

First Competition Review

Liam Hinchliffe



A short interview with Liam Hinchliffe looking back on what it's like to enter a powerlifting competition for the first time.

How long have you been lifting?

I've been powerlifting in general for about twelve months. I've trained on and off since I was younger and then I decided to move away from bodybuilding and focus more on the programming and discipline that you get from powerlifting.

So what kind of programmes were you using beforehand?

Before I started powerlifting I was training for bodybuilding so just hypertrophy and things like that. I never really trained for strength. I got a bit of advice from different people and then it was mainly my own programmes that I'd made up. I've followed a few Sheiko programmes and obviously once I started seeing the strength gains coming, it just felt good and I started seeing better results. It was high intensity stuff at first, now my programmes are based around high reps and high volume, things like that.

How many times a week were you training before the competition?

Leading into the competition I was training three times a week. It was basically squat, bench press, and deadlift. Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays with four days of rest.

Did you feel nervous or intimidated going into your first competition?

Yeah because it was my first one. Especially when I was waiting to weigh-in, I think I was one of the smallest out of the whole class. I weighed-in at 127kg and there were some big boys there. On the stage I was really nervous, yeah. But I got to talk to the officials there and that made me feel really comfortable and really at home and at ease with everything. I spoke to a few of the other gentlemen in my class and the same again; they gave me some good advice and good tips so I felt really at ease after that.

How would you describe the atmosphere to somebody who has never been to a meet before?

The atmosphere was great, especially when I first started watching everyone else as my class didn't lift until 1 o'clock. There is a real sense of everybody cheering for everybody, getting behind each lifter. There's no hostility, everyone's here to help everyone.

Did you have anyone there to support you on the day?

Yeah my father came and my training partner came down as well, but really there were enough people there who'd have helped me who were in my class. When I went to warm up in the training room, I was with lads in my class, lads in different classes, and they were all easy to talk to so I could have gone by me sen really.

Did your first performance go as planned?

In a way, yeah. I wanted to qualify for the British Classic and I got my qualifying total. My squat went better than I'd planned. I think on the bench press I could have done a bit better and the same on the deadlift but I think nerves still did get me when I went up onto the platform. When you're actually up on the platform and you're lifting for the first time you're thinking about your technique and getting three white lights so you are a bit nervous.

What did you think was the best thing about the day?

There was a really good sense of everybody helping each other out. There was no me vs you, everybody was lifting their own weights and having their own goals, but everybody was helping each other out as well.

Was the competition what you were expecting beforehand?

I had a bit of an idea and it was better than I expected to tell you the truth, I really enjoyed the day.

Would you change anything for next time?

I would just try to get myself a bit more relaxed when I get up onto the stage, compose myself. When you get to the bar you've got that minute before you have to start making the lift. I think that I would just compose myself a little bit more before I start making my lifts. Apart from that no, I really enjoyed it.

And what was the first thing that you did after the meet?

Get food like everybody else! It was a long drive home for me, a two and a half hour drive but plenty of food on the way home. That and rest, I rested when I got home.

Do you have a message for anybody thinking about doing a competition for the first time?

My advice is to just go and enjoy it. Don't worry about it; don't worry about hitting a total. Set yourself goals that you would like to achieve but just go and enjoy it. There are plenty of experienced people there that can give you advice, just go and try it.

