

WEIGHTLIFTING

# WEIGHT OF THE WORLD

## 10 THINGS YOU ALREADY KNEW ABOUT OLYMPIC WEIGHTLIFTING...

...BUT HAD KIND OF FORGOTTEN, WHAT WITH THE PRICE OF GAS, WORKING ALL THE HOURS AND THE FOOTY TIPPING NOT GOING TOO WELL

**1** Eight members of the Bulgarian team will get busted for drugs before, or during, the Games.

**2** That moment when the lifter heaves a quarter of a tonne of dead weight onto his shoulders, and brings the whole thing into a shuddering squat, you think to yourself, "God help us, that person is going to split in half."

**3** The word snatch will get repeated and enthusiastic mentions from commentators.

**4** Turkey, Greece, Iran, Romania, China, and Bulgaria will compete in their own private competition, and everyone else, including our guys (see below) can bugger off.

**5** Short-arses can lift huge weights. You calculate that it's the equivalent of your wife lifting you and your next-door neighbour at the same time. Come to think of it, your neighbour would jump at the suggestion.

**6** All those fat units in lumpy leotards remind you, uncomfortably, of wrestling in the 1980s.

**7** If there's going to be a massive, agonising and unsightly injury in sport, it'll be in this event. A couple of dirty knee bandages aren't going to stop it.

**8** The combination of shouting and banging, coupled with huge chunks of metal on the move and the possibility of catastrophic joint failure, leave you slightly on edge throughout.

**9** Teachers, weightlifting monsters and tiny 15-year-old gymnasts have cornered the market for chalk.

**10** There are times when you look at a female wedge of muscle with veins on the outside and prison-guard hair and think, fleetingly, "The things that woman could do to me."

In no particular order, the main occupations of the Iranian government are enriching uranium ore, pondering its role in global conflict and feeding this bloke. Hossein Rezazadeh is a mighty god of weightlifting in a country where the sport is huge. The two-time Olympic champion, and multiple world champion, weighs 160kg and is known as the world's strongest man, hauling 263.5kg over his head (in the clean and jerk), which is the equivalent of five supermodels. When he first broke the world record in 2003, the Turks offered him millions to defect, but he told them to get stuffed (in Iranian).



**DEBORAH LOVELY +75kg**  
Deborah Lovely is a pretty handy all-round athlete, though it's lifting huge chunks of metal above her head that's taken her to two Olympics.



**DAMON KELLY +105kg**  
Kelly lifted a PB qualifying for the Games, adding 2kg to his snatch and 5kg to his jerk. In China, he's hoping to raise the bar even further.



PHOTOGRAPH: GETTY IMAGES.