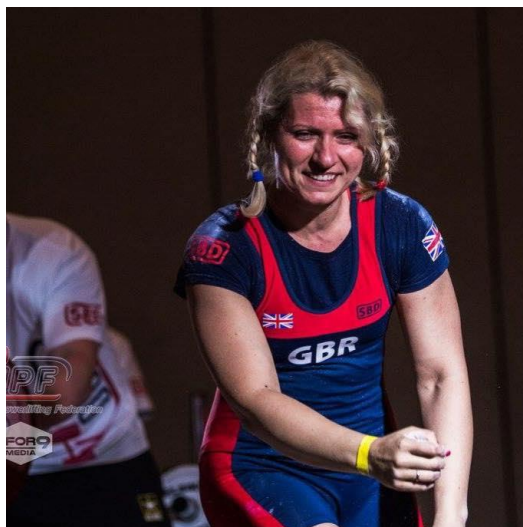


2017 British Womens Classic Championships preview

Ruta Lendraitiene



A short interview with Ruta Lendraitiene ahead of this weekend's British Womens Classic Championships

So where do you usually train?

I train at Titanium Strength Gym in Sheffield. I started there a couple of months ago and before that I was lifting at Five Towns Powerlifting Gym.

What does your normal training week look like?

I normally train four times a week. Recently I have been squatting twice, benching twice, and deadlifting once a week. I've been following some of Andy Bolton's programming after reading his book which inspired me to try this approach. I usually go heavy once a week and then the other sessions are lighter. We'll see how it works because I took a gamble and started this programme four months ago, so let's see how it goes at The British.

So what kind of lifter are you? Are you a sumo or conventional puller? Do you high bar or low bar squat?

I'm conventional and I squat low bar. When I started squatting years ago I tried high bar but at that time my coach said that I should try low bar. Initially it was very unusual and difficult for me but I got used to it. Now when I try high bar, that's very difficult for me. For deadlifts I've never really tried sumo, I've always been conventional.

How long have you been lifting for?

Three years, at the end of this year it will be three years. This will be my third time at the British Classic Championships. I also competed internationally in my first year of lifting. The Commonwealth Championships was my first international meet.

How do you find competing internationally in comparison to national competitions?

It's more difficult because of the travelling and the nerves, also people are a lot stronger in these competitions. There's probably more pressure because you're representing Great Britain so with all of those factors you can't necessarily lift what you can normally lift competing domestically.

Do you find that that pressure is a big factor for your lifting?

Initially it was but I've read quite a few books on how to handle the pressure and how to prepare mentally. It's a lot to do with how you think and prepare yourself psychologically.

Do you have any advice for somebody competing for the first time at a national level?

Probably to just take it easy and not put too much pressure on yourself because as I mentioned it's more difficult, so just go and enjoy your first one.

So how are you feeling coming into the competition this weekend?

I feel strong and ready but everything comes down to the day. It's how you're feeling on the day, so we'll see.

Do you have any goals or specific numbers that you're looking to hit at this meet and longer term?

I'm expecting to hit at least my personal bests but we'll see how it goes. As I said, it's difficult to predict. In the future I would like at least to hit a 160kg squat. For my bench I'd definitely like to hit 100kg. It was stuck last year and it didn't move. My PB initially didn't change at all but remained just at what I benched in my first year. I couldn't improve in my second year so it's only been in this third year of lifting that it has started moving again. On deadlifts again, it's improving but I'd like at least to achieve 200kg.

If I'm not mistaken you currently hold some records in the 72kg class for bench.

Yes I do. I have the total bench press record as well as bench only.

Is that something that motivates you? Do you look to take records or would you prioritise placing on the day?

Probably when it's a regional meet it doesn't really matter for me where I place. Of course it's nice to get the records but for me it's more nationally and internationally where I'd look to place.

And what has been your best competition experience so far?

I'd say all of my meets. Wherever I go, in all competitions everybody is very friendly and supportive. In this sport it's really nice. Even if let's say I come on my own to a meet and nobody is supporting me, there will always be people who help me with numbers and loading weights etc. So I think that

that's what motivates me and that's really nice going into competitions because it takes that pressure off a little bit.

So what are your favourite things to do outside of powerlifting?

One of them is biking, I'm a biker. I've got a motorbike but recently I haven't had time to go out because I've been preparing and competing a lot internationally, but that's what I like doing. I also like hiking but again it all comes down to preparing and not losing strength. I can't hike as much as I used to. You have to make sacrifices.

Last question, do you have a powerlifting hero?

If I had to choose one in the UK I'd say that I've been really inspired by Melissa Wall. She's over 50 years old and very inspiring. I mean, when I get to her age I would like to be as strong and impressive as she is. In the 72 class on the world level it's Kim Walford, she's so strong and inspiring as well. Obviously she's also been lifting for many years and that's my inspiration. I'd like to lift that much. That deadlift is amazing.

