

Background:

Age: 26 years

Profession: Work on powerlifting and lifting equipment for Metal Sport & Wear.

Family: Girlfriend Heidi and 2 dogs.

Hobbies: Walking with dogs, computers, fishing during the summer.

Best accomplishments:

First and only European to bench 400kg.

WPC World Bench Press Champion 2006.

SHW Finnish Record total 1140kg.

I feel the best is yet to come.

Sakari Selkainaho: How did you get into powerlifting?

Jani Murtomäki: I went to the gym with some friends just to try out how much I can bench.

SS: Did you do any other sports then?

JM: I wrestled all my childhood till I was 17. I also played soccer, did some track and field and bandy.

SS: What was your first meet?

JM: It was a national IPF meet back in 2001.

SS: What kind of goals do you have?

JM: I aim to be the best bencher and powerlifter in the world.

SS: How has powerlifting developed during the last decade?

JM: The gear has improved a lot. Lifters get more out of the gear, the carryover has gotten bigger.

Also, training information and knowledge has got better.

SS: What do you see to be the biggest changes during the last couple of years?

JM: The eastern bloc has entered the pro meets; that is a major change. I believe it will improve the the sport greatly. The standard has become higher too.

SS: What do think about prize money in powerlifting?

JM: It's a good thing. The more money the better the results get.

SS: The results have definitely blown through the roof during the last few years. Where do you see the limit?

JM: I don't think you can set any limits.

SS: Let's talk about training. What do you think are the best assistance exercises to each powerlift?

JM: Squat—heavy good mornings, glute/ham raises, ab work and Kettlebell front swings.

Bench—board presses and upper back work.

Deadlift—concentric good mornings, Kettlebell front swings and dynamic ab work with bands.

INTERVIEW

JANI MURTOMÄKI

interviewed by Sakari Selkainaho



NOT JUST A ONE LIFT WONDER – Jani Murtomaki has credentials in every lift (photographs courtesy of Sakari Selkainaho)



SS: What kind of max effort work do you think is best?

JM: Squats with chains are good. For bench presses, bands and chains work well along with floor pressing. For the deadlift, traditional deadlifts are best.

SS: How do you see the role of speed in strength training?

JM: It's important for lifting with today's equipment, explosive strength

plays a large role. Also, speed training helps recovery.

SS: Name biggest mistakes for beginners?

JM: 1. They copy the training routines from champions.

2. Too much gear in the beginning.

3. Not sticking with basics.

SS: What do you see to be the biggest mistakes in training?

JM: 1. Focusing on the wrong

things.

2. Training too much.

3. Not being able to change the training.

4. Thinking you know it all.

5. Not listening to advice.

6. Poor nutrition.

SS: Name the 3 most common technical mistakes on each lift?

JM: Squat—Falling forward, knee going forward, not being tight enough.

Bench—not keeping elbows in, lowering too fast, not turning arms under the bar on lockout.

Deadlift—not using hips on the end, not staying tight on the start, deadlift with too straight legs on the start.

SS: Name the 3 most important on factors for constant progress?

JM: 1. Training the right way.

2. Proper nutrition.

3. Rest.

These are in this very order.

SS: Where do you get the knowledge in training?

JM: I studied something from the internet, but I'm very skeptical in that area. In the beginning, I got good advice from Arto Lyytikäinen and Pasi Martikainen. Antti Uotinen has helped a lot in the bench press.

I now train with Ano Turtiainen, and during the five months spent with him I've learned more from strength training than all the previous years together.

SS: How did your training change with Ano?

JM: I got madness and sense in my workouts at the same time.

SS: What lifters do you look up to?

JM: All who compete, no matter what federation they're in. If they keep their feet on the ground and respect others, they have my respect.

SS: What's your advice for beginners?

JM: Don't rush. Learn good form first and stick with the basics. Learn the basics of healthy nutrition.

SS: How have the bands and chains changed training?

JM: A lot really. I have eliminated a lot of weaknesses and got more explosive with them.

SS: How do you see the role of powerlifting in other sports?

JM: It's big. As far as I know, most sports use powerlifting as foundation in their strength training.

SS: What kind of influence does strength training have on other sports?

JM: It has a big influence for almost every sport.

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Jani Murtomaki is one of the best benchers in Europe and the world

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SS: How do you see PT's affect in strength training?

JM: If they really know their business then it's a good thing.

SS: You work for Metal Sport & Wear. What kind of things do you do?

JM: Product development, testing gear, customer service, billing, marketing, getting information and monitoring sport and business on the internet.

SS: The internet has really come into the game. What pros and cons does it have?

JM: It's good for the sport. Powerlifting gets more coverage and so do lifters. Also, getting information has become easier than before.

The biggest disadvantage I see is the so called internet "experts" who criticize everything they see. There is no need to pay any attention to these people whose total is smaller than the squat or bench they're bashing. Usually they are young people but I am sure there's a lot of more experienced lifters who try to back up their own poor performance by belittling others. Overall, I see more benefits than disadvantages from the internet.

SS: What future plans do you have?

JM: To stay healthy and keep lifting as long as possible.

SS: What kind of new stuff does Metal have coming next?

JM: The newest is the King fabric. It has been tested successfully in the deadlift. New designs on suits and shirts are in constant process.

SS: What do you think is the best education you have received as a powerlifter?

JM: These last five months I've lived here in Juva and trained with

Ano.

SS: What do you think is the biggest mistake in coaching?

JM: The biggest mistake for powerlifting coaches are those who don't have enough knowledge and train wrong themselves. Also having the lifter train with too much gear or having him train for the gear in the beginning is a big mistake.

SS: What are your next big meets?

JM: The WPO Semis in Russia and the Finals in the USA are next on the list.

SS: What do you think of the RAW meets?

JM: These are a good choice for lifters who don't like to use gear. It's a good way to measure lifters brute strength. But there's one thing I really wonder. Why are such few lifters in these meets? The internet is full of bullstrong experts but I don't even see them in the audience.

SS: Any other things you would like to add?

JM: I would like to thank my sponsors. Skip, Voimapuoti, XTC, Metal, EFS and my fiancée Heidi for their tremendous support.



Jani psyches up for an attempt