



**BRITISH
WEIGHT
LIFTING**

Athlete Q&A

GB International Olivia Blatch

What is your favourite aspect about weightlifting?

I like that you don't necessarily have to be elite or competitive to enjoy Weightlifting. This sport is centred around self-improvement, and if you put the hard work in you very often see the reward whether that be a 10kg jump to your total or a 1kg on a particular lift, each PB feels special to you and everyone can achieve that feel good buzz in the gym, home garage or on the competition platform it doesn't matter.



In addition, I love that this sport has more of a focus on what my body can do, as opposed to what my body looks like. You can be any size and shape and still be strong which I think makes it an inclusive sport to be part of.

How have you found the Lockdown Lift-Off Challenges so far?

I entered rounds 3 (standing long jump) and round 4 (The Boxall-New challenge) and I just treated them as a bit of fun to get involved with. During lockdown my fitness levels took a bit of a hit so its been fun to

tackle different challenges and just enjoy being back in the gym as opposed to focusing on the set backs to my lifts.

Top tip: It's even better when you can convince a fellow team mate to join you in friendly competition.

How are you feeling about getting back into the gym?

I've never been happier to be back in the gym. I will never again take a flat floor/ platform and roof over my head for granted, and in a way not having access to the gym has really proved to me how much I enjoy and missed weightlifting so when the doors were opened again it's given me a boost of motivation. Of course, I was a bit apprehensive at first, as the virus is a serious matter, but anti bac has become a new essential in my gym bag and getting to see my coach/ team mates again has reinvigorated my drive to get training.

What are your thoughts on Birmingham 2022 with less than two years to go?

I can't believe how quickly the time flies! I'm really excited for the games and really looking forward to working hard to ensure that I am selected for that squad as it will be a dream come true.

How can you build on your previous British and English Champs success?

Well Lockdown gave me a chance to refresh and reset. I had a few injuries/ niggles that needed taking care of which I might not have done if I was still training for competitions. So in a way I've been able to focus on the things that yes feel boring but are actually just as important as the big lifts. I've been focusing on my stretching and body building especially in the areas that I am weakest on and letting my body enjoy

the rest before the hard work begins again to add more weight to my total. That being said I am very much looking forward to stepping back out on the competition platform again when it is once again allowed.

When it comes to sport who is your biggest inspiration?

I'm lucky that I don't have to look too far for inspiration and sometimes I even get to train with her. Emily Muskett is the perfect role model for our sport, she works blooming hard and focuses on getting stronger in body but also in mind. She's had set backs but has never quit, and when she has had success such as Commonwealth Gold and a World Championship bronze medal she has remained humble throughout. If I could be half the lifter Emily is when 'I grow up' then I would be more than happy with that.

And finally, what advice would you give to someone who was new to weightlifting and just starting out?

In the words of Nike: Just Do it!

Go to the BWL website and find your nearest WL Gym, find yourself a coach to teach you and lock in the basics before you add any weight to the bar. Weightlifting is a great community to be a part of and you'll no doubt make some friends for life.