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BASICS**

BY BRANDON BRANER

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THE PHENOM

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I'M A FAN AND A LIFTER.

I love this sport. Those of you who truly know me know what big deal that is for me to say that because I hate so many things. I have been in love with this sport since I first started over 20 years ago. That's right, folks — 20 years! I started lifting at 12 and got more into it at 14 when I lied about my age to get into a meet.

I also did a double on the bench with the ADFPA (now the USAPL), set a new state record and almost got booted out of the meet! My friggin' brother told me, "Hey, 280 lbs.? You should hit that for two reps." And so I did. Didn't mean to be a jerk, but I was fired up. I love powerlifting and I want to keep pushing the sport to the next level. Things like my free YouTube videos (www.YouTube.com/SuperTraining06), Facebook Q&A and SuperTraining.Tv are my ways of not only sharing free information with everyone, but expanding the sport and making everyone realize they could use some strength training in their lives. The training for this sport is important not matter if you're a 15-year-old football player or a 65-year-old woman. Remember, strength is everything. When your strength runs out, you die. I want to push this sport that I love to the next level, and the only way to do it is make everyone realize the benefits of becoming stronger. I guess my point here is while I am a lifter and promoter of powerlifting, above all else I'm a fan. Please try to turn others on to our sport, share your knowledge and be encouraging. We will all be stronger for it.

I'm a huge fan of the lifters in this sport. Guys like AJ Roberts, who is this month's "Get to Know" subject, and our cover boy, the seemingly unbeatable Dave Hoff. Hoff and Roberts are two of the three men to ever bench over 900 in a full power meet. The 24-year-old Hoff is on a mission to squat about 1,220, bench 1,000 and deadlift 830 — that would be an all-time world record total of 3,050. Sounds impossible, but it's a fairly easy task for a guy who shares his birthday with Jesus.

My dad is out of the hospital and back to work, due in part to the strength and courage of my mother, Rosemary. I know I talk about my dad a lot, but my mom kicks a lot of ass, too. My mom and dad appreciated the support they got from the fans of Power and Super Training while my dad was in the hospital for 75 days.

"He who moves the world must first move himself."

Mark Bell

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SuperTraining.TV
HowMuchYaBench.net



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FEATURES



COVER STORY

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Dave Hoff

Dave Hoff has emerged as one of the best powerlifters in the world, and he's only 24. Mark Bell talks to Dave to find out how he progressed so quickly and is now knocking at the door of the world record total of 3,000 lbs.



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Coaching Cues Gone Bad

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Cardio for Power Athletes

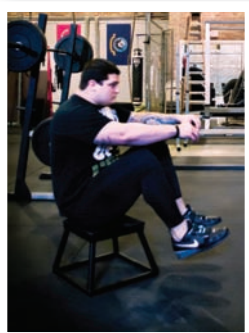
Kiefer lays out a plan for cardio training to keep strength: HIIT (high intensity interval training).



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Raw bencher Brandon Braner takes us step by step on how he sets up to bench more than 635 lbs.



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Develop Maximum Power

Highland Games athlete Matt Vincent uses a slew of different techniques to develop a complete strength program for building maximum strength and power.

I AM STRONG

ROB LUYANDO – World Record Bench: 947 lbs. @ 247 lbs.

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POWER TEXTING WITH MARK BELL

ZACH EVEN ESH

POWER: What are your three favorite things to whip athletes into shape that need that extra gear, that "fourth-quarter game strength and speed?"

EVEN ESH: Combat circuits. For example: sled or prowler sprint x 150 ft + sledgehammer x 20 reps + battling ropes x 50 reps. Do that for four rounds. Another favorite is truck push x 100 ft + backward sled drag x 100 ft + battling ropes x 50 reps x 4 rounds.



ED COAN

POWER: What lifters did you see that guys of today should know about?

COAN: Furnas, Gamble, Bell, Alexander, Jacoby, O.D. Wilson, Rick Weil. There were some great ones before me that were cool, also.

POWER: What do some of the current powerlifters miss out on that old-timers got a lot out of?

COAN: There was only one federation back then. All the big guys showed up at once under the same rules.

POWER: What do you think high bar squats are good for? When you used them, did you squat deeper and go with a closer stance?

COAN: High bar squats are good for hip and back squatters to balance out overall leg strength for quads. Yes, on both counts. I paused them, also. Will also help with explosion at start of deadlift!

POWER: Did you ever mess with good mornings?

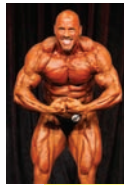
COAN: No, I felt they would over-train my back because I was a back and hip squatter.



KONSTANTINS KONSTANTINOV'S

POWER: What are some of your favorite things to increase your deadlift, and how do you hold onto some of those big deadlifts?

KK: I like to deadlift on a box and speed deadlift with bands, black bands mostly (300+ lbs.) and sometimes green bands (+220 lbs. at the top). My box is about 3x3, 5-in. I always use an IPF bar and not a deadlift bar. I do 3-5 reps and 2-3 sets of speed deadlifts. For now I do triples and each rep I put on 25 lbs. For example: 440+465+490 lbs. Sometimes if I feel strong I go for 1 max rep, but not too often. For grip I take heavy bar from the power rack and hold it for 10 seconds. I do many assistant exercises: reverse hyper, hyper extension, leg curls — all exercises I do very heavy, not just for pump. I try getting stronger in all of them. I train my upper back and abs heavy, too. If I get stronger in assistance exercises, I get stronger in deadlift too.



STAN EFFERDING

POWER: What are your five favorite supplements?

EFFERDING: Are Doritos a supplement? Otherwise I'll go with a multi-vitamin, vitamin D, EFA, Species Isolyze (whey protein), EFX Carebolyn, powder. I also use Beverly International Mass Aminos and drink glutamine during workouts.



ROBERT WILKERSON

POWER: What are some of your favorite raw bench exercises?

BIG WILK: Floor press, incline press, chest-level pin press, anything close grip.



AJ ROBERTS

POWER: What are your favorite assistance exercises for bench?

ROBERTS: Neutral grip DB press, Rolling DB Triceps Extensions and high rep band pushdowns.

POWER: What about for max effort?

ROBERTS: Reverse band, floor press with chain and T-grip bar press.

PAPA BELL

POWER: How are you doing today dad?

PAPA: First full day in normal clothes and even some outdoor walking. Went out for dinner. Feeling great. Love you. Mom doing a super job helping me. Four yards and a cloud of dust each day. Marking the ball based on forward progress.

POWER: Actually there is a high school football coach who always goes for it on fourth. So you only need 2.5 yards if you follow his coaching strategies. Out of 3,000 plays at 4th and 1, NFL teams only went for it 4% of the time ... despite 75% success rate. It shows how we are wired the wrong way. People seem to care a lot more about loses then they do about gains!

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POWER NEW PRODUCTS



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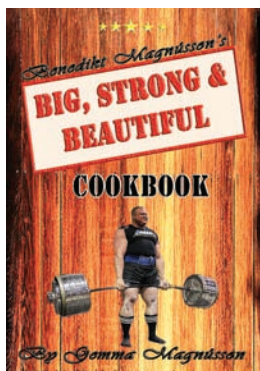
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BENEDIKT MAGNUSSON BIG, STRONG AND BEAUTIFUL COOKBOOK

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The Benedikt Magnusson Big, Strong and Beautiful Cookbook takes readers through Benedikt's preferred weight gaining recipes, which he used while training for his most recent world-record deadlift of 1,015 lbs. raw. Written by his wife, who lovingly prepared each and every dish, readers will discover what Benedikt ate for breakfast, lunch and dinner, and his favorite pre-deadlifting snacks (plus sauce recipes) that helped him add 40-plus lbs. of bodyweight. Benedikt also gives his greatest eating tips to explain how he could eat up to 17,500 calories on deadlift day.

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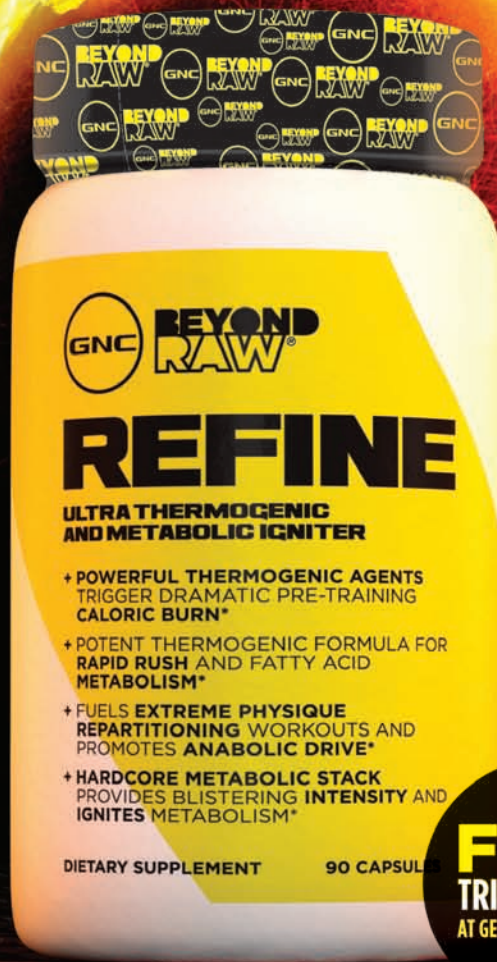
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TRESTON EUGENE SHULL

What are your stats? I'm 27 and I compete in the 308-lb. class and the SHW class. I am 6 feet, 1 inch, and have been lifting in the multi-ply class for four years. Prior to that, I did single-ply for about seven years.

What are your best lifts? My best meet lifts are a 1,030-lb. squat, 727-lb. bench and 744-lb. deadlift, and my best total is 2,502 lbs. I say meet lifts because people always mention their gym lifts, but no one cares what your gym lifts are. If it's not done in a meet, no one cares.

What are your biggest powerlifting accomplishments? I set multiple records as a teen that still stand, which is pretty cool. I set the world record in the bench-only division as a junior in the APA. I have an elite total in 275, 308 and the SHW class. I have a pro total in the 308 and SHW class. As an amateur I took first place two years in a row at the Pro/Am in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Squatting 1,000 lbs was one of my all-time goals that I finally accomplished, and it was huge for me. When I started powerlifting, I remember when Steve Goggins squatted 1,000 lbs, and it was the one lift I always wanted. Oh, and my record for the amount of fold-out chairs that I've broken at meets? Probably around 12.

What is your favorite lift? Why? My favorite lift is the squat. Why, you ask? It's because I'm better at it than the other lifts!

Where do you train? I train at the best gym in the world, the best in the west, the strongest in the west, Super Training Gym in Sacramento, Calif. It's the only gym worth lifting at in Sacramento, and there are a ton of gyms in the Capital city.

Who is your coach? How has he helped you? My coach is the one and only Mark Bell. Also, I think of all my teammates at Super Training Gym as coaches. We all criticize, critique and help each





other. It really is a great gym to be at. When I first called Mark and asked if I could come train at ST, he said sure, just be prepared to work. The first day I was there he put me through the ringer so hard that I went to my truck, lit a menthol cigarette and really debated on just starting the truck and driving off, because I didn't think I was worthy to be there. Right when I put out my cigarette I said f*ck it. I went back inside and did reverse band deadlift because Mark told me to.

To explain how much Mark and ST has helped me in the last four years would take all day. The proof is in the numbers. When I walked in on Nov. 27, 2007, my total was 1,680 lbs. Within three months my total was 2,000 lbs. And now, four years later, my total is 2,502 lbs. That's 822 lbs. on my total since the day I joined and 125 lbs. a year on my total since my first meet representing Super Training Gym. That is what Mark and Super Training Gym have done for me. Mark is not only a great coach, but he's also become a great friend of mine.

How and when did you get into powerlifting? I started lifting when I was 14 for football. I was really into it and when I was 15, I found out that there was going to be a Strongman comp near me in Modesto, Calif. I entered the competition in the adult light-weight class because there were no other teenagers lifting and I didn't want to compete against myself. I tied for second place.

At that competition I met a pro Scottish gamer named Charlie Kapture. He told me I should do the Scottish games the following month in Sacramento. I went to the games just to watch, and Charlie and Kevin Kinzy, another Strongman and Scottish gamer, made me do it. I entered the C class and took first, second or third in all of the events and was the youngest competitor at the games, and at the time the youngest competitor in Scottish games in America. At the Scottish Games a competitor named Mike Benton from Modesto, who competed at the Strongman competition I did

the month before, approached me and told me I should do a powerlifting meet in Fresno, Calif., the next weekend. It was the Ironman put on by Bob Packer, an APF meet. I went to that meet and lifted raw at 15 years old in the 220-lb. weight class. I squatted 405 lbs., benched 275 lbs. and deadlifted 435 lbs. I took first in that meet in my age and weight class

and was instantly hooked in all the strength sports. At the end of the meet, Mike Benton gave me my first squat suit and bench shirt. It was a red Inzer champion suit and a red inzer standard blast shirt.

