

KINGS LANGLEY STUDENT SELECTED TO NATIONAL TEAM

15-year-old Hailee Jarrett admits she knew very little about weightlifting when someone suggested 12 months ago she give it a try.

She knew there was a clean and jerk and a snatch category (which is more than most 14-year-olds know) but very little else.

But the former gymnast had been trying out crossfit training, so weightlifting was not an unnatural progression.

And as it turns out, it was very sage advice.

Hailee Jarrett has taken to weightlifting like a duck to water, culminating in her selection this week as one of two athletes to represent Australia at the Youth World Weightlifting Championships in Peru in April.

"I'm so excited to be given this opportunity," Jarrett said.

"My goal was the Youth World Championships, hopefully the Junior World Championships and hopefully the Commonwealth Youth Games at the end of the year.

"It's a great experience, I'm going to get a lot out of the sport this year. It should be good."

The Kings Langley athlete will be lifting in the 48kg class in Peru. And even though she's just 15, the teenager believes this will be the weight division she'll remain in for quite a while.

I hope to stay in 48kg. I'm told I'm not going to grow anymore," Jarrett said.

"I think there's a big stereotype with weightlifting that it's only for big, heavier people. It's the sort of image you get, but it's fun – I definitely recommend it for anyone."

She says making the transition from crossfit to weightlifting hasn't been too difficult, but the sport does present other challenges.

“I knew nothing about the sport,” she said.

“I’ve enjoyed it. But I’ve had to get used to travelling to the gym in Mona Vale.

“The hardest part is the mental side of the sport – missing lifts, and going after bigger numbers can be pretty challenging.”

Her other challenge is to educate her school friends about her chosen sport.

“My friends understand that I lift weights, but I don’t think they understand all the technical bits and the dedication you have to put into it,” she said.

“My family’s really supportive of my career. Mum and dad do a bit of lifting as well as there’s definitely lots of support.

“The 2018 Commonwealth Games is my big goal, and then hopefully the Olympics after that.”

The 2015 Youth World Championships will be held in Lima, Peru, from April 5-12.