

# CasePerformance

## May Newsletter Part I



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**Here is the news that we'll cover in Part I of this month's newsletter....**

I. Welcome & A Tribute to Mothers.....	2
II. Community Member of the Month Interview – Kristine Poirier.....	3
III. Community Member Performance Tip – Training During/Following Pregnancy...	12
IV. Meets/Events.....	15

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Hello,

I hope that the month of May has treated everyone well and that you find yourself a step or two closer towards achieving one of your short/long term goals. Things are active here for the CasePerformance team members.

Our [strength](#), [running](#) and [nutrition](#) consultations are going well. If you're interested in finding out about our group discounts please send us an [email](#).

## I. A Tribute to Mothers

According to Wikipedia, a source which we all know is 100% accurate, 100% of the time (wink, wink); greater than 100 countries celebrate Mother's day during the month of May. Furthermore, my mother brought me into the world on May 1<sup>st</sup> making it officially the grooviest month of year! Thus, between those two factors, I felt it was only appropriate to unite the celebration of motherhood with this month's CP Newsletter. Part I of our May newsletter co-stars Kristine Poirier, our CP Community Member of the month, as well as Sarah Stevens who contributes this month's CP Community Member Tip of the Month. As you'll see, both women are quite accomplished as athletes, and, of even greater importance, role models for their kids. The lessons and advice shared by these women extend out to everyone, regardless of gender. (So yes – All you Macho guys out there will benefit from reading this Mother's Day Themed Newsletter!!!)

Our tribute to motherhood and women in general does not end there. In Part II of our newsletter, we shift focus to a couple supplements that either A) potentially assist fertility issues or B) potentially protect against breast cancer.

In closing, I hope you enjoy the uniqueness and insight shared in our Mother's Day themed May newsletters as much as I did while assembling them!

Respectfully,

Sean Casey

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## II. Community Member of the Month...



*On left, Kristine showing off a little hardware following a figure competition. On right, Kristine engaging in a little strongwoman training*

This month's CasePerformance Community member of the month is Kristine Poirier who hails from North Carolina, USA. To say that Kristine is a fan of resistance training and exercise in general would be an understatement; it's her passion! Kristine has competed in both figure contests and as of late, powerlifting meets with strongman competitions soon to follow this July. Needless to say, few things get Kristine excited as much as a good training session or meet with the one exception being, as she puts it, her “kiddos.” [For those whose 1<sup>st</sup> language is not English, “kiddos” is slang for kids]. With that backdrop, I knew that it was only fitting that Kristine Poirier be our CP Community Member of the Month for our Mother's Day themed May Newsletter.

Without further delay, let's get to our interview and start picking at the mind and experiences of Kristine Poirier....

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**First, on behalf of the CasePerformance Community, I want to thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to join us here today; it's an honor and a privilege.**

Thank you Sean! It is my pleasure to be a guest with you today!

**Tell us a little about your background... How did you get involved with resistance training and/or exercise in general? Did you participate in any sports while growing up?**

I was not the athletic type growing up. Throughout grade school and high school I did not belong to any sports. It was not until I began my freshman year of college that I found exercise and joined the Army ROTC program, where I had to participate in PT- (physical training). We did many types of exercises- the 3 main being pushups, sit-ups and a 2 mile run (3.2 km). I went on to graduate and join the Army where I served just shy of 10yrs. In all that time, I never did much more than the basic mandatory exercises and I had a love/hate relationship with running. I did not enjoy it, but it kept me 'skinny'. I ran a lot.

In the summer of 2006 I had my first daughter, and I decided to resign my commission and be a homemaker. Then came baby number two, even though I had religiously stayed active throughout my pregnancy, the extra weight was unbearable as was the time it was taking this time around to lose it.

Thus, I decided that the only way to lose the weight and feel happy again about me as a person, was to *have a goal*. So, I picked a bodybuilding show to compete in. Aid from competitors at my gym and my family's support, I trained, dieted and competed in my first figure competition. I ended up placing, and was hooked. I have since competed in two other competitions.