Do you have a background in other sports? I played football for six years, competed in Strongman for seven years until 2006 (still occasionally throwing in the Scottish games) Olympic lifting for four years, and I was also a stuntman on the cheer squad in high school. I know it's not very manly, but it's a great way to meet chicks and that was the only way into the weight room after football season was over.

Have you faced any major challenges along the way in your powerlifting career? In February 2006 I was in a car accident. On July 29, 2008, when I was 23, my father died of natural causes when he was only 52. It was the hardest day of my life. I didn't want to train or do anything after he passed. I was supposed to do my first Pro/Am in Ohio, but I couldn't afford it because of all the expenses my family incurred. I showed up at Super Training a week after the funeral and the team came together and gave me \$450 to help me get to the Pro/Am. They knew that's what my father would want. At that meet I received my very first elite total.

What are your 2012 goals? To get a 2,600-plus-lb. total, squat 1,100 lbs., bench 750 lbs. and deadlift 800 lbs.

Long-term goals? To squat 1,200-plus lbs., bench 800-plus lbs., deadlift 900-plus lbs., total 2,900-plus lbs. and get a top-five all-time total.

What do you do for work? I'm a union labor relations representative and union organizer for the Laborers International Union of North America and a member of Laborers Local 67 in Oakland, Calif. I love my job and couldn't think of doing anything else.

Who are your biggest fans? My friends, family and, of course, my beautiful fiancée Laura. My mom has always encouraged me and never pushed me to do anything I didn't want to do. But whatever I chose to do, she was always there yelling at me and cheering me

TRESTON EUGENE SHULL

on. You couldn't ask for a better mother, and if you disagree then I will fight you. My fiancée is very supportive. She is very special to me and I can't wait to marry her. She has been to all my meets and always has my back whenever I need something. I couldn't get through a meet without her anymore. She is one hell of a woman and I can't even imagine my life without her.

Do you have any meet superstitions? I never change anything about my life just because I have a meet the next day. I stay up late, sometimes only getting three or four hours of sleep before a meet. I never eat before a meet because I usually never eat when I



wake up before I go to work. Also, I never lift without my Lifewave patches. I've been wearing them for four years and stand by them 100 percent. They stimulate different acupressure points on the body. Basically I just try to be myself, like any other day.

What do you do to get amped before a meet or before an attempt? I usually stay very quiet and try to stay by myself at a meet. I'm a calm guy most of the time. Even on meet day I try to be my normal self and just screw off and joke around with everyone. Two things I do though right before I take an attempt is imagine the weight crushing me and killing me. That makes me really concentrate on the lift. The other is I ask my father for help. I know he's at every meet watching me.

How has powerlifting changed your life? As any powerlifter will tell you, we sacrifice a lot to do what we do. We lose friends, sleep, nights out partying and sometimes the women we love. It takes a special type of person to be around powerlifters. I

wouldn't change one bit of it, though. Powerlifting has made me strong, not just physically but also mentally. To excel in any sport you have to become disciplined. What we do on the platform doesn't come easy; it takes a lot of guts and mental strength to get through a meet. Hell, I know some guys who have lifted for four-plus years saying they'll do a meet but never do. They don't have the discipline or the mental strength to compete, and they are not powerlifters no matter what they say.

If you weren't powerlifting, what would you be doing? I'd probably be sitting at home playing World of Warcraft, weighing 500 lbs. eating Ding Dongs if I didn't lift. I really don't know what I would be doing because I can't see my life without powerlifting in it. I've been doing it now for almost 13 years and it's just a part of me, it's who I am. Even if I couldn't lift anymore I would be training people, anything to still be in the weight room.

What lifter do you admire most? Why? I admire lots of lifters. When I first got started, I looked up to guys like Ed Coan, Gary Frank, Louie Simmons and Steve Goggins. I still look up to them because to me, they pioneered this sport. Lifters today that I look up to are Chuck V., Brandon Lilly, Dave Hoff, Donnie Thompson, Mark Bell, A.J. Roberts – the list could go on and on. I admire them all because they put themselves through hell, and for what? Money,

fame, recognition? Hell no! They do it to say they are the best at what they do. It's about self-respect. Can anyone reading this article look in a mirror and say that they have given it their all, or done the best they can do? No, except for a very few, like those I mentioned above. They know what it's like to sacrifice day in and day out, and I admire these men exactly for that reason: They have given up so much of themselves for nothing in return.

Is there anything else you would like to add? I would like to say thank you to my friends and family, who have supported me for 13 long years in this sport. People like my mom, sister, fiancée and grandpa, my buddies who don't powerlift but understand why I don't see them and they don't give me shit for it. Also a huge thanks to everyone at Super Training Gym. There are more than 20 of them so I'm not going to name names. And last but not least, thanks to Power and Muscle Pharm for choosing me as the spotlight lifter. It truly is an honor and a pleasure to have done this interview. **PM**

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THIS CHICK CAN KICK YOUR ASS, MANDY

Who are you in 10 words or less? I'm a mother first, before anything else. Then I am a wife, fitness model, gym rat and happy person who is blessed and loves her life!

Where do you train? I train at PowerShack Gym in Columbus, Ohio.

Do you have a nickname? I do! Most people call me "Baby Girl" but a lot of people call me "Tiny," "Little bit," "Mighty Mouse" — anything small. You get the idea.

Are you married? Have kids? Yes, I am married to John Stafford (a former lifter at Westside Barbell) and we have one son who is almost five. His name is Nathan Stafford, the love of my life.

Age and weight class? I'm 32 years old. I'm 4'11" and weigh 115 lbs.

How did you get into powerlifting?

I started powerlifting with the great Donnie Thompson (Super D) back in 2000. I loved it immediately. Powerlifting taught me so much about lifting and really gave me the foundation I use for training today. Even though I don't compete in powerlifting anymore, I still use the techniques I learned and apply them to my training

now. I squat, bench and deadlift every week. I

remember the week of my last photoshoot. I had marks on my shins from deadlifting. It's one of those things you never stop doing. It's just part of your life.

Do you intimidate a lot of dudes?

I do. I have no clue why because I'm not even five feet tall! I hear all the time how big my arms and traps are and how thick my back is. Occasionally I like to pick on guys and say I can lift more than they can, and I try my best to bully them. It does make me laugh when I'm in the gym training and I'm using much heavier weights than some of the men that are lifting. Ahh, now that makes me feel good! However, I am friends with a few guys now who have told me when they first met me they were intimidated by me. I just giggle.

What is your favorite lift and why? Deadlift! I love

pulling. Grabbing that bar and ripping it off the floor gives me such a rush. I often take out my aggression on the deadlift. Even rack pulls fire me up. There's just

AND YOU MAY LIKE IT

STAFFORD

BY MICHELE ATKINSON
PHOTOS: MARANDI PRODUCTIONS
AND MIKE JOHNSTON WITH
AMERICAN STRONGMAN



something very special about loud angry music and deadlifts. It does my soul good and it makes me feel powerful, like nothing can stand in my way. If I'm pissed off and it's deadlift day, watch out.

What is the typical reaction when people find out you are powerlifter? Women are usually more shocked that I lift as heavy as I do — a lot are still under the assumption that if you lift anything heavy you will be bulky and look like a man. This annoys me so much! I usually fire back and say, "What, I don't look feminine to you?" Crazy!

Do you think you get extra attention because you are a girl? I think I do, sometimes, from people who don't know me. Because I am a girl and I do have muscles, but around my friends I'm always treated like one of the boys. I always talk about lifting and football and I have a mouth like a sailor.

Do you get hit on a lot at meets? I used to. It drove me nuts! Now everyone knows I am married and I hate being hit on so I'm not really bothered anymore. Or maybe I'm just too old now. I could write a book on the cheesy pick up lines I've heard.

What is the most embarrassing thing that has happened to you in the gym? I am not one to get embarrassed at all. I think I have been embarrassed once in my life, if that. I trip at least five times a day and I have fallen and busted my ass on several occasions in the gym. One of the funniest things was when I was training in South Carolina at Donnie's gym. I was box squatting and we had a gym full of people. As I went to squat down on the box, my pants ripped completely and I didn't have any underwear on! There were tons of people standing behind me, but they were more embarrassed than I was. I continued doing my set then went and changed my clothes. I will never forget that day.

What are your PRs in each lift? Well, now I don't train for singles. I'm just over the need to see what my 1RM is. Squat: I train with 225 for 10; bench: I train with 145 for reps of 5-6; deadlift: I train with 225 for 3. I don't use a belt, but I should. I had stomach surgery last January and wearing a belt still isn't comfortable for me.

What do you do for work? I'm a personal trainer and still do programs for people, but right now I'm fortunate enough to be able to stay home with my son. That is hard work for sure, but I really miss working outside of the home and I'm looking forward to him starting school so I can go back to work.

What outfit makes you feel the hottest? My old, worn out blue jeans and a tank top. It may not be as sexy as a hot little black dress, but this is when I feel my most comfortable and I feel like myself. I'm a country girl and we love our blue jeans. Sometimes being hot isn't what you're wearing, but how you feel about yourself in the clothes.

Who is your favorite lifter? My hubby John Stafford, of course! That is a tough question. I know so many of the great lifters. Donnie Thompson, David Hoff, Mark Bell, Paul Childress, Andy Bolton, Tony Bolognone, Dave Tate, Chuck Vogelpohl, Jo Jordan, the lovely Julia Ladewski (just to name a few) are all great friends and I love watching them lift. I guess my favorite is Donnie Thompson. I've known him for 12 years and he's Mr. 3000!

How has powerlifting benefited you? I've met so many amazing people through this sport. I even met my husband. I've learned so much about training. The powerlifting community is unique. I see these guys once or twice a year and it's like no time has passed at all, we just pick right back up and start chatting away. Talking about training, sports, life, whatever.

What are your powerlifting goals? I don't have powerlifting goals at this time. I just want to continue lifting and getting stronger, and hope I can motivate more women to train hard and not be afraid to get under a squat bar.

Do you have advice for other girls who want to get into powerlifting? I would say do it for you, not your boyfriend or your husband. Don't do it to try and fit in. Just do it because you want to.

Anything else you would like to add? I would like to thank Mark and Andee Bell for this opportunity. I love Power and I am totally honored to be interviewed for my favorite powerlifting magazine! **PM**

COACHING CUES GONE **BAD**

BY JESSE BURDICK

Coaching is hard work. There are so many things to consider, so many moving parts to keep track of when taking on the job of someone's coach. You have to pay attention to their body language, what they say and how they say it; know how they move and what motivates them; know how to teach, how they learn – and pretty much know everything else about them. And that's for each person.

Often, in a coaching setting, a lot of what you do is say the same thing over and over again in different ways until it clicks with them. At times it is the most challenging and frustrating job, but it also can be the most rewarding. It is said that the true measure of a coach is to produce an athlete that performs better than what the coach is actually capable of.

In the world of powerlifting, coaching a lifter through the ranks from a newbie to an elite, pro-level lifter should be everyone's dream. Great coaches have a way about them, a language all their own and a perfect delivery for each of their lifters. I want to take some of the greats' language, which has permeated the world of lifting, and dissect it a bit. Let's really consider what they are trying to correct, what they say, how they say it, what they mean, what you get when it is misinterpreted, and how to fix it.

"ARCH, ARCH, ARCH"

The first voice I hear in my head when I hear this phrase is that of Louie Simmons. You hear him screaming it to all his guys when they squat. He tries to correct or cue his lifters to make sure their back doesn't roll forward, making them fold up on themselves. Along the lines of thinking, "If the Russians did it, it has to be good," it has become common practice to use Lou's terminology because they think if that's what's going on at Westside barbell, it has to be right.

It's a great idea to cue your lifter to arch. When people overextend their backs, they fall victim to a syndrome commonly referred to as "overextension pants". It's a fancy way of referring to an overly pronounced lordotic curve in the lower back, which usually leads to the straightening of the legs, an inferior and external facing hip position and shoulders that are

pressed forward of the midline. You end up looking like a midget with a huge ass trying to get into a downward facing dog position in yoga class. An over-arched back isn't advantageous in the squat or deadlift. The greatest concern for anyone trying to be safe, efficient and strong is that it creates instability in the mid line and more distance for your hips to travel.

While the ideal positioning for the heaviest squat can be debated due to individual lifter to lifter biomechanics, it can certainly be agreed that, overwhelmingly, a rounded back or an overextended back is no way to squat. Take Stan Efferding and Dave Hoff, for example. They are great lifters but need to go about achieving a flat-ish back position. Stan, due to his mad soccer skills and years of bodybuilding, has hips and shoulders that are internally and medially rotated, so for him, hearing the word "arch" was perfect. It cued him into a position of power, it wound his tanned and shaved body up like a crank, kept him tight and gave him a position to push off and out of. Hoff, on the other hand, walks around and shoots his shotguns in a very arched position everyday. So when he squats, he winds himself up and keeps a tight flat back by concentrating on keeping his hips underneath the bar and knees out as hard as possible.

