This is Tomis Kono

Tommy Kono decided that he liked lifting better than bodybuilding and started practicing the 160, 200, and 350 pound lifts. He soon learned how to do his lifts correctly and to do them with good form. These lifts are the key to success in weightlifting because of the greater emphasis on strength, speed, and form.

Kono would continue to train during the summer and in the fall with the same dedication. After 6 months of training he decided to try the Olympic style and discovered that he could lift more weight in this style. He began lifting with the same dedication as before, and eventually he broke his record.

During his last year in high school he began to participate in track and basketball. He was a member of the track team and played basketball. He lifted with the same dedication as before, and eventually he broke his record.

In March of 1958 Tommy entered his first contest where he placed second, second, and second in the 100, 200, and 350 pound lifts. His total for the contest was 575, which is 50 pounds less than his previous record.

In August of 1958 Tommy competed in the weightlifting competition at the Olympic Games in Melbourne. He placed first in the 100, 200, and 350 pound lifts with a total of 835 pounds. He also placed second in the 400 pound lift with a total of 1100 pounds.

During his career Tommy Kono won numerous awards and set records. He is considered one of the greatest weightlifters of all time. His dedication and hard work paid off in the form of numerous medals and records.
years have given Tommy inspiration and com-
petition. These boys have done a lot for the
game out here and their combined efforts
gave us some fun the last time we met. Not
the time for 1952.
In the year 1950 he was faced with many
events early two weeks apart, March 25th he
made 220, 225, 300, 760 to win the Northern
California Championships and again the
outstanding lifter award. April 16th he made
220, 230, 315, 770, winning the state title
and the coveted outstanding lifter trophy.
April 25th he won the Pacific Coast 660
series 220, 240, 210, 260, May 14th at the
Nationals in Philadelphia he made 220, 235,
265, 760. No doubt he became overtrained
with this frequent competition and long trips.
During the year he was quarantined with 280
for 20 reps and 390 for 12 reps at a body-
weight of 155.
In September 1950 Tommy had high hopes
of making the American team for the World
Championships. He was to lift in the tryouts
at New York City October 15 but news of the
death of his mother sent him home before
the tryouts. A day before he left he had pres-
sed 230 for 3 reps, 225 1 rep and had snatch-
eds 230 for 2 reps and jerked 360 at a bodyweight
of 155. In November Tommy pressed 260 for
3 reps given training. In the latter part of
March of 1951 Tom was drafted. He hung up
his lifting belt for the time being. Since he
was in basic training he had no time to train
and keep himself in top condition. Some
people wondered if this was the end of his lifting
career but they didn’t know the enthusiasm
that he has for the lifting game. With no train-
ing he gained to 160 pounds bodyweight but
40 days later had managed to dry out to
1464/5 pounds for a contest in which he mi-
ished 480.
The Senior Nationals were over but four
weeks away to be held in Los Angeles. Once
in a while he would obtain a short leave and
catch a hike up to Oakland for a workout but
this wasn’t too often as you can well imagine.
Tommy was able to train two days at Toney’s
gym before the meet. In this meet he made a
total of 260 and again placed second to Per-
man. After the suits Tommy must have entered
well for in 21 days he went from 1464/5 to 166
pounds. Ten days later he weighed 173. He
Photo at upper right depicts Tommy in a
graceful, yet menacingly overpowering pose. His
excellent triceps developed by much overhead
lifting is well displayed here. Photo by Giff.

At the left is an early photo caption of Tommy
shortly after he started training in 1948. You
can note a tremendous difference in his de-
velopment since that time. Already he was show-
ing promise of being a great lifter and one
authority predicted that he would some day be
world champion.
The above photos by Cine show Tommy posed in different positions indicating that weightlifting can and will develop a physique equal to what can be obtained from careful bodybuilding exercises. Tommy has won many prizes in physique contests.

October 30th he hit the track to his weight that he trimmed down to 178.

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been transferred to Europe, so I thought the cold and snow must have affected her mind. She told me that Tommy has greatly enlarged his diet and is training in the open air. He said that he had been given an award as an outstanding athlete. You can imagine how proud we were of "Your boy."