However, I also have a newfound love for competing in powerlifting meets. Additionally, I have my first Strongman competition on 27 July.

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**While competing as a figure/bodybuilding athlete, what did a typical training week look like?**

Throughout my entire prep, my training week varied considerable; however, speaking in terms of generalities, I lifted weights and did cardio 6 days a week until I was about a month out from the competition (which I note is a controversial training strategy but it worked for me). Starting a month out, I began 2-a-day cardio sessions, 4x/week. For my problem areas, I weight trained along these lines:

Monday- arms/back

Tuesday- quads/glutes

Wednesday- shoulders/ab work

Thursday- Chest/back

Friday- Hammies/Glutes/calves

Sunday- Shoulders

**What motivated you to shift from figure/bodybuilding competitions to powerlifting and strongwoman competitions?**

I crossed over for the pure excitement of competing against myself. Powerlifting and Strongman provide me this over figure/bodybuilding. Each one of these sports is special to me in its own way. The bodybuilding/figure competitions are beauty pageant like in nature. This can be very taxing both mentally and physically; the diet coupled with 60 seconds to sell "you" to a subjective judging panel is very stressful. Don't get me wrong, I enjoy the weight lifting, the stage, and being a ham (!), but the diet prep is very hard to maintain from show to show.

I found powerlifting while during my off season between figure shows and decided to try out my new muscle mass, by competing in a meet with little to no prep, coach, or dieting down for a lower weight class. I placed, taking first in my weight class and was instantly hooked. By chance, I happened upon the Strongman competition being held here in North Carolina this July and decided I wanted to test how strong I truly am! So far, the sport of Strongman is the toughest but most rewarding in the *“OMG ‘I’ just did THAT WOW, I AM Strong!”* aspect.

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**What does your typical training week currently look like now that your focus has shifted to strongman/powerlifting competitions vs. the training you described a couple questions ago?**

As far as the powerlifting training, I have the option to the train up for a meet with my current coach, Matt Perryman. My training is a Bulgarian-esque type of method. Every day I squat up to a training max and either over-head press or bench press followed by some sort of pulling movement. During the 3 months I've been on this program, I have made huge gains in strength. Right now, I am looking for overall strength gains and not worried too much about the 'aesthetic' appeal.

In addition to that mentioned above, I am training for the Strongman competition every Saturday as well. This encompasses atlas stones, yoke carry, frame carry, log clean and press, sled push pulls, and some other events. I train with a fantastic crew led by Lynn Morehouse, who is the promoter of the [Strongman competition](#) I am competing in on July 27<sup>th</sup>. For those who are in the area and interested in also competing, I think you should definitely check out the [event](#).

**Are there any particular short or long terms goals that you're currently working towards with respect to your training?**

Short term goal

Right now my focus is on being mentally and physically prepared for the Strongman competition in July.

Long term goals

In the future, my goals include a 300lb squat, a 340 lb deadlift, and a 170+ bench all raw (136kg, 154 kg and 77kg). I will get them!

**With your experience in body/figure competitions, powerlifting and strongman competitions, I'm sure you've trained using a huge variety of lifts. For pure enjoyment, what is your favorite lift and why?**

Right! My favorite lift is the deadlift. If I am short on time and can only pick one exercise to do, it is always this lift. The simple movement of the deadlift requires so much from your body to complete the movement, yet it is, in my opinion, one of the easiest lifts to learn, and it does not require a spot, which is always a plus in my book. It

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works back, legs, glutes, grip, and core. You can move a ton of weight with this one exercise and with just a barbell and some plates. Deadlifting can help you build muscle while getting a full body workout. There are many variations of this exercise; but to compliment my personal goals, I have been training with conventional deadlifts, sumo deadlifts, and Romanian deadlifts (RDL's).

