



# THE FISHER QUEEN

LAUREN FISHER CAME OUT OF NOWHERE AT THE SOCAL REGIONAL TO NAB A SPOT TO COMPETE AT THE 2014 REEBOK CROSSFIT GAMES. NOW, THE 20-YEAR-OLD POWERHOUSE REPRESENTS THE NEXT GENERATION OF CROSSFIT COMPETITOR.

» BY LINDSAY BERRA  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBERT REIFF



**T**he 120 feet seemed like such a long way. So far, in fact, that they hadn't even discussed the possibility that she might make it. So when Lauren Fisher kicked up into a handstand and walked the entire length of the floor in front of a roaring crowd at the 2014 CrossFit So-Cal Regional, she was ecstatic and a tad confounded. She looked nervously into the stands and caught the eye of her coach, C.J. Martin, who had sprinted from his spot midway up the bleachers to the fence line nearby when he realized his charge was going to make it.

"What do I do?" Fisher asked.

"Wait until the two-minute mark," Martin hollered. "Then kick up and go back."

Fisher made it another 85 feet across the floor, for a combined 205-foot handstand walk, good enough for seventh place in the event. Before that, the best she'd done in practice was 105 feet. She had surprised herself a bit. But Fisher has been surprising a lot of people lately.

Fisher, who is just 20 years old, finished third overall in the SoCal Regional, edging out veteran CrossFit heavy-hitter Lindsey Valenzuela for a spot in July's CrossFit Games. There, she finished ninth, despite being the youngest female competitor this year. Though she is just 5 feet 5 inches tall and 135 pounds, her ability to lift heavy has made her one of the most powerful up-and-comers in CrossFit.

While Fisher trains primarily in CrossFit at CrossFit Invictus in San Diego, where she is a sophomore at San Diego State University, she also competes on the international stage in Olympic weightlifting.

At the USA Weightlifting Junior Nationals in February, she took three gold medals in the 63-kilogram weight class and earned the Best Female Lifter award. Then, in early July, while her fellow Games competitors were prepping for Carson, she spent two weeks in Kazan, Russia, competing at the weightlifting Junior World Championships. She finished 10th, with a 75-kilogram (165-pound) snatch and 110-kilogram (242-pound) clean-and-jerk, for a combined total of 185 kilograms (407 pounds).

"I like CrossFit better, but I will continue with the Olympic lifting," Fisher says. "There's a chance for me to break some junior American records over the next few months, and in the clean-and-jerk, I'm only a few kilograms from the senior record."

Fisher comes from an athletic family. Mom Linda played volleyball and ran track, and dad Bert played basketball and baseball. Both currently do CrossFit. As a child, Fisher was hugely competitive with her three older brothers. Andrew, 28, is training for his second Ironman triathlon;



Ryan, 26, is a minor league baseball player in the Miami Marlins system; and Garret, 23, is familiar to CrossFitters everywhere — he finished fifth overall in the 2013 CrossFit Games.

In 2013, his little sister also got her feet wet at the Games as a competitor with Team Invictus. This summer, Garret, who finished fifth in the NorCal Regional, was forced to watch Lauren's individual debut from the sidelines.

"Everything was very competitive when we were growing up, no matter if it was sports or a game of Monopoly," Garret says. "We'd always end up yelling or throwing the pieces at each other." But Lauren has always held her own.

In high school at St. Mary's in Stockton, California, Fisher's basketball team won two state championships and a national championship. She began CrossFit when she was 14 as a way of becoming stronger for basketball and immediately saw her vertical leap, quickness and stamina increase. She was hooked. In San Diego, Fisher elected to make CrossFit Invictus her home rather than

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the SDSU gymnasium. "CrossFit is my college sport," she says.

Her schedule is like that of any collegiate athlete. "I try to schedule most of my classes on Thursday, which is my rest day," Fisher says. "But whatever my schedule is, I train in the morning, go to class, train again and usually have another class later at night." Like any other 20-year-old, Fisher also finds time to go to the beach or shop with friends, read Harry Potter books and bake — banana-nut bread and homemade pies are her specialties. That, and anything involving a barbell.

At the CrossFit Games, Fisher's best two

finishes came in events that showcased her strength. She finished sixth in the Overhead Squat with a lift of 238 pounds and sixth in the Clean Speed Ladder, in which she cleared 225 pounds. For some perspective, the winners of the Overhead Squat and Clean Speed Ladder, Kara Webb and Elisabeth Akinwale, weigh nearly 20 and 30 pounds more than Fisher, respectively. "I'm really strong for my size," Fisher says. "My strength is probably my biggest strength."

Coach Martin, though, also tips his cap to Fisher's composure, developed over years of playing in front of large crowds as a high school athlete. "I think Lauren is super mature as a competitor for her age, whether she's standing on a stage in front of a world championship crowd for weightlifting or at the CrossFit games," Martin says. "She's very composed, and the way she handles her nerves and is mentally prepared is often even more impressive than her physical performance."

With Fisher's ability to move weight, that's saying a lot. □

CROSSFIT AT ANY AGE

THE SPORT OF FITNESS MAY SEEM LIKE THE PLAYGROUND FOR THE YOUNG, BUT AS ANYONE WHO'S WALKED INTO A BOX KNOWS, ATHLETES OF ALL AGES ARE THROWING DOWN ON THE DAILY. STILL, THE BODY CHANGES AS IT AGES, AND THE SMART ATHLETE IS THE ONE WHO PAYS ATTENTION, LEARNS AND ADAPTS.

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Photo by Marc Gio