



At the 2011 Golden Tiger meet



Maryana with her "Mum"

MARYANA

the bench monster

ПАВЛОВА



At the December 2011 WPA Russian Championships



IN HER COUNTRY THEY CALL HER THE PRINCESS OF THE BARBELL. SHE IS INVITED TO TV TALK SHOWS, AND EVEN INTO THE RUSSIAN PARLIAMENT. IN THEIR MEMOIRS ABOUT THEIR RECENT RUSSIAN TRIP, GENE RYCHLAK AND ROB LUYANDO CALL HER THE BENCH MONSTER—A NAME SHE LIKES MUCH MORE.

An ordinary 10 year old schoolgirl, a pupil of the 6th level in the suburbs of Moscow, she liked to play with dolls, and saw a barbell only in her father's journals on the bookshelf. Since she was 4 years old, Maryana Naumova had been doing sports aerobics, and she became a champion of the Moscow region. But in December 2009, her life changed dramatically.

"I had no one to sit with me at the house and my father—a bench-er—took me to the competition with him," says Maryana. "During his performance, I decided to try to press an empty barbell in the warm-up chamber. I got to do it for 4 times without any help. One of the meet directors—the strongest bench-er of Russia, Vladimir Kravtsov—noticed my efforts, gave me a poster and said that I'll be a future champion. This poster now hangs in my room."

The next day, Maryana and her father went to the gym, and a month later they went to the Moscow AWPC championship and established her first junior record, pressing 37.5 kg. Four months later, Maryana won her first senior tournament, the WDPFF "Black Sea Cup," with her 50 kg. lift. At the end of 2010, with a demonstration performance at the professional tournament "WORLDLIFTING" in Moscow, she got another record with 60 kg!

"I always watched Kerrigan "Little Evil" McCaslin's performances at the Arnold Classic (2006) and wanted to be like her. The first girl at the AC—yes, of course, I envied her. I asked to contact her via an internet forum, but received no reply.

"After the Soviet Union collapsed, children's sports in Russia were very poorly developed. The gym is rather expensive, and my friends and classmates see an 'alien' in me. When I brought some chocolate protein to school and treated my classmate, teachers wanted to sue my parents in court. People think that sport nutrition 'hurts.'

"My father was involved in powerlifting for 20 years, but probably will never become a world champion. I did it in 12 years, and I know that my dad is very proud of me. I'm very pleased; he spends a lot of time with me, it's very important to me."

The attention of the TV and Press, which accompanied Maryana's performances, made her a welcome guest at any competition since meet directors were receiving good PR.

At the WPA Ukraine Championships in February 2010, Maryana pressed 62.5 kg., and at the IPA Europeans in Sochi, 66 kg. Then Maryana received an invitation to the professional meet "Battle of Champions 2010" in Arkhangelsk, where she competed on the same stage with the great champions: Michael Koklyaev, Laszlo Mezarosz, and Vladimir Maximov. At this tournament, Maryana set an absolute record in the bench press among girls under 14 years with her incredible 70 kilograms. Maryana is in the *Record Book of Records Russia*—the national analogue of the *Guinness Book of Records*.

"During the 'Battle of Champions' it was interesting. I was preparing to approach my new record 70 kg. I was not confident in the result. Suddenly, I heard the audience call me. They pointed their finger at me and laughed, not believing that I could press it. I was so angry that just blew the bar up! I am the Bench Monster and I'm the best!

"In Europe's largest sports festival 'Golden Tiger,' in September 2011 in Yekaterinburg, I competed together with my idol in strength sports, Vladimir Kravtsov. I spotted him, and he pressed 280 pounds and beat the American Jeremy Hoonstra in the bench press. I like Jeremy, he is a handsome and strong guy, but I wish good luck to Vladimir."

At the "Golden Tiger," for the first time a delegation of American athletes visited Russia; Jeremy Hoonstra, Paul Key, Gene Rychlak, Rob Luyando, Joe Mazza—they were all shocked by Maryana, and remem-

bered her as a little star of Russian powerlifting, upon returning to back to America.

In November 2011, Maryana was invited to the Russian parliament, where the presidential candidate from the Communist Party, Gennady Zyuganov, awarded Maryana an honorary diploma for her contribution to children's sports in Russia. The Communists have become sponsors of Maryana, and added "Red, Communist" to the "Bench Monster" nickname.

"I do not understand politics, but I use every opportunity to make our sport more well-known and popular. Many Russian politicians do not even know what powerlifting is. They all confuse it with weightlifting. Everyone knows the Great Soviet champions: Vlasov and Zhabotinsky, and no one knows powerlifters. I have often sought help from the mayor's office of my town and got nothing. Now, with the help of the Communist Party, I have the opportunity to attend any tournament."

