

## Girls finish first, fifth at state powerlifting

Written by By Betsy Blevins, Managing Editor  
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March 24, 2011 - While many were in Corpus Christi last week for spring break, two Leonard girl powerlifters were there to compete in the state meet for the Texas High School Powerlifting Association. While most in the area were enjoying a time of relaxing and leisure, junior April Jones, who was named the two-time girl's powerlifting champion in her weight division at the meet, said it was "busy" for her and senior teammate Cadi Grantland. Jones clenched the gold in the 198 weight class and Grantland earned a respectable fifth place finish in the 97 weight division.



Jones is no rookie at the state meet, having competed there last year and winning then, but every year is a different game.

"I was worried about one girl," Jones said. "But she only got her first squat, and I got all three. So right there I was 90 pounds ahead of her."

The squat is the first competition of the meet that the athletes compete in, which gave Jones a huge advantage right out of the gate.

"After I got the squat, I jumped up and hugged Coach Murray and Coach Dills gave me a kiss on the cheek," stated Jones.

Her 415-pound squat was a personal best, as was the next lift - a 225-pound bench press, which was also a tie for the state record.

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"I matched the record for the bench. It had been at 215 for forever, then the day before it got beat by 220, and 225, and then I matched it on Saturday. And that's for all divisions overall (1A-5A), the state records are not limited to division."

By the time the final match rolled around, Jones admitted she was worn out. Her dead lift of 340-pounds was her second lowest of the season, but with the 90-pound gain she had on her most contested competitor, she "had it in the bag". She lifted a total of 980 pounds between the three sets.

Grantland lifted a 190 squat, her second best of the season, and an 85-pound bench press. Her best competition was the dead lift where she pulled 250 pounds - her personal best for the year - and was only five pounds lighter in the category from the first place finisher in her division. When the weights were averaged out, Grantland earned fifth place overall with a total weight of 525 pounds. Bri Williams of White Oak earned first place in the division with a total of 645 pounds.

While the competitors will admit the competition is as much mental as it is physical and always different, they try to keep things as normal and routine as possible in the time leading up to the event, which includes watching what they eat.

"Every night before a meet, I do exactly the same thing - I get ready and do the same routine as the meet before," Jones said, who further explained that after the win this past weekend they celebrated by going out to eat.

Jones said her coach, Mike Dills is debating on a national meet, but it wasn't a for sure thing at press time. If she does attend one, it will more than likely be in Oklahoma in April sometime.

**Pictured, April Jones (left) and Cadi Grantland (right) show off their respective first and fifth place medals from the state powerlifting meet held last weekend. - Ava Barlow staff photo**