



**CONCENTRATION** is the key to lifting weights, says Deputy Bob Hoagland of Ocean Isle.

**LEG WRAPS** help Southport Police Officer Georgia Phelps when doing squats while in training.

## Powerlifting Police Officers Prepare For State Olympics

BY TERRY POPE

Some Brunswick County law enforcement officers are carrying a heavy weight on their shoulders.

For three days a week, two hours each session, they have been lifting weights to prepare for the N.C. State Police Olympics competition in Charlotte next week.

A group of local officers plan to not only attend the Sept. 27-29 event, but to also make new friends and bring back some trophies.

"Nothing but first place," said Bob Hoagland of Ocean Isle Beach, a retired Charlotte police officer and now an auxiliary deputy for Brunswick County.

Hoagland has been participating for nine years in the weightlifting competition and last year captured first place in both powerlifting and bench press for officers ages 50-54.

Powerlifters lift weights for strength and to help them stay fit. It is not to be confused

with bodybuilding, where the emphasis is on using weights to improve muscle tone and a person's physique.

"Powerlifting is a strength sport," said Hoagland. "You have to train differently for it."

It is also a sport that involves concentration. In competitions, the key to success can often be linked to a person's frame of mind, said Hoagland.

"It's 80 percent mental," said Hoagland. "The least little thing will do you in. If you get a mental block and you've got a weight on your back, you're going down."

For instance, Hoagland once made an impressive 420-pound deadlift to win an event, but only by accident. He had asked for 400 pounds. Following the successful lift, judges noticed 420 pounds had mistakenly been placed on the bar.

"If I had known that 420 pounds was on that bar," said Hoagland, "it'd never come up."

In another event, a split in the mat below his feet threw his concentration off. Something as simple as the color of the weights can also psychologically defeat a powerlifter, he said.

Sheriff's Deputy George Stanley last year participated in his first police olympics and brought back a first place trophy in powerlifting and another second-place trophy when he bench pressed 430 pounds. While it's an impressive stat, Stanley had just battled back from a case of the chicken pox before that meet and wasn't quite up to par.

He has bench pressed up to 480 pounds with a competition pause, where the weight must stop on the chest momentarily. He hopes to win the olympics event this year with a 470-pound bench press.

Stanley will participate in the men's open division, 242-pound weight class. Hoagland will participate in the men's masters division, 181-pound weight class.

"It keeps you strong," said Stanley. "It al-



so makes you feel good."

Southport Police Officer Georgia Phelps placed first in powerlifting in the women's 132-pound class and second place in the bench press. In her first competition, she made an impressive 235-pound deadlift.

"It relieves stress," said Ms. Phelps. She has looked forward to returning to competition against her fellow officers. A car accident following last year's meet kept her out of training for a while.

"You get to meet a lot of different people at the events," said Ms. Phelps, "and I enjoy that part of it, too."

Local officers participate in the events at their own expense. Hoagland has a weight room at his home where he also helps to train people interested in lifting weights for strength instead of bodybuilding.

"We don't train anybody that's on steroids," said Hoagland.

Anabolic steroids are drugs that speed muscle growth but are also linked to harmful side effects. They can cause serious injuries when the muscles outgrow a person's tendons.

"I won't train anyone that smokes either," he added. "Anybody that smokes is not serious about their health."

Hoagland began training Stanley and Ms. Phelps last spring. He believes each has already earned a reputation as one of the top competitors in their categories.

"These guys here are going to be great if they stay with it," said Hoagland. "When they walk into the meetings, people will say, 'There's George and Georgia. I've wasted my time preparing for this one.' They'll pack up and leave."

Southport Police Officer Tim Capers and N.C. Highway Patrol Trooper Jerry Dove also plan to participate in the olympics next week. A Brunswick County trooper has won the "Toughest Cop Alive" competition at the olympics for two years straight.

In 1989, Dove won the event, but chose not to participate last year. Instead, he entered the weightlifting competition and captured a first-place award in the bench press.

Last year, Brunswick County State Trooper Roy Murray won the top cop event, which includes a five-kilometer run, both pistol and shotgun firing, weightlifting and a 100-meter dash. He also won a gold medal in the obstacle course run and a silver medal in weightlifting.

Winners can qualify for the International Police Olympics, which will be held in Raleigh in May. Hoagland hopes Brunswick County will have representatives there, including himself.

He is confident of bringing home another state title next week.

"I'm going to win first place," he said. Pointing to Stanley and Ms. Phelps, he adds, "I hope they do, too."



STAFF PHOTOS BY TERRY POPE

**DEPUTY GEORGE STANLEY** will defend his title as powerlifting champion at the N.C. Police Olympics next week.

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