Local Athlete Breaks World Kettlebell Record

By Grant LaFleche

It's not likely to make national news, given the relative obscurity of her sport, but St. Catharines-based personal trainer Jennifer Hintenberger became a world kettlebell record holder.

In a cloud of chalk, the St. Catharines kettlebell trainer and competitor smashed a record by hauling a 16-kilogram weight over her head 738 times for 60 minutes straight. She broke the old record held by an Australian athlete who completed 545 repetitions.

Hintenberger set the new record at a charity competition to raise money for disaster relief.

"This is such a great feeling," Hintenberger said. "It's a great sport and allows me to engage my competitive spirit. I cannot play rugby anymore. I've got three screws in my shoulder and had eight concussions. I have had figure skating injuries. So this is something that is a challenge and I can still be competitive."

Kettlebells is a sport that mirrors more traditional weightlifting using weights that, despite the name, look more like cannonballs with a fused handle than kettles. The primary difference between the two sports lies in the objective: where weightlifting competitions are won by the person who lifts the heaviest weight, kettlebell competitions are decided by who lifts a particular weight the most times within a time limit.

Most competitions involve 10-minute events, but this one was called a "long cycle," or marathon, in which competitors perform a single-arm lift—they can switch hands as often as they like—for an hour without setting the kettlebell down.