

Empson powering to success

Chris Empson made his Scottish debut in the sea angling Home Internationals in Weymouth last year and 12 months on he is fast gaining a reputation in another sport, powerlifting.

The 37-year-old already holds Scottish and British records and has now qualified for the Great Britain championships next year.

All this and he still continues to make waves in local fishing, being among the front-runners to take the Bass Rock Shore Angling League's summer series.

Dunbar-based Empson (pictured) fits his sporting activities around his family and also his work as a joiner on a site near the East Lothian town.

He is a member of the British Drug Free Powerlifting Association (BDFPA) which is the most strictly regulated category and where no artificial performance enhancers are allowed.

Empson competes in the equipped category at 82.5kg and recently set his Scottish record in the Highland bench press championships held in Fort William, smashing his own record twice on the same day.

He went in at 170, a weight which he felt was comfortable, and 2.5kg below his then Scottish record. Then he upped the weight to 175kg to break his own record and then went in at 180k to

set a new mark.

Empson admitted that his adrenaline was pumping with the final lift, his best in nearly 20 years of lifting, and a lift he described as a bonus.

Concentration is paramount as competitors have to abide by the commands of the on-floor judge and the new high was set despite carrying a leg injury which has restricted his training for around a year.

He still goes to the gym, rented from the local British Legion, around three times a week to keep himself in competition shape.

The fisherman also holds the Great Britain record for a single bench press and he said: "A number of us go regularly to the gym but numbers have dropped off since COVID. It would be good to see some old faces back, but those of us who do go continue to train hard. Qualifying for the British single lift next year is a real boost and it gives me something to aim for."