



Ultimate Power

The official magazine of the East Midlands Powerlifting Association
A division of the Great Britain Powerlifting Federation

March 2012



**Congratulations to Tony Cliffe
East Midlands Lifter of the year
2011**

Editors View



Welcome to all East Midlands powerlifters.

A somewhat smaller newsletter than normal due mainly to it being a quiet time of the year in powerlifting terms

The East Midlands Unequipped Championships took place (just - in spite of deep snow the night before) in Hitchin with some sound lifting from those who managed to make it there (full report inside).

Yardley Gobion Club also hosted the British Bench Press Championships for the first time, over two days and all went well even though the number of entrants was down on previous years and several East Midlands lifters performed well – a report is included.

The next few months see several major Championships taking place – The British Juniors & Masters Championships in Coventry, the World Masters Bench Press in Denver USA, the British Unequipped Bench press in Birmingham, the European Senior Championships in the Ukraine and the World Open and Juniors Bench in Pilzen, Czech Republic – good luck to all the East Midlands lifters involved in these.

Special congratulations go to Tony Cliffe who, after a great year was presented with the East Midlands Lifter of the Year trophy at the British Bench and also to Jerry Rice for qualifying as a GBPF referee and also gaining GBPF level 2 coach status – we need more people to follow his example.

Thanks again to George Leggett and Paul Kerridge for their contributions to the newsletter and I suppose to Allen Ottolanguai for his competition report (he's been lying down ever since!!)

As always any views comments, articles, photos about clubs, individuals or indeed anything would be welcome.

Good lifting.

Best Regards Steve Walker

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Calendar of National Events for 2012

	<u>Start Date</u>	<u>End Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
View	24/03/2012	25/03/2012	British Master and Juniors
View	31/03/2012	31/03/2012	East Midlands Bench Press
View	07/04/2012	07/04/2012	Greater London Equipped Bench Press Championships
View	07/04/2012	07/04/2012	Greater London Unequipped Bench Press Championships
View	19/04/2012	22/04/2012	World Masters Bench Press Championships
View	22/04/2012	22/04/2012	Southwest Powerlifting Championships
View	28/04/2012		South Yorkshire Unequipped Powerlifting
View	05/05/2012	06/05/2012	British Unequipped Bench Press Championships
View	08/05/2012	12/05/2012	European Powerlifting Championships (open)
View	19/05/2012	19/05/2012	YNEPF Seniors
View	20/05/2012	20/05/2012	GBPF SCOTLAND DIVISIONAL EQUIPPED AND UNEQUIPPED
View	20/05/2012	20/05/2012	Lancs and Cheshire/NW unequipped
View	20/05/2012	20/05/2012	Welsh Powerlifting and Bench Press Championships
View	23/05/2012	27/05/2012	World Bench Press Championships (Open and Juniors)
View	05/06/2012	09/06/2012	European Junior & Sub-Junior Powerlifting Championships

View	12/06/2012	17/06/2012	IPF Classic Powerlifting World Cup (Unequipped)
View	07/07/2012	07/07/2012	YNEPF Unequipped
View	08/07/2012	08/07/2012	North Midland unequipped Championships
View	17/07/2012	21/07/2012	European Masters Powerlifting Championships
View	21/07/2012	22/07/2012	British Powerlifting Championships (Open)
View	04/08/2012	04/08/2012	Roses cup (Lancs vs. Yorks)
View	09/08/2012	11/08/2012	European Bench Press Championships (Open)
View	28/08/2012	02/09/2012	World Junior and Sub-Junior Powerlifting Championships
View	08/09/2012	09/09/2012	British Unequipped Powerlifting Championships
View	14/09/2012	15/09/2012	Western European Cup
View	22/09/2012	23/09/2012	English Open Benchpress Championships
View	02/10/2012	07/10/2012	World Masters Powerlifting Championships
View	18/10/2012	20/10/2012	European Masters Bench Press Championships
View	29/10/2012	04/11/2012	World Powerlifting Championships (open)
View	03/11/2012	03/11/2012	YNEPF Benchpress Championship
View	17/11/2012	17/11/2012	YNEPF Open and Juniors Championships
View	02/12/2012	02/12/2012	NW Powerlifting championships

Calendar of Divisional Events currently confirmed

31/3/12 East Midlands Bench Press Championships Colchester

28/4/12 Anglian Open Championships Cambridge (date to be confirmed)

30/6/12 East Midlands Masters, Juniors & Novices Yardley Gobion

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EAST MIDLANDS UNEQUIPPED POWERLIFTING CHAMPIONSHIPS 2012

This year's East Midlands unequipped Championships were held at the Hitchin and Letchworth Weightlifting Club, on a very wintry morning. The whole country woke to find a deep covering of snow.



We were unsure if the competition would even proceed but as true powerlifters twelve of the twenty three competitors and five officials braved the elements so the Divisionals went ahead.

To start in the 52Kg class was our very own Jenny (the man) Hunter. Jenny fought a good second attempt 85Kg Squat but missed her third of 92.5Kg, a bit too heavy on the day. It was a different story on the bench, Jenny took all three attempts finishing with a comfortable 72.5Kg and there was definitely more there. On to the deadlift and like the Squats Jenny found them hard going getting 140Kg on her second attempt but missing 147.5Kg on her third to give her a 297.5Kg total and the title.



The 63Kg class saw a new name in Sarah King with some pretty impressive lifting. A big opening squat of 150Kg was hard fought and successful but Sarah didn't get anymore. On the bench Sarah managed a solid 87.5Kg narrowly missing 90Kg.

An easy opener on the deadlift of 150Kg saw Sarah take a 20Kg jump to her second of 170Kg then increasing that to 175Kg on her third and a new British Record, giving her a 412.5Kg total and first place.



Last of the women was Jackie (nice buns) Blasbery. As per usual Jackie showed her experience (steady) by carefully selecting her attempts, getting all 3 squats and finishing with a good 132.5Kg, then all 3 benches and 82.5Kg. Jackie missed her third Deadlift after a good attempt which left her with 162.5Kg and a 375Kg total.



