

**THIS CHICK CAN KICK YOUR ASS...
AND YOU MAY LIKE IT!**

SHANA RATCLIFF

How old are you, where are you from and what are you wearing? I'm 24 years old, from Waynesburg, Ky., and I'm wearing black leggings and a baggy green long sleeve shirt.

Where do you train? I train in Mt. Vernon, Ky., at Four Brother's Gym. I'm a team member of Iron Mafia.

Do you lift with other girls, or is it all guys? Right now I don't have a training partner, but I'll jump in with whoever is there if we are doing the same thing, both girls and guys. That's the great thing about having such a huge team; someone is always there to train with or help out. I love training with my female teammates when I get the chance because they are very strong, but when I jump in and train with the guys I push a lot harder because I feel like I've got to be like one of the guys.

What do you do for work? I'm blessed to focus on my training and being a mom at the moment, but I'll be starting at Nurtishop's new store in Richmond, Ky.



How did you get involved in powerlifting? I took my first weightlifting class as a freshman in high school and, honestly, I became addicted to lifting weights and fitness from that moment. It was just a few years ago I figured out people in my area powerlifted, and the sport interested me. I've always been very competitive. Even playing sports in high school, and other areas of fitness, never really hit the spot for me until I decided to do a powerlifting meet just for the fun of it. Even though I knew nothing about powerlifting and had no idea what I was doing, I was addicted as soon as I hit the platform. It was a rush and a passion that I have never felt before, and I knew this was the sport for me. I decided right then and there I was going to give everything I had to be the very best I could be. Now I'm blessed to be apart of a powerhouse gym and team.

What do your "normal" friends think of how much you can lift? I only have two close friends who are females that don't powerlift: Shenah and Shannon. Yes, we all three have similar names! How rare and unique! Shenah tells me all the time how proud she is and how I inspire others. She really uplifts me and pushes me harder. Shannon used to be my training partner, but sadly distance and different fitness goals caused us to not train together. Both are very supportive and try to understand my lifestyle. They talk about training with me and even come to my meets. I'm beyond lucky!

When you go to a powerlifting meet with a room full of men with massive levels of testosterone, do you feel like the center of attention? Honestly, I don't even pay attention to that because I'm so focused on supporting and helping my teammates, or competing myself. I get too into the moment even if I'm not lifting, but it's nice to think I might get some looks my way.

Are you married, have a boyfriend or single? I'm blessed to have Mark Miller as my partner in crime. He is a beast of a powerlifter. He is also my teammate and coach. We have a love-hate relationship. No, seriously — we do. Tempers run high between us when one or both are meet prepping, but at the end of the day we always have each other's back, just like a teammate or relationship should. I'm a very lucky to have a man who shares the same passion for this sport and is just as driven as I am to be the best he can be. We have this connection and we feed off each other when it comes to training and meets, and I think that is helping us both become better athletes. We love to see each other succeed.

Do you remember the first time you out-lifted a boy? How did it make you feel? I don't think I ever remember out-lifting any of the boys, but I do remember I was always trying to be pound-for-pound as strong as them and keep up. I still try! When I used to attend public gyms (and wasn't powerlifting) I did always have men (and women) telling me that I was strong and could kick their butts. I would just smile,

say thanks and continue on with my workout. I never knew if I should take that as a compliment or not.

Do you wear makeup to the gym? If I have it on already, yes. I don't plan on looking pretty when I'm lifting so I don't "fix my face" before I train. It would be a waste of makeup. If it's meet day, well, yes! We all have to look pretty on meet day.

What do you have to say to women who don't lift weights because they think they'll get too big? This is something I've heard since I was a teenager when I first started lifting weights. I tell women all the time, "Don't be scared to lift heavier, because

we as women don't produce enough testosterone like men to build like a man. Every woman's body is different, but lifting heavier is going to give you a sexy, toned body." In reality, a lot of women cut themselves short on the results they want because they aren't using heavy enough weights for the workouts they are doing. I'm not saying they have to powerlift, but they should treat their workouts like their career or school. Give 100 percent and get 100 percent back. Don't be afraid of the weight, because in the long running they're only cheating themselves!

How has powerlifting helped you?

Powerlifting has made me more confident as a woman, not just in my appearance, but my personality as well. I'm more confident in all areas of my personal and professional life, and it has given me such a tough mentality for everything in life. I have a one-year-old and started

powerlifting after I had my son, and it's transformed my body. I'm happier now with my body than before I was pregnant, and I eat more now too. Win-win!

What is your favorite lift? I love all the lifts. I've always loved squat because, for me, it's my most aggressive lift and I really get into it. Lately my bench has gotten a lot stronger, so I always look forward to training bench. I really just love the whole package of powerlifting.

Tell us about your current best lifts. I currently hold the world record squat and total in the 97-lb. class. I earned those numbers and records at RUM in February and re-broke them in April at the Women's Pro/am. At the meet in April, I was the first female to put up more than a 700 total in the 97 class. Current lifts from my last meet are squat: 275, bench: 160, deadlift: 300, total: 735.

What are some of your powerlifting goals? I've been successful in the 97-lb. class and still plan to continue to compete in it until I feel as if I can't cut the weight to the class or if I've accomplished all I wanted. I'm also planning on jumping into the 105 weight class, as well, this year. I plan on hitting some bigger numbers and setting some pretty big goals for that class.

Anything else you'd like to add? I'm really thankful for this opportunity to be in Power. Thanks to my parents who help out with my son while I train, since he isn't big enough to go with me yet, and I have to say thank you to all of my teammates who have pushed me and helped me to get to where I am. Dream big and stay strong! **PM**

