

FIXING YOUR HEAD POSITION BY KELLY STARRETT P. 28

POWER

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2013

7 Habits of Highly Effective Athletes

By Zach Even-Esh P. 46

From Green to Gold Dan Green

P.18

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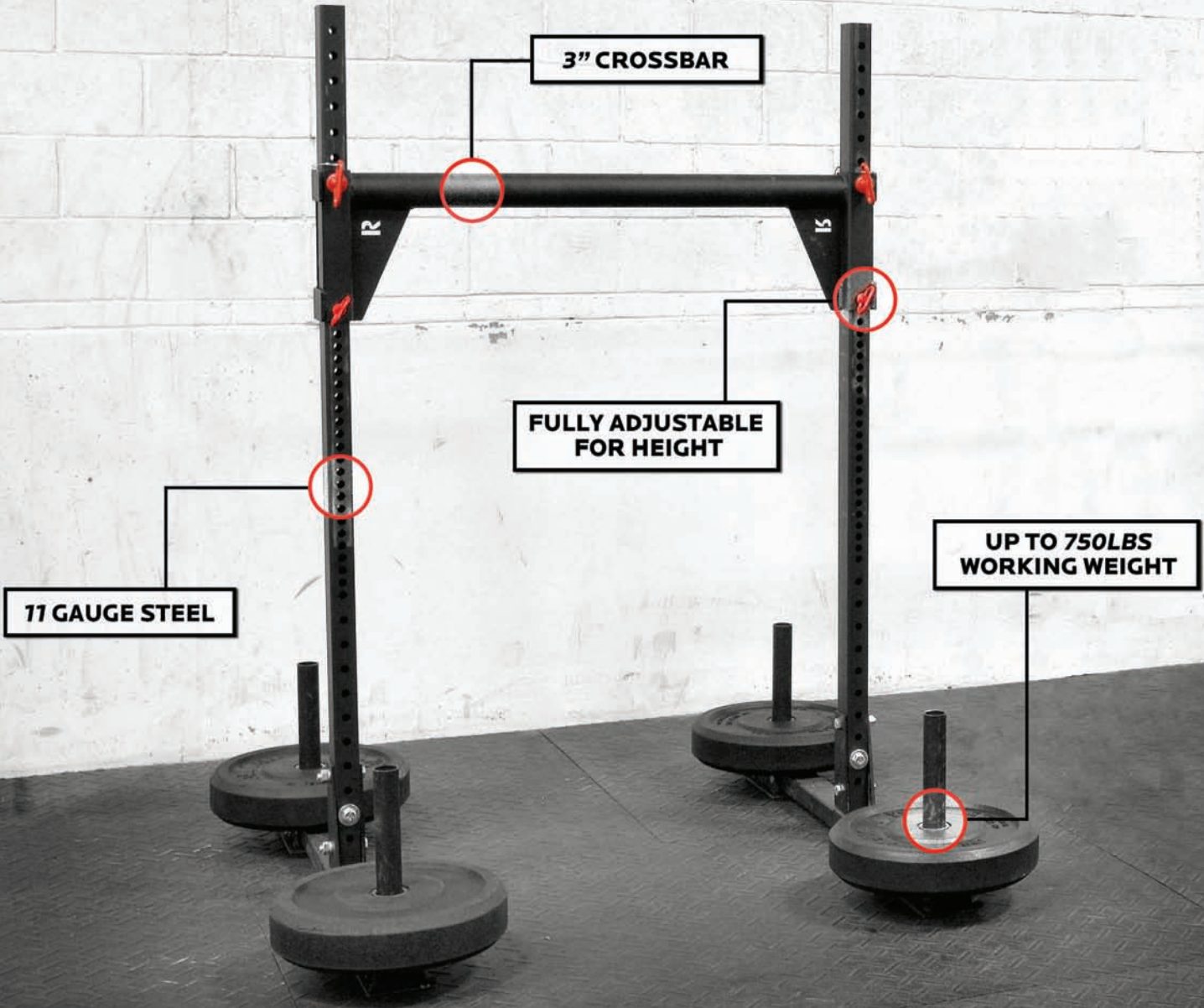
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FIRST WORD

WITH MARK BELL



Mark Bell and Kelly Starrett

Kelly Starrett, aka CrossFit mobility ninja god, aka K-Star, gives us some awesome insight on why your high school football coach was an idiot for telling you to look at the ceiling when you squat. Having your dome sticking straight up in a squat or pull can wreak havoc on your lift and cause the opposite affect you're looking for. This revelation has taken my squat from 954 lbs. to 1,080 lbs. Kelly may not be a powerlifter, but he understands how the body should move – and so should you. For more information on K-Star, please check out www.MobilityWod.com.

