

WEIGHTLIFTING NO PLACE FOR THE FAINT HEARTED

If you sat down last night with a pair of comfy slippers and a warm dressing gown, hoping for a quiet night of weightlifting on the other side of the world, you would have been sadly disappointed.

What we got instead was a true roller-coaster of emotions, ranging from jubilation, despair, confusion, tension and exhilaration.

Australian weightlifting fans today will feel like they've been through a hand wringer overnight. Not once, not twice, but three times our noble lifters pushed us to the edge.

Once we got pulled back, but on two more occasions we were left to topple over the edge.

And that's just us. Imagine the emotions of the lifters, their coaching staff, teammates and family.

So let's start from the start. When the final field for the women's 75kg was released, there was no Jenna Myers.

The plucky Tasmanian, who had worked so hard to overcome injury to get to Glasgow, had collapsed dramatically just moments before she was due to weigh in and had to be rushed to hospital suffering dehydration.

Jenna had been trying to get her weight down with an intense sauna session which ended up draining her. Team officials, which fortunately include Sydney doctor Rob Mitchell, had no choice but to scratch the 28-year-old.

"Jenna is resting comfortably in her room in the village, is talkative and in good spirits," team medical director Dr Grace Bryant said this morning.

Which left us to concentrate on Canberra lifter Kylie Lindbeck, making her Commonwealth Games debut after less than a handful of years in the sport.

Kylie rarely misses a lift, and so it was no surprise when she returned three perfect lifts in the snatch to leave her sitting fourth with 92kg.

But then the drama struck. Kylie missed her first clean and jerk at 105kg. When the bar crashed to the stage on her second lift, people started to think the unthinkable.

But Kylie Lindbeck is a fighter, and when she hoisted the bar above her head on her third and final attempt the sense of relief was palpable.

A fifth at her first Games, and maybe the incentive she needs to push towards Rio in 2016.

The real drama of the night came in the men's 94kg division, when Australia's Simplicé Ribouem and, it seems, 90 per cent of the world watching, believed he'd clinched back-to-back gold medals.

The man he feared most, Papua New Guinea's Steven Kari, had his final lift disallowed, giving Simplicé the gold with a lift to spare.

But Kari's lift was reviewed, and the judges' decision overturned. Simplicé missed his final attempt, leaving him disconsolate but with a silver medal.

"I'm upset. He (Kari) knows that already. The judges decide and they give it to him," Simplicé said.

"You can't do anything. The judges decide. I was planning to bring the gold to my two sons. Unfortunately I have silver and I have to accept that.

"He only won by the judge, not him. I'm very upset with the judge. But he knew he did something wrong."

Which brought to an end one of the most dramatic night's in recent Australian weightlifting history.

And we've more to come.