Meet Rainee Khabagnote. She’s the president of UCI’s new Powerlifting Club Sport Team. She took the time out of her training for a quick Q&A about powerlifting and to give us some trade secrets.

What is powerlifting?
Competitive powerlifting is the essence of lifting heavy; it is based around the strength of an athlete in the three major lifts: squats, bench, and deadlift.

What’s your favorite lift, and why?
Personally, my favorite lift is the squat. For squatting, you have the bar and the allotted weight loaded on the sides. You pick it up onto your back and then squat until your legs are parallel with the floor and then you have to get back up, the part where you get to see
everyone’s cutest faces. I love it because of the progress I’ve made. I used to have a back problem and I couldn’t even squat halfway down to parallel last year, but now I can squat the weight of the average professional football player. Also to be honest, I love to build legs so that makes me completely biased.

**Who are your favorite powerlifting celebrities?**

My favorite female lifter is Leanna Carr. Like myself, she is a dual athlete: competitive powerlifter and bodybuilder. While she lifts more than most guys, she also is very disciplined and places very high in her figure competitions. I believe she got her pro status last weekend. Besides her insane strength and physique, what I love most about her is her huge quad muscles. It truly takes some dedication to build leg muscles. Someday I will have 25-inch legs just like her. My favorite male lifter is Kyle Ota, I owe all my powerlifting accomplishments to him. Not only is he a world champion at his weight class, he is one of the best teachers and one of the greatest friends you could hope to meet.

**What’s your favorite snack?**

Hands down, Oreos. I eat them for pre-workout, intra-workout, and post-workout. It’s the powerlifting secret.

**When is the best time to lift?**

I would say the best time to come into the gym would be somewhere between 8 P.M. and 10 P.M. You would probably get to see most of our lifters. I believe people train a substantial amount better with a good support system.

**What is the difference between powerlifting and lifting for fitness?**

Powerlifting differs from lifting for fitness mostly in its goal. The goal for powerlifting is just to find a way to get the weight up. Because of that we have many weird looking techniques like arching on the bench. These techniques don’t necessarily get us stronger, or our muscles bigger, but they are more effective strategies for lifting heavy. Powerlifting doesn’t always correlate with being or looking fit either. Even though we are a particularly strong group of people, I know a lot of powerlifters who refuse to rep anything over 5 or walk a mile or anything cardio related.

**Why should people powerlift?**

Powerlifting forces you to seek balance, between nutrition and training but also between resting and training. Unlike bodybuilding, which can consume your life with strict training and diet, if you want to be a great powerlifter you have to eat to train and you have to rest. It forces you to have a life outside of obsessing about fitness. Rabbit food won’t make you strong, but you’ll never make your weight class if you just eat junk food. You definitely can’t get to your potential if you work out every day, your muscles won’t have time to repair but at the same time you can’t workout 1-2 times a week and expect your lifts to boost up 50 pounds each which is average for someone who does a program for the first
time. Powerlifting really forces you to be a well-rounded athlete and I think everyone can take something away from it.

**What do you want people to know about your club?**
The most important thing I want people to know about the UCI Powerlifting Club Sport Team is that we really welcome people of all skill levels. With the proper training, anyone can improve to unbelievable levels. We all started somewhere and for most of us, that somewhere was not as grandiose as most people believe. Just a year ago my Co-President, EJ Torralba, just began powerlifting and when he first deadlifted he could only do maybe around 300 lbs, today he’s on his way to 600lbs!

So, make sure to check out the [Powerlifting Club Team](#). Contact information can be found on the [Club Sports page](#) on the [Campus Recreation website](#).