## Do you have any personal pet peeves while training in the gym?

If I'm honest, I have a plethora of gym related pet peeves, but instead of giving a redundant list, I will try to come up with some newer ones I have recently found myself complaining about.

- Unwanted spots- this is a HUGE issue for me personally. It seems like men in my gym have never seen a woman squat more than 180 lbs (~82 kg) before. However, when I get to 180+lbs, I can see men behind me in the mirrors "at the ready" to save the damsel in distress. I have had men just come up behind me and start coaching me, or take a hold of the bar or my waist; very distracting and unsafe. While I understand that there will always be 'someone who will require a spot and does not know it', usually a newer lifter or over confident one; it is still unsafe and a pet peeve to take unwanted action- unless it is an obvious necessity.
- Talking to you in the middle of a set- I can be found with my earbuds in my ears, but don't be fooled, there is usually nothing "on". It is simply a deterrent I've recently begun using to keep from getting into conversation with someone- especially in the middle of sets. The unfortunate thing is that it's not 100% fool proof. I still find myself having to "hit the pause" button in order to hear what someone is asking. I have been detained for more than 10 minutes before; this kind of interruption will ruin a set, and a mindset.
- Dumbbell Rack Hog- This one is a little redundant but I feel it needs to be reiterated. It irks me to see folks doing one arm bent over rows on top of the dumbbell rack, or doing anything within 2-3 feet (0.6-0.9m) of the rack. If I have to say "excuse me" to get a dumbbell, we have issues.



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**Switching gears here, let's discuss the nutrition and supplement strategies that fuel your training...**

With my current training schedule, I am not actively “tracking” my macros or even ensuring that I am keeping to my maintenance in order to maintain current body weight. With the amount of physical work I do daily, I am allowing my body to “tell” me when and what to eat. I will say, I eat what I prepare at home; I do not frequent restaurants or fast food. I like to eat turkey, chicken breast, uncooked veggies, fish, eggs, oatmeal, potatoes.

As far as supplements, I take fish oil every day, a multivitamin, vitamin D, and I use whey protein powder. That is it. No fat burners, no BCAA's, no pre-workout, no post workout concoction, and no “recovery” powders/pills.

**You looked exceptional for your figure competitions. Can you give us an overview of the dietary approach you used while preparing for these contest?**

Oh, thank you, at my age- I'll take that! I had a coach who did my nutrition and training for the shows I competed in; I highly recommend folks looking to get into figure/bodybuilding competitions at the very least hire a nutritionist for their contest prep! In my opinion, you have so much to worry about that adjusting your macros and level of physical output can make you second guess yourself when in a state of caloric deficit. I find it is much easier to trust a professional and follow their plan.

To answer the question, I was in a caloric deficit for approximately 16 weeks, and during this time, I did use fat burners, as well as BCAA's. I consumed a low carb, high fat, high protein diet during this time. I ate 6 small meals a day- this was only to ensure that I was getting all the food I needed to ingest into my body and it was my preferred method of eating. Others on my team ate primarily in the evening and in just 1 or 2 meals total.

**Now that you're competing in powerlifting competitions, has your dietary strategies changed at all?**

For sure. I bulked up and gained quite a bit of weight for my powerlifting meet. I can say at my maintenance I am about 124lbs, for my meet I was 132lbs, for a figure competition I am 110lbs, and for the upcoming Strongman- I will be a whopping 140lbs. So, as you can see- I am eating. A lot!!

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**When first starting off, what were the biggest mistakes you found yourself making from a nutrition and training perspective? In other words, what would you advice people NOT to do when first starting to train?**

1. Have a plan for when you get to the gym. This, in my opinion is where a personal trainer comes in very handy for beginners who do not know how to perform the exercises correctly or know their way around the gym/weight room.
2. Do not “just” do classes at the gym. In my opinion, doing the same thing over and over again can become boring and in many cases, the individual will cease working out due to the boredom. And do things with a friend(s) to keep your motivation and accountability up.
3. Do not break the bank! Good supplements do exist, but many will fail to live up to the hype and are NOT necessary!!! Do your homework. I do not get my knowledge from fitness magazines anymore, I research and even experiment on myself to see if a certain “product” is truly beneficial to my physique and my pocket book. You can search and read an array of research reviews and studies on supplements nowadays. My one word of caution would be using *intelligence* in interpreting what you read; Make sure you're reading trusted sources and don't simply look at the reviews on the manufacturers own website which always seem to indicate that the supplement was the best thing ever created... hmmm! Forums and e-commerce websites can be misleading too so take everything with a grain of salt when looking at these latter sources.