What can we do about overextension pants? There isn't a quick fix. Go about building a massive enough back, where overextension of the spine can never happen. Often overextension pants comes with hip mobility issues and a misunderstanding of what to do on the descent of the squat.

You ever wonder why companies put their logos on the front of t-shirts and squat suits? They think that everyone is going to be looking at them. Let's continue on with that logic and consider one of the better cues I have heard to help correct this. As you start to lower yourself into a squat, try to make sure everyone can see your logo clearly. This will allow the hips to move properly, keep the torso upright and back flat in great, heavy load-bearing squat form.

"HEAD UP, LOOK UP"

This is a cue that is best suited for the "struggling to lock out a deadlift" or "I love turn-

ing my squats into a good morning" lifter. When used for a lifter at the bottom of a deadlift or the ascent of the squat, it is often useless.

We need to think of the body as a spring. We want all the tension to build upon itself and then yield all the potential energy we can use. But if you were to unscrew the top of a spring, the bottom goes loose, as well. That's exactly what happens in this instance. Once the head goes up, the chin up and out, there is a 100-percent chance that your hips shoot up and out, as well. This lets all the tension we built into the body escape and turns the lift into an awful-looking, stiff-legged good morning, which creates a greater distance between the hips and the head and makes a hard lift harder for everyone.

How do we remedy these issues? Play with the lifter's eye line until he or she can establish and hold a neutral spine throughout the entire range of motion. Some will need to stare at the floor, others must find that magical horizon where sunsets, unicorns and rainbows happen. But remember that this is the eyes, not the head. The body will always follow the head and have a reaction for any of its movements.

Another way to help a lifter out is to have the lifter think about developing that sexy double chin look that is so popular right now. This look is achieved when the head pushes back instead of up. Finding where their eyes need to be and keeping their heads/chins back establishes tightness at the top of the body and shores up the spring mechanism we addressed earlier.

"TUCK YOUR ELBOWS"

This cue was developed to break people of the habit of benching "bodybuilder style", with your elbows out, and also for the shirted bench press. While some people have developed strength using the bodybuilder method of benching and for shirted bench press, this is a good cue as it insures the maximal usage and pop-out of the bottom of the shirt.

The ideal position keeps your elbow at a 45-degree angle, allowing all the musculature to be utilized while keeping the elbow underneath the bar. Not only will this allow proper bar path and the greatest muscle activation, but it will also

insure both shoulder and elbow integrity.

So what's the best way to save you and your lifter's dental insurance deductible? Teach and allow the elbow tuck, but keep in mind the 45-degree angle. It is usually okay as long as the elbow can still remain underneath the bar.

"HIPS LOW ON THE PULL"

The start of a deadlift position from the outside looking in seems to vary widely from person to person. But what do KK's turtle shell start and Bealev's perfect upright torso sumo deadlift position have in common? Three things stick out in my mind: they are both Russian, they are tightly wound up and their hips remain high. These deadlifting phenoms stop moving their hips once they have a hold of the bar, but somewhere, somehow it became part of the lexicon to coach a low hip start position.

It was probably started by people who were good deadlifters despite their form. What they were doing — and, consequently, lots of other people — was squat the weight up in order to break the bar off the ground. Malanichev is a great example of the exception to the rule. He does precisely this and pulls 900-plus. But he is Russian, as well, and therefore doesn't count, as he is genetically predisposed to deadlift. All joking aside, while the well-meaning coaches and advocates of squatting a deadlift are trying to help, they created the perfect storm of loose and poor positioning at the bottom of the deadlift for most people.

So how do you cue the bottom position of the deadlift? Again, there cannot be one idealized position for everyone, but in general, demand a flat lower back, tightness and hips only as low as needed to grab the bar and pull into position. While this is easier said than done and coached, it isn't impossible. The most successful way of teaching this in the shortest amount of time is to have the lifter set up with the bar covering the knots in their shoes, bend from the waist to grab the bar. By pulling against the bar, regain a flattened back position and then pull into a starting position where the hips are below the shoulders, the chest is up, eyes are on a horizon and there is no slack left in the arms of the lifter.

GOOD COACHES ARE HARD TO FIND

While it is said that good intentions pave the way to hell, as a coach, well-intentioned

cueing is an art form and very often needs to be used on a lifter-by-lifter basis. There will always be universal truths, but also exceptions to every rule.

Anyone can consider themselves a coach and/or an expert simply because they have seen videos or even have a video account on YouTube. It is very rare to find someone who has the discipline years of knowledge (both by the book and under the bar), ability and desire to be great coach. To these people, their coaching is their lives; it occupies their minds at all

times, dominates their conversations and even keeps them up at night. I was lucky enough to have had great coaches all throughout my baseball and now into my lifting career. My first coach was my dad, and my current coach is my best friend. I count myself lucky and thank them for all they have done and did for me; they showed me the way and made me who I am today. If you are a coach, good luck, don't take it lightly, do everything you can do for them, leave no stone unturned to inspire, educate and empower them. **PM**

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C4S

CARDIO FOR STRENGTH

JOHN KIEFER

Kryptonite drops Superman to his knees and sunlight turns vampires into pyrotechnics. Of the two, I'm not sure which works best for an analogy of how powerlifters feel about cardio. On Just Big Radio, Vincent Dizenzo relayed what happened when I sent cardio advice as part of a certain powerlifter's recompositioning protocol. I won't name names as to spare anyone any embarrassment, but apparently when Rob Luyando saw that I included cardio to help him lose fat as he trained for a world-record bench press, it terrified him. Just the thought of cardio had him sweating. My plan worked just by having him read it.

What I saw on the other end, however, was a guy posting on Facebook with noticeable glee about his morning cardio sessions.

FROM ANGST TO ANTICIPATION: WHAT THE HELL DID I PRESCRIBE?

Most people who've tried dieting down in strength sports make the mistake of consulting a physique guru. A physique guru can do one thing and only one thing well: help you get to a certain body fat for once in your life, maybe twice. But that's it. They throw everything into the mix, which often includes hours and hours of cardio. The goal is not peak performance — it's a crescendo to a brief aesthetic burst that fades into a fat, disgusting blob when it's all over.

There are several reasons for this, but mostly it has to do with cardio's ability to devastate the endocrine system

and cast a metabolic lull that extends for weeks after the show. Thyroid hormone levels lower — you're main metabolic regulator — cortisol levels spike, and the brain and body react strongly to ghrelin, the body's hunger-control hormone. In other words, when you're done with a physique guru's cardio plan, you're ravenous, your body is primed to soak up as much fat as possible, your muscle mass is swimming in catabolic hormones and your metabolism is in the shitter.

As with ways to skin a cat, there are plenty of ways to lose massive amounts of body fat, of which some allow you to get stronger in the process. Even my clients gunning for the stage lose little strength by the time they hit the coveted level of sliced. And once the show's over, their strength explodes as they hold a tighter, leaner physique than they started with. Part of the magic, as one client called it, is using the right cardio and as little of it as possible.

HIIT IS YOUR BEST SHOT

I won't beat around the bush and pretend that I own some secret, because my methods aren't secret at all. It's HIIT: High Intensity Interval Training, which is doing cardio in short, intense bursts instead of the steady-state garbage so often prescribed. Something as simple as sprinting for one minute, resting for two, sprinting for another, resting again for two before going into the next sprint and so on, is considered HIIT training.

Even though the idea of HIIT started some 80 years

“MOST PEOPLE WHO’VE TRIED DIETING DOWN IN STRENGTH SPORTS MAKE THE MISTAKE OF CONSULTING A PHYSIQUE GURU. A PHYSIQUE GURU CAN DO ONE THING AND ONLY ONE THING WELL: HELP YOU GET TO A CERTAIN BODY FAT FOR ONCE IN YOUR LIFE, MAYBE TWICE. BUT THAT’S IT.”

ago, scientists only now are discovering the efficacy and efficiency of using HIIT for everything from brain health to increasing skeletal muscle’s ability to burn fat for fuel. Granted, HIIT almost seems like magic, but only because we’ve been using ignorant methods of cardio for close to a century. By ignorant, I mean we now know better – continuing on the old path can now be considered stupid.

For example, how wise is it to waste two hours on a treadmill running at a high heart rate when, with HIIT, you get the same benefit from 30 minutes of time, of

which only 3 minutes is spent at a high heart rate? The exact same benefits – no matter what benefits you want to list – in one-fourth the time with only 3 minutes of total effort. I feel bad for my treadmill-neighbor every morning. I’m in the gym, warmed-up, worked-out, showered and gone before they’re finished running.

Just like ice cream, HIIT comes in various flavors. But unlike ice cream, you can’t go home with the entire



SPLIT	USE	TIMING	INTENSITY GOAL
4: 1/2	Endurance, general health, fat loss	First thing in the morning or before or after resistance training	100%
4:1	Fat loss, endurance	First thing in the morning or prior to training	95-100%
2:1	Fat loss, increased fat burning capacity, endurance	First thing in the morning or a least a couple of hours before resistance training	95-100%
1:2	Fat loss, increased fat burning capacity, endurance, deplete carb stores or compensate for carb binging	Same as above	90%
2:4	Same as above	Same as above	90%
2:4	Post Carb Nite if using such a plan, all the benefits of above plus increasing lactic acid threshold (i.e. extending time to anaerobic failure)	Resistance train in the morning and do this at night	100% for the duration (will taper but should always feel like 100%)

“HIGH INTENSITY INTERVAL TRAINING, WHICH IS DOING CARDIO IN SHORT, INTENSE BURSTS INSTEAD OF THE STEADY-STATE GARBAGE SO OFTEN PRESCRIBED.”

frozen section in the trunk of your car in the hopes of experiencing a slight moment of euphoria before slipping into a sugar coma. HIIT doesn't work that way. You get one flavor at a time. Choosing the right HIIT requires consideration of many factors like time of day of resistance training, when you can perform your HIIT and your ultimate conditioning goal.

If your goal is fat loss, HIIT should be performed first thing in the morning before ingesting anything besides a nutritionally-void source of caffeine, including tea, a few assorted no-carb energy drinks and coffee (hot chocolate and lattes don't count). Otherwise, perform HIIT immediately prior to training. Before bed is fine, but not ideal.

KNOW YOUR PROTOCOLS

HIIT protocols look like the odds on a horse race — 1:2, 4:1, 3:1 — and so on. The first number represents the minutes of active rest and the second number the minutes of high-intensity exertion. The high-output segment can range from 90 to 100 percent of maximum

power output, depending on the duration of the sprint portion. Producing 100-percent power output for 4 minutes is extremely difficult, but 30 seconds is doable. Above is a chart of different prescriptions and relative intensities and how they should be used.

For any of the splits at any time of day, you should only do a maximum of eight cycles or 30 minutes, whichever is shorter. For example, eight cycles of a 2:1 split would be 24 minutes, but you could only perform five cycles of the 2:4 split to stay at the 30-minute threshold. Most of the time, for most strength and power sports, you'll never need more than the first level, 4: 1/2, performed three to four times per week.

If you feel like killing yourself on the treadmill or taking a spin class, or maybe Jazzercise or Zumba is more your speed, go right ahead. It will definitely work as you starve yourself to near death, living the life of a Buddhist ascetic. Or, you might consider cutting your cardio to near nothing, increasing metabolism, performance and even giving yourself a greater endurance capacity for game day. **PM**

Warning: saying the below could get you smacked!

"Hey Bro, Are You Done Squatting In The Rack So I Can Do Some Arm Curls?"

If you want to "train for real" and get respect in the gym then you've come to the right spot...and if you want the "real" scoop on supplements from legends like Joe "The Prototype" Morrow then keep reading...

Dear Fellow Powerlifter,

I feel sorry for them, you know the guys I'm talking about...

The ones that read the "bodybuilding" magazines and blindly follow the endless "split/single body part" routines because one of the pharmaceutically enhanced pros said so...c'mon man!

Week after week, month after month, I see the same guys doing arm curls, rocking back and forth, using the same weight from when they first started, not gaining a single pound of muscle...I call them "curl-bro's"...

Sometimes I like to have a little fun with them and yell out, "When is leg day?" Of course the answer is always "tomorrow!" Kind of like the sign in my local bar, "Tomorrow Is Free Beer Day!"

RAW LIFTING

Since you are reading this you know what "raw lifting" is and no one knows that better than Joe Morrow...