On to the Men, firstly David Brown in the 59Kg class. Dave lifted excellently getting 9 for 9, 92.5Kg Squat, 80Kg Bench and 132.5Kg deadlift giving him a 307.5Kg total and a deserved win. It's good to see Dave still increasing at M3.



At 74Kg saw Steve Walkers hero Allen Ottolanguai (yawn). Allen struggled today (why does he think that's unusual) only getting his opening attempts of 175Kg Squat, then 110Kg Bench and 210Kg deadlift, completing a 495Kg total but Steve still loves him (in his dreams.)



As we're all bored of Allen's rubbish lifting – here's a picture of his ear instead!

There were 2 lifters in the 83Kg class and second place went to Tom Rowell. Tom is still a new comer to the sport and put up a respectable total of 412.5Kg, after lifting a strong 150Kg squat, 82.5Kg bench, Tom's foot slipped on his opening deadlift of 170Kg which meant he had to take it again then he went on to pull a strong 180Kg with much more there for next time.



The winner of this class was Doug D'Hobbit. Doug nearly got 9 from 9 only missing his third Bench but finishing with a 537.5Kg total and a British record deadlift of 232.5Kg. I am sure there will be a lot more to come from Doug later in the year at the British Championships.



At 93Kg we again saw 2 lifters and in second place was another new lifter in Michael Griss. After a shaky start on the squat with 140Kg Michael overcame his nerves and managed 95Kg on the Bench and a 200Kg deadlift for a 435Kg total. I am sure with a bit more experience we will see all Michaels lifts improve massively.



The first place title went to Matt Lines. Matt also relatively new to the sport started well with a strong 172.5Kg squat, however Matt didn't quite get the bench right on the day only achieving his opener of 105Kg but came back strong on the deadlift getting all 3 attempts and finishing with 205Kg and a 482.5Kg total.

The 105Kg class brought in the biggest battle of the day between old hand Andy Rodney and the younger less experienced Edgaras Kreipavicius. Andy took a big jump from his second attempt squat to his third of 230Kg which he missed leaving him with 210Kg but Edgaras managed a 215Kg on his third which put him in lead after the squat.

Both were evenly matched on the bench, Andy getting all 3 finishing with 155Kg and Edgaras only taking 2 attempts but managing a hard fought 160Kg which put Edgaras 10Kg up on the subtotal.

Andy went back into the lead after the opening deadlifts but he mysteriously missed his second attempt and Edgaras went on to pull a strong third attempt of 260Kg.



This meant that Andy, being the heavier man had to up his third attempt to 272.5Kg to take the title and what a determined lift it was to get 3 white lights and a 637.5Kg total beating Edgaras by 2.5Kg. Fabulous lifting by these two and good to see Andy back on the platform after a long break, I am sure Edgaras will be training hard to get his revenge next time.



Andy Hutchings lifted unopposed in the 120Kg class, 3 solid attempts on the squat left him with 205Kg then he followed this up with a 140Kg bench. Andy pulled a solid 230Kg deadlift on his second attempt then took a big jump to 255Kg for his third knowing he had nothing to lose but it wasn't there on the day but I am sure we will see Andy pulling this soon.



After all of the uncertainty of the comp going ahead it was good days lifting. I would like to thank Jerry (the elbow) Rice, Pete (during the war) Weiss, John (the bench) Bevan, Kevin (been around forever) Jane and last but not least Steve (I can't lift anymore cause it hurts but I will leave it to my hero and lover Allen Ottolangui) Walker for reffing. Also my brother Dave Ottolangui for MC ing, Martin Smith for scoring, the loaders for the day Steve (monkey boy) Gates, Chris (trains everyday) Anderson, Mandeep and Kuldeep (the noland twins), and the lad from the audience who I have no idea of his name, and lastly Nita who turned up to do the food for us.

See you all at the next one.

(Steve Walkers only and legendary friend)

Allen Ottolangui

Thanks as usual to Allen for the report – the dementia is obviously getting worse!

Championship East Mids Unequipped powerlifting champs **Venue** Letchworth **Date** 5 / 2 / 2012 **B/W Class/s** all

Age	Name	B/W class	Squat			Bench Press			Dead Lift			Total
	<u>Women</u>											
		52Kg										
M2	Jenny Hunter	52	75	<u>85</u>	<u>92.5</u>	65	70	<u>72.5</u>	130	<u>140</u>	<u>147.5</u>	297.5
		63Kg										
Snr	Sarah King	61.4	<u>150</u>	<u>152.5</u>		80	<u>87.5</u>	<u>90</u>	150	170	<u>175</u>	412.5
		84Kg										
M1	Jackie Blasbery	78.5	112.5	122.5	<u>132.5</u>	70	77.5	<u>80</u>	152.5	<u>162.5</u>	<u>172.5</u>	375
	<u>Men</u>											
		59Kg										
M3	David Brown	57.9	85	90	<u>92.5</u>	75	80	<u>82.5</u>	122.5	127.5	<u>132.5</u>	307.5
		74Kg										
M2	Allen Ottolangui	74	<u>175</u>	<u>190</u>	<u>190</u>	105	<u>110</u>		<u>210</u>	<u>220</u>		495
		83Kg										
M2	Doug D'Gama	82.2	140	160	<u>172.5</u>	120	<u>132.5</u>	<u>137.5</u>	205	225	<u>232.5</u>	537.5
U23	Tom Rowell	80.2	130	140	<u>150</u>	75	<u>82.5</u>	<u>87.5</u>	<u>170</u>	170	<u>180</u>	412.5
		93Kg										
Snr	Matt Lines	90.7	160	<u>172.5</u>	175	<u>105</u>	<u>112.5</u>	<u>112.5</u>	190	202.5	<u>205</u>	482.5
Snr	Michael Griss	88.9	<u>140</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>90</u>	90	<u>95</u>	180	<u>200</u>	<u>207.5</u>	435
		105Kg										
M1	Andy Rodney	105	180	<u>210</u>	<u>230</u>	140	150	<u>155</u>	240	<u>260</u>	<u>272.5</u>	637.5
Snr	Edgaras Kreipavicius	104.2	<u>200</u>	200	<u>215</u>	152.5	<u>160</u>		220	240	<u>260</u>	635
		120Kg										
Snr	Andy Hutchings	113.4	180	190	<u>205</u>	130	<u>140</u>	<u>145</u>	220	<u>230</u>	<u>255</u>	575

Side Referee Jerry Rice

Centre Referee Kevin Jane ___ Side Referee Pete Weiss ___

G = Guest Lifter

br = British Record

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS.