**Editor's Note:** Awesome there! I'm glad to see that Kristine is following my golden rule of ["RE"-search leads to "ME"-search](#) when she says " *research and even experiment on myself to see if a certain “product” is truly beneficial ...!*"

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With this being our Mother’s Day themed newsletter, along with your passion for your kids, I must ask...

**While pregnant/following pregnancy, did you incorporate exercise into your daily routine?**

Yes. I was still an active duty Soldier throughout my entire first pregnancy and actually "had" to remain active. The Army has a physical fitness program for pregnant soldiers. In my case at that duty station, we swam every single day at the pool on post.

With my second child, I also remained very active, I lifted weights and jogged/walked on a treadmill-(depended on which month) or swam throughout. I believe the energy I had, as well as my pleasant mental state was a direct result of daily physical activity.

**How do you encourage your children to be active?**



*The true secret to Kristine's success ... having an excellent coach giving her pointers during her workouts!*

Simple, I lead by example. My kiddos have been to my competitions and meets; In addition, they usually accompany me to the gym. Most of the folks I associate with also are fitness lovers of some nature. My daughters are involved in soccer, gymnastics, ballet, and karate. I allow them to choose what they want to do.

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**Any final thoughts/advice you're willing to share with us at CasePerformance?**

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to share my experiences with the CP community!!

**For those individuals who would like to follow your training a little closer, where can they find it?**

They can follow me on [Fitocracy.com](http://Fitocracy.com). It is the social network where I log every single one of my workouts and follow many other amazing people and athletes. Or they can send me a [facebook request](#) and follow me there.

**I realize that thoroughly answering these questions takes a lot of time and effort on your part. There are a lot of solid insights and lessons that one can take away from your thoughts. Thus, on behalf of our readers, I want to once again thank you for taking time out of your busy day to join us. Keep up the great work!**

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## III. Community Member Performance Tip

This month's Performance tip comes to us from Sarah Stevens who shares with us her training leading up to and following her pregnancy. Her dedication is quite impressive. In addition, I want to clearly point out, as she explicitly states in the title to her piece, this is HER experience, NOT advice! Make sure you consult with your physician prior to starting up any exercise program during pregnancy.

## My Experience. Not Advice. My Story.

By Sarah Stevens



*Sarah Stevens doing a few kettlebell swings at ~ 5 months (left) and deadlifts at ~ 8 months (right) to keep physically and mentally sharp during her pregnancy.*

Previously here at CasePerformance, I shared with you [my background](#). As mentioned there, my long term goals are to be a capable woman and a good role model for my daughter. With that in mind, I share with you my experience training during pregnancy, post pregnancy and as an active mom.

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I was highly active when I got pregnant, training in BJJ (Brazilian Jujitsu), Crossfit, distance running and group exercise. I trained the first two months without modifying my routine, as I didn't know I was pregnant. When I found out, my doctor warned me to not have my heart rate exceed 140 BPM. I knew I had been above that recently. Uh oh? I decided I was going to continue training the way I was because I really enjoyed it, and it made me somewhat sane. However, I really focused and listened to what my body was telling me during training, something I hadn't always done up to this point. When I cramped up, I stopped. When I needed to sleep in, I did.