Joe has more powerlifting titles and raw lifting records then would fit on this page and he truly is one of the nicest guys you'll ever meet. He's also solid as a slab of granite and inspires everyone when he walks into the gym. So when Joe talks about supplements... **people listen!**

THE MODERN BLUEPRINT

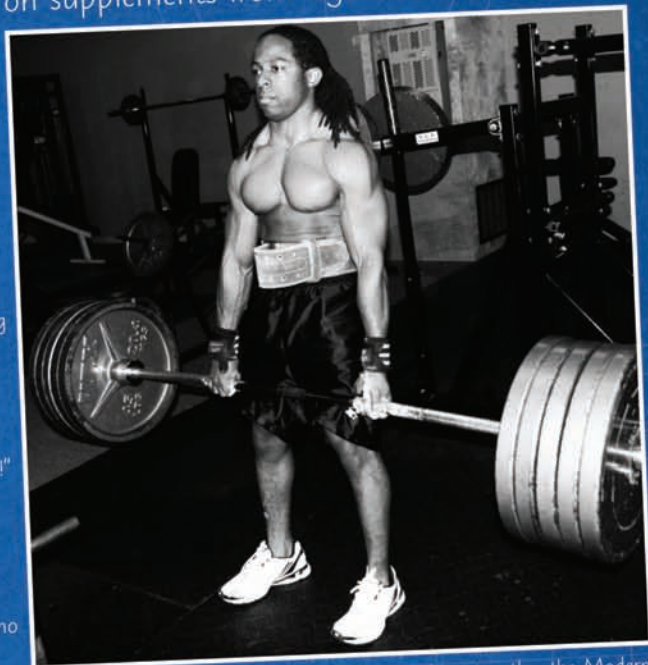
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THE MODERN BLUEPRINT

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DAVE

BY MARK BELL

Dave Hoff is the youngest lifter to squat 1,000 and 1,200 lbs., the youngest to bench 900 the youngest to total 2,400, 2,500, 2,600, 2,700 2,800 and 2,900 lbs. Hoff is rewriting record books at breakneck speeds and has turned the Westside record board into his very own resume of achievements. Haters, step aside and stop trying to say it's today's gear because the stuff Hoff wears now has been available for nearly 10 years. He was swarmed in a tornado of criticism and controversy after a Pro/Am showing where it appeared that he had stuck some type of object under his shirt to shorten his bench stroke. No one ever did find out the real story. Since that time, Hoff has buried the past with a blind fury of outrageous totals, all done with picture-perfect form, technique and class.

MARK BELL: The question on everyone's mind is this: How did you go about reinventing yourself as a pop star in Germany after Baywatch was cancelled?

DAVID HOFF: Come on man, don't hassle the Hoff!

MB: What sticks out (more than your gut) when you are on the bench is your



ASTSI



progress? Seriously, we are all impressed with the massive weights you handle, but in my mind you have cemented yourself as an all time great with consistency and mind-numbing progress. What is the key to some of your success?

HOFF: One of the main reasons for my success is the gym I train at, Westside Barbell. It's hands-down the greatest strength training facility on earth. Not to mention the countless number of world record holders who have come through that building over the past 25 years. I've had the privilege to train with the absolute best in the world for my entire career. Westside greats like Matt Smith, John Stafford, Joe Bayles, Greg Panora, Chuck Vogelpohl, AJ Roberts and Jake Anderson. I can go on forever.

I started training at Westside from the ripe old age of 15. Right then and there it was either perform perfectly or get out. Westside is very cutthroat, and only the strong survive. I was thrown to the wolves when I was 15 and that made me the lifter I am today. Not to mention being under the careful watch of the great Louie Simmons and Bob Coe, making me do everything perfect before I was allowed to move up in weight. I simply wasn't allowed to miss weights. Those are some of the reasons for my success.



first full power meet was a couple months later. I did a 700 squat, 475 bench and 600 deadlift for a 1,775 total at 220.

MB: How long have you been at Westside?

HOFF: Eight years. Its crazy how time flies by!

MB: It is my understanding that you started powerlifting even before Westside. How did all that go down? And who did you train with?

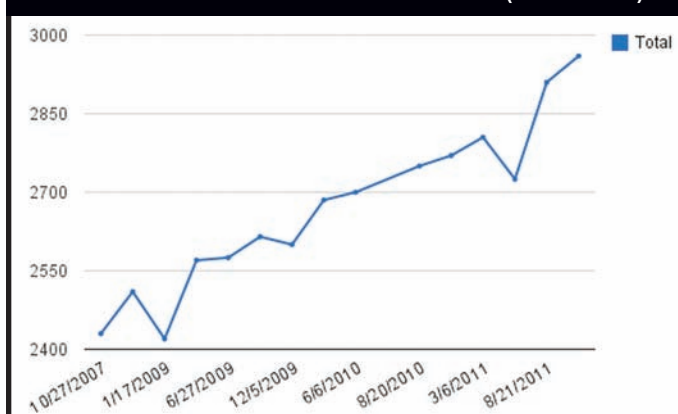
HOFF: I started lifting weights at a very young age. When I was in 6th grade I would out-lift the freshman football team; they all called me a Power Ranger. After that I moved up to lifting with the varsity football team and that's kind of how I got my base. From there on out I always wanted to be the biggest and the strongest guy. Soon I found former Westside lifter Travis Fletcher, who had a small powerlifting gym. It was pretty cool because I got to train with my brother and closest friends. I trained for a couple weeks, started moving weight around, and Travis said, "You need to meet Louie." I said, "Who?" He took me to Westside for a workout. I met Louie and I remember his words like yesterday: "You need to train at Westside." I've been there ever since.

MB: What gave you the confidence to believe in yourself?

HOFF: I'm a firm believer in the good Lord. Powerlifting is a gift that he has blessed me with. At night I pray and ask, "What do You want me to do, Lord?" And I wake up with numbers. It's been like that since I started lifting. I ask him what He wants me to do, and I do it. I put all my trust in Him and what He wants me to do. So that is more confidence than you can humanly get.

MB: So it's not out of line to say you might be "Tebowing" before and after you bench a grand?

HOFF'S PROGRESSION FROM 19 YEARS OLD TO TODAY (24 YEARS OLD)



WEIGHT CLASS	DATE	SQUAT	BENCH	DEADLIFT	TOTAL
275	October-07	1005	680	745	2430
275	August-08	930	780	800	2510
242	January-09	880	770	770	2420
275	March-09	985	800	785	2570
275	June-09	990	790	795	2575
275	August-09	1015	810	790	2615
242	December-09	1025	785	790	2600
275	March-10	1030	850	805	2685
275	June-10	1035	840	825	2700
275	August-10	1075	860	815	2750
275	December-10	1060	900	810	2770
275	March-11	1115	880	810	2805
308	June-11	1035	915	775	2725
275	August-11	1165	945	800	2910
308	December-11	1200	965	795	2960

MB: What did you lift in your first meet?

HOFF: My first meet was a bench-only meet. It was in Circleville, Ohio, and I had just turned 16. I benched 440 and just missed 470. Back then a kid benching 440 was insane. I would over hear people comparing me to Kenny Patterson (former Westside world record holder in the bench). At that moment I realized I had a God-given gift to do this sport, and I was hooked. My



HOFF: Very funny. Call it what you will, but Mr. Tebow and I share common ground; we both are successful in our chosen areas of competition. I go into it with the mindset that if I get it, the good Lord wanted me to have it. If I miss it, that's because He wanted me to miss it. He has a plan and I just go with it because the more I trust and listen, the further I go.

MB: I know Lou is Westside Barbell and he is your coach, but it also appears you get a lot of help and guidance from an old-time lifter who has been at Westside from the beginning. How important has Bob Coe been to your training?

HOFF: Bob Coe has been with me since the beginning. He pretty much built the base of strength I sit on today. Bob always was looking out for my best interest. He was a firm believer in, "If it aint

broke don't fix it." He would get together with Lou and finetune workouts just for me. I didn't have to think, all I did was lift weights. Bob added a lot of energy and passion to the gym and the training group. He made you feel like you were lifting for something better than yourself. He lives and breathes for Westside. If Bob Coe hadn't taken me under his watchful eye, I don't believe I would have made the kind of progress that I have been able to make. Bob never told me that I couldn't do something. He would always give me the odds and say, "Junior, I don't know how much longer you can go on making 100-lb. PR jumps." That was his way of saying no one has done this before you need to be careful so you don't get injured. Bob Coe did one very important thing with me: He never let me get hurt. If I tweaked something, I was done and didn't go heavy until I was

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healed. Bob gave me longevity in the sport. Bob Coe handed me my first 440-lb. bench press and my first 1,000-lb. bench. We have been down a long road together. Bob physically can't powerlift any more due to several injuries, so he wasn't ever able to really train. He came in on his own free will and helped me. So Bob, thank you very much for all the time, effort, blood, sweat and tears you have put into my career. I could have never done it without you.

MB: What does it mean to you to get your name up on the record board at Westside Barbell? To have your name with the best of the best – and even surpassed the best?

HOFF: It definitely is a great honor to be on that board. For years and years I looked at that board telling myself one day I will be up there one day. My most honorable moment was after the Pro/Am this past August where I squatted 1,165 at 275. I was standing in front of the board looking at one of the most popular names in all of powerlifting: Vogelpohl. I remember just stopping and looking at it. Chuck was the man and he set the bar so high. I never thought in a million years I would be standing in front of that board erasing his name to write mine. That single moment was one of the most memorable in my career. I've looked up to Chuck since I first saw him at the Arnold. He's been a source of great inspiration to me. He's taught me so many things about squatting and helped me excel my squat to world-class. In my opinion he is one of the greatest powerlifters to walk to planet. I really felt like I reached the top when I had the honor to replace his name with mine.

MB: It seems like you and Joe Jester are good friends and teammates. How has he helped your progress?

HOFF: Joe Jester is another person at Westside not many people know about. He is a very dedicated lifter. He eats and breathes Westside. He's a very true friend and no matter the issue, I can count on Joe. I've trained with him since I started at Westside. Not only is he a strong powerlifter (870-lb. squat, 630-lb. bench, 600-lb. deadlift for a 2,100-lb. total at 220), but he's also a great coach. Joe wraps my knees for the squat and calls my depth; he's my eyes while I'm lifting. If I didn't have Joe and Bob, powerlifting would suck! You are only as good as your help and my progress reflects

the great help I have gotten. So a very big thank you to Joe Jester. We are kind of like Batman and Robin.

MB: Explain what you mean by lifting one meet behind your potential?

HOFF: This is something I kind of fell into and goes back to Bob Coe wanting me to leave something in the tank at the end of the meet. I train to hit certain numbers and I lift to get the big total. I don't go balls out and try something I'm not 100-percent sure I can get. I believe that's a good way to get hurt. So I always try to stay a meet behind my actual potential. This is a big reason I can make big jumps at the level I'm at. Powerlifting great Travis Mash told me, "Powerlifting is not a sprint, it's a marathon." I took those words of advice and applied them. Ask yourself, "What's the hurry to get to the big weights? The weight will always be there, take your time and conquer the weight!" Do not fall victim to the weight.

MB: Did you really go from a 405-lb. bench to an 825-lb. bench in the same old denim shirt?

HOFF: My first bench shirt was a Cairns Xtreme denim shirt. In my first meet I did an opener of 425 then went 440 and missed 470. I went from 425 to 825 in the same exact shirt. I still have that shirt and I have every number I ever did written down the inside panel of the shirt. I guess that goes back to what Bob said – if it aint broke don't fix it – so I rode that shirt out until I got too big and couldn't touch anything anymore. That's when I made the switch to the INZER Super Duper Phenom (SDP).

MB: I'm glad you brought up the SDP. We have seen some great movement in your total and a big chunk has come from your bench moving up 100 lbs. when your bench was already unreal. Tell people what you feel the shirt is doing for you.

HOFF: Personally I think Inzer makes the best powerlifting gear money can buy. The SPD, more than anything, is just a comfortable shirt to wear. You don't feel like your arms are going to explode an inch from your chest. The shirt holds up under massive weights and gives you incredible pop out of the hole. The SDP works for me because it has an almost identical shirt groove to my old denim bench shirt.



MB: How often do you train in your shirt?

HOFF: Typically I shirt up every three or four weeks. After a meet, I wait four weeks to let my body heal and recover from the bashing it takes with those big benches. I also go by how I feel; if week three rolls around and I feel beat up, I will wait another week and then go. I never try to push the issue if I'm sick or tweaked a pec; that's a good way to get hurt.

MB: I noticed that as I got stronger, overload work in a shirt off boards did very little for me. What's your take on shirt work?

HOFF: I think it depends on where and when you are trying an overload exercise. I do one type of overload work and that's 10 weeks out from a meet, just to give my CNS a shock. Also, some people go too heavy with shirt work. Instead of getting stronger, some just try to whore out a bench shirt and find the tightest shirt that takes 800 lbs. to touch, when really they are a 700-lb. bench. Don't train beyond your means in a bench shirt. Use it and make it relevant to what you are doing in a meet. I see a lot of guys take 850 on a one-board to make 600 feel light in the meet. Keep it simple.

MB: Give us a quick rundown of your bench workouts.

HOFF: I use the Westside Method for the bench press. I have a dynamic speed bench press day where I concentrate on speed, explosion, form and technique, and then my max-effort bench day with a chosen exercise. I use a lot of bands and chain tension, mostly on dynamic speed days. I will use heavy tension as well on a max effort day, i.e. four-board press with four chains on each side. Sometimes I do singles, other times I do doubles. It changes every training cycle. I try to change little things in the training cycle and keep a base of five to six max-effort exercises.