1977.

1977 and we are due to go to Perth, Western Australia. Before I tell you about the World championships I want to take you back to May 1977 a very important time for the world of Powerlifting.

Vic Mercer was the I.P.F. president and one of his innovations was to divide the world into regions, Europe, Asia, America, Africa and Oceania which would include Australia, New Zealand and the south pacific islands. With this in mind we headed off to Turku in Finland to have a friendly competition with the Finns but more importantly to form the European Powerlifting Federation. The inaugural meeting took place on 14th May 1977 and among those present were Vic Mercer, John Moody and George Leggett from Great Britain, Arnold and George Bostrom from Sweden, Jaako Parviainen and Bror Holm from Finland and Emil Emilsen and Helge Stave from Norway. Among the many points that were discussed it was agreed that the first European championships would be held in Birmingham, England in May 1978. Little did I know it then but I was destined never to spend my birthday at home for the next 20 years because the European championship would always be held at the same time as my birthday, but unlike Bob Hoffman I am not conceited enough to think it was held purely to celebrate my birthday.

If you can get a copy of the Arnulf Wahlstrom book "The History of the E.P.F. 1978 to 1997," you will see that he describes the names of those delegates as legendary in the history of Powerlifting and these pioneers have done tremendous work organising and promoting the Powerlifting sport in the World and Europe. Arnulf is the current president of the E.P.F. and has been for many years.

However, I digress and I am supposed to tell you about the World champs. We arrived at our hotel quite tired after our long journey but Paul Jordan came and met us, Paul was living and working in Australia at the time and he invited Eddy Pengelly and myself to go to the beach with him, he had an old Triumph Herald. We walked to the sea shore and suddenly Paul and Eddy grabbed me and threw me into the ocean, what a welcome to Australia.

The competition started well, on the first day all our lifters excelled themselves, Peter Fiore was now competing for Great Britain at 75kg and managed to gain a silver medal. The second did not go so well, Paul Jordan our 100kg World champion unfortunately broke his leg on the squat and had to retire. I have a very good photograph of the actual moment his leg broke but I do not think it appropriate to publish it. Paul was never ever to represent Great Britain again or to compete internationally but I did here he lifted at some minor events in Australia. He eventually married an Australian girl who became a good powerlifter herself but I heard they started breeding horses. Paul's name will come up in a much later article.

Below you will see the results of the Great Britain team but in future articles I will be telling about both the world and European results.

George Leggett.

GREAT BRITAINS TEAM RESULTS.

1977 Perth. Australia.

52kg.	N. Bhairo.	Silver.
60kg.	E. Pengelly.	Gold.
67.5kg.	T. Kirton.	(4th).
75kg.	P. Fiore.	Silver.
82.5kg.	R. Collins.	Gold.
90kg.	E. Toal.	Silver.
100kg.	P. Jordan.	Retired injured.
110kg.	T. Fitton.	(4th).
Super.	E. Kershaw.	(4th).

GREAT BRITAIN. SILVER MEDALLISTS.

The U.S.A. once again reigned supreme and were WORLD CHAMPIONS but at least we maintained our second place. 1978 will be my next article.

After the World championships we took three team members, Narendra Bhairo, Eddy Pengelly and Peter Fiore, to New Zealand for a friendly international. We all had a great time, organised by Precious McKenzie, the whole event was televised all Saturday afternoon, the equivalent of B.B.C. grandstand. We spent a few more days there being shown around and then the boys flew home and Vic, Rupert Milner and myself flew across the pacific to Los Angeles because Vic had some meetings with the Americans. A visit to disneyland was a highlight at a time when the film Jaws was all the rage. Eventually we flew across America and the Atlantic to complete a round the World journey. A very memorable time.

George Leggett.

The British Bench Press Championships

This year's Championships were held at Yardley Gobion Powerlifting Club over the weekend of 11th & 12th February with all lifters competing in both the Open Championships and their own specific age group so two medals were up for grabs to all lifters.

Despite a lower number of entries than in previous years there were still a respectable number of East Midlands lifters (thirteen) taking part.

First off was Megan Ainsworth lifting in the 43kg Junior class getting all 3 attempts passed and finishing with 60kg and 1st place at a bodyweight of only 38.6kg.

Next was Natalie Blake in the 52kg class taking only one lift of 90kg to win the open title.

Adam Alderman lifted a tremendous 135kg, narrowly missing 140kg to take the 59kg open title at a bodyweight of only 47.75 kg. Dave Brown was second in the open with 3 good lifts finishing with 92.5kg taking the Masters 3 title as well.

It was all or nothing for Lee Meachen in the 74kg, Lee going straight in at 177.5kg but missing this and deciding to leave it at that for today – it should be there soon though.

The 93kg class saw some massive attempts with James Jeffries, Ian Wells and an improving Ian Kinghorn all lifting in the open and their own age groups. James made light work of his 242.5kg opener and then went straight to 300kg, only half a kilo under the World Masters record and a new British Open record. However it wasn't quite there today and James had to settle for the overall title and thoughts of his next assault on the record.

Ian Wells looked ripped and strong and opened on 220kg – I think his highest ever opener but all 3 lifts were the same and he couldn't lock out so no total today.

Ian Kinghorn went well making his opener and second of 205kg with 215kg being a bit too much today but he seems to be getting his form and confidence

back in time for the World Masters later this year – he finished 2nd overall and 1st in the Masters 1 class.

Pinda Singh won the 105kg class with his 1st lift of 240kg, narrowly missing 270kg twice and Paul Kerridge got second in the Masters 3 class with 130kg although he only weighed 93.2kg so not sure if that was an error or planned.

Finally on to the big boys in the 120kg class, Tony Cliffe winning with 3 well planned and executed attempts finishing with 282.5kg and Stewart Cowan continuing to improve every time with 207.5kg to win the Masters 1 title at only 108.4kg bodyweight. The evergreen (if enlarging) Bob Baxter came second in the Masters 3 class and breaking the Commonwealth Masters 3 unequipped record with 143kg.