During his stay in Europe Tommy has entered a great many athletic contests with his pal, Clyde Ervin, also in the army and stationed in France. I recall his letter about the contest in Philadelphia, in which Tommy carried the U.S. flag in a parade. Tommy wrote that he was happier over this opportunity to carry the American flag than over winning the Olympic crown. In this contest he pressed 270, snatched 264 and dropped and jerked 347. The bar was stiff and two plates were used. Two days later in Paris, using a globe type belt, he pressed 220 and cleaned 350. Then he did a jerk with a solid, thick handled weight of 396. This was handed to him at the shoulders. This is the same bar that Dusty cleaned and jerked before attempting the Apollon Weights. Then she tried the jerk with a globe type belt with 375 and jerked it six times but each time the weight fell back and unlocked his arms. He then worked up to 242 pounds in clean and jerk with 118.5 in the left hand and 123.2 in the right. This too is a record.

Tommy wanted very much to break the world record in the clean and jerk in the light-weight class for he now held the snatch record at 254. In November he made 3 new world records for the light-weight class in Germany with a 242 press, 264 snatch and a 341 clean and jerk. He also made a surprising total of 118.5 in the left hand and 123.2 in the right. This too is a record.

The fine chest and arm pose in photo at upper right indicates Tommy's sturdy physique. Photo by Gibbs. Lower right photo is of Tommy passed with his trophy won at the Nationals in New York City in 1952. He weighed 148 at this time and you can see that this posture caused him to have to drop out too much and he looks too floppy trained. Photo by Young. Photo below shows Tommy as he made the World lightweight record of 250 in the two arm snatch at the Olympics. Durett Photo.
methods of bodybuilding are far better than the old; not because they produce bigger models but because they make it possible for former problem cases to attain a satisfactory degree of development. In other words, the average man has had a new physique made possible for him if he is willing to make even a small effort for it.

TOMMY KONO—OLYMPIC CHAMPION

4247. Did Tommy receive credit for those lifts? He did not! Why? Because he was 100% overlimit. He did four attempts. Three others were unannounced at the last moment. He had only one body limit. Tommy was literally disappointed over this but being a good sport and a perfect gentleman, he took it with his customary poise.

The incident told to Tommy when he had made world records as a lightweight in Europe, only to find that he was over (or under) his own personal standard of strength. History will record, however, that Tommy made those records as a lightweight because of a weight limit set for him; not as a technical matter.

In January Tommy and Emerick left in a contest in England and as a middleweight. Tommy made 275, 270, 335 and 385, and dead-lifted 350 and 385 and dead-lifted 335 and 385. He was before him and of the soundness of 709 people, 300 having been turned away for lack of room. This is an indication of the popularity, for usually contests of this sort are very few people. The following day at 4:11 a.m. he was in the gym and he peeled 300 twice, ran 250 once, while seated. He also did a 322 clean and jerk, while seated—309 in hand, 138 in hand. He then superimposed the two and did a squat for 100 pounds. He then had a shoulder of 413 lbs. He also made a strict deadlift of 175 pounds and one of 165 which would have reached British rules. While here he met Bill Pullum who gave him a few tips on best pressing. He said the old gear is still quite stout at 65 years.

The above list is not all; a subsequent newspaper clipping showed that February 8th Tommy made 275, 280, 335. This gave him a new world record total in the middleweight class. From Tommy, February 1st to March 2nd, 1951, and then for the rest of the 1951 season, he did 275, 280, 335, 385, 400, 450 pounds and was at the Olympic trials on March 31st, 1951. The latest news from Tommy tells us that he has peeled 320-340 and has a half-pound behind the 285 world record. He also did a 285 snatch with a clean and jerk of 322 at a bodyweight of 165 lbs. This gave him another record total of 9107 lbs, the highest in the world to make over a 900 total.

Tom will be displayed soon and by the time you read this will probably be back in Oakland training with his old going again. He will be happy about this and so will we.

You may wonder what kind of a fellow this Kono is. His success goes to his head! No! Tommy is one of the most modest young fellows you will ever meet. He is most courteous and thoughtful of others—a real gentleman at any price. If I had a son I would want him to be like Tommy Kono. Could I say more about his character and personality?

Please recall Tommy's lifts in his first contest in 1948 which were 155 press, 185 snatch.

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