



Abigail Johnston. Talking about kettlebells

Abigail Johnston – is one of strongest ladies kettlebell lifter around the World! She lives in Glasgow, Scotland. Her personal best of snatch 24 kg kettlebell is 168 in competition. She has silver and bronze medals of World & European Championships 2014-2015. Today we will ask her a few questions about her training and her life...

- Hi Abigail. You are really strong kettlebell lifter. Tell us when did you start to lift kettlebells, why did you choose this sport, who was your first coach and who trains you today?

- I first started to lift bells as part of my fitness training for Martial Arts in 2011, my first coach back then was my martial arts instructor Scott McLaughlin (who now also is a kettlebell lifter). I wouldn't say I chose to lift kettlebells at that time, in fact at first I hated when Scott would bring them out in class, though I have to thank him now for not listening to my complaining and persisting with them! It was only really when we found kettlebell sport and both started training for our first kettlebell competition (in Feb 2012) that I started to enjoy training with kettlebells and also started to get drawn in by the challenge they offered.

It was at that first competition I met my current coach, Eddie Sheehan from Ireland, he coached me for my next competition where I set a UK record in 16kg snatch. From then on I was hooked by this sport and Eddie has remained my coach ever since.

- *What do you do and what is your profession?*

- I originally was a Design Engineer, I got my Masters Degree in Engineering and worked in that industry for a few years. However I decided it wasn't what I wanted to do and so retrained and now I am a Sports Therapist (similar to a physiotherapist but with an emphasis on sports injuries and rehabilitation) and Personal Trainer. I love my work now and have my own small studio space where I train people and teach classes, and an attached treatment room for my sports therapy & sports massage.

- *Your main competitor is Russian athlete Natalya Gorbunova. You both have similar results. What do you think about her? As I know you never beat her? Do you plan to beat her?*

- I first met Natalya in 2013 in Omsk when I was over for a Kettlebell Certification course with Anton Anasenko, I think we got on well from then and I like and admire her very much! We have competed together several times in different events, one of which was at the English leg of the IUKL World Cup in 2014 I won gold and Natalya silver in 24kg snatch.

I only plan on working to achieve my best results in training and competition, I don't think about anyone else when I am training – I am only in control of my own performance so that is what I focus on.

- *What is your most hard and most interesting competition?*

- The next one is always the hardest ;) One thing I love about the sport is the targets are always increasing and moving forward. Every competition is hard and interesting, they all have taught me something, whether bad or good!

- *Will you take part on World Championship 2016 in Kazakhstan? Are you already preparing for this competition?*

- This year I don't think I can make the World Championship, I run my own business so it is hard to take the time off to attend competitions that require a lot of travel and time away. In terms of preparation - I am always training, my next competition I think will be the British Championship in November so I am preparing for this currently.

- Tell a few words about you sport plans for future and wish anything for young athletes...)

- My plans are to keep training, competing and progressing in all lifts (snatch, jerk and long cycle, with both single and double bells) and overall to keep enjoying the process! My wish for young athletes is that they too enjoy the process and come into a sport based on community and sportsmanship.

- Thank you Abi for you time. We wish you more and more great results with kettlebell sport!!!

Valentin Egorov