Anyone who hits PRs every single workout, and in meets, has my attention. Dan Green has been smashing PRs for the past two years and we all better pray he doesn't end up in our weight class. Dan "Goldie Locks" Green has hit so many PRs, he's even surpassing awesome Russian lifters like Andrey Belyaev. Dan's extraordinary ability to withstand tons of pain and punishment in his training has everyone in powerlifting talking about feats of strength that include a 615-lb. front squat.

Corey Hayes deadlifts outside the box. Truth be told, if I don't know who you are or if you haven't done jack squat in powerlifting, you will not grace the pages of the only strength magazine on the planet: Power. So when I got an email from a guy named Corey Hayes asking to be part of Power, I admittedly wanted to hit delete before I even opened the file. After reading the first few sentences, I quickly realized this "nobody" won't be a "nobody" for long with his unique approach to solving some problems we all face on the deadlift. This article is packed with some great advice that can easily be applied.

Kenny Rodgers once said, "You got to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em, know when to walk away, know when to run." Robert Wannamaker has been learning how to play the cards he was dealt his whole life. Robert is not walking on eggshells hoping they don't crack, he's walking on nails with no shoes wondering which nail will do him in. Any wrong move Robert makes means weeks of pain, but yet he still pushes on. In my opinion this is the best article ever written for Power because it didn't come from his head, it poured out from his heart.

The Muscle Pharm Power Spotlight shines bright on Chis Hickson, who, according to his coach Ernie Lillibridge, is not just a deadlift freak. Chris is hitting up 700-lb. raw squats and is ready to become a great lifter.

Ever see that strange looking bar people call the Bamboo Bar? It's funny looking with bands and Kettlebells swinging from it. What the heck does it do? We have an article for you that explains. It's called a Bandbell bar and it has a lot of benefits that range from helping improve form to helping you train through and or prevent injuries. At ST we use this bar every few weeks instead of, and sometimes after, speed bench.

John Kiefer believes organic is a scam. Check his article out where he makes some great arguments. My in-laws own a blueberry farm and they also have olive oil. It's not organic, but it's all handled with care and the stuff rules. Their farm is quality and clean as can be. So I'd say rather than worry about whether or not food is certified organic, go with local farmers you feel you can trust.

Don't forget to check out my free content, The Power Project, on "The YouTubes" at www.youtube.com/supertraining06. I cover info on diet, form, injuries, workouts and anything related to fitness and picking up heavy stuff. One more plug: My booooy Jesse Burdick has a site called www.PowerWod.com. Check it out and if you're fat, hit him up for diet advice.

Shots are fired at my opposition and you know by my creed, "Either you're in, or you're in the way."

You know who you are, so listen up.

No one will deny me, no one will defy me, no one will tell me who I can and can't be. My opponent does not know my heart. I will arrive at my goals by any means and when I arrive I will do so violently. I will define myself and no longer worry about being kind.