MB: I'd say you're one of the best benchers this sport has ever seen. A lot of guys have a tough time locking weights out.

What do you think the issue is? What have you done to build a full power bench world record of 965 lbs.?

HOFF: I think a lot of guys spend too much time in a shirt and not enough time training to get strong. Some people just like the self satisfaction of taking 850 to a three-board for two instead of actually being able to touch and bench press 800 lbs. Some people will try a shirt and, if that didn't add 30 lbs., they try another shirt a week later. When that shirt goes bad they go back to the one they used the previous week. I just get in a shirt and handle the numbers I'm going to attempt in the meet. It's very basic. I take my time and the numbers come with consistent training. You only get better or worse, no one stays the same. I have made it a priority to get better each meet, even if it's only an increase of 5 lbs.

MB: Last meet you nailed a 1,200-lb. squat weighing 278. Tell us about your training going into the meet and about the purpose behind squatting into chains.

HOFF: I did this meet because I felt like I left way too much at the Pro/Am in August. I wanted to go out and try some big numbers to really see what I could handle and just take a shot at another World Record. I box squat 75 percent of the time, again using bands and chains for resistance. I did small three-week waves of box squatting and on the fourth I took a free squat. I used the chains basically to get comfortable in gear and to handle the numbers I wanted to do in the meet.

MB: What assistance movements do you like to do for the squat?

HOFF: I do a lot of isolated hamstring work. Lou invented a new hamstring curl machine that I have been living on and I believe it's been a huge part in my squat jumping. I also do a lot of belt squats and live on the reverse hyper. I pretty much train like a bodybuilder for



assistance work. I tend to isolate muscle groups for squat assistance.

MB: I've talked to many great lifters over the years, and several have said they like don't like to max out all the way in training. What's your take on this?

HOFF: I feel the same way. I believe there is a time and place. I like to shut it down early and have more left rather than barely get something and know it's all I had. I guess in a roundabout way it

built confidence for me because I don't let myself miss in the gym, and that carries over into the meet.

MB: When you got your first 2,500-plus total, you deadlifted 800 in August 2008. Your last total (three years later) in December 2011 was 2,960 with a 795 deadlift. Your total has gone up 450 lbs., but your deadlift has stayed about the same. Tell us what you feel you need to do to improve your deadlift after such huge squats and benches.

HOFF: The deadlift has always been tricky. It's not a lift where you can throw gear on and instantly add 50 lbs. It's hard to put all the numbers together after big squats and big benches. The deadlift is a continual work in progress. It's a lot of form and technique and if you're off the slightest bit, it either feels like a million lbs. or you miss it. You can only do so much in a training cycle leading up to the meet. One of my flaws is holding back on the deadlift at times. To improve I have to keep trucking on. In the near future I think you will see a deadlift PR out of me.

MB: Give us some of your favorite deadlift exercises that have helped you pull 800 or more in eight competitions.

HOFF: I like to do heavy speed pulls from the floor with added band resistance. I also like rack pulls with the doubled over purple bands; it's a great exercise to work the lockout and grip. I also train both sumo and conventional, but only pull sumo in the meet. I learned this from Chuck V. and it has carried over well for me.

MB: How do you choose attempts for the meet? And how is it you are able to hit so many and almost always seem to have a chance at a PR total and/or world record total?

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HOFF: It's pretty simple. If I get a PR, I move all my attempts up from the last meet about 20 lbs. or so. If I didn't do well in a particular lift that time around, I keep the training numbers around the same and repeat it at the next meet. Don't rush through numbers to get to the "big ones," just take your time and pace yourself. I have a plan and I stick with it. I choose my first, second and third attempts immediately after I'm done lifting in the previous meet. I usually have a plan "A" and plan "B" in case the day isn't the best. If I'm firing on all cylinders, I go with plan "A". I don't pick numbers I don't think I can't do.

MB: We all know great things don't happen without a lot of support, so tell the fans out there who has helped you become a multiple world record-holder.

HOFF: My father more so than anyone. He has always been a big supporter. He's extended a huge helping hand and I can't thank him enough for all he's provided me. He's the best father and role model any son could ask for.

Louie Simmons opened the door and let me train at Westside. Lou has set the stage for my powerlifting career. I'm grateful for his time and effort, and all the world records he's paid me for! (That's right, Westside pays you \$750 for every world record you break).

Bob Coe has never doubted me or told me I couldn't do some-

thing. Big thanks to Joe Jester for always giving me constructive criticism, wrapping my knees and handling me at meets. He's got one of the best eyes in powerlifting and is one of the most knowledgeable people out there. Also big thanks to Chuck Vogelpohl for teaching me the secrets of the squat. I hope to carry on his legacy. Also thanks to Chris Mason at Atlarge Nutrition for his generosity. He's got the best supplements out there. And John Inzer for providing me with the top notch powerlifting gear. And lastly, a big thanks to all my Westside teammates past and present, I couldn't have done anything without all my teammates, day in and day out, pushing me to the limit.

MB: Wrap this up by giving Power readers three tips to a huge bench.

HOFF: One, get a shirt that fits properly and that you can get to touch with relative ease. Once you have built PRs up in that shirt, move to a tighter one and repeat.

Two, stay within your means and be true to yourself and what you can do. Gym lifting doesn't mean crap in a meet. Make a plan and stick with it!

Three, don't miss workouts. If you want to consistently improve your bench press, you are going to have to be consistent in the gym. **PM**

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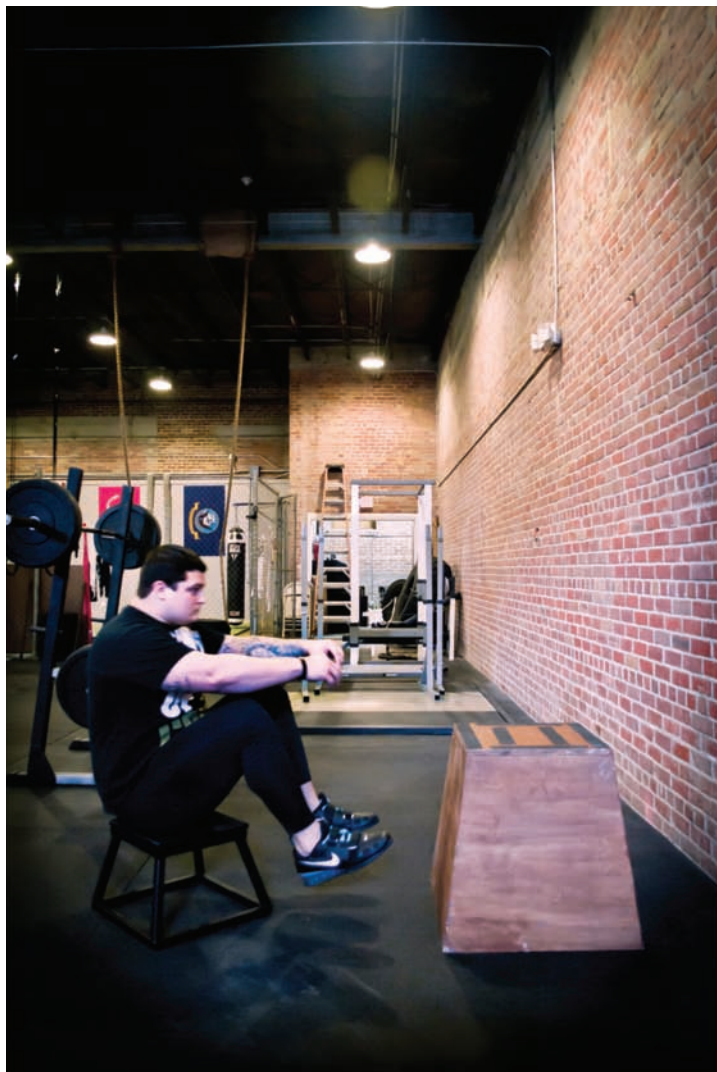
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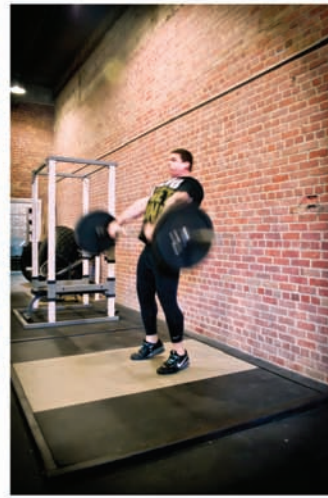
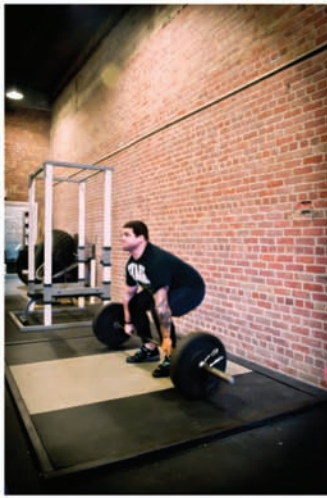
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DEVELOP MAXIMUM POWER

BY MATT VINCENT
PHOTO CREDIT: DREW REILLEY

Throwers are some of the most explosive strength athletes on the planet. Many of the top guys can squat 700-plus and bench 600-plus raw. This is often done with no wrist or knee wraps, as well. Don't believe me? Take a minute and look up a guy like Christian Cantwell on YouTube. The ability to throw a 16-lb. ball 70 feet involves a lot of factors. Maximal strength is one of those; power is another. Power is the rate at which energy is transferred. In short, being strong is not enough to be powerful — you have to be able to apply that force quickly. Simply put, the number one thing that makes athletes great is power, and developing it isn't complicated.



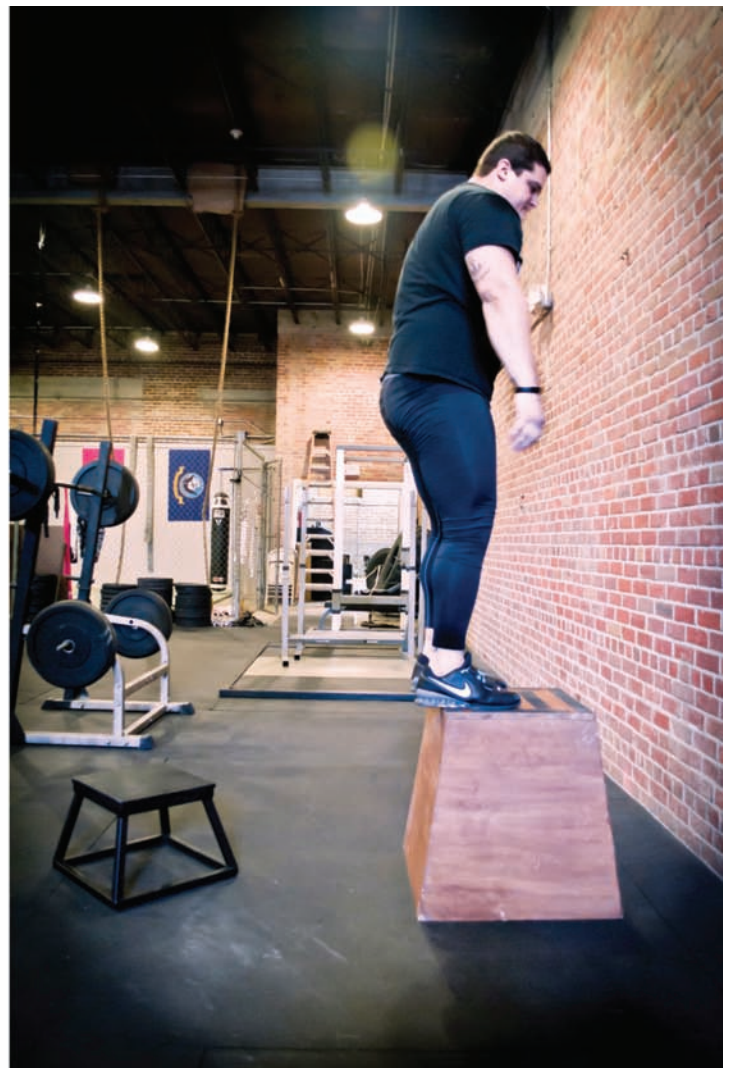


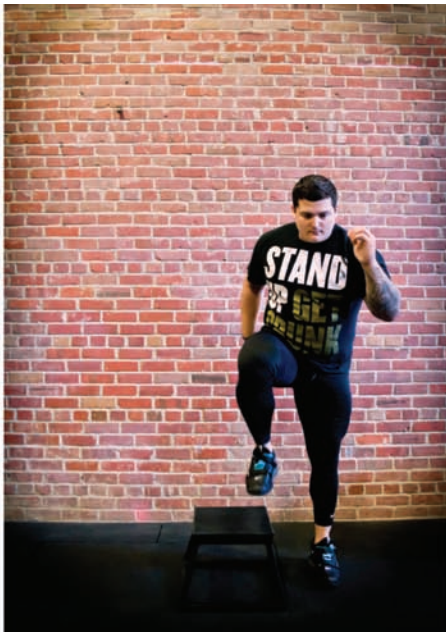
Training for power is no different than anything else. It requires time and consistency. Building power will also develop max strength. Some training goals can be unrealistic, like getting strong and super-lean at the same time. Luckily, gaining power and top-end strength is entirely possible. No matter what type of training you are doing as a strength athlete, being more powerful will benefit you. There is no secret program Olympic shot-putters are privy to. It's the same stuff any serious strength athlete should be doing. We

all need strong back, legs, cores, arms and shoulders to be successful in our athletic endeavors. The way we go about developing this is where differences start to arise.