So well done to all concerned and thanks to the officials, loaders, helpers and audience for making it a great weekend. I didn't manage to get any photos of the actual lifting due to other commitments but there were also an excellent pigging out Championships running which were caught on camera for the record so you can see these instead!!



An easy first attempt from local boy Mick Tapp on the chocolate cake took him into an early lead



Not to be outdone, Stuart (Max Thrust) Danvers, piled on the pounds with an effortless bucket of chilli (he was later disqualified for wearing an illegal table cloth as a bib)



Years of experience showed with Mick's second and third attempts to take the title (and anything else vaguely edible!!)



The 2012 British Pie Eating Champion looking rather smug (and bloated)



A special thanks to Pete Weiss who kindly painted the skirting boards the day before



There's always someone acting his age!!

(PS competition T Shirts size large and upwards to XXXL are still available – contact the editor if you are interested).



GBPF – Merchandise Price List

Masters	T - Shirts	£11.00
GBPF	T – Shirts	£9.00
	Vests	£8.00
	Caps	£7.50
	Beanies	£7.00
	Polo Shirts	£10.00
	Sweat Shirts	£14.00
	Hoodies	£15.00
	Fleece Jackets	£20.00
	Refs white collar shirts	£15.00
	Refs ties National or Divisional	£10.00
	Long Socks S,M,L.	£6.50
	Bags	£6.50
	<u>East Midlands (GBPF) T-shirts</u>	<u>£8.00</u>

All prices exclude postage. Contact Kevin Jane to order any merchandise on 07887903104 or Kevin@kjane.fsbusiness.co.uk

Please send any comments, letters or articles for the Newsletter to Steve Walker @ SJR.Walker@fsmail.net or ring on 07710 138171

GET A GRIP.....

Considering that a lifter's grip on a bar, dumbbell or machine is the only direct contact with the weight for many exercises, why do so few pay any attention to this important connection. Surely your only connection to the weight must be worth a little reflection?

The type of grip used on a bar, dumbbell or exercise machine can make a significant difference to the anatomical position of the lifter and the mechanical levers of an exercise which affects the impact on, and efficiency of the muscles involved.

The bench press is a classic example of how the grip may affect an exercise as there are several grip options you may use for this in training and competition. The following pictures of the left hand show the various grip types that may be used. However, before we get into these variations I must mention the use of lifting gloves in the gym. By all means use them if all you do is general fitness training without using particularly heavy weights, or if you have sensitive hands or skin and the rusty bars are not that appealing. But, for anyone taking strength training seriously and handling heavy free weights a strong grip is vital, something that gloves will compromise badly, they stop you from gripping the bar correctly, particularly if the gloves have padded palms. For heavy weights you should use bare hands and magnesium chalk or if the gym has a chalk ban use a liquid grip aid such as tennis grip obtainable from good sports shops. Leave the gloves for the posers and girls, (sorry, powerlifting girls excluded!). Fig.1 shows the standard grip with the bar running

Fig.1



Fig.2



through the palm and with the wrist in a near vertical position. Please excuse the paint on my hands I was decorating just before taking these pictures. There will be a tendency as the weights get heavier for the wrist to bend back which should be resisted as excessive wrist movement moves the bar from directly above the forearm changing the mechanics of the lift a little as well as putting the wrist at risk of injury. Fig.2 shows what will happen if the wrist is allowed to bend backwards under pressure. This may be deliberate to reduce the distance of the bar from the chest in benching but it

can cause serious wrist damage with very heavy weights, so unless you have specifically trained using a bent wrist with very strong wrist wraps I recommend keeping the wrists straight and grip very firmly and with a straight wrist every time you train if you use this standard grip.

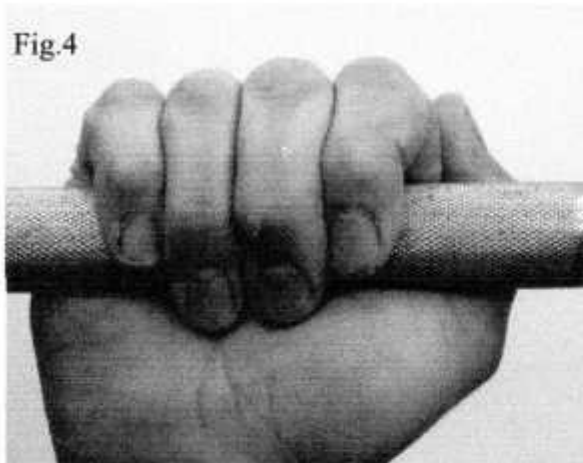
Fig.3



When lifting heavy weights use wrist wraps to help keep the wrist straight and support the grip. Standard wrist wraps from a local sports shop are ok for general fitness training but most of the wrist wraps on the market are soft and frankly virtually useless for heavy work, a good sign of a high quality wrap is that it starts to hurt if put on tightly and can't be worn for more than a couple of minutes. Those sold in sports shops are cheaper but won't hold your wrist vertical under heavy benching or resist

the tendency for the wrists to bend back when squatting. Short wrist wraps are suitable for small lifters with very thin wrists but these are not adequate for larger lifters, on the other hand, the 1m long variety is a pain to put on and certainly irritating when training. The most commonly used size is 18 inches like the Titan powerlifting brand, shown in Fig.3.

