

= Mark Henry =

Mark Jerrold Henry ( born June 12 , 1971 ) is an American powerlifter , Olympic weightlifter , strongman , and professional wrestler who is currently signed to WWE on the Raw brand . He was a two @-@ time Olympian in 1992 and 1996 and a Gold , Silver and Bronze Medalist at the Pan American Games in 1995 . As a powerlifter , he was WDFPF World Champion ( 1995 ) and a two @-@ time U.S. National Champion ( 1995 and 1997 ) as well as an all @-@ time raw world record holder in the squat and deadlift . Currently , he still holds the WDFPF world records in the squat , deadlift and total and the USAPL American record in the deadlift since 1995 . He is credited for the biggest raw squat and raw powerlifting total ever performed by a drug tested athlete , regardless of weight class , as well as the greatest raw deadlift by an American citizen .

In weightlifting , Henry was a three @-@ time U.S. National Weightlifting Champion ( 1993 , 1994 , 1996 ) , an American Open winner ( 1992 ) , a two @-@ time U.S. Olympic Festival Champion ( 1993 and 1994 ) and a NACAC champion ( 1996 ) . He holds all three Senior US American weightlifting records of 1993 ? 1997 . In 2002 he won the first annual Arnold Strongman Classic .

Since joining the World Wrestling Federation ( now WWE ) in 1996 , he has become a one @-@ time WWF European Champion and a two @-@ time world champion , having held the ECW Championship in 2008 , and the World Heavyweight Championship in 2011 .

= = Early life = =

Henry was born in Silsbee , Texas . As a child , he was a big wrestling fan and André the Giant was his favorite wrestler . While attending a wrestling show in Beaumont , Texas , young Henry tried to touch André as he was walking down the aisle , but tripped over the barricade . André picked him up out of the crowd and put him back behind the barricade . Henry played football in high school until his senior year , when he strained ligaments in his wrist during the first game of the year and scored below 700 on the SAT . When Henry was 12 years old , his father , Ernest , died of complications from diabetes . When he was 14 years old , Henry was diagnosed with dyslexia .

Henry comes from a family in which almost all of the men are larger than average , especially his great uncle Chudd , who was 6 ft 7 in , weighed approximately 500 lb , never had a pair of manufactured shoes , and was known as the strongest man in the Piney Woods of East Texas .

= = Powerlifting career = =

By the time Mark Henry was in the fourth grade , he was 5 ' 5 " and weighed 225 lb ( 102 kg ) . His mother bought a set of weights for him when he was 10 years old . During Henry 's freshman year at Silsbee High School , he was already able to squat 600 lb ( 270 kg ) , which was well over school record . As an 18 @-@ year @-@ old high school senior , Henry was called " the world 's strongest teenager " by the Los Angeles Times , and made it into the headlines in early 1990 for winning the National High School Powerlifting Championships and setting teenage lifting world records in the squat 832 lb ( 377 kg ) and total 2 @,@ 033 lb ( 922 kg ) . By the time Henry finished high school , he was a three @-@ time Texas state champion with state and national records in all four powerlifting categories ? the squat at 832 lb ( 377 kg ) , bench press at 525 lb ( 238 kg ) and deadlift at 815 lb ( 370 kg ) as well as the total at 2 @,@ 033 lb ( 922 kg ) .

At the Texas High School Powerlifting Championships in April 1990 , Terry Todd , a professor of kinesiology at the University of Texas at Austin and former weightlifter , spotted Henry and persuaded him to go to Austin after he graduated to train in the Olympic style of weightlifting . In July 1990 at the USPF Senior National Powerlifting Championships , 19 @-@ year @-@ old Henry came second only to the legendary six @-@ time World Powerlifting Champion Kirk Karwoski . While powerlifting relies primarily on brute strength and power , which Henry obviously possessed , Olympic weightlifting is considered more sophisticated , involving more agility , timing , flexibility and technique . There have been few lifters in history who have been able to be successful in both lifting disciplines . Mastering the technique of weightlifting usually takes many years of practice . But Henry

broke four national junior records in weightlifting after only eight months of training . In April 1991 , he won the United States National Junior Championships ; 20 days later he placed fourth at the U.S. Senior National Championships , and finished sixth at the Junior World Weightlifting Championships in Germany two months later . Only few weeks afterwards , he became 1991 's International Junior Champion in Powerlifting as well . In Henry 's first year in competitive weightlifting , he broke all three junior ( 20 and under ) American records 12 times , and became the United States ' top Superheavyweight , surpassing Mario Martinez .

At the age of 19 , Henry had already managed to qualify for the weightlifting competition at the 1992 Summer Olympics , where he finished tenth in the Super- Heavyweight class . Ten months before the 1992 Olympics , Henry had begun training with Dragomir Cioroslan , a bronze medalist at the 1984 Summer Olympics , who said that he had " never seen anyone with Mark 's raw talent " . After the Olympics , Henry became more determined to focus on weightlifting and began competing all over the world . In late 1992 he took the win at the USA Weightlifting American Open and further proved his dominance on the American soil by winning not only the U.S. National Weightlifting Championships , but also the U.S. Olympic Festival Championships in 1993 and 1994 . At the 1995 Pan American Games Henry won a gold , silver and bronze medal .