At the WPC Worlds 2011 in Riga, Maryana won, setting a world record in "Teen 13-15" with an amazing 75 kg. During her career, Maryana has suffered some injuries.

"The most difficult performance was in WPA nationals in December 2011. On the warm-up I got a shoulder injury, a sprained deltoid muscle. My father forbade me to press that day, but my classmates were watching me online and I could not disappoint them. I pressed through the pain, was able to do the second attempt of 77.5 kg. It was the new world record. It's a pity because I was ready to lift more. In the gym I pressed from boards 92.5 x 3 and was prepared for 80-85 kg.

"I'm sure that injuries can be avoided. Be sure to listen to the coach and not try to lift more weight than scheduled on a given day. When I feel strong, I cannot resist and add more plates. As a result, my muscles do not recover and cannot withstand the load. But, thank God, everything passes quickly.

"My biggest dream is to compete at the Arnold Classic, and see Arnold Schwarzenegger—I love all his movies. Of course, I want to compete on the same platform with the strongest bench-er of the world, Scot Mendelson—he's the best!! I know that he has a daughter who is involved in bench pressing. In November 2012, I plan to come to Los Angeles for the World Cup HNV and I hope to see her there and win. I want to become the first girl my age who will do 100 kg. on the bench. I'm sure I'll get it. At the same time, I will try to keep a beautiful shape. Many girls, while trying to set records, spoil their appeal and become like men. I do not like that. I want to be strong and beautiful. With my example I want to make powerlifting more popular in Russia and all over the world! The more us powerlifters speak to the media, the better for our sport! I am fond of photography, and for the victory in one of the tournaments, they gave me a professional camera. Maybe in the future I will be sports journalist.

"People often ask me if I'm going to use equipment. I'll be honest, I do not really like to watch amateur athletes in bench shirts—it is transformed into a no-lift show. When you are a professional, it's interesting, and it does achieve a certain level. It would be interesting to try a bench press shirt, but now I want to achieve my raw best. It is possible to use equipment in some show in the future, but not now..."

"I'm sure my boyfriend will be an athlete! Why is it not now fashionable to be big and strong. I disagree with this idea! I really like Vladimir Kravtsov and Jeremy Hoonstra. It is a pity that they are already adults... So, guys, to win the heart of a championess, go to the gym right now!!!"

Maryana is prepared under the guidance of experienced coaches, Askold Surovetsky and Alexander Grachev. For sports nutrition she uses some vitamin complexes and proteins from MHP. «

MORE PHOTOS OF MARYANA + TRAINING ROUTINES ►

MARYANA NAUMOVA »

Maryana with the Russian Champion bench pressing champion, Mr. Kravtsov



Maryana with Gene Rychlak Jr., the first man to bench press over 1,000 lb.!!



MARYANA'S PLAN PREPARING FOR THE "GOLDEN TIGER" IN 2011

courtesy of coach Askold Surovetsky

Initial Result: 70 kg.

- AUG 30:** 25/8; 37, 5/6; 47, 5/5; 52, 5/4 – 5 sets
- SEP 1:** 25/8; 37, 5/6; 47, 5/5; 52, 5/4; 57, 5/3; 60/3; 57, 5/3 – 2 sets; bench with a pause of 3 seconds: 55/2 – 2 sets
- SEP 4:** 25/8; 37, 5/6; 47, 5/5; 52, 5/4; 57, 5/3; 60/3; 62, 5/2; 65/2; 57, 5/4 – 2 sets; bench with a pause of 3 seconds: 55/2 – 2 sets; bench from a board of 5 cm: 70/2; 75/2 – 2 sets
- SEP 6:** 25/8; 37, 5/6; 47, 5/5; 52, 5/4; 57, 5/3; 60/3; 62, 5/3; 57, 5/5 – 2 sets; bench with a pause of 3 seconds: 55/3 – 2 sets
- SEP 8:** 25/8; 37, 5/6; 47, 5/5; 52, 5/4; 57, 5/3; 60/3; 62, 5/2; 67, 5/1; 70/1; 60/3 – 2 sets; bench from a board of 5 cm: 75/2 – 3 sets
- SEP 11:** 25/8; 37, 5/6; 47, 5/5; 52, 5/4; 57, 5/3; 60/3; 62, 5/3 – 2 sets; bench with a pause of 3 seconds: 57, 5/2 – 2 sets
- SEP 13:** 25/8; 37, 5/6; 47, 5/5; 52, 5/4; 57, 5/3; 60/3; 62, 5/2; bench with a pause of 3 seconds: 57, 5/2 – 3 sets
- SEP 15:** 25/8; 37, 5/6; 47, 5/4; 52, 5/3; 57, 5/2; 62, 5/1; 67, 5/1; 70/1; 73.5/1; bench from a board of 5 cm: 75/2 – 3 sets
- SEP 18:** 25/8; 40/6; 50/5; 55/4; 60/3; 62, 5/3; 65/2; 67, 5/1; 70/1; bench with a pause of 3 seconds: 62, 5/2 – 2 sets; bench from a board of 5 cm: 75/2; 77, 5/2; 80/2
- SEP 20:** 25/8; 40/6; 50/5; 55/4; 60/3; 65/2 – 3sets; bench with a pause of 3 seconds: 62, 5/2 – 3 sets
- SEP 22:** 25/8; 40/6; 50/5; 55/4; 60/3; 65/2; 67.5/2; bench with a pause of 3 seconds: 62, 5/3 – 2 sets
- SEP 25:** 25/8; 40/6; 50/4; 55/3; 60/2 – 2 sets
- SEP 28:** Golden Tiger meet – 73 kg. bench press



