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# Charleston takes on the weight of national championship

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Some lifters from Eastern will be testing their strength this weekend at the USA Weightlifting's Collegiate & 23 and Under National Championship, held at Charleston High School.

Assistant Eastern strength and conditioning coach Erin Blair as well as senior Brittany Brown, a current rugby player, are both in the competition.

Erin Blair, a graduate student at Eastern, was a recent graduate and hockey player at the University of Finlay in Ohio.

Though she always stays in great shape, she has been training specifically for this competition since September 2004, she said.

Blair said she is expecting to get a fun time out of the competition, and because of her love for the sport of weightlifting, she is planning on training just as hard after the competition.

Brown is an inside center on the Eastern women's rugby team. Though rugby took up most of the fall, she still found time to train specifically for this competition and has been doing so since the end of October.

Brown said she is competing for the self-satisfaction.

"I hope to break my personal record and hope to come out as a stronger athlete in general," she said.

Nathan Moe, the strength and conditioning coach here at Eastern, said that in order to train for a competition like this, competitors usually train for about 8-12 weeks, and if there is no training background, usually at least 1 year.

It takes a lot of time and commitment to excel in a sport such as lifting, Moe said, and weightlifters have to have an extreme love of the sport as well as great determination in order to be successful.

"The exciting thing about this competition is that even though people are competing against each other, everyone wants to see everyone do well and improve individually," Moe said.

USA Weightlifting is the national governing body for the Olympic sport, as designated by the United States Olympic Committee.

About 150 lifters from most of the 50 states will meet for the competition, which begins Saturday and concludes Sunday.

There are seven weight classes for women and eight classes for men. The winners of each class will qualify for the World University Championship, held this summer in Lille, France.

This competition is open to all lifters who are 23 years and younger and are enrolled in college this semester.