The basic grip in Fig.1 is the most natural grip and is used in training and competitive power lifting for most exercises so why would you consider anything else? Well there are common variations and some more obscure issues around the grip that any serious trainee or coach should be aware of that may offer a significant advantage. Fig.4 shows the thumb less grip. This is a



variation you may see a lot in the gym where the bar is virtually balancing on the palm, held relatively loosely by the fingers. It is most commonly used for the bench press and nose breakers, but may be used for many pressing exercises. There are possible advantages from the reduced tension of the forearm flexor tendons if the lifter suffers from tendinitis but to compensate for the lack of grip strength with this method users have to let their wrists bend backwards on any press movement which will change the mechanics of the lift as well as potentially causing serious wrist strain. This grip is not allowed in IPF competition for the bench press and frankly it's not safe, the bar

can slip out easily when pressing heavy weights with disastrous results. I've witnessed several very nasty accidents where this grip has been used and the bar has slipped out of the hands. A couple of years ago at the British drug free bench press competition a lifter was allowed to start using this grip and on pressing 170kg it slipped out and took the spotters completely off guard, it crashed into his chest resulting in broken ribs, but worse a 45 minute delay for the rest of the lifters! Very inconsiderate of him! If you use this grip for the bench press then sooner or later you will find out what it's like to get the bar across your teeth or through your chest. However, it should not be completely dismissed. Why? Well, for some exercises it is useful to help develop grip strength, for instance, dead lifting using the thumb less grip will help strengthen the finger flexor muscles in the forearm and may be deliberately used for all but the heaviest sets in a workout to develop a better grip strength.

Fig.5 shows a lifter at a recent IPF sanctioned competition who got away with the thumb less grip



indicated by the arrows, the referees must have been asleep! Note how the wrists are bent back particularly on the left side, and no wrist wraps! This is an accident or injury waiting to happen.

Fig.6

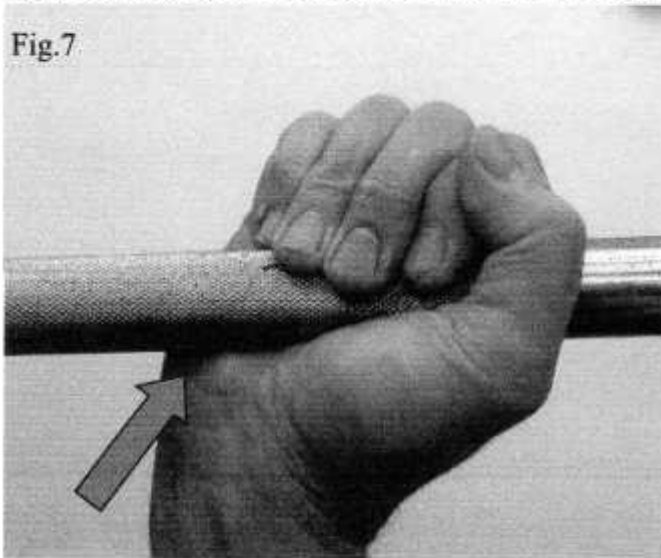


Fig.6 shows the thumb lock grip, also known as the 'hook' grip. This is the standard grip used in Olympic lifting but it may also be used as a very secure grip for the bench press and many other exercises. In powerlifting and Olympic lifting competition you're allowed surgical tape over the last joint of the thumb to prevent damage on the bar knurling. The hook grip is very secure but does require fairly large hands and is painful as the thumb is crushed against the bar. The advantage of the hook over the alternate one hand over, one under grip used as a common secure grip is that it does not put the body in an unbalanced twisted shoulder position.

While watching the worlds strongest man competition I noticed a particular advantage one lifter had in using the hook grip. The strength test was an axle clean and press, and most of the competitors had to use an alternate one over one under hand grip as shown in Fig.9 to get the bar to the chest. As the weight had to be pressed overhead these lifters had to rest the bar on their chest, then change the alternated hand grip to allow them to attempt to press the weight as anatomically you can't press any real weight overhead with the alternate grip. This strange pause and grip change had a dramatic negative affect on performance. But, the lifter using the hook grip simply cleaned and pressed without a pause. Try it and see how you get on, but you may have to persevere for a while for it to become familiar and less painful. It can help reduce the tension in the forearm flexors a little as the bar does not have to be squeezed so hard to maintain a safe grip. This may be helpful for those who have shoulder problems where the alternate grip is uncomfortable.

Fig.7 shows a special competition grip for the bench press where the hand is deliberately angled to

Fig.7



put the bar through the lowest part of the palm and directly over the heel of the hand. It's known as the 'Lain' grip from a lifter who made it popular in the 1980's although it seems to be rarely used today. The bar sits directly on the heel of the thumb at the lowest possible position with the hand angled as shown. The angle of the hand and wrist will force the elbows outwards away from the body which favours some pressing styles, particularly 'flared elbow' equipped benchers. The rarely mentioned advantage of the Lain grip is the resulting effective increase in the overall width of the grip when benching due to the weight being taken on the heel of the palm as indicated

by the arrow, rather than mainly on the thumb to finger web of the hand, thus moving the weight bearing point out along the bar with the fulcrum point below the little finger, this effectively gives the lifter a wider grip and an anatomical advantage, but, it can be painful with a lot of weight. When you get it right you can feel the effect of the wider grip and the pressure on the heel of the hand. In press range tests performed with a number of lifters this grip alone can reduce the bench press range from chest touch point to fully pressed by as much as 2cm. This does not sound like much but when combined with the increased effective grip width it can make a significant difference at 1RM. The Lain grip is only recommended for experienced lifters with plenty of practice and a high pain threshold! To comply with most federation rules where all fingers have to be around the bar, those with small hands may fall foul of the referees using this grip.

The overhand grip on a barbell as shown in Fig.1 is used for virtually all exercises where the aim is to press the weight overhead or to push the weight away from the body. The two hands are usually