SPEED

Building speed is where many people fall short. We all like to get under a barbell and test our maxes. The bad news is that weeks or even years of slow, grinding lifts will not help you get more power-





ful. Take a step back and train with a different mindset, and it could push you through any plateaus that you are seeing. It doesn't matter what your level of strength is. Developing more power will help you with every facet of your game, whether it's being a better overall athlete or adding pounds to your total.

I set my program up into five-week blocks. One five-week block focuses on max strength while the other focuses on max speed/power. The training is based off three days a week and six

main lifts: squat, bench, push press, deadlift, clean and snatch. You should be familiar with all of these lifts, as they are staples of any basic strength program for an athlete.

GOING OLYMPIC

Olympic lifts may cause apprehension in some, but they shouldn't. They are highly technical lifts to master, but since you are not looking to compete as a weightlifter, you just need the basics to benefit.

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What you are trying to gain from these lifts is a stronger, more powerful hip drive. As a bonus, powerful hips is what “finishes” deadlifts and squats. In Olympic-style lifts, your hip drive on these lifts is what accelerates the barbell to either catching at the shoulders (clean) or overhead (snatch). High pulls with either narrow grip

will carry over to your max effort lifts and help you develop more speed on them. This speed can be the difference in getting buried or being able to drive through your sticking points. This mentality of pushing as hard as you can is particularly important during the speed and power block.

“TAKE A STEP BACK AND TRAIN WITH A DIFFERENT MINDSET, AND IT COULD PUSH YOU THROUGH ANY PLATEAUS THAT YOU ARE SEEING. IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT YOUR LEVEL OF STRENGTH IS”

(clean) grip or wide (snatch) grip will give you all the benefits you need. There are also about 10 million different tutorials out there for both of those lifts, so there's no shortage of study material.

The program works on three days with two main lifts each day. Day 1 is squat and bench. Day 2 is push press and deadlift. Day 3 is clean and snatch. The max strength block is going to have you lifting heavy on Day 1 and Day 2, while Day 3 will be lighter weight you can move faster. The speed and power block is going to have you lifting lighter reps on Day 1 and Day 2, and heavier for Day 3.

Always push every lift as hard as you can. Think about moving the bar as fast as possible all the time. Forcing you to move all weights quicker will be harder than you think it is. Instead of just putting out the amount of effort needed to comfortably finish the lift, really focus on using 100 percent effort on all lifts, no matter the weight. Teaching your body to drive as hard as you can all the time

I recommend taking whatever your current max single is and setting 90 percent of that as your training max to base percentages. This is an idea I started using with 5/3/1 and it always kept me getting stronger. So, for example, if you squat 500 lbs., your training max that all of your percentages are based off of is $500 \times .90 = 450$. This will keep you from missing any reps during the training. When you finish the four weeks of training, spend the following week de-loading.

One of the first lessons I learned while in college throwing was to lift for strength and jump for speed. Doing some simple jumping in your training will be a great way to develop explosive power. I know you see people jump on 70-inch boxes on the Internet all the time, but this is more of a show of hip flexibility than show of power. You can do these weighted with a vest, if you have the option, or go raw.

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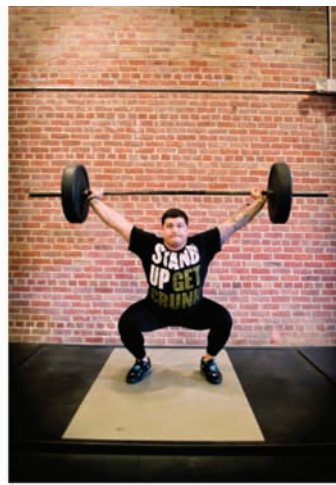
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Max Strength Block: Sets/Reps/%

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Week 1	SQ/BP- 5x5 @ 85	OH/DL- 5x5 @ 85	CL/SN- 5x3 @ 75
Week 2	SQ/BP- 5x5 @ 90	OH/DL- 5x5 @ 90	CL/SN- 5x3 @ 80
Week 3	SQ/BP- 5x3 @ 95	OH/DL- 5x3 @ 95	CL/SN- 5x2 @ 85
Week 4 (test)	SQ/BP- 5x1 @ 100	OH/DL- 5x1 @ 100	CL/SN- 5x1 @ 90

Speed and Power Block:

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Week 1	SQ/BP- 12x3 @ 60	OH/DL- 12x3 @ 60	CL/SN- 10x2 @ 85
Week 2	SQ/BP- 10x3 @ 65	OH/DL- 10x3 @ 65	CL/SN- 8x2 @ 90
Week 3	SQ/BP- 8x2 @ 70	OH/DL- 8x2 @ 70	CL/SN- 6x1 @ 95
Week 4	SQ/BP- 6x1 @ 75	OH/DL- 6x1 @ 75	CL/SN- 4x1 @ 100

Workout Template: Insert your numbers depending on training week

Day 1:	Day 2:	Day 3:
Squat:	Push press:	Clean:
Bench:	Deadlift:	Snatch:
Good mornings: 3 x 10	Pull-ups: 3 x 10	Seated box jumps: 3 x 10
Weighted dips: 3 x 10	Single arm rows: 3 x 10	Single leg jump: 3 x 10
Conditioning: HIIT training	Conditioning: HIIT training	Conditioning: HIIT training

“THIS PROGRAM WILL MAKE YOU MORE POWERFUL. BEING ABLE TO GENERATE MORE POWER WILL HELP YOU BE ABLE TO BE A BETTER BENCHER OFF THE CHEST, STRONGER OUT OF THE HOLE SQUATTER, AND HELP YOU TEAR THE BAR OFF THE FLOOR PULLING.”

ate more power will help you be able to be a better bencher off the chest, stronger out of the hole squatter, and help you tear the bar off the floor pulling. No one ever missed a lift by being too powerful. Try something new and train like some of the most powerful guys on the planet. I know that many of you will dismiss the program due to the low percentages, Olympic lifting and jumping, and that will be your loss. Worse, you might take it and manipulate it so that the percentages are too high and get rid of the Olympic movements and jumping, then bitch about it not working after one week, despite missing

the entire point of the program. Strength training is a lifelong journey and we all have our own decisions to make. Training like an athlete will never go out of style. **PM**

Matt Vincent lives in Baton Rouge, La., and is one of the top Professional Highland Games athletes in the world. He placed second at 2011 IHGF World Championships (International Highland Games Federation). He also competes in powerlifting. Check him out at www.MattVincent.net.



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POWERLIFTING & MILITARY TACTICAL TRAINING

BY MATT R. WENNING, M.S.



Chaotic benching: A new staple in the Army



The sumo deadlift being instructed, a base exercise in MAW



Soldiers doing Kettle bell swings with 45 lb weights for 2 minute sets

I have had the pleasure to work for the U.S. Army for five years in various ways. In that time, I have learned as much as I have taught to our armed forces. Much of this was originally taught to Special Forces in 3rd Bt. Rangers, and now to the general Army.

The general Army has a long way to go to become a physical formidable force. But with the Mountain Athlete Warrior Program (MAW), we are making great strides to make sure our troops have the best that the weightlifting and performance the world has to offer. Powerlifting has been a huge help in increasing our strength and teaching the Army how to train properly. Powerlifters understand the use of effective and, more importantly, safe ways to become better. They understand that it takes time and knowledge to get stronger, making a great powerlifter someone who is smart, patient and less injury-prone.

Select military groups have adopted a powerlifting mentality to

training very well. They understand that it doesn't just take more muscle size to become stronger, but rather a blend of multiple abilities (speed, strength, technique, balance, etc.).

STRENGTH: A MAJOR COMPONENT TO TACTICAL POPULATIONS

Many soldiers are very weak. The average deadlift of infantry officers I measured was slightly less than 200 lbs. The average soldier weighs 185 lbs. The average equipment load is 70 lbs. (ammo, armor, GPS, etc.). Therefore, the total weight of that soldier is 255 lbs. vs. his or her average deadlift of 200 lbs. Even an untrained person can see this doesn't make sense. Soldiers who are not strong enough to lift themselves or their partner? This is a huge problem.

There is only one way to fix this issue: Get stronger. Most of the soldiers under my supervision for a short time can deadlift on aver-



“MANY SOLDIERS ARE VERY WEAK. THE AVERAGE DEADLIFT OF INFANTRY OFFICERS I MEASURED WAS SLIGHTLY LESS THAN 200 LBS. THE AVERAGE SOLDIER WEIGHS 185 LBS. THE AVERAGE EQUIPMENT LOAD IS 70 LBS. (AMMO, ARMOR, GPS, ETC.). THEREFORE, THE TOTAL WEIGHT OF THAT SOLDIER IS 255 LBS. VS. HIS OR HER AVERAGE DEADLIFT OF 200 LBS.”

Teaching proper box squat form to the military

age 450 to 500 lbs. without gaining much bodyweight (165 to 185 lbs). This leads to easier moving of heavy equipment and injured personnel, as well as lower injury rates in soldiers both on and off the battlefield.

JUST BECAUSE YOU CAN RUN 5 MILES DOESN'T MEAN YOU'RE IN SHAPE

Running moderate to long distances in the Army is a staple for conditioning and is widely overused. In reality, a soldier does very little if any long distance running in real battle scenarios. This vintage method of training has also led to many injuries and decreased

performance across the military. The older ways of conditioning have not properly prepared our soldiers for the rigors of combat in a city, desert or the mountainous environments that we find ourselves involved in combat today.

As powerlifters, we know that it makes sense to train for what we need. Soldiers need quick sprints with added resistance (weapons, armor etc.) and short rest periods. This is where powerlifting comes in. Sled dragging, farmer's walks, Kettlebell swings, rope swings and dummy carries are essential for specific conditioning needs. Running alone does about as much good for a soldier as a gun with no bullets.



WEAKNESSES: SAME FOR SOLDIERS AND POWERLIFTERS

As you can see in the picture, glute ham raises for our military are not the easiest thing in the world. In a soldier's enlistment, about .0001 percent of their training time is designated to increasing hamstring/glute strength. Bringing up the hamstring strength to an acceptable level of strength (usually eight to 10 reps of glute ham raises) has proven with Special Forces to reduce lower back and knee problems almost 50 percent.

A training protocol that develops maximal strength, general and specific physical preparedness and explosive power is essential to our soldiers to perform their jobs effectively and safely. To work on these multiple abilities we have them utilize a Soviet style of training, commonly called the Piecemeal Conjugate System, which is fairly common in the powerlifting world but



Speed benching using bands with officers from MAW

new to the tactical environment.

The conjugate system can be used for soldiers to design, modify and progress their training regimens. The certification process of the MAW system demands that the officers lay out monthly programs, and understand everything from loading parameters to exercise placement and technique.



Teaching the proper deadlift to military officers

“MAW TEACHES THE BASICS OF ENERGY EXPENDITURE, LIMITATIONS AND HOW TO MODIFY TRAINING TO INCREASE RESULTS. THE OXIDATIVE, GLYCOLYTIC AND PHOSPHAGEN SYSTEMS MUST BE EQUALLY TRAINED AND EXPANDED UPON.”

MAW teaches the basics of energy expenditure, limitations and how to modify training to increase results. The oxidative, glycolytic and phosphagen systems must be equally trained and expanded upon. With general military PT, the oxidative system is primarily used (by running) and the phosphate and glycolytic systems are ignored, making performance less than optimal in an urban setting.

MAW also teaches the officers to understand proper training adaptations in order to make positive progress in their training. It is vital to get stronger, faster and increase specific endurance needed to make a difference on the battlefield.

Understanding these basic biological changes and how to manipulate them can make great progress and decrease injury all in one. The real issue to adapting this at the Army level is to make a complicated system easier to follow. By understanding all the issues listed above, it becomes much easier to adjust, manipulate and perform successfully.

Without powerlifting techniques, the Army would still be doing basic running. But we are slowly adjusting the military's mentality to help them perform better, and save more lives on the battlefield. **PM**

Matt R. Wenning, M.S., is director and co-founder of the MAW (Mountain Athlete Warrior) program for the Army.

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A high-angle, close-up photograph of a man in a red tank top and black wristbands performing a bench press. He is lying on a yellow bench, with a barbell resting on his chest. The barbell is heavily loaded with dark, textured weight plates. The background is slightly blurred, showing a gym setting with a blue mat on the floor and a red water bottle on the bench. The overall image has a high-contrast, slightly grainy aesthetic.

