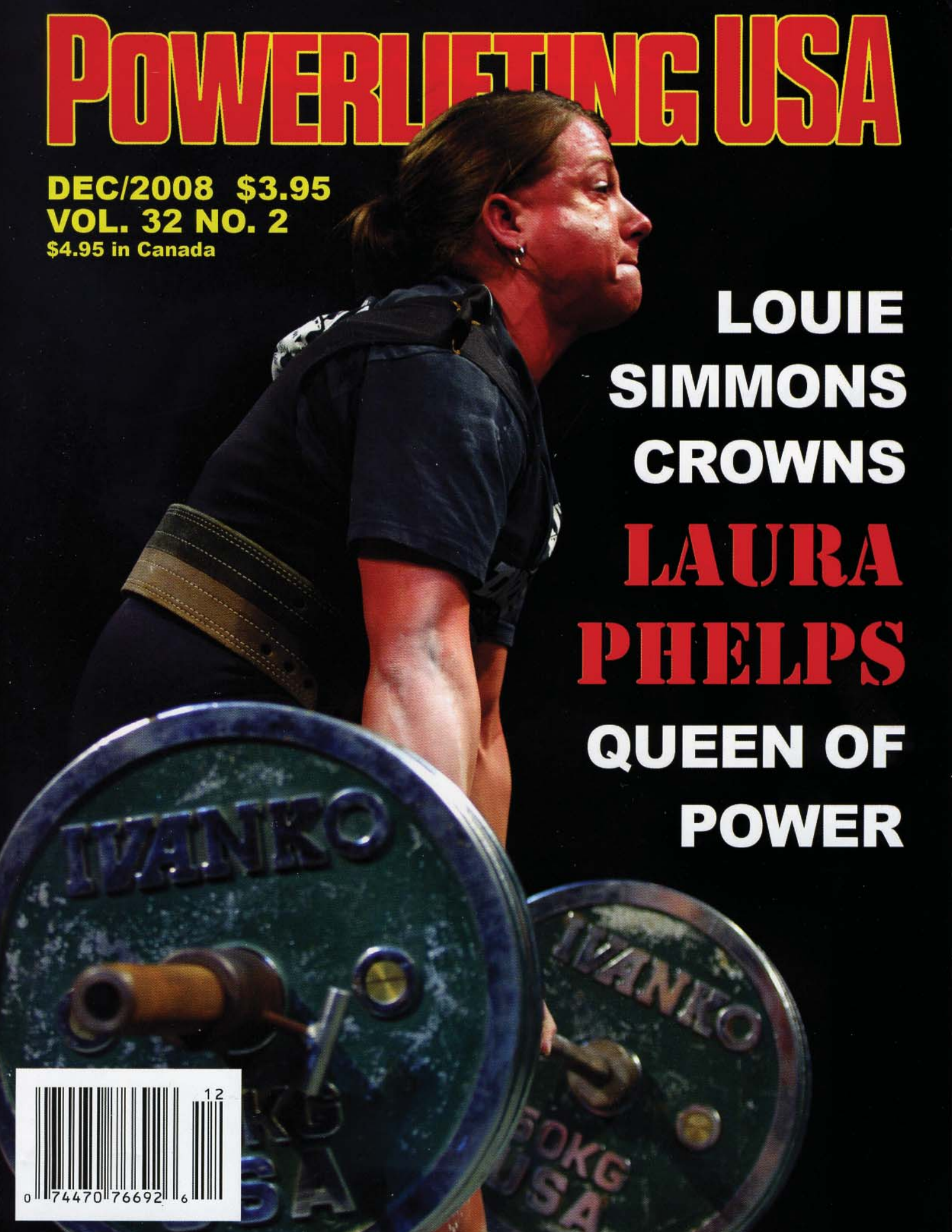


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**LOUIE
SIMMONS
CROWNS
LAURA
PHELPS
QUEEN OF
POWER**



When you think of great women powerlifters, a few names pop up. Olesia Lafina of Russia was the first to total 10 times her bodyweight. Margaret Kirkland of Florida made 10 times her bodyweight in two weight classes, 105 and 114. Next up is Amy Weisberger of Westside Barbell. She totaled 10 times bodyweight in the 132 class, and she holds the world record of 1440 in the 148 class. Becca Swanson of Big Iron of Nebraska with Rick Hussey at the helm made lifts no one thought were possible for a woman, lifts even the men have a tough time doing. Check this out: a 600 bench press, an 856 squat, and a 683 deadlift. I saw it. It was my pleasure and a distinct honor to have Becca represent the United States as the world's strongest woman, bar none.

Then, out of nowhere comes Laura Phelps. She holds the squat record in the 165 class at 740 pounds, and

POWER PROFILE

LAURA PHELPS

— Queen of the Iron Game —
as told to Powerlifting USA by Louie Simmons

at 181 did a 770-pound squat. At 181 she benched a world record of 465 pounds. Later on she made 455 and 465 at the Powerstation Pro-Am at 165 bodyweight. Her total records at 165 bodyweight are 1715, and 1725 at 181 bodyweight. How did this all start? First, Laura was a gymnast for 14 years. Her flexibility is extraordinary. This aids in the perfect form she now possesses in all three lifts. After gymnastics she tried bodybuilding for a short time with good success but was bitten by the powerlifting bug. Most would like a virus like that. In

the beginning her potential was obvious to all that saw her train. Her husband, Shane, guides all of her nutritional needs, and it is beginning to show in her muscularity. She has traded fat for muscle, really changing her body composition. Shane sets the diets for many MMA competitors. His vast knowledge about recovery and adding muscle mass makes it very easy for Laura to worry only about herself and not other lifters. Laura and Shane set most of her training up with some small guidance from me with the Westside system. She rotates her

squat workouts from chains to bands on a hard box to a foam box. The hard box builds connective tissue strength for explosiveness. The foam builds muscle and strength by slowing down the process. I can't wait for schools to do studies on this subject with our recommendations.

Laura has squatted 640 in briefs and knee wraps. I wanted to take her to the Ohio State football facility, but I didn't want to see the kids cry. She uses her full gear about once a month to ensure she knows how to use it. She does a lot of belt squats, Reverse Hypers, and plyo swing jumps, making sure her abs are strong and to maintain her flexibility. She wears a Leviathon squat suit and a Rage X bench shirt from Inzer. For her bench she does speed work once a week and max effort work on Sunday. She always uses bands or chains on speed work to ac-

(continued on page 74)



Laura Phelps utilizes a classic wide stance squat form to move unbelievable weight; she has squatted 640 in briefs and knee wraps!