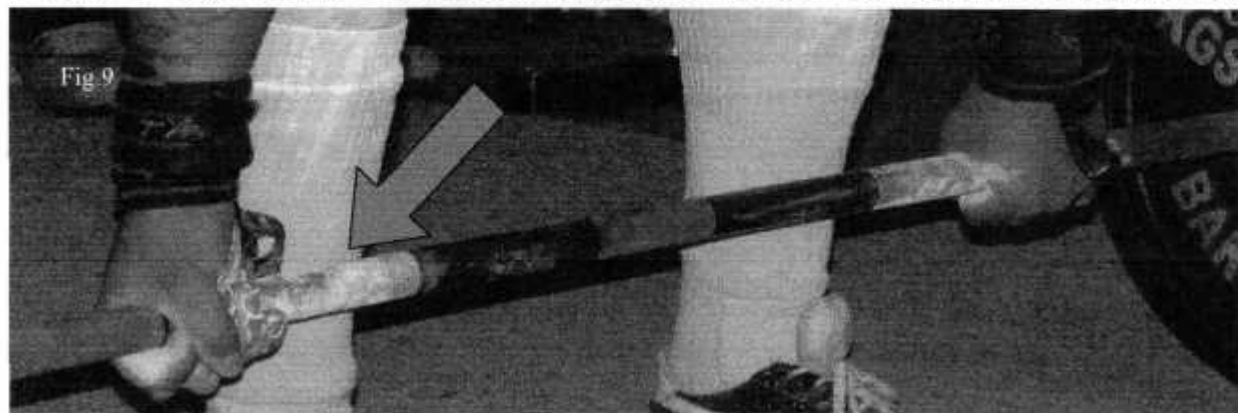
balanced evenly along a barbell but under some circumstances it is necessary to use an off centre grip. For example, some trainees may have one side considerably stronger than the other and this will be apparent by the weaker side continually failing or the elbow locking out a little slower than the other side in any press strength test. This can be a problem in bench press competition as the referees may consider it an uneven extension or lockout and may fail the lift. Remedial work should be put in place to improve the weaker side but initially the bar may be gripped slightly off centre to counter the weakness, if the weakness is due to an old injury or an imbalance that does not respond well to training the lifter may find the off centre grip works well for them on an ongoing basis.

The lifter in Fig.8 demonstrates an unusually severe right side weakness very clearly, in this picture



the lifter is gripping the bar at least 2 full inches to their right as shown by the arrows. This moves the centre of gravity to the left reducing the weight distribution on the right side, balancing the unequal effort to maximise the evenly pressed weight. A lot of lifters would benefit from experimenting with this as many lifters have a weaker left side and could try keeping the same grip width but move both hands a half inch towards the left. This will move the centre of gravity of the barbell very slightly towards the right side moving some of the weight to the right and balancing the weight to the strengths of the lifter. This may not be allowed in competition if one of the marked rings on the bar is exposed so check with the referee first if you use a wide off centre grip. The grip must be no wider than 81cm between the forefingers for competition benching with the index finger covering all the ring. The key thing to remember is to move the grip of both hands towards your weaker side, or to move the grip of the hand on the weaker side a little wider. I used this method with one lifter who went on to win the British under 18 raw bench press championship in his first year. Mason had a slightly weaker left side as is very common and by moving the grip half an inch to the left he was capable of successfully pressing another 5kg evenly.

The off centre grip is often necessary for dead lifting where the alternate, one hand over, one under grip is used. The alternate grip is the most secure when pulling heavy barbell weights towards the body or from the floor as it eliminates the tendency for the bar to roll out of the hands. However, when using it for dead lifting it will move the lifting point in the alternated hand and to maintain the correct balance the underhand grip hand will often need to move outwards a little



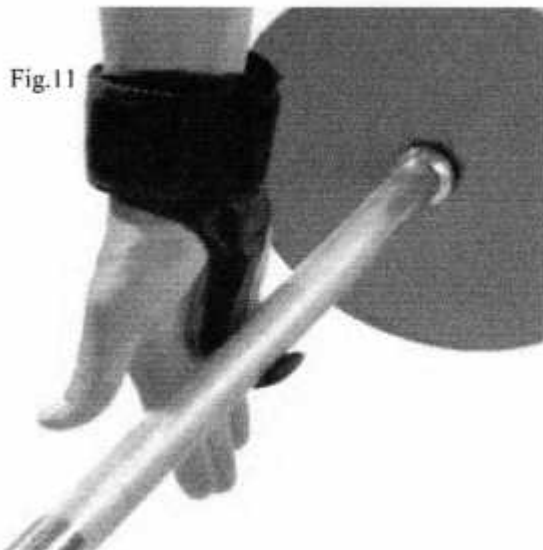
along the bar, usually by about 1 inch, but it may be as much as 3 inches. The picture in Fig.9 shows a clear example of this in practice with at least 2 inches more of the bar knurling showing on the lifters right side, indicated by the arrow. It may take some experimenting to find the right adjustment but correcting this imbalance enables the lifter to focus on the lift and will increase the potential maximum weight lifted. This is particularly important for sumo dead lift wide stance lifting where the grip is much narrower and the correct bar balance becomes critical.

The alternated grip is very common in powerlifting and relatively few lifters use the standard overhand grip or the hook grip. Note how the lifter in Fig.10 who is using a standard overhand grip is struggling with a heavy dead lift that is opening his hands by rolling the bar as indicated by the



arrow, leaving him literally holding on with hooked fingers. As a side issue, it may have helped a bit if he had cut his fingernail, why? Look at the extra kilo or two he is having to exert pulling up his knee sleeves! Personally I have not had a problem with the overhand grip and have won competitions in my class including the British powerlifting championship using it, but I have very large hands that provide me with a grip that exceeds my lifting capacity by over 50%. Even so, when I changed to the alternate grip I found it easier to focus on the lift as all worry of my grip slipping completely disappeared.

Straps or lifting hooks are generally frowned on by competing strength athletes and their coaches as they introduce an element affecting performance that cannot be used in competition. In powerlifting competition straps and hooks or any grip aid other than wrist wraps and chalk are not allowed, however in some strongman competitions straps are allowed, but never hooks. Despite this, straps or hooks may be used effectively in training for some exercises where the grip may fail or distract the trainee from the key objective of the exercise. For example, some trainees with small hands or a poor grip may be restricted in what they may lift or pull to exercise their posterior chain muscles. Also, the alternate grip to improve pulling capacity may be very uncomfortable for some



trainees, particularly those who may have suffered an elbow or shoulder injury in the past, or in the case of exercises such as the clean and press it is impossible to use. Under such circumstances the need to develop the posterior chain pulling muscles may be limited without the use of straps or hooks, and they would be entirely appropriate for training in such circumstances. The use of lifting hooks is pretty self explanatory as seen in Fig.11. The hooks are worn so that they fit in the palm as shown and the lifter grips them around the bar with an overhand grip. Hooks almost completely remove the need for any grip strength and may be usefully employed if a lifter has a wrist or hand injury to maintain a training programme. For example, one lifter I trained with

