

NATALIE FREED

as told to Powerlifting USA by Ben Tatar of Critical Bench

Natalie Freed holds many world records. She holds world records in the WABDL, USPF and in USAPL. She has four American raw records in the USAPL. She has six national world records (two in the bench, squat and deadlift) and she has fourteen PA state records. She has so many records that it would take too long to write them all here. So let's skip the accolades and meet this dominant powerlifter! *Powerlifting USA* brings you the Natalie Freed.

Natalie, tell us about yourself.

I'm Natalie (Natty) Freed, a 25 year old powerlifter from Pittsburgh, PA. I went to school at Carnegie Mellon and right now I'm the Director of Web Content and Marketing for Supplement-Central.com here in Pittsburgh.

That's pretty cool that you set so many records while you were a full time student. Where do you compete and what are your best lifts?

I've competed all over the country (PA, OH, VA, FL, CA, TN) in three different federations: WABDL, USPF and now USAPL. My best lifts in competition are (in pounds): raw – 209 squat, 165 bench, and 314 deadlift; single-ply – 300 squat, 203 bench, and 352 deadlift at 123 pounds.

Great numbers, Natalie! Tell us about some of your most memorable moments in powerlifting so far.

Great moment – I set two world records at the 2007 WABDL World Championships (even after I puked all night!)

Hardcore moment – Completing my third attempt 352 pound deadlift at the 2010 Night of the Living Dead deadlift meet after I hit a sticking point.

Funny moment – Walking out on stage to lift with somebody yelling "I love you!" over and over!

Moment that changed me – Realizing that my deadlift at my very first meet was a world record! That was when I knew I would be powerlifting for a while.

Natalie, let's talk about your first meet for a minute. What was it like when you found out you set a world record?

Ha ha ha, I know! It was awesome! It was the first record that I set and I was a junior. I just went out and the meet director goes, "It's a world record!" I was just totally shocked. After that moment, I knew I was going to make powerlifting a passion.

Very cool! You also got to compete at the



Arnold Classic, a powerlifter's dream. What was that like?

I really enjoyed it. It was a lot of fun. I liked how there were a lot of people watching.

Natalie, tell us five things that you love about being a powerlifter.

1. I love staying healthy and fit.
2. The great people I have had a chance to meet and lift with.
3. The personal challenge.
4. When all my time and hard work pays off at a meet.
5. Lifting heavy weights!

Tell us about your training routine.

I train three days a week plus cardio. Usually I split up the days with attention to each of the three powerlifts and any accessory work.

Where do you currently train?

Right now I train at Umberger Performance (and sometimes LA Fitness) in Pittsburgh, PA. The atmosphere is great; Scott and everyone else are pretty no-nonsense about working out, but still friendly and helpful. I feel comfortable doing what I need to do. The facility has all the equipment I need plus fun stuff like flipping tires!



photos courtesy Natalie Freed and Critical Bench

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Best

Jacob Geissler - CEO USPlabs

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Matt Vinopal – Madison, WI



Advice from Matt – "My training is focused on big, multi-joint movements. Multi-joint movements are the foundation of any strength training program. Examples of this include the Squat, Bench, Deadlift, and Standing Military Press. My program is structured in a fashion that I train each exercise once every 10 days. My main training days are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday with Tuesday and Thursday being devoted to weak point training, cardiovascular training and last, but certainly not least, mobility work. I utilize the big multi-joint movements to build strength (rep ranges 1-5) while also using higher rep accessory work for hypertrophy and balance in my training (rep ranges 10-50).

Training Tips:

- Have defined both short and long term goals.
- More is not better - better is better.
- Progress slowly and measure your progress (always WRITE IT DOWN!)

