

IN-FORM ELLIOTT READY TO TEST HERSELF AGAINST WORLD'S BEST

Ask Sydney weightlifter Kiana Elliott about her lifting history and she rattles numbers off quicker than you can write them down.

PB's of 86kg in the snatch, 100kg in the clean and jerk, but 101kg in the heavier 69kg division, a 103kg clean in training, and a close miss at 105kg in training.

Such is the life of a weightlifter, constantly trying to find that extra kilo, the equivalent of a big book or a bottle of wine, the reward for the hours and hours of hard slog spent in often stark, cold gyms during unsociable hours.

They also know what they need to lift if they're going to challenge for medals at the big events, like World Championships and Olympic Games.

17-year-old Elliott has those numbers committed to memory too - 100kg in the snatch, 130kg in the clean and jerk.

"It sounds like a lot, but two years ago my best was 52 in the snatch and 62 in the clean and jerk," Elliott said.

"The numbers I'm lifting now were unfathomable back then. But since I finished school I've been able to increase my training sessions from five a week to eight or nine now.

"It's really helping my consistency."

Next week Elliott will get a chance to test herself against the best in the business when she competes at the World Junior Championships in Poland.

She goes in good form, having broken a string of Australian junior and NSW State records in recent months, and off the back of an encouraging seventh at last year's Youth Olympics.

Elliott's path to Australian team colours is not your traditional one, certainly not in weightlifting.

As a junior she was a national level gymnast. When she decided to try a different direction, she followed the path followed by most sporty, flexible gymnasts – diving.

For Kiana Elliott, though, there was one serious problem.

"I've never been a fan of water," she laughs.

"I did diving for about six months, but I never really enjoyed it."

IN 2013 Elliott was spotted by talent scouts. To be fair, Elliott made it pretty easy for the scouts'; at a weightlifting workshop being run at her cross fit gym she lifted weights that would have put her in contention for Australian junior medals.

“I’d been doing cross fit to keep fit and keep in shape and was finding it really enjoyable,” she said.

“But I never pictured myself lifting barbells, and to be honest, mum was not keen on me going to this workshop.

“I think it was just the usual stereotype thing. But when I was told my numbers at the workshop were comparable to what lifters were doing at Australian juniors, that’s when I realised I might be good at this.”

Mum was still not keen, trying to convince her daughter to stick with cross fit, but Elliott says she’s always been supportive.

Elliott is one of several Australian junior weightlifters benefitting from the NextGen AUSComGames funding program, financial assistance provided to Australian weightlifting to help potential future Commonwealth Games athletes gain international experience.

She hopes it will help her get to the 2018 Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast, and the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.