

# Melanie Roach

*World's Strongest Mom...*



DOB: Dec. 14, 1974  
Home: Bonney Lake, WA  
Height: 5'0"  
Weight: 117 lbs.



- 2015 & 2014 American Open Champion
  - 2008 U.S. Olympian
- 8 Time U.S. National Champion
- 5 Time U.S. World Team Member

## ***Points of Interest***

- Melanie is the mother of five, one of whom, son Drew, is autistic.
- Despite holding enormous amounts of weight overhead, Melanie is well-known for her mid-lift smiles and stylish earrings!
- Melanie is the first U.S. woman to clean/jerk over double her body weight, and she is currently the only U.S. woman to do so.
- She holds the longest standing American record in the clean/jerk.
- She broke the snatch and clean/ jerk total American Record at the 2008 Olympic Games en route to finishing 6<sup>th</sup> in the competition.
- She is the owner/operator of two successful businesses, Roach Gymnastics and Roach Strength & Conditioning.
- She is the author of *LIFT – Enjoying the Journey of Life*. 100% of the proceeds from this book go to the charity she started, Team Jacoby, in support of a former student of Melanie's who was injured in a training accident.

## Melanie Roach *in depth...*

An active, world class athlete who is also a mother, while impressive is certainly not unprecedented. Mother of two is of course more unusual, three children would be rare, four – as anyone who has children will attest – would be almost unimaginable, and five seems impossible. Until you meet Melanie Roach, a firm believer that anything is possible.

Time efficient, organized, dedicated, passionate, bursting with energy and really, really strong, Melanie Roach is the mother of five young children (between 3 and 13, one of whom is autistic), an American record holding weightlifting champion, an Olympian, an 8-time National Champion, one of the strongest women on the planet and as of December 2014 she's the American Open Champion who intends to return the Olympic Games in Rio in the Summer of 2016. If that's not enough, she's also the owner/operator of two small businesses and a Sunday-school teacher.

Melanie grew up as a gymnast, reaching the Washington State High School Championships before an injury sidelined her from the competition. Rehab included her introduction to free weights and soon thereafter a future, and powerful star was in the making.

Shattering the stereotypical body image of weightlifters, the petite and fashionable former gymnast quickly made it clear that strong things can come in small, stylish, packages. In her first competition, the 1994 American Open, she won a bronze medal. In 1996, she began to pursue weightlifting full time, and set her sights on the 2000 Olympic Games. She soon stunned the weightlifting world by exceeding the world standard in the clean and jerk at the 1998 U.S. National Championships. She had become the #1 ranked U.S. weightlifter and the first American woman in history to clean and jerk more the twice her own body weight. She was poised for a 2000 Olympic debut.

Devastatingly, weeks before the Olympic Trials, Melanie suffered a serious back injury. Her Olympic dreams and future in the sport appeared to be over. She picked herself up and moved on. She put her energy into growing her family and opening her own business - Roach Gymnastics, Inc. which now serves over 500 students. Despite her business success, Melanie still yearned to compete.

In 2005, the then mother of two, she returned to competitive weightlifting. Later that year her son Drew was diagnosed with autism. The resulting emotional and physical challenges of living with autism weighed heavily on Melanie and her husband, Dan, but their faith, commitment to each other and ever-growing support group has carried them through.

By March of 2006 Melanie reclaimed her spot on the U.S. National Team and won her 6th U.S. National Championship. She then underwent state of the art back surgery, a microdiscectomy, not available years earlier when she left the sport. The result was her 7th U.S. National Championship (2007) and the first time since 2000 that she clean/jerked twice her own body weight. She was back!

In August of 2007 Melanie won the bronze medal at the Pam Am Games in Brazil, officially making her return to elite international weightlifting. She went on to claim her 8th National Championship in February of 2008, and secured her Olympic dream in May of that year by winning the U.S. Olympic Trials in Atlanta, GA.

Melanie's Olympic story captured the attention of the national media. She was named ABC World News Person of the Week, USA Today's Athlete of the Week, profiled in a NY Times Cover story and filmed by NBC's Today Show, CNN, The Associated Press, NBC's Nightly News and countless news, radio and local television broadcasts.

At the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing Melanie finished 5<sup>th</sup>, setting a new American record. She retired thereafter. That record still stands.

Since Beijing, Melanie and Dan continued to grow their family and opened a second business, aptly named Roach Strength & Conditioning. Though retired, Melanie continues to train and made a brief comeback in 2014. In December of 2014 she won The American Open, the very same competition in which she debuted as a competitive weightlifter twenty years earlier but this time she won it as the mother of five. She repeated that effort, winning again in 2015.



For more information about

## Melanie Roach

Contact:



Patrick Quinn

m: 630 903 0000

e: [Patrick@chicagoSEP.com](mailto:Patrick@chicagoSEP.com)

[www.MelanieRoach.org](http://www.MelanieRoach.org)

