

INTERVIEW

Personal dialogue between
PL USA Magazine and the
Sport's Greatest Names.

KYM ALLEN

A Rising Star in Powerlifting as told to Powerlifting USA by Judd Biasiotto, Ph.D. of World Class Enterprises



Kym at the '93 Georgia Bodybuilding Championships (Martin Miller)

Kim Allen saunters up to the bench, press sporting more muscle than Rambo ever thought about having. The weight on the bar is a mind-boggling 325 pounds. Only one woman in the world has ever lifted as much as Allen's bodyweight of 181 pounds. Allen is a strange mix, powerful and quick as a large cat, yet as gentle as a new born lamb. After positioning herself under the bar, Allen unracks the weight and lowers it to her chest. Then with ungodly quickness she rams it upward with relative ease setting a new American record in the process. Before the afternoon is over, Allen will go on to post the third best total in the world, making her a legit contender for a world title.

Without question, Allen is on the verge of becoming a superstar in the sport of powerlifting - perhaps an icon. "She has it all," states Curtis Leslie a former World Champion himself, "good genetics, incredible quickness and awesome power." More importantly, though she has the intelligence and heart to become a World Champion. If Allen's past is any indication of what the future holds, Leslie's prediction may be right on. In the four short years that Allen has been competing, she has been ranked in the top ten in the world three of those years. During that time, she has set 4 state records, regional records, 2 national records, and 2 American records. Her best lifts include a 425 squat, a 330 bench press, and a 480 deadlift. Her best total is an incredible 1185 pounds. All of the aforementioned lifts were posted at a body weight of 181 pounds.

Perhaps just as important as her lifting, Allen could very well emerge as a forceful spokesperson for women's powerlifting and/or women's sports in general. She is extremely active in the "women's movement" and is determined to see women get their fair share in the sports world.

In order to get a closer look at powerlifting's newest star, World Class Enterprises went to Macon, Georgia to meet with Kym Allen. W.C.: Before we get into the meat of our discussion let's get some of the specifics down like your age, weight, employment and any other demands you think are important. Allen: O.K. I'm 23 years old 5'6" and 181 pounds. For the past four years I've been working as a firefighter with the Macon-Bibb

recognized woman and I would like to help women in the sport receive the recognition they deserve. Now to answer your question about bodybuilding, I don't know if I'm the next coming of Bev Francis, but I do believe that if I put forth the effort I would do well in the sport. In all candor, the thing I like most about bodybuilding is that unlike powerlifting the sport gets National exposure and women are featured more often and in a better light.

W.C.: Before we get into the issue of women in sports, why do you believe powerlifting doesn't receive the recognition that bodybuilding or some other sports receive? Allen: I believe the major reason is that powerlifting doesn't receive the financial support and exposure it needs to grow. Think about it, how many times have you seen powerlifting on ESPN or even on a local sports station? There are people in America who don't even know what powerlifting is. In fact, I'd venture to say people don't know the difference between Olympic lifting and powerlifting or that women even compete in these sports.

W.C.: What do you think can be done to remedy that situation? Allen: Well, it won't be easy, but if powerlifting is to reach the status that other sports have in America, we have to educate the public as to what the sport is all about. I would like to see POWERLIFTING USA on every newspaper and other sports magazines and television exposure. Everyone who is a part of this sport is going to have to take the responsibility of selling it to the public. It's going to take a lot of time, energy, money and good will, but if we all work together we can bring powerlifting to the forefront of the sports world. Like I said, powerlifting is a great sport. People will love it once they get to know it.

W.C.: You said we all need to start working together, but I think you would have to admit that, next to boxing, powerlifting has more factionalism than any other sport in America. Allen: I can't argue with you on that point. We have too many federations and too much dissension in the sport. If the sport is going to grow we have to do something about these issues. The

federations need to find common ground and work closer together. It would be better if some of these organization would be ignorant about us and our sport. W.C.: Do you think the male lifters in the sport support the women's movement in powerlifting?

W.C.: Yes, today's athletes use SUPER GROWTH ENHANCER by OPTIMUM NUTRITION. AVAILABLE IN: 100 & 200 Capsule Containers.

competitiveness and dedication just like any other athlete, male or female. Until we get the right exposure through to people, they are going to be ignorant about us and our sport. W.C.: Do you think the male lifters in the sport support the women's movement in powerlifting?

W.C.: I believe I would like to tell those guys? Allen: I'm not sure there is anything I could say that would change the mind of anyone who has such a myopic view of sports. I will say this though, I'm an athlete! I work extremely hard every day and I've suffered a lot to get where I am today. I love the sport, it's in my heart and soul. All I ask is that you give me and other women in our sport the same opportunities that you enjoy. If you do that not only will you allow us to grow, but the entire sport of powerlifting.

W.C.: Is there anything else you would like to say before we close?

Allen: I would like to thank POWERLIFTING USA for the opportunity to express some of my views on the sport. I'd also like to thank my training partner Allen Rozier for his support and encouragement. I'd also like to tell the people of powerlifting that if there is anything I can do for you on the sport please let me know.

W.C.: How do you expect to get more women into powerlifting if you don't give them exposure. Believe me, women's powerlifting needs more exposure than the men's sport. It needs to be the right type of exposure, too. We're in the Nineties and there's still people who think powerlifters are freaks. There are not freaks, we're athletes, just like Steffie Graf or Flo Jo. We're hard working,

Remus just men in powerlifting are extremely supportive, but there are some, I'm sure, who would like to see us go away. Maybe they think we're infringing on what they consider a male domain. A lot of men have trouble dealing with a woman who is confident and powerful. I believe they're intimidated.

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