RAW **BENCHING** **BASICS**



BY BRANDON BRANER

In a world of double and triple-ply bench shirts and guys weighing more than 350 lbs., a 650-lb. bench press doesn't sound very exciting anymore. A person can go to any powerlifting meet and someone will bench press well over 800 strapped into their two or three layers of material, and there is nothing wrong with that. The sport of powerlifting has gone the way of the "shirt ninja" and mastering gear to get the most weight out of it.

Where does this leave someone whose best gym bench is 650 lbs. to their chest and 785 off a three-board, and whose best meet is a beautiful 635? I would get murdered if I tried to bench with the big boys out there in their shirts. Lucky for me, those numbers are 100-percent raw. While raw lifting is starting to emerge as a larger part of some federations, powerlifting seems to have forgotten about raw strength and how much fun it can be to go head to head with someone — just you and pure, raw muscle.

Don't get me wrong, I own a single-ply shirt, and there is no better rush than throwing that on and going for 900 lbs. But when I started this sport back in 2009 I knew I wanted to be the strongest, best bench presser around. When I say the strongest, I mean I want to lay down on the bench with just my wrist wraps and know I can out-bench anyone out there. I have a long way to go. I am no Scot Mendelson or Ryan Kennelly, yet my 650-lb. raw bench seems to get me tons of questions on how I do what I do. So, I am going to walk you through how I set up from the time my ass hits the bench till the weight is re racked. Hopefully this can help you visualize how you bench, and maybe improve your form just a bit more.

FORM

Back/shoulder position. The first thing you need to do is get your back and lats tight and rotate your shoulders back while you are still standing by the bench. Imagine a dot in the middle of your shoulder blades. You want to pull your back tight to that one spot as to encapsulate that dot with your shoulder blades. Your back should be uncomfortably tight at this point, if you're squeezing correctly.

Now that your shoulder blades have surrounded your spine, take that same dot and attempt to pull your shoulders themselves down to the dot in such a way that you are actually rotating the tops of your shoulders back. This will increase the tightness in your back and help your chest stay up and tight.

Rack height. Some people enjoy the rack way too high; they have to reach to get the bar out. But this removes your shoulders from the tucked back position,

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makes you lose your form and adds distance to how far the bar travels. Others seem to start the bar too low and require almost a two-board press to get it out of the rack, wasting precious energy.

I lay on the bench back fully tucked and tight. I tuck my butt up toward my back and plant my feet properly so I am in the form I want. My eyes should be lined up directly with the bar in the rack. When I reach up to grab the bar, I make sure to keep my shoulders and back tucked and tight, and I grab the bar with my index finger on the ring. Now that everything is tucked and tight and you have a firm grasp on the bar, you should have a roughly 20-degree bend in your elbows. You're ready for your lift off.

Body/feet position. While lying down on the bench, have your eyes lined up a little bit past the bar — as if you were trying to slide off the edge of the bench, about 1 inch past the bar. Find that dot in the middle of your back and set up your back and shoulders as described above. Bend your legs slightly past 90 degrees and up on your toes. Then use your legs to drive up on your toes to get up on your traps, back still tight in the same position as before. While still driving with your toes, take that dot in the center of your back and imagine someone has attached a string from that dot to your tailbone tip. Now they are going to take said string and pull it; this should force your ass to pull underneath your body, as if you are trying to set your taint on the bench. Doing this will give you the start of your arch. Now that your ass is firmly planted on the bench, you want to move your feet out away from the bench so you are pushing off your heels and the inside of your feet.

Keeping your feet planted, grab the bar as described above. Once you have the bar, walk your shoulders toward your butt. You want to make sure your butt is still stapled to the bench and your feet are still driving. Now take one shoulder at a time and walk it down. This should be increasing your arch and moving your eyes to the desired position: right under the bar.

Time to press. You are now set up and ready to press. Find your favorite liftoff guy and, with your arms at that perfect position, have them lift the bar just high enough to clear the hooks. Your shoulders need to stay back and tight. Now here comes the hardest part: You want the bar to be positioned right above the spot on your chest where you want to touch so it can go straight up and down. To get the bar to this position, simply flex your lats. This should pull your arms down and move the bar to almost the perfect position. While

TYPICAL WEEK BREAKDOWN

Monday is usually my lighter day, but keep in mind I'm always shooting to hit a max number. If I want a max of 650 I will jump online and find out how many reps I need at a certain weight for, say, three to hit that number. For example, 590 lbs. for three reps. I always add at least one Sling Shot set to the end of the workout. I love my Maddog Sling Shot and always go for my max double or triple, which is around 700. Find that number, order a Sling Shot and use it.

Depending on how I feel, my next bench day is usually Thursday or Friday. I will work up to my one-rep max for that day, which is hopefully sequential with the numbers I did Monday. I will try to hit that number at least once, if not twice. Then, using the Sling Shot, I hit the heaviest single I can then drop down to something I can rep for 10 raw. Most bench days I am so fried by the end, that's all I do, but if I have any energy left I will hit dumbbell inclines for sets of five. I use dumbbells to work the stabilizer muscles vs. a barbell. It isn't rocket science, just heavy lifting and a lot of food. Keep it simple.

Sample Workout

MONDAY

- Warm up 225 x 10, 315 x 10, 405 x 5, 495 x 3
- 590 x 3 x 3 (three sets of three)
- Add the Maddog Sling Shot for 700 x 2 x 1
- Dumbbell inclines 130 x5 x3
- High rep triceps pushdowns with V-bar

THURSDAY/FRIDAY

- Same warm up as Monday
- 600 x 1
- Might hit 650 in the Maddog Sling Shot to feel the weight
- 650 x 1 x 2 (two sets of one)
- Put on the Maddog and hit the heaviest single possible

you are bringing the bar down by tightening your lats, slightly rotate your elbows. This will put you in a better power pressing position. Bring the bar straight down and touch your chest. Check your elbow position; they should be close to your body. Make sure that your elbows do not break the plane of your back. In other words, when you are bringing your bar down make sure your elbows do not drop below your back — otherwise you will lose significant power and potentially rip some shoulder muscles and tendons to hell.

When you push the bar back up, remember that the bar needs to go in a straight line. After all, that's the shortest distance between two points. It all starts with leg drive. Once you hear "press," keep everything tight and press your legs into the floor quickly, as if you're trying to jump really high. This will give the bar more explosion off the chest. Then start to drive up with your lats and shoulders; they are both very strong muscles and will get the bar moving off the chest. As the bar starts to move up, incorporate your triceps and drive like hell. You want to drive yourself into the bench, as this will help



with explosion and keep you under the bar and in a better position to lock it out. Once the bar is about three-quarters of the way up, feel free to bring your shoulders forward and your back out. This will help pull you away from the bar and get the "rack" command.

TRAINING

I have developed what I refer to as the H.T.F.D.I.F (how the f*ck do I feel) training method. The H.T.F.D.I.F method is simple. Go to the gym. As yourself how you feel. Is it a heavy night or is it a light night? Do you still hurt from the last workout? Lie down on the bench and start doing your warm-ups. You will easily be able to tell how sore you are and what your workout should be.

I train as heavy as I can every single time. This doesn't mean maxing out every time to a single, but it does mean maxing out reps

if I need to go lighter. I either work up to a one-rep max for the day or sit around 550 to 575 and hit sets of five to three. Every last rep on each set should pretty much be to failure. I don't incorporate speed work into my workouts. I am in the business of moving heavy weights. I overload my body all the time and by doing so my CNS is accustomed to weights heavier than I am actually trying to press. I overload by doing partial reps with boards. I always end with something like that after my normal workout. I usually never do more than three or four sets, as going to either a single or a rep max is very taxing. However, now that I have the Maddog Sling Shot, my training has gone to a whole new level. Boards are out the window as the Sling Shot allows me to hit a full range of motion and rep as heavy as 760 lbs. It teaches me how to control the weight all the way to my chest. Then I have to blow it off my chest, so leg drive is huge. And once I'm at the top it's all me, so my triceps and lockout strength goes to a whole new level.

POWERLIFTING TIPS

Find a local gym. And I mean a gym, not a chain club. Need help? Log onto www.powerliftingwatch.com to find a list of them. Find some place that lets you do what you want, one that isn't full of fancy-ass equipment. Stick to the basics.

Get online and read. Find good lifters on Facebook. Trust me, we will friend you and we will talk to you. If you need help or advice, we will give it. Most likely someone helped us out once, and we will help you out. Eat big, lift big and you will get big. It's that simple. **PM**



HOW CAN I HELP YOU GET STRONGER?

Q&A WITH MARK BELL

Q: What's an example of everything you eat in a day (especially with your new slimmer diet)?

A: I follow a Paleo "power building" diet. The reason I chucked in the term "power building" is because I do not follow some of the really heavy diet principals that small fat people need to follow. For example, I don't care about an apple having a high glycemic index, or if rice is an optimal grain. What I have done is cut gluten out of my diet, along with other stuff like straight junk food. I love candy and ice cream, so I traded in the ice

and now I just eat the cream in the form of heavy cream. I traded in my peanut butter cups for raw organic dark chocolate.

Here is what I ate "last yesterdays," as my four-year-old says. Morning: brown eggs with hippy bacon and a

little grass fed ground beef, along with some raw whole milk. Snack: True Protein shake with a small scoop of SMS mixed with raw milk and water. I added raw honey, raw cashew butter, MP creatine, hippy probiotics and two digestive enzymes. Lunch: Thai food from a local restaurant, a mixture of peppers, spices, chicken and rice. Snack: leftover Thai food (tip: always order double whenever you get anything healthy from anywhere, ever. That'll ensure two good meals for the day). Snack: Perfect Foods bar and same shake as the one from earlier snack. Dinner: 20-oz. porterhouse steak with kale. I'll eat the rest of this big bitch for breakfast today. Went to Mission Impossible 3 with the wifey and killed some M&Ms with peanuts (at least there is protein in 'em). Last meal of the day: killed one more shake with some raw milk in it.

Q: I can't stay upright enough at the bottom of my squat and I end up practically doing a good morning on my way up. Help!


A: When the ass comes up in the squat and/or you get a crazy leaning forward effect, I refer to

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Foreword by Loren Cordain, Ph.D.
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A photograph of two men standing on a green artificial turf floor in a gym. They are both wearing dark blue or black long-sleeved shirts and shorts. The man on the left is wearing light grey shorts with a blue stripe, and the man on the right is wearing dark blue shorts. Both are pointing their right index fingers directly at the camera. In the background, a large white banner with the CrossFit logo and 'LYNNWOOD ANNEX' is visible, along with an American flag on the right side.

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this as a two-part lift. This can harm you in about a hundred different ways, but the worst thing the two-part lift does is limit progress. When you do a squat/good morning combo, you can negate the intent because you are no longer doing the exercise properly. Your inefficiency with squats is limiting your progress because you're not training the muscles that make a big squat and you are not teaching yourself to squat properly.

push your hips way back, do not roll way forward on your knees. Just do a squat. Also examine www.mobilitywod.com by Kelly Starrett to work on your mobility.

Q: My SI joint has been giving me issues. I am doing rehab movements and getting adjusted. I pull sumo in competition in gear. What can I do to increase my sumo pull without opening the hips too much and messing with the SI joint?

“Get blood to the areas that you are going to push to the limits that day. Also if things hurt let’s do 5 to 10 minutes of pain management and mobility work, a.k.a. move around so you can move around better when it’s time to lift”

One easy fix is to reduce the weight and avoid squatting like that in a rep range of four to eight reps. Really focus on forcing your knees out hard, even on the way up. Try to feel like you are pushing the floor apart. A common mistake is having your head way up high, chest pulled up tight and an over-arched back. If you try to squat like this, you will fold up like an accordion because the body is trying to maintain too many unnatural positions at one time. Keep your head neutral, get your stomach full of air and just squat. Do not

A: The old SI joint, huh? Let’s actually open up this can of worms for a second and eat them up. Let’s start with something simple, like warming up. Get blood to the areas that you are going to push to the limits that day. Also if things hurt let’s do 5 to 10 minutes of pain management and mobility work, a.k.a. move around so you can move around better when it’s time to lift. Three things you can do: Add some loose briefs, do sumo stiff leg deads or sumo pull with a narrow stance. Remember working through injuries does not

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Q: Thoughts on overhead presses? Yay? Nay? Good for helping a raw lifter's bench? Any use for a geared lifter?

A: This falls into my favorite category of KISS: Keep It Simple Stupid. An overhead press will always be a great exercise. I realized the other day that I have been in this game (the iron game) for 23 years. I started this shit when I was 12, lifting in my basement. I've tried it all. Overheads

you ready to rock. I also still take Size Mass Strength from Darrell Robideau. This helps me keep my size on. I probably have about two or three shakes a day. Last, but most important, is to hammer the healthy fats. I take some fish oil but also drink a lot of raw grass fed milk (also called pasture raised cows). I also consume a lot of grass fed beef, raw cheese, raw butter, raw almonds, cashews and coconut oil. These fats have made a huge difference. The Paleo diet is

"Start eating like a real athlete. Always think protein first and ditch sugary drinks, fries and chips. I personally do not drink any juice or soda — ever. The only calories I drink are from protein shakes and maybe a Gatorade..."

are great. Mix them in and see how you respond.