Throughout the pregnancy I ran 2-3x/week; usually around 3-5 miles (4.8 – 8km). My longest was 10 miles (16 km) which I did at 6 months pregnant; the reason I stopped was because I was constantly peeing my pants the whole run... Not fun being a pee pee pants for that long!! In addition to the running, I did crossfit 3x/week, taught about 8 group exercise classes/week, throughout my pregnancy. I also did finally BJJ 2x/wk up to month 5 of my pregnancy. It was a lot but nothing I wasn't used to. I liked being on the go constantly. On top of all that I worked a 40 hr a week job on my feet bartending and serving cocktails.

My doctor knew of most of my workouts and was fine with it. As long as the little was active in my belly, all was good. She was most active when I was done with my workout. It was her time to squiggle, hiccup, and workout. From a nutrition standpoint, I was vegan for the first 7 months. However, my body then began craved steak so I ate it. Again, I listened to my body.

I knew the exact day my last workout would be as I had a scheduled C section. I recall doing a pretty good workout the day before I delivered my active little Olive. Following delivery, I took 2 1/2 weeks off from the gym before I started to feel better and the urge of needing to move returned. I did it VERY carefully at first; my initial workouts consisted of stretching, light lifting, and a bit of sweating. As I healed, I added weight; A little at a time.

By keeping up with my training during pregnancy, I was probably able to maintain about 80% of my pre-pregnancy level of fitness. With regards to weight gain, I gained about 35lbs (16 kg) throughout my pregnancy. Following Olive's birth, it took me about 6 months to take it off the weight. As I mentioned above, I took my recovery slow and was back to lifting normal weights within a year of Olive being born. I definitely enjoyed my time with her being so small and was ok with taking time out to get some quality time with her. (-;



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*On left, Olive critiquing Sarah's sled pulling skills from behind (or just enjoying a free ride!). On right, Sarah coaching Olive during a powerlifting meet.*

Olive has been in a gym since she was 2 1/2 weeks old. She learned to use barbells as walkers, learned to stand on a kettlebell, and has been doing gym stuff "like mom and dad do." Now at age 5, she has done two powerlifting meets with quite impressive totals! Olive is able to clean and jerk 20 lbs (9 kg), 9 solid pull ups, can climb a rope and deadlift 2x her bodyweight. I am convinced that because I was active during my pregnancy, she is happily active now!

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Great story there Sarah; Thanks for putting the time and effort into sharing it with us. I think I can speak for all members of the [CasePerformance Community](#) when I say it was an excellent read!

Switching gears here, I **strongly encourage** other community members to contact me via [facebook](#) or [email](#) and share your training, nutrition, supplement and/or healthy cooking tips and recipes for the "Community Member Performance Tips" sections of future newsletter.

Intimidated about the writing aspect of things but still have a good thing to share? No problem, I'll help you on the writing aspect of things. We look forward to sharing your knowledge and experiences!

- Sean Casey

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## IV. Meets/Events

Here are a couple events that have been shared to me by members of the CasePerformance community.

### 1. Strength Sport Competitions

**Strength Guild, Strength Camp, featuring Jason Pegg, Paul Carter, Phil Stevens and the supplier of this month's performance tip, Sarah Stevens**

Where: Topeka, Kansas

When: June 21<sup>st</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>

For more information [CLICK HERE](#)

### 2013 North Carolina Strength Challenge

Where: Morrisville, North Carolina

When: July 27<sup>th</sup>

For more information [CLICK HERE](#) ... and go support CP featured member Kristine Poirier as she dominates the competition (no pressure there Kristine!)

### 2. Endurance Events

There has been no specific event that has been brought to my attention. However, for a general listing of running events going on in your area, [CLICK HERE](#)!

\*\*\* Please know that CasePerformance does NOT receive any financial or other incentives if you choose to participate in any of the above events.



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That wraps up Part I of this CasePerformance newsletter. Hope you enjoyed it. Stay tuned for Part II of the May Newsletter where our Mother Day themed agenda continues!

And as always... Train smart, train hard and leave the excuses to someone else!

Respectfully,

[The CasePerformance Team](#)