

"I can cook. I like cooking pasta, and I cook pasta probably three times a month. I like cooking cajun pasta the most."

Hayden Ewing, 9

"I'm always trying to help my friends get good grades. I'm helping them so they can get good grades over the summer."

Omer Elamin, 9

"My teamwork [is underappreciated]. I like to help my group. I make sure everyone is involved, and make sure I'm doing my part."

Simon Egnatios, 10

"My motivation is underappreciated. I think people assume that I don't try as hard as I do, so I think it's my dedication."

Riley Durak, 11

"Something underappreciated is my honesty. A lot of people aren't as honest as I am, and I think that's a negative trait."

Alyssa Eppers, 12

Q: What inspired you to start powerlifting?

John Spreitzer [12]: Freshman football put it into perspective for me. I was smaller and wanted to bulk up, so powerlifting helped me.

Advik Dogra [11]: I always lifted weights. When the powerlifting team started, I was like, you know what, I'll try it out. I fell in love with it. I've been doing it ever since.

Liam Changcoco-Lamug [12]: I've always been a good deadlifter. It's always been my best lift. When I heard powerlifting, I was like, 'yeah, I'll probably be good at this,' and I joined it for real.

Spreitzer: I continued to do power lifting because it's given me other things to do during the winter, and it's given me the motivation to keep working out, even though I have no other seasons coming up.

Dogra: Yeah, honestly, the competition helps a lot. We go to a bunch of meets. Eight, nine, ten meets a season, and it's always good to compete and make friends. It's just really fun.

Changcoco-Lamug: It's low-key fun winning. I feel like that's what makes this year fun. We've been winning a lot. I also like powerlifting because the environment is pretty good, and I like messing with our coach.

Dogra: Our coach is funny. He's chill and he's always in a good mood. He's always poking fun at Liam. We're always having fun.

Spreitzer: Yeah, and the environment at the meets are also very supportive. Even though [powerlifting] is really competitive, everyone is very supportive. They want you to do good.

Dogra: You could be competing against someone, and they'll still cheer for you when you're about to hit your third [attempt].

Spreitzer: At the first meet at Oxford, I was going up for third. I was going for my last attempt and I was going to beat this kid with over 100 pounds, and he was still cheering for me. That's just an example of how supportive everyone is going up for my last attempt.

Dogra: It's a small sport, so not many people do it and the people who do are very committed. They aren't just here for a varsity letter, people do it because they love the sport.

Q: What is your favorite powerlifting memory that you've made this year?

Dogra: Honestly, I haven't been to any meets, so probably just the practices. I remember our coach making one of the freshmen do the arm day gauntlet. It was funny because I did that my freshman year, and that was heinous. You do 250 reps, you pyramid all of the way up and back down, so seeing someone else suffer the way I did was really funny.

Changcoco-Lamug: The best memory for me was the Oxford meet. Our team got second place, the teams around us had 50 more people than we did. There were ten of us, and we only lost first place by three points.

Spreitzer: Plus, the feeling of individual accomplishments after you place top three is nice, like when I placed top three at Oxford, it felt really nice. It also felt even better to place runner up as a team with fewer people.

Changcoco-Lamug: I remember when we were in our first year, and we had only two girls and like four guys. It's nice to see how far we came, and how it's actually growing as a club, and now we're gonna be a sport soon.

Dogra: That'll be nice. We've accomplished a lot as a team, I think in comparison to all of the Troy sports teams, we're better in the state, especially for being so new.

Hands on bar, junior Jeanne Park lifts weight. "I started going to the gym during the pandemic. I wasn't really looking to do [powerlifting] as a sport, but I saw it was a club and kind of got into it. Right before a PR [personal record], I take a lot of sugar and caffeine which helps a lot. I like to take my time, slow my breathing, get locked in and then I go for it," Park said. *Photo by Ellie Sivier.*

raising the bar

The powerlifting team had several members who qualified for states this year.

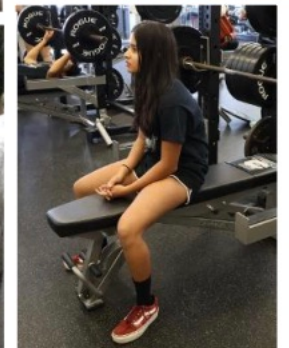
Weight on shoulder, senior Dominick Derigiotis looks forward. "Lifting has always been a hobby of mine, and I know that some of my friends from football are also doing it, so I enjoy it. I like bench press the most because I'm stronger than a lot of people on that lift," Derigiotis said. *Photo by Zaria Johnson.*



Holding the bar, junior Brooke Malone deadlifts 255 pounds. "My favorite lift is the deadlift because it makes you feel strong. For my opening weight, I test what I can do in practice, then pick a number that's a little far from my max, but still safe," Malone said. *Photo by Zaria Johnson.*



Weight set, senior Norbert Kovacs places his hands on a barbell. "I [started powerlifting] because I was out of shape and didn't like it. Powerlifting keeps me consistent and accountable, instead of just doing whatever I want. For [opening numbers], I go for something higher. I know I can hit it because it's something I can hit easily," Kovacs said. At the Oxford Regional Meet, four team members placed first in their weight class. *Photo by Zaria Johnson.*



Faced forward, senior Sarbani Sengupta sits on a bench. "My sister [inspired] me to join powerlifting. I didn't know we had a team. She told me to try it out, so I mainly joined because she asked," Sengupta said. *Photo by Keira McComb.*

In position, freshman Duncan Cauchi prepares to bench press. "Powerlifting has made me get into a consistent habit, and it's helped me keep a schedule and keeps me busy. Before I joined powerlifting, I wasn't that consistent, and I didn't have any motivation for anything," Cauchi said. *Photo by Keira McComb.*



Photo by Soykie Pedroso.



"When I started lifting, I never thought I'd be a captain. It's a surreal feeling. Beyond teaching new lifters, it's a role model position; if I don't push myself, it sets a bad example." **Rishi Kulkarni, 12**

Powerlifting team captain describes his responsibilities

legs or arms

Powerlifting students debate between doing arm day or leg day in the gym

30%

"I think leg day is more fun because I can put up more weight with my legs than with my arms. There's also more to do with legs, because arm day is really just curls."

Noa Reed, 12

70%

"I chose arms because I have to go on stairs a lot. If I do legs, then it hurts. When I do arms it doesn't affect me."

Lucas Rossi, 9

*23 students surveyed