Chad Herlehy - Pensacola, FL PRO FOOTBALL FREE AGENT & COMBAT VETERAN

"I am a U.S. Marine Corps combat veteran, Personal Trainer and Semi Pro football player/Pro football Free agent. I have been training since I was 12 yrs old. I am now 32 and achieving new goals...unexpected goals. If there has been a supplement out there...I've tried it and/or taken it. From protein, carbs, and weight-gainers to andro, tribulus, NO's, glutamine, glucosamine and multi-vitamins. Recently I stumbled across The Jack3d Stack. I was looking for something to help give me that EDGE on the field and during training. The first time I tried it before my season opener was AMAZING! My explosiveness was off the charts! My closing speed, my explosion, was unlike I've ever experienced! So for the rest of the season...The Jack3d Stack...every game day & training session! We won the championship and I was selected to the All-star Team. Thanks to those who turned me on to USPlabs Supplements... it honestly brought my game to another level and has gotten me scouted for the next level too!"



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Great stuff! Give us your top 5 tips for a bigger bench, squat, and deadlift.

1. Train hard and put the time in—there aren't any shortcuts.
2. Eat right.
3. Pay attention to good technique as well as repetition.
4. Something really important to me anyway: core strength.
5. Don't set boundaries for yourself.

What are your future goals?

I'd like to go back to Carnegie Mellon for a Masters in Professional Writing at some point. As far as lifting, my next meet will be the 2011 Arnold Raw Challenge. Long term, I wouldn't mind getting into more writing and maybe some food photography!

Speaking of the future, how do you see the future of powerlifting?

I'm hoping that powerlifting can get past some of the politics that seem to be breaking it up right now. It will have a better future if everything can become more unified and standardized.

When it comes to powerlifting, what fires Nata-

lie up?

I'm ready to go when I feel strong and have friends cheering me on, plus some good old death metal never hurts. I love lifting to some Lamb of God, DevilDriver, Black Label Society...

What makes Natalie happy?

Riding horses, good food, Brian Yeager, reading, real country music (Waylon, Kristofferson, you get the idea), watching thunderstorms, the way you feel when you just finished a super hard workout, owls, shooting at the range, peanut butter, my family, sunny days, my funny toe shoes, photography... lots of things. I'm easy to please.

Tell us something random that you have never shared with the public before.

I love scary movies and hold conversations with a Michael Myers mask that I keep in the living room.

Natalie, you are everything powerlifting and then some! What is your advice for strong people who want to be super strong?
Don't cheat yourself by trying to take any shortcuts. If you want it, commit yourself and work hard—no excuses. And believe you can. Don't

ever limit yourself in your own mind.

When you're using a shirt, what shirt do you use?

I actually haven't lifted with a shirt in a while, but I have a Titan F6. It works with my arch pretty well and I'm happy with it.

What does your family think of your powerlifting?

My family is always supportive of me, but none of them are lifters so they don't really understand everything I do for it. They're still cheering me on though! My mom worries that it's not really a feminine sport, but most people love that I'm a female powerlifter and it hasn't bothered me at all.

How do you want to be remembered?

I'd want to be remembered first as a good, honest person. Also, for coming back from a major physical setback to be the best powerlifter I can be.

You have met a lot of people in powerlifting.

What do you think of powerlifters?
Most people I've met through powerlifting are really genuine and friendly. I love how other lift-

ers and coaches at meets go out of their way to help each other instead of being so competitive that they take the fun out of the sport.

What supplements do you take?

I use mostly Optimum Nutrition supplements: Protein, Multi-Vitamin, B Vitamins, Amino Acids. I've also used Con-Cret occasionally. If you could be any kind of animal what kind of animal would you be?
I'd definitely go for an owl.

What do you like doing away from powerlifting?

Right now I don't have too much free time, but when I do, I like reading, target shooting, and hanging out with my boyfriend. I also enjoy photography and would really like to get into a little food writing.

Natalie, you're a powerlifting champ with a complete life. It has been great talking to you. The powerlifting world wishes you the best with everything. In closing, is there anything you would like to say or anyone who you would like to thank?

I'd like to thank Ben Tatar, *CriticalBench.com*, *Powerlifting USA*, Supplement Central, Umberger Performance, Optimum Nutrition, Titan's Ken Anderson, and APT Pro Wraps. «



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