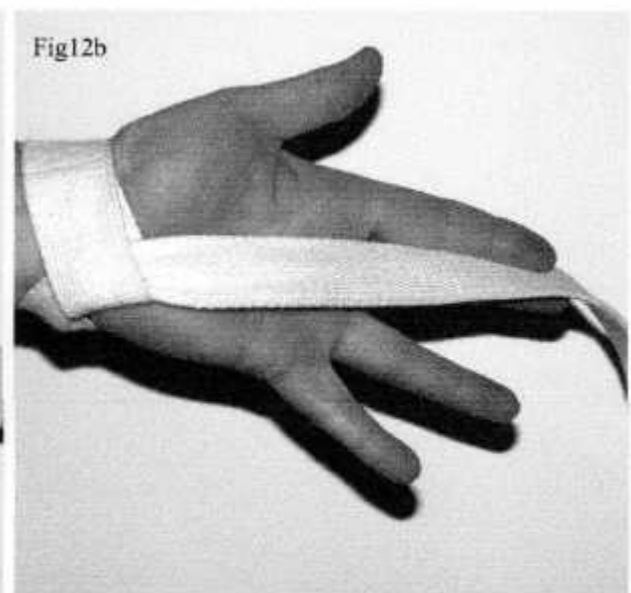
had a thumb mussing due to a war injury. He could not effectively train his spinal erectors, glutes and hamstrings using barbell pulling exercises without using hooks. Another lifter could not use the alternate grip for the deadlift as he found it very uncomfortable in the shoulder and this completely distracted him from lifting. They are also useful for training pulling exercises where total focus on the posterior muscle chain is the primary aim, or simply to give the forearm muscles a rest!

Pulling straps offer most of the advantages of hooks but do require a considerable grip to be used to hold them to the bar or equipment being lifted, they can be painful to wear with heavy weights and care should be taken to use them correctly to avoid potential injury to the wrists.

I have seen several methods to attach them to a bar but by far the best is shown in the sequence in Fig.12

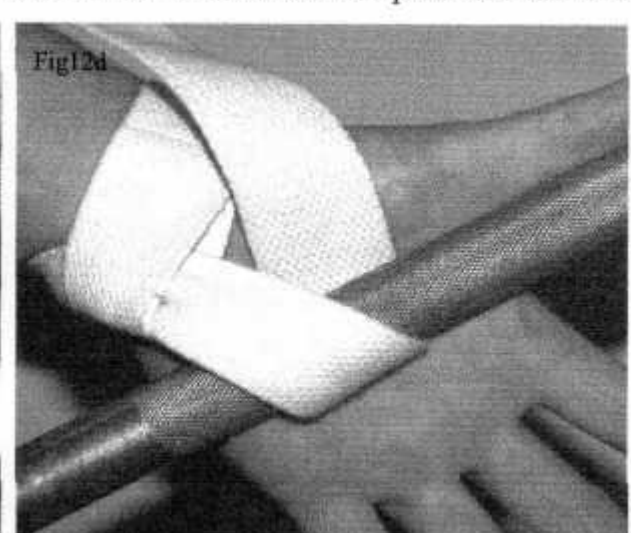
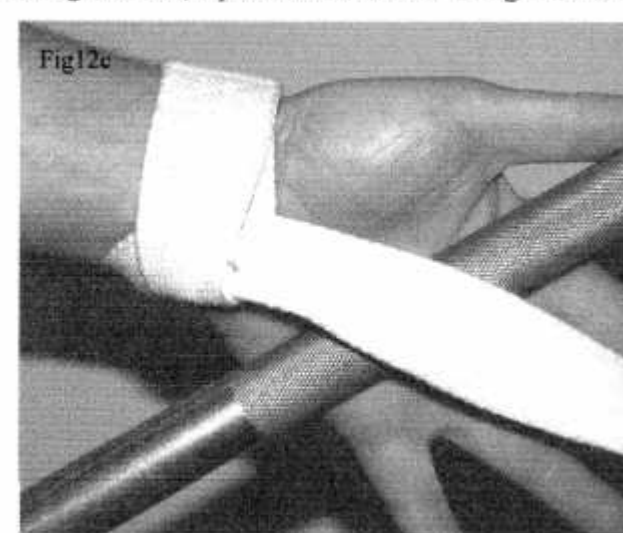
Step 1-Fig.12a. Position the wraps on the hands with the eyelet on the little finger side. If they are positioned with the eyelet on the thumb side excessive stress will be felt on the heel of the thumb and it can be very painful, in addition the tail end will be positioned incorrectly for wrapping easily on the bar.

Step 2-Fig12b. Ensure that the loop is tightened very firmly around the wrist with the tail hanging on the little finger side of the palm.



Step 3-Fig12c. Grip the bar, relax the grip and pull the tail away from the hand under the bar, dumbbell or machine grip.

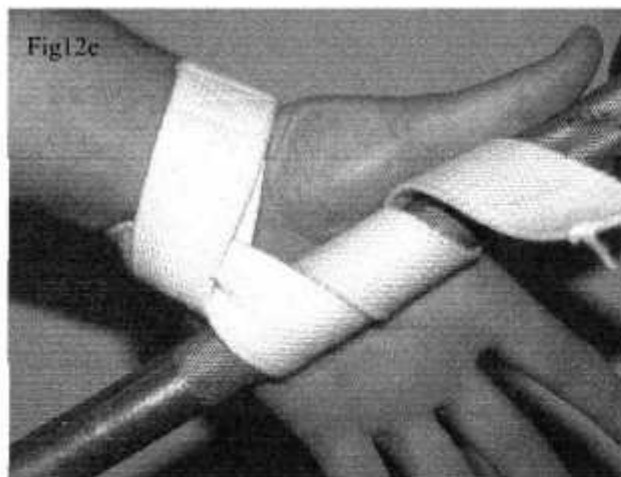
Step 4-Fig12d. Keeping the heel of the hand pushed against the bar with the thumb outstretched along the bar, open the hand and bring the tail over the bar and between the palm and bar. It is



important to pull this first turn tightly keeping the thumb stretched along the bar as shown.

