



PHOTO/TERRANCE THOMAS

Millard Pearson lifted 425 pounds to win the Rosewood Weightlifting Competition in Columbia recently. He has bench-pressed up to 510.

## 44-year-old weightlifter wins first contest

By **TERRANCE THOMAS**  
Staff Writer

Millard Pearson of Winnsboro likes doing things the old-fashioned way—the “raw way,” as he puts it.

That’s why he lifts weights without the help of steroids and high technology.

That’s why he’s dedicated to hard work.

That’s why, at age 44, after lifting weights for nearly 20 years, he has won his first weightlifting competition.

Pearson, who drives trucks for Richland School District One, bench-pressed 425 pounds to win the Rosewood Bench Press Competition in Columbia last month.

And he did it with room to spare. The second-place finisher lifted 405 pounds. Had he lifted more, Pearson was ready: he has lifted as much as 510 pounds—a quarter of a ton.

Few people can bench-press 500 pounds like Pearson, who graduated from Winnsboro High School in 1972.

At 26, he entered a toughman competition—that’s fighting with no holds barred—in 1980. He finished third. That got him into weightlifting.

“I wanted to see what could I do,” he said. “I really enjoy doing it. It’s recreational. It’s like a hobby. When I was younger, I never thought I could have lifted 500 pounds. I think I’m going to enter a couple more competitions to see how I’m doing against other people.”

At 28, he starting lifting 400 pounds or more. And now he has won his first competition.

“I like the raw way,” he said. “I like the old weight rooms. The new technology makes things easy. I want it hard. Steroids give you help. I don’t want help. It takes hard work and dedication to reach the amount.”

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