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The Archer

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Emma unleashes her hidden power

When your mum is the British national champion at deadlifting incredibly heavy weights, there are some questions that must be answered. First among them is: "Mum, could you pick up my teacher?" Yes, definitely. Followed by: "So could you pick up my whole class?" Er, not quite.

This is what five-year-old Martin Primary school pupil Eliza wanted to know from her mother Emma Whiteman, who recently lifted 160kg or 25st 3lbs to win her weight class at the British Drug Free Powerlifting Association national championships.

Fitness plus

Emma, of Chandos Road, N2, also has a three-year-old son Noah. She says: "Eliza and

Noah see what I do and I hope it shows them what you can do when you keep yourself healthy and fit. For me personally, deadlifting gives me a huge amount of confidence and a real feeling of power."

Emma entered the sport only three years ago when she got a taste for weightlifting as part of a general fitness programme at Funxion Junction, off King Street in East Finchley. She loved it so much that she found a coach who introduced her to a dedicated training programme.

"I wanted to get fit so that I could keep up with the kids," says Emma. "I'm generally average in everything I do but I found something in deadlifting that I can do well. Now having the chance to represent my country is a dream come true."

World Championships

Emma, who trains at 5am before the school run, will be lifting for Britain at the World Championships in Malta in June. There she will be aiming to lift 170kg but her ultimate aim is to beat the world record, which currently stands at 192.5kg or 30st 4lbs. Follow her on Instagram @north_london_lifter



Weight for it: Emma prepares to lift 160kg

Emma adds: "I'd encourage anyone to try powerlifting for themselves as long as they learn the proper technique. The great thing now is that weights rooms are no longer just full of men. At least a third of the people in there these days are women."



Venus and Mercury rising

The new moon in the old moon's arms, top left, sails above the planet Venus, lower centre, and the planet Mercury, above and to the right of Venus, in this magical shot of a twilight sky above East Finchley. The roof of the Jamatkhana in East End Road

and the top of one of the Prospect Ring towers are in the foreground. Thanks to John Dearing for the photo taken on at 7pm on 19 March from the second floor balcony of Viceroy Close above Budgens.

A shameful family secret

The Garden Suburb Theatre company will perform Oscar Wilde's *A Woman of No Importance* at a new venue for them, the King Alfred Phoenix Theatre on North End Road, near Golders Hill Park, NW11.

This classic play is as fresh and relevant today as it was over 100 years ago. A house party is in full swing at Lady Hunstanton's stately country home. One of the guests, Gerald Arbuthnot, is overjoyed when the suave Lord Illingworth offers him employment as his secretary. His mother, however, implores him to refuse this opportunity.

Should she reveal the shameful secret that she has kept hidden for 20 years and possibly destroy her beloved son's happiness forever? How can she tell Gerald that, contrary to appearances, Lord Illingworth is a 'man of no importance'?

Performances take place from 12-14 April at 7.30pm, with a matinee on 14 April at 2.30pm. Tickets at £13/£11 are bookable at www.gardensuburbtheatre.org.uk.

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