Maryana with lifting champs Hoornstra and Kravtsov



Maryana has been accepted as an outstanding performer by Russian champions in all weight classes



Maryana concentrates with the help of her coach before a challenging attempt

MARYANA NAUMOVA »



Maryana benching at the 2011 Battle of the Champions



Jeremy Hoonstra, Paul Key, Maryana, Rob Luyando, and Gene Rychlak, Jr.



Maryana with Jeremy Hoonstra



MARYANA'S PLAN PREPARING FOR THE "RUSSIAN CHAMPIONSHIP WPA" IN 2011

courtesy of coach Alexander Grachev

Initial Result: 75 kg.

**Bench press with rubber, rubber band stretched under the bench, ends of the rubber rope attached to the barbell*

- NOV 20: BP 20/8, 30/6; bench press with rubber: 40/6, 45/6, 50/6 – 3 sets; BP 45/6 – 4 sets; 30/15
- NOV 22: BP 20/8, 30/6; bench press with rubber: 42.5/6, 45/6, 47.5/6, 50/6, 52.5/6; BP 45/6 – 3 sets
- NOV 24: BP 20/8, 30/6; bench press with rubber: 42/6, 47.5/6, 52.5/6, 57.5/6, 60/6; BP 45/6 – 3 sets
- NOV 26: BP 20/8, 30/6; bench press with rubber: 42/6, 45/6, 47.5/6, 50/6, 52.5/6; BP 45/6 – 3 sets
- NOV 29: BP 20/8, 30/6, 40/4, 50/4, 60/2; bench from a board of 5 cm: 65/2, 70/2, 75/2, 80/2
- DEC 1: BP 20/8, 30/6, 40/6, 45/4, 47.5/4, 50/4 – 4 sets; 25/10
- DEC 4: BP 20/8, 30/6, 40/6, 45/4, 55/2, 65/2, 70/1, 72.5/1 – 3 sets; 40/20
- DEC 7: BP 20/8, 30/6; bench press with rubber: 40/6, 45/6, 50/6, 55/6 – 3 sets; BP 60/6, 55/6, 50/6
- DEC 9: BP 20/8, 30/6; bench press with rubber: 40/6, 50/6, 55/6, 60/6, 62.5/6; BP 60/6, 55/10, 50/12
- DEC 11: BP 20/8, 30/6, 40/4, 50/4, 60/2; bench from a board of 7 cm: 67.5/2, 75/2, 85/2; bench from a board of 5 cm: 75/2; bench from a board of 2 cm: 70/4 – 3 sets
- DEC 13: BP 20/8, 30/6; bench press with rubber: 40/6, 45/8, 50/8, 55/8 – 3 sets; BP 60/8, 55/10, 50/12
- DEC 15: BP 20/8, 30/6, 40/6; bench press with rubber: 50/10, 55/8, 60/6, 65/6 – 3 sets; BP 60/6, 55/8, 50/10
- DEC 18: BP 20/8, 30/6, 40/4, 50/4, 60/2; bench from a board of 7 cm: 70/2, 77.5/2, 85/2, 87.5/2, 92.5/2; bench from a board of 5 cm: 75/3; bench from a board of 2 cm: 70/4 – 3 sets
- DEC 20: BP 20/8, 30/6, 40/6, 45/4, 47.5/4, 52.5/4, 57.5/4 – 3 sets; 25/10
- DEC 22: BP 20/8, 30/6, 40/6, 45/4, 55/2, 65/2, 70/1, 75/1 – 2 sets; 72.5/1 – 2 sets; 40/20
- DEC 25: Russian Championship WPA – 77.5 kg. bench press in the second attempt and was injured; was ready for more weight.



Board benching is a prominent part of Maryana's workout



Maryana "The Red Bench Monster" with Russian presidential candidate Gennady Zyuganov who has, along with the Russian Communist Party, supported her lifting