Q: Any good dieting tricks for more power at the gym?

A: I have been following the advice of John Welbourn from Crosssfit Football. I read The Paleo Solution by Robb Wolf and then bounced different stuff off John to stay big and strong. I am 283 lbs. right now. My stomach is fairly lean (even though that's not the main focus) and, most importantly, I feel healthy and strong. I like the product called Assault from MusclePharm. It's a stimulant that'll get

not easy to tackle, but if you want to just play with it for three days, ditch your gluten products, chop out dairy and just eat things that come from the earth naturally. Probiotic supplements and digestive enzymes help more than I thought they would, as well. Go eat a steak, and go train.

Q: I've always done a bodybuilding type workout, doing chest/triceps one day, shoulders on another, back/biceps on another, etc. I've had pretty good results, but I want to get on a more powerlifter-like training schedule. Can you give me an idea of a template I can use?

A: Powerlifting normally revolves around the main lifts. So it would be called a bench day, not a chest day. A leg day would now be a squat or deadlift day, with a heavier focus on lower body movements afterward. The split or what you call it doesn't matter; the intent of the day does. So if you want a better bench, do some type of bench first then move onto other muscles that you feel would help improve your bench.

Q: What's a good powerlifting diet?

A: Most powerlifters should start with the book called Eat This Not That. From what I have seen, many powerlifters are unhealthy, fat and disgusting. Some extra body fat can support leverages and it can assist with you lifting a little more weight on the platform. However, that's still no excuse.

Start eating like a real athlete. Always think protein first and ditch sugary drinks, fries and chips. I personally do not drink any juice or soda — ever. The only calories I drink are from protein shakes and maybe a Gatorade here and there during training. If you want to get more into it, try ditching useless carbs that contain gluten. If you want to take another step, you can look into Rob Wolfe's The Paleo Solution. If you want to be lean, you will have to cut back carbs and add protein and fat. I just totaled my best total ever and never felt healthier, leaner or stronger in my powerlifting career by implementing the Paleo solution. Good luck! **PM**



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**WORLD RECORD
PROVEN GEAR**

AJ ROBERTS

What superhero power would you most like to possess?

It's probably a bit cliché, but super strength.

What is your idea of perfect happiness? I'm not sure there is such a thing but lying on the beach everyday would get me pretty close.

What is your greatest fear?

Being normal.

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?

Anger.

What is the trait you most deplore in others? Jealousy.

What is your greatest extravagance?

Education. I absolutely love to learn and am a total book nerd.

What is your current state of mind? Happy.

On what occasion do you lie?

When it is necessary.

What do you most dislike about your appearance? The power belly, although it does come in handy for benching.

What do you most value in your friends?

Loyalty.

What or who is the greatest love of your life? Miss Gracie V and my pittens.

When and where were you happiest?

The beach.

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be? Flexibility. I'd like to be able to scratch my own back again.

What do you consider your greatest achievement? Breaking the 308-lb. world record total.

What is your most treasured possession? My two pitts.

What is your most marked characteristic? Willingness to help others.

Which historical figure do you most identify with? Winston Churchill.

Which talent would you most like to have? Be able to play the guitar.

What is your motto?

Never, never, never, never give up.

Which living person do you most admire? Louie Simmons.

Who is your favorite hero of fiction? DC Comics heroes.

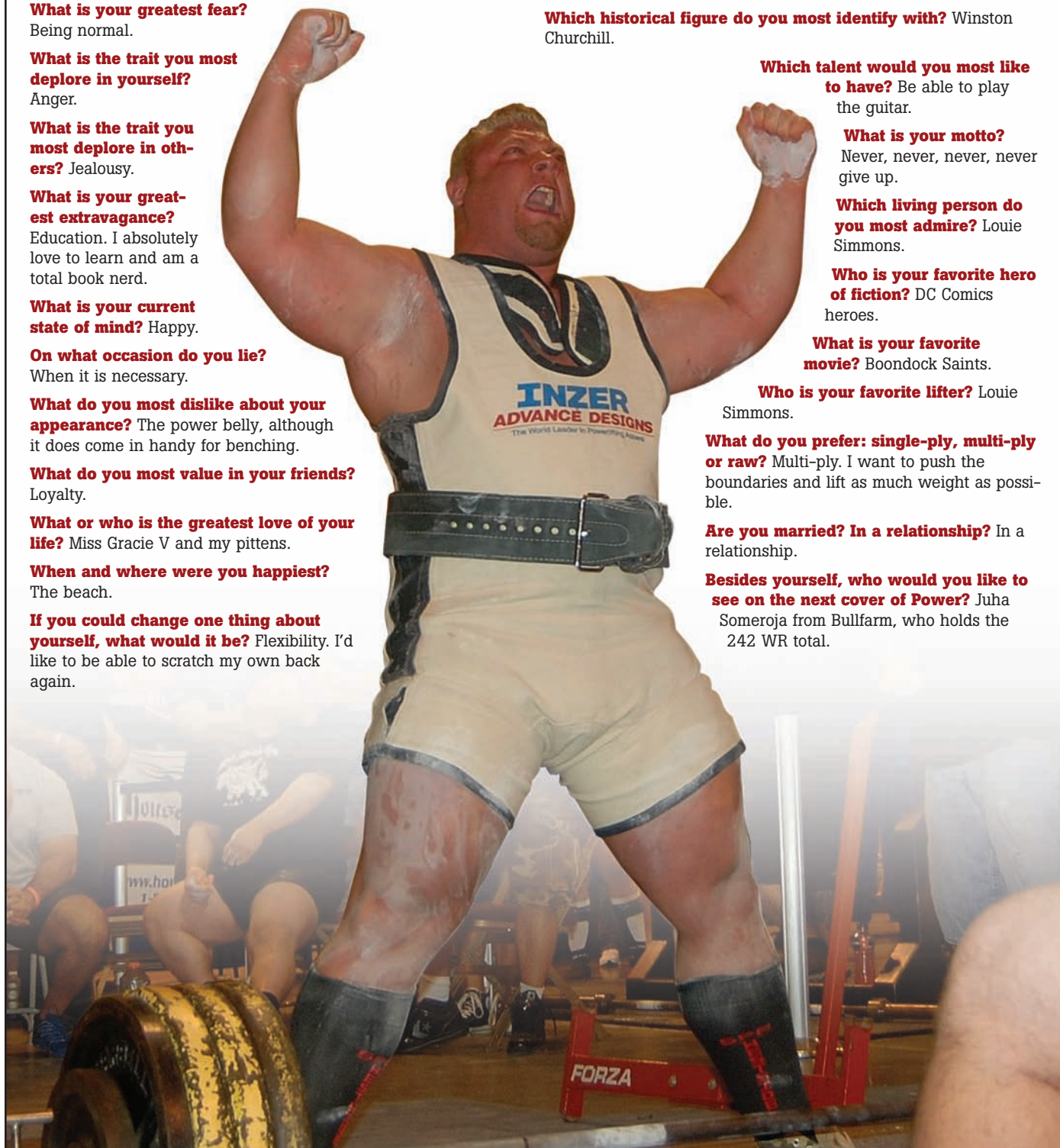
What is your favorite movie? Boondock Saints.

Who is your favorite lifter? Louie Simmons.

What do you prefer: single-ply, multi-ply or raw? Multi-ply. I want to push the boundaries and lift as much weight as possible.

Are you married? In a relationship? In a relationship.

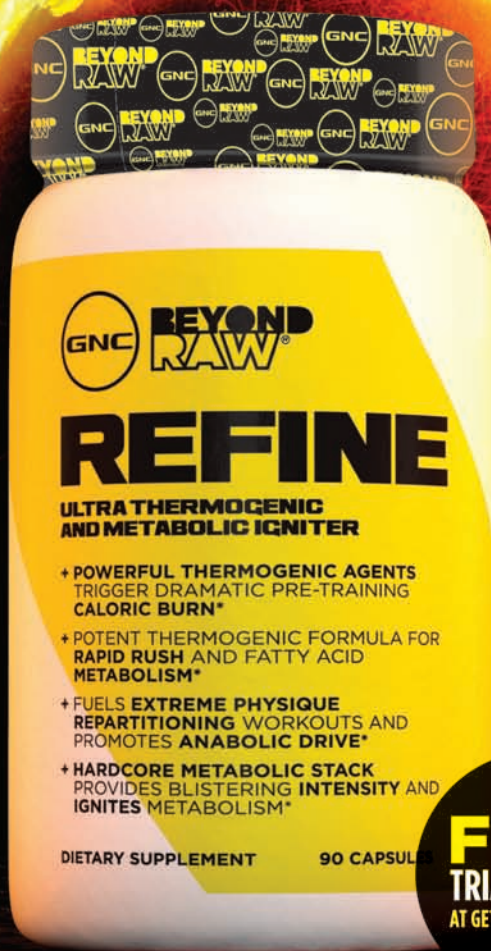
Besides yourself, who would you like to see on the next cover of Power? Juha Someroja from Bullfarm, who holds the 242 WR total.





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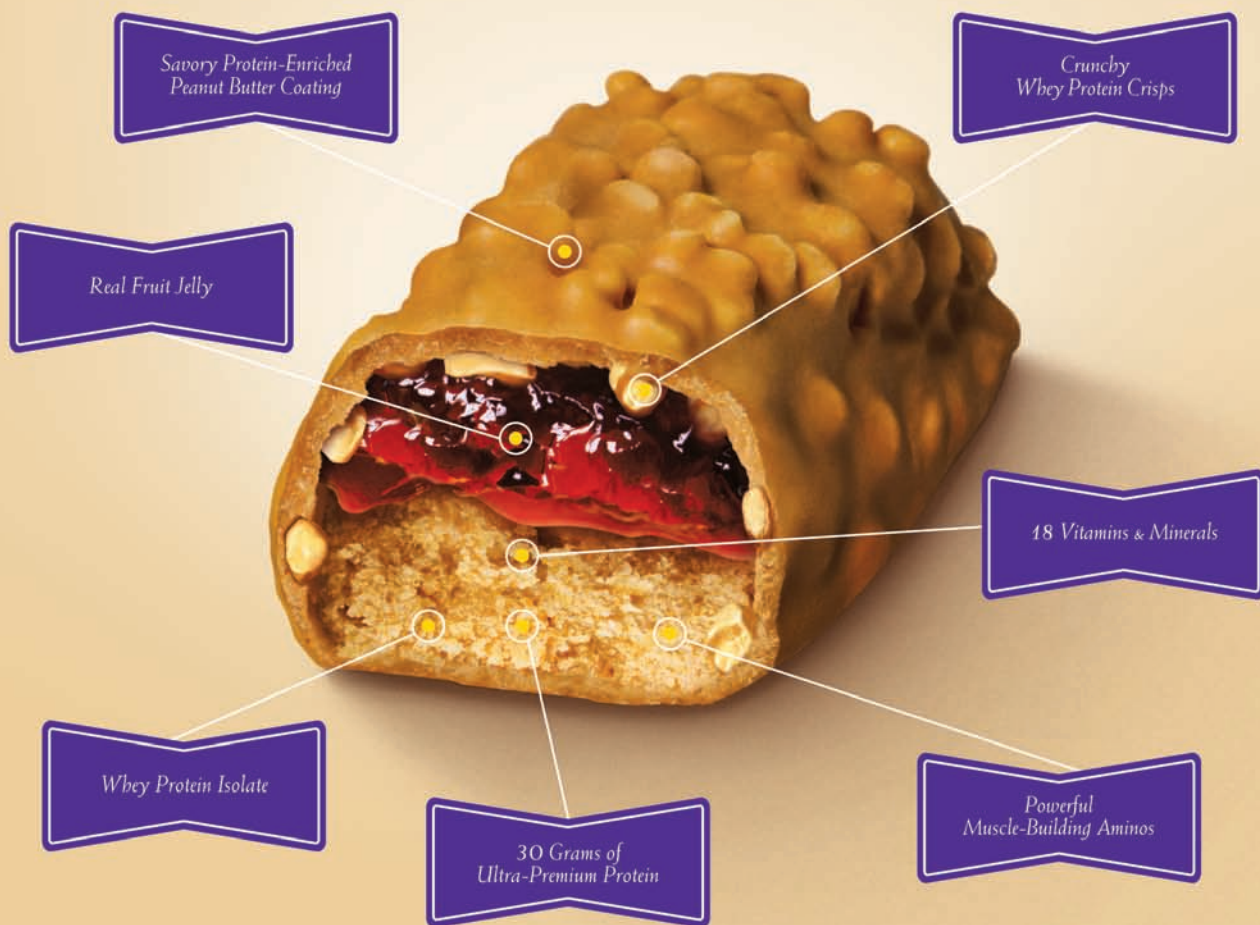
-GNC Customer, Statesboro, GA



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