Having reached the pinnacle of weightlifting on a National and continental level , he competed again in powerlifting and shocked the world by winning the ADFPA U.S. National Powerlifting Championships in 1995 with a 2314 @. @ 8 lb raw Powerlifting Total . Despite competing without supportive equipment in contrast to the other competitors , Henry managed to outclass the lifter in second place by 286 lbs defeating not only 5 time IPF World Powerlifting Champion and 12 time USAPL National Powerlifting Champion Brad Gillingham , but also America 's Strongest Man of 1997 Mark Philippi . In the process he set all @-@ time world records in the raw deadlift at 903 @. @ 9 lbs ( 410 kg ) and the squat without a squat suit at 948 @. @ 0 lbs ( 430 kg ) as well as the all @-@ time drug tested raw total at 2314 @. @ 8 lb ( 1050 kg ) . Later that same year in October , he competed in the drug @-@ free Powerlifting World Championships and won again , even though he trained on the powerlifts only sparingly ? due his main focus still being on the two Olympic lifts . He not only become World Champion by winning the competition but also bettered his previous all @-@ time squat world record to 953 @. @ 5 lbs ( 432 @. @ 5 kg ) and his all @-@ time drug tested world record total to 2336 @. @ 9 lbs ( 1060 kg ) .

In 1996 Henry became the North America , Central America , Caribbean Islands ( NACAC ) Champion . He earned the right to compete at the Olympics by winning the U.S. National Weightlifting Championships in the Spring of 1996 for a third time . During his victory Henry became Senior US American record holder ( 1993 ? 1997 ) in the Snatch at 180 @. @ 0 kg ( 396 @. @ 8 lbs ) , Clean and jerk at 220 @. @ 0 kg ( 485 @. @ 0 lbs ) , and Total at 400 @. @ 0 kg ( 881 @. @ 8 lbs ) , improving all of his three previous personal bests . This 400 kg total , in the opinion of many experts in track field of international lifting ? including Dragomir Cioroslan , the ' 96s coach of the U.S. team ? was the highest ever made by an athlete who had never used anabolic steroids ? who was lifetime drugfree . By that time , at the age of 24 , Henry was generally acknowledged as the strongest man in the world , even by many of the Eastern Block athletes who outrank him in weightlifting . No one in the history of the sports had ever lifted as much as him in the five competitive lifts ? the snatch and the clean and jerk in weightlifting ? the squat , bench press and deadlift in powerlifting . To this day , his five lift total is still the greatest in history by a fair amount ? making him arguably one of the strongest men that ever lived and stamp him , according to lifting statistician Herb Glossbrenner , as history ? s greatest lifter .

In the months prior to the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta , Georgia , Henry received more attention and publicity than any lifter in recent US history . He guested at Jay Leno , Conan O 'Brien and Oprah Winfrey Show and was featured on HBO Inside Sports and The Today Show . He was also featured in dozens of magazines including U.S. News & World Report , People Vanity Fair , ESPN The Magazine and Life where he was photographed nude by famed artist Annie Leibowitz . During this period he connected with WWE owner Vince McMahon for the first time , which led to him signing a 10 @-@ year deal as professional wrestler .

Henry improved his lifts to 407 lb in the snatch and 507 lb in the clean and jerk during his final eight

weeks of preparation for the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta . Henry at 6 @-@ foot @-@ 4 @-@ inches tall and 414 lbs bodyweight , became the largest athlete in Olympic history and was voted captain of the Olympic weightlifting team . Unfortunately , he suffered a back injury during the competition and was unable to approach his normal performance level . Due to the injury he had to drop out after his first clean and jerk attempt and finished with a disappointing 14th place . His appearance at the Olympics proved to be his last official competition in Olympic weightlifting , as he retired from weightlifting , vowing never to return unless the sport is " cleaned up " of anabolic steroid use .

Since his career start as a professional wrestler shortly after the Olympics , he broke his leg in the Fall of 1996 . But by the summer of the following year he had rehabbed it enough to be able to compete at the USAPL National Powerlifting Championships 1997 , where he won the competition to become the U.S National Powerlifting Champion in the Super Heavyweight class again . He had planned to continue heavy training in powerlifting , although his travel schedule as a professional wrestler with the WWF ( now WWE ) has made sustained training difficult . Mark ? s WWF contract was unique in many ways , allowing him at least three months off each year from wrestling , so he can train for the national and world championships in weightlifting or powerlifting . Barring injury , Mark had originally hoped to return to the platform in late 1998 , to lift for many more years , and to eventually squat at least 1100 lbs without a ? squat suit ? and to deadlift 1000 lbs .

