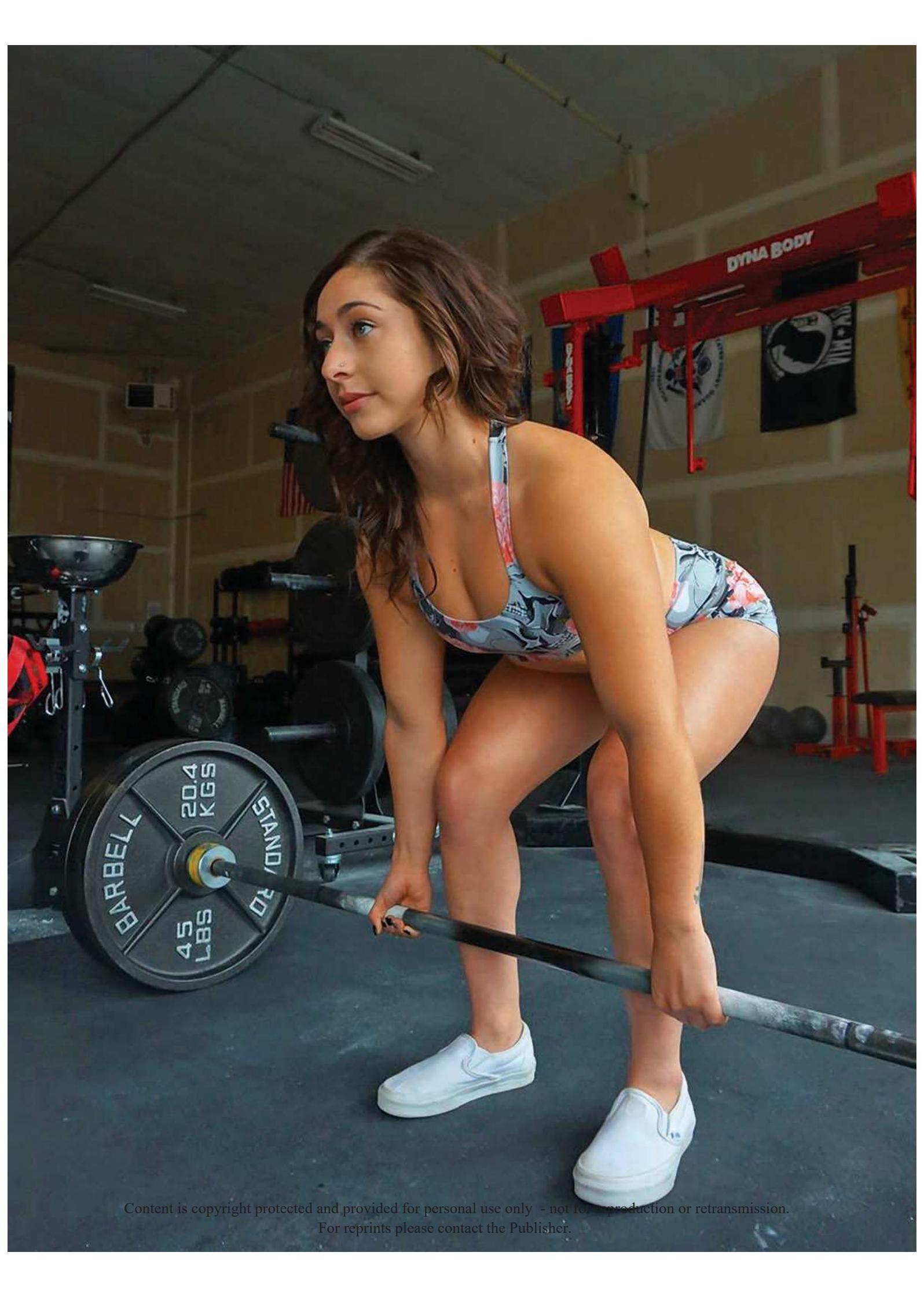
**You're only 20, but you've already accomplished quite a bit as a powerlifter! You're top 10 all-time in the women's 105-114 lb. weight classes (both sleeved and wrapped), and seem to continually be improving. How old were you when you touched your first barbell? What inspired you to pursue powerlifting?**

I was 17 when I first started getting into lifting. My high school basketball coach at the time told me I was too short to continue playing through college. I quit basketball and started lifting weights instead to channel my energy into something else. When I first started lifting I would go into the gym and would strive to be stronger than I was last week. So it was kind of like a competition with myself. I loved the feeling of feeling strong, and not just physically, but mentally as well.

**You already have many powerlifting accomplishments and have competed in several high-caliber meets. What has been your most memorable powerlifting moment?**

I would definitely say the 2018 Kern US Open when I deadlifted 402. I've been chasing that number for years and to finally be able to accomplish





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that on one of the biggest platforms in powerlifting was a really amazing feeling.

**What are some lifting goals you hope to obtain in the near or far future? What about non- lifting related goals?**

Lifting wise, I've accomplished a lot of the things I wanted to do earlier than I expected in the sport. Right now, I'm focusing on building muscle, fixing imbalances and exploring other styles of training that could potentially benefit me in my powerlifting career later in the future. Any PR's I hit in the mean

time is just an added bonus. I have been going to jiu jitsu no gi classes and that is one sport that I'm interested in pursuing.

**I'm sure being a top-level athlete requires some attention to diet and nutrition. What are some of your favorite healthy go-to meals? What about your favorite "cheat meal"?**

I pretty much eat the same things everyday. I do count my macros, but most of the time I eat intuitively. My diet consist mostly of lean proteins such as chicken or turkey, lots of greens, rice, sweet potatoes, avocado and rice

cakes. I don't really have a favorite "cheat meal" per say, but i definitely have a weakness for macadamia nut cookies and mozzarella sticks.

**You often post videos on your Instagram of hand-stands and flexible poses. Have you ever regularly performed yoga or gymnastics? Or do you just enjoy making shapes with your body in your free time?**

I did gymnastics for a while when I was younger and was a cheerleader back in high school. I just enjoy yoga and gymnastics movements a lot. I also think working on mobility on



regular basis definitely helps with my recovery from lifting heavy in the gym. Bikram yoga is something I've been really enjoying.

**With great flexibility comes great bench-press-arching ability! I'm sure you've gotten many comments on your bench arch. What is your response to the naysayers who say arching is cheating, or that arching is bad for your back?**

I think the people who try to trash talk arching are people who simply aren't familiar with the sport, so I don't pay much mind to them or I tell them to



educate themselves before they comment something negative on someone's post. I rarely get "hate" from fellow powerlifters. But I definitely am open to constructive criticism if the person has background knowledge of the sport.

**On average, how many meets do you do a year? How much time do you spend preparing for a meet? Do**

**you think there's a limit to how many meets someone should do in a year?**

I only compete 2-3 times a year, personally. I spend about 4-6 months preparing for a meet. I like to do an off-season training split to keep up the hypertrophy and that is one of the main reasons why I only compete about 2-3 times. I don't think there's any magic number on how often someone competes. I think it just depends on the recovery level of the individual.

**What's something that not many people know about you?**

When I was younger I went to a Cirque Du Soleil show and saw people bending in very weird shapes and told myself that I wanted to do that one day. I kid you not, I would stretch for like 4-5 hours straight every night to master some of the contortionist skills I saw. So, it is quite interesting how I ended up being a powerlifter instead of a contortionist. **PM**