



MUSCLEPHARM POWER SPOTLIGHT

KIMBERLY WALFORD



Kimberly Walford is originally from the “city that never sleeps.” She says she has two callings in life, “One is my career as a civil servant and the other is as a powerlifter.” Some may ask how she can compare your professional career to a sport, but her answer is simple: “If you have to ask, you’re not a powerlifter.”

POWER: How did it feel to win the 2012 GNC Pro Deadlift competition at the Arnold Sports Festival?

KIMBERLY WALFORD: I felt a sense of personal redemption and re-birth. I took third place in the 2009 GNC Pro Performance Deadlift Championships. I was not happy with my performance because I changed some things last-minute prior to that

meet. I took from that experience to stay consistent with whatever rituals you follow on meet day. If you haven’t tried it in the past, then doing it at a meet is the wrong time to experiment. The 2012 GNC Pro Deadlift represented my return to the sport I love.

POWER: How did your training go in preparation for this performance?

WALFORD: I reviewed my old training logs as a gauge for where to begin training for the Arnold. I sent my coach, Gene Bell, my training template for feedback. He returned it to me with his own feedback and I got down to business preparing myself for the meet. Additionally, throughout training, my coach and I stayed in phone and email contact, keeping each other updated on my training day outcomes. In turn, coach provided feedback on whether I was fine

or needed to make training changes.

POWER: How did you get started in powerlifting?

WALFORD: One of my Air Force gym training buddies, Mike Shirley, told me about a base bench press meet coming up on base. I told him that meets weren’t my thing, that I just like to lift. He finally convinced me to compete in the bench meet. I won the meet and was hooked instantly and I wanted to find out everything I could about powerlifting. I still thank Mike for introducing me to a sport that has given me so much in my life.

POWER: Where do you train?

WALFORD: Hardkore Fitness in Shelton, Conn. This place is an awesome training ground for strength athletes and fitness enthusiasts alike. I knew the moment I walked in and saw

power racks, a monolith, reverse hyper machine and Strongman equipment, I was home. Hardcore Fitness owners Lou Santella and Rose Dinice and the rest of the crew took me in like family. I'm excited to go train because I'm surrounded by supportive, like-minded people with a strong work ethic who strive to be the best in their sports and athletic endeavors.

POWER: How did you develop your technique in each lift? Give us some helpful hints as to what works well for you.

WALFORD: My techniques for my lifts originally came from years of weightlifting, as well as reading numerous research articles related to weightlifting. When I met coach, he helped me tweak my technique for all my lifts. Three of my biggest hints for technique are 1) take as few steps as possible when coming out the rack and let the weight settle before squatting; 2) In the bench, stay tight and squeeze the bar as hard as you can throughout the lift; 3) In the deadlift, get your feet set, butt down and commit to the lift.

POWER: How has your training changed through the years, and how did you find what works best for you?

WALFORD: My training, at its core, hasn't really changed over the years, I train in the 60- to 95-percent intensity range, and allow sufficient rest time in between training sessions and meets. What has changed in my training is the incorporation of sled work to help me with my explosiveness, and constantly reviewing research articles related to powerlifting training and nutrition looking for current and new information.

As far as finding out what works for me, it's been years of trial and error from prior training cycles and competitions. I also like to talk over my training and nutrition programs with my coach every training cycle.

POWER: What does your diet look



like, and do you have to work to stay at 136 lbs.?

WALFORD: If I don't eat the proper types of food and necessary volume of food, how do I expect to get stronger? I make sure no matter what day it is, at the minimum I take in 1g of protein and carbs per pound of body weight. I keep my fat intake in the 10- to 20-percent range of total calories for the day. On training days, I take in 1.5g to 2g of protein and carbs per pound of body weight. A few days before competition, I double my protein and carbs. I want to assure that I have enough energy in reserve to get me through a meet.

POWER: Give us some numbers.

WALFORD: My best lifts to date in gear for the 148-lb. class are a 418-lb. squat, 248 bench, 518 deadlift and 1,168 lb. total. My best geared lifts for the 165 lb. class were a 418-lb. squat, 248 bench, 512 deadlift and 1,151 total. My best raw results in the 63kg class are a 314-lb. squat, 231 bench, 485 deadlift and 1,031.75 total. My best raw results in the 72 kg class are a 440-lb. squat, 235 bench, 496 deadlift, 1,068 lb. total.

POWER: How did you meet Gene Bell? What is some powerlifting wisdom you learned from him?

WALFORD: I met my coach back in 2002 at the USAPL Military Nationals. Johnny Graham told me about coach

and said I should meet him. I knew nothing about coach or his powerlifting accomplishments, but I trusted Johnny's advice. So I spoke with coach at Military Nationals and from that day on back in 2002, Gene Bell has been my coach and my friend. He has taught me so much over the years with regards to powerlifting and life in general. Three of his best pieces of advice to me are 1) Strive for perfection in execution of my lifts; 2) If you want to be successful in powerlifting, you have to be willing to put in the work, and 3) "It takes the best in all of us to bring out the best in each of us."

POWER: What are some other secrets to your success?

WALFORD: My faith in God and the support of family and friends. Also my coach, who has guided my training since the day I met him. He is not only my coach, he is my friend. I'm so thankful to have him in my life. Finally, my belief in myself and my goals. I believe that anything worth having in life does take hard work and sacrifice, and I'm willing to put in the work. **PM**

Editor update: Kim competed in the 2013 Arnold Pro GNC DL and again earned another win in the GNC Pro DL's "Wilks coeff and heaviest deadlift" category.