Although in early 1998 he was still able to do five reps in the bench press with 495 lbs , three reps in the squat with 855 lbs ( with no suit and no knee wraps ) , and three reps in the standing press with 405 lbs in training , while traveling with the World Wrestling Federation , he never returned to compete again in official championships in favor of his wrestling career . He weighed 380 lbs at that time , and his right upper arm was measured at 24 ? by Terry Todd . By basically ending his lifting career at the age of 26 , it is probable that he never reached his full physical potential as a professional lifter . Henry remains the youngest man in history to squat more than 900 pounds without a squat suit as well as the youngest to total more than 2 @,@ 300 pounds raw ? he 's the only person ever to have accomplished any of these feats at under 25 years of age .

= = = Personal powerlifting records = = =

Powerlifting Competition Records : done in official Powerlifting full meets

Squat ? 432 @.@ 5 kg ( 953 @.@ 5 lbs ) raw with knee wraps ( done on October 29 , 1995 WDFPF )

? former all @-@ time unequipped squat world record for over a decade in SHW class until 2010 ( + regardless of weight class until 2007 )

? current WDFPF world record squat in SHW class ( + regardless of weight class and equipment ) since 1995

? current drug tested all @-@ time world record squat without a suit in SHW class ( + regardless of weight class ) since 1995

? currently heaviest walked @-@ out raw squat of all time ( without a monolift ) regardless of weight class or federation since 1995

Deadlift ? 410 kg ( 903 @.@ 9 lbs ) raw ( done on July 16 , 1995 ADFPA ( USAPL ) )

? former all @-@ time raw world record deadlift in SHW class until 2010 ( + regardless of weight class until 2009 )

? current all @-@ time highest raw deadlift ever pulled by an American in SHW class ( + regardless of weight class ) since 1995

? current Open Men American record deadlift in SHW class ( + regardless of weight class and equipment ) since 1995

? current all @-@ time US national championship record deadlift in SHW class ( + regardless of weight class and equipment ) since 1995

? current USAPL American record deadlift in SHW class ( + regardless of weight class and equipment ) since 1995

? current drug tested raw world record deadlift ( in SHW class only ) since 1995

Powerlifting Total ? 1060 kg ( 432 @. @ 5 / 235 @. @ 0 / 392 @. @ 5 ) / 2336 @. @ 9 lbs ( 953 @. @ 5 / 518 @. @ 1 / 865 @. @ 3 ) raw with wraps ( done on October 29 , 1995 WDFPF )

? current WDFPF world record in SHW class ( + regardless of weight class and equipment ) since 1995

? current drug tested all @-@ time world record unequipped powerlifting total in SHW class ( + regardless of weight class )

Career aggregate Powerlifting Total ( best official lifts ) ? 1108 @. @ 0 kg ( 432 @. @ 5 + 265 @. @ 5 + 410 ) / 2442 @. @ 7 lbs ( 953 @. @ 5 + 585 @. @ 3 + 903 @. @ 9 )

Powerlifting Gym Records ( unofficial ) :

Squat ? 1006 lbs ( 456 @. @ 5 kg )

Bench press ? 585 lbs ? 600 lbs ( 265 kg ? 272 kg )

Deadlift ? 925 lbs ( 420 kg )

Career aggregate Powerlifting Total ( best unofficial lifts ) ? 2531 lbs ( 1006 + 600 + 925 )

Front Squat ? 770 lbs ( 350 kg )

Behind @-@ the @-@ neck @-@ press ? over 400 lbs ( > 181 kg )

= = = Personal weightlifting records = = =

Weightlifting Competition Records :

done in official competition

Snatch : 180 @. @ 0 kg ( 396 @. @ 8 lbs ) ( done at 1996 's U.S. Nationals )

? Senior US American snatch record 1993 ? 1997 in SHW class ( + regardless of weight class )

Clean & jerk : 220 @. @ 0 kg ( 485 @. @ 0 lbs ) ( done at 1996 's U.S. Nationals )

? Senior US American clean & jerk record 1993 ? 1997 in SHW class

Weightlifting Total : 400 @. @ 0 kg ( 881 @. @ 8 lbs ) ? snatch : 180 @. @ 0 kg ( 396 @. @ 8 lbs ) / clean & jerk : 220 @. @ 0 kg ( 485 @. @ 0 lbs ) ( done at 1996 's U.S. Nationals )

? Senior US American weightlifting total record 1993 ? 1997 in SHW class ( + regardless of weight class )

Weightlifting Gym Records ( unofficial ) :

all three done in training after the 1996 's U.S. Nationals , but prior to the Olympics ' 96

Snatch : 184 @. @ 6 kg ( 407 lbs )

Clean & jerk : 230 @. @ 0 kg ( 507 lbs )

Weightlifting Total : 414 @. @ 6 kg ( 914 lbs )

= = = Combined lifting records = = =