Step5-Fig12e Wind the tail evenly along the bar towards the thumb. Winding the strap in this

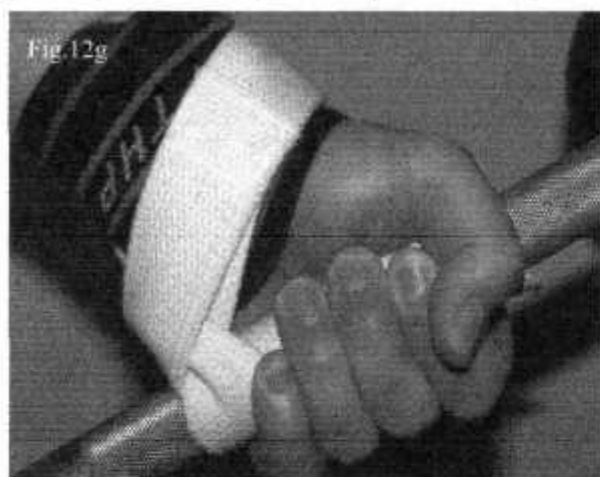
direction will have the effect of tightening the strap if your fingers start to slip. Do not wind the



strap around the bar starting between the palm and bar as winding in this direction will actually help unroll the straps off the bar and out of your grip if your fingers start to slip.

Then Grip the bar over the windings as shown in Fig.12f, note the thumb is not fully in position to show the strap wound on the bar, the full correct grip is shown in Fig12g.

Use a spotter to help repeat the set up for the other hand. The method shown is very sound and proven, but does require a spotter to help with the second hand. If training alone the second hand



will be difficult to tie one handed to the bar as tightly as the first so always tie your weakest side first, with practice the second hand may be tied fairly well on your own.

For very heavy training where the straps may cut into the wrist they may be worn over the top of wrist wraps as shown in Fig.12g, but be sure to tighten the first turn firmly as the cushioning affect of the wraps may introduce some slack when under maximum tension.

If you use straps, I recommend thick woven cotton as shown in the pictures as these will have softer edges than some cheap man made fibre straps and

will be less likely to cut into your wrists.

So, next time you grip a barbell, take it seriously, spend some time developing your own approach to this connection between yourself and the weight.

Get your grip right!

Paul K

Thanks again to Paul Kerridge for this article

Star Performer – Jerry Rice



Congratulations to Jerry Rice on passing his GBPF referees exam and reffing for the first time at the East Mids Unequipped despite the snow.

Jerry has also gained a coaching level 2 accreditation from the GBPF

Anyone else interested in becoming a referee should contact Dave Tucker (contact editor for Dave's details)



East Midlands Powerlifting Association – Minutes of 2011 Annual General meeting.

Meeting took place at Moulton College, Northants 29/1/2012 and opened at 11.30am

1. **Members present;** Jenny Hunter, Peter Weiss, Ian Finch, Dave Tucker, Allen Ottolangui, Dave Brown, Kevin Jane
2. Apologies; Steve Walker
3. **Minutes of the previous AGM** were accepted - Proposed Pete Weiss, Seconded Dave Tucker
4. **Officer reports;** Jenny presented the detailed accounts for the year with the current balance standing at £1,082.39 with no outstanding amounts. The Secretary produced a written report (attached)
5. Election of Officers;

Position	Officer
President	<i>Dave Tucker</i>
Hon. Secretary	<i>Kevin Jane</i>
Chairman	<i>Pete Weiss</i>
Treasurer	<i>Jenny Hunter</i>
Membership registrar	<i>Allen Ottolangui</i>
Technical Secretary	<i>Dave Tucker</i>
Records officer	<i>Ian Finch</i>
Drug liaison Secretary	<i>Kevin Jane</i>
Powerlifting Secretary	<i>Pete Weiss</i>
Web site Manager	<i>Jenny Hunter</i>
Safe Guarding Officer	<i>Kevin Jane</i>
English Powerlifting representative	<i>Pete Weiss</i>
Newsletter Editor	<i>Steve Walker</i>
Assistant Technical secretary	<i>Pete Weiss</i>

Meeting Closed at 12.05pm



East Midlands Powerlifting Association – Minutes of committee meeting of 29/1/2012.

Meeting took place at Moulton College, Northants and opened at 12.10pm

1. **Members present;** Jenny Hunter, Peter Weiss, Ian Finch, Dave Tucker, Allen Ottolangui, Dave Brown, Kevin Jane
2. **Apologies;** Steve Walker
3. **Matters arising from previous meeting (26th November 2011)**
 - a). **ANGLIAN OPEN** – The secretary had been in contact with Nigel Burgess who is willing to stage the Anglian Open again this year at his club in Cambridge. The committee suggested the 28/4/2012 which will need confirmation in due course. No decision on a date for the Anglian Bench Press has been forwarded from Stuart Hamilton although still expected to be held in Colchester in September/ October.
 - b). **Records** - Ian had produced an up to date list of divisional records for both equipped and unequipped lifting which will be displayed on the web site and updated every quarter.
 - c). **Lifter of the year award** – the Secretary had contacted Cliff Hayes re returning the award in time for presentation to Tony Cliff at the first opportunity in the 2012 calendar.
4. **All England-** the date for this year's competition was agreed as the 4/5 August 2012 at Moulton College, Northampton.
5. **Website** – Stuart Hamilton had not sent apologies to the meeting and was not currently a paid up GBPF member so it was not sure as to whether he intended to stay on a web master. The committee elected Jenny to take over this position which was discussed at length as it was felt that the Division was likely to benefit from having direct control over a website and hopefully as a consequence develop it to become a financial asset to the division. Jenny will look into the cost of setting this up and a likely time scale.
6. **A.O.B.**
 - a). Committee meeting dates- *April 28th at Cambridge
July 21st Yardley Gobion
November 25th Letchworth
Meetings to be held after the championships held on these dates. * *date still to be confirmed*
 - b). Dave pointed out the 50% increase in the referees exam fees.
 - c). The committee need to define the term 'Novice' prior to this year's Junior, novice and masters competition, and how entries for the Novice section can be monitored.

Meeting closed at 12.35pm

So who guessed that this cheeky chappy was of course Pete Weiss (he was a lot taller in those days!!)



So who do you think this young Olympic boxing hope is??
(The one holding the shield)

Answer next issue

