

LEANER NORMAN READY TO TAKE ON BEST

When James Norman missed selection for the Australian junior weightlifting team by just five kilograms, he was absolutely devastated.

"It was pretty hard to take," Norman said.

But rather than let it get to him, the 18-year-old Queenslander threw himself into training, and has been rewarded with selection in the Australian team for the Junior World Weightlifting Championships in Poland next month.

His selection is even more meritorious considering he has just dropped back to the 69kg division.

"James has represented Australia at Youth World Championships before," Australian Weightlifting High Performance Director, Jacquie White said.

"Last year was probably his quietest year, but he not only managed to produce a personal best recently, but he managed to do it in a lighter body weight category than he's been lifting at for the last six months.

"It's an even bigger improvement given the change in bodyweight."

Making it even more challenging is that Norman has a full time job.

"Some days are pretty hard to get through," he said.

"I've been training six times a week, got myself a good dietician and I'm eating plenty of protein."

Weightlifting never held any interest for Norman when he was younger. He preferred AFL.

But when a weightlifting talent scout turned up at his school, and identified 13-year-old Norman as a good prospect, the seeds were sown.

Norman still took some convincing to give up the footy, but his father pushed him to take up a weightlifting scholarship.

"I wasn't keen at all early on," Norman said.

"But when I cracked my first Australian team, I realised I could get somewhere in this sport. Now I love it."

Norman will be lifting in the 69kg class in Poland.

The World Junior Championships will be held in Wroclaw, Poland, from June 6 to June 13.