

Saturday May 30th 2009 brought with it the Victorian Senior and Junior Championships, incorporating Under 16, Under 18, Under 20 and Open Age Categories. The competition was of a high quality with Senior Nationals and World Master's Qualification on the line, as well as lifters trying to achieve the various International and Elite standards.

Hawthorn had many lifters competing, all of whom represented their club with skill and dignity. To start proceedings, Wei-Jien Tan and Vannara Be were in the 62Kg Category and Steve McConnell was in the 69Kg Category. In his first competition, Wei-Jien missed his first two Snatches but recovered for successful attempts on 57Kg and 76Kg. Steve failed in his attempt to qualify for Senior Nationals, brain-snapping and deadlifting 125Kg twice having completed 102Kg Snatch and 120Kg Clean & Jerk. Vannara was the star of the session however, easily Snatching 107Kg before narrowly missing 112Kg. Vannara then went on to to successfully attempt all three Clean & Jerks, finishing with a huge PB 135Kg. Not bad for 60.85Kg bodyweight! This gave Vannara the Senior International Standard for 62Kg Category.

The first female session followed the first male, with Socheata and Reachny Be lifting, along with Bernadette Kinnane and Seen Lee. Reachny continued her recent improvements with successes on 39Kg and 43Kg, whilst Bernadette also improved with lifts of 33Kg and 41Kg. Socheata was successful in achieving the Senior standard and thus qualified for the National Championships by lifting a total of 143Kg. Seen Lee was, as usual, last out and took some big jumps, deadlifting her final 94Kg, although it was a record attempt. She would have to be content with 85Kg Snatch and 105Kg Clean & Jerk. Despite not exceeding her bests Seen still managed to complete the Elite Standard for the 3rd time, the only female to achieve the Elite Standard this year.

The day rolled on and as the competition started to fall behind schedule, the 77Kg men lifted. Julio B Melo (the junior) lifted well in his first competition to complete lifts of 48Kg and 63Kg whilst Greg Kowalski, lifting in only his second competition, managed to (power) Snatch 82Kg and also completed 110Kg in the Clean & Jerk, something he has been working towards for a while now. Dave Miller looked very solid with his attempts on 76Kg and 95Kg, continuing his improvements. Francois Etoundi, having only recently become Oceania Champion, only did two attempts, a very comfortable 110Kg Snatch and a nice push jerk on 140Kg, all this at the bodyweight of 74.90-rather heavy for Francois! David Sarkisian was the pick of the 77Kg lifters, easily Snatching 127Kg and fighting hard for 163Kg Clean & Jerk. This total of 290Kg gave Dave the 'Senior International' standard, making him the eighth person this year to achieve this standard.

As the clock continued to tick, the competition continued. It was now the turn of the 85Kg and 94Kg men. In the 85Kg category, Paulo Magistrado continued to impress with comfortable attempts on 86Kg and 106Kg. His 192Kg total qualified him to represent Victoria at the Under 18 Nationals to be held later this year. Well done Paulo! In the 94Kg category, James Parry, lifting for Hawthorn for the first time, showed his strength with an 85Kg Snatch and 113Kg Clean & Jerk, whilst one of the elder statesmen of the gym, Nick Milankovic, Snatched 84Kg and followed that up with a very strong 117Kg in the Clean & Jerk. Simplicie Ribouem, like Francois, having one eye on the upcoming Senior Nationals, did not push himself incredibly hard and looked very strong in his two attempts on 137Kg and 161Kg, looking comfortable at 87.60Kg bodyweight.

The massive day kept rolling on, this with the final women's session, encompassing the 69Kg, 75Kg and 75+Kg categories. Hawthorn had three lifters-Jacquie White in the 69Kg

category, Belinda Van Tienen in the 75Kg category and Carley McKay in the 75+Kg category. Carley, having put in the hard yards to make bodyweight (75.15Kg) performed well to secure five out of six attempts, just unable to stand up with her last Clean, finishing with a respectable 122Kg total to win the super female category. Jacquie White, lifting as a light 69Kg lifter (63.90 bodyweight) recovered from a missed 83Kg Snatch to successfully attempt it and followed that with successes on 99 and 102Kg in the Clean and Jerk. This gave Jacquie qualification for the Senior Nationals in the 69Kg category, having qualified for the 63Kg category earlier this year. The last of the females to lift was Belinda Van Tienen and having lost a few kilos to make bodyweight (74....) was unfortunate to miss 86Kg Snatch, missing it very closely behind on the second attempt at it. She would settle for an 82Kg Snatch and would go on to Clean and Jerk 100Kg, just missing a Jerk after Cleaning 105Kg very nicely. Belinda's 180Kg total would see her qualify for the Senior Nationals in the 75Kg category.

Finally, the last session of the day arrived, starting 1 hour after the allotted starting time of 5:30 p.m. The wait was well worth it though, with Hawthorn boasting a massive crop of lifters, or is that a crop of massive lifters? Josh Quinn, Michael "Big Mick" Bridgeman, Simon McCoy, Adam Kok, Matt Falcone, Corran Hocking and Julio Melo (Senior) were all lifting. Julio was unfortunate, unable to total after missing 95Kg Snatch three times, however, the rest of the session would prove better for the club. Big Mick, in only his third competition, did a massive 22Kg total improvement to finish with 97Kg Snatch and 111Kg Clean And Jerk, just pressing the Jerk after power cleaning 118Kg. Josh Quinn lifted the best he ever has, doing PB lifts of 108Kg in Snatch and 128Kg in Clean & Jerk, also pulling out a massive Clean on 136Kg. Adam Kok, having removed his sleeved attire, Snatched a nice 118Kg and Clean and Jerked a solid 150Kg, also Cleaning 160Kg in a massive grind. Simon found himself in a battle with Gordon Laurie for the 105Kg title and, after falling 5Kg behind in the Snatch, did an easy 151Kg for the win before capping that with 155Kg-and seeming happy about it. Matt Falcone saved himself nicely completing his third attempt in the Snatch on 140Kg, before Clean and Jerking an easy 170Kg. Corran would Snatch this amount and follow that up with a whopping 201Kg Clean and Jerk to win the Best male lifter trophy based on the Sinclair formula.

All in all, a successful day for the club, with many, many PB's, as well as winning the Bob Edmond Shield for best male team. Corran Hocking, Seen Lee, Socheata Be, Steve McConnell and Reachny Be also managed to collect 7 out of the 8 Best Lifter trophies on offer to cap what was a long, tiring yet successful day.