Mark Bell

Inventor of the Sling Shot

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To Hell and Back

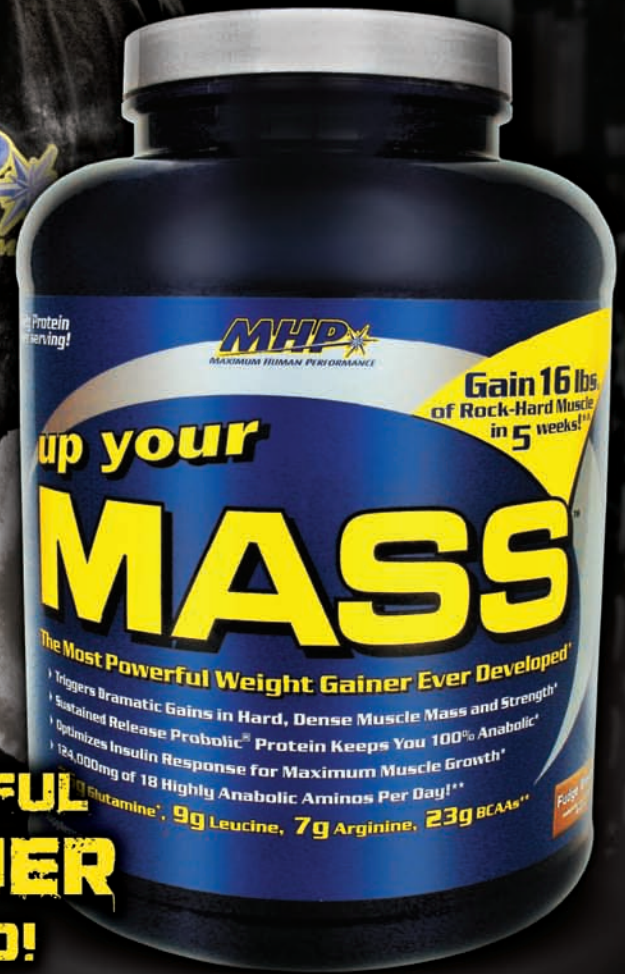
Jeff "Robot" Irion sits down with Westsider Luke Edwards to find out how he made such an amazing comeback after a few major setbacks.

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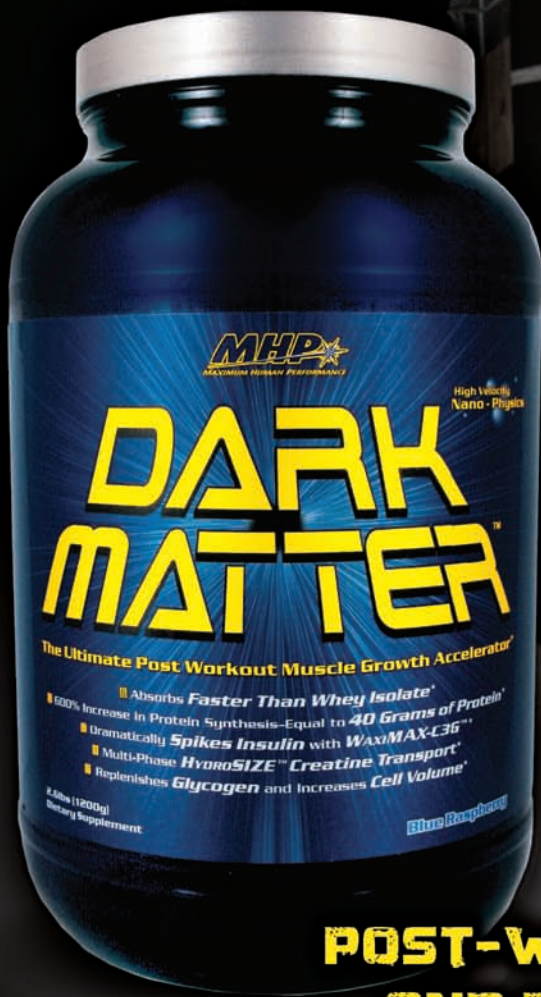
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POWER TEXTING

WITH MARK BELL

Stan Efferding and Eric Lilliebridge

Mark Bell does a quasi-semi interview (using only his texting thumbs) with two lifters who are dominating the all-time 275-lb. weight class.

Eric Lilliebridge

Mark Bell: Eric, how does it feel breaking the all-time raw squat record by nailing 881 lbs. at 275?



Eric Lilliebridge: It felt great to break a record that I've been chasing for the past couple of years. I hit my first 800-plus-lb. raw squat with wraps at 20 years old, and once I found out what the all-time world records were, a huge goal of mine was to break at least one of those while still being a Junior. I especially wanted the squat record because I knew it was well within my reach. I still have over a year left as a Junior, and next in line for me is to attempt to break the all-time raw total at 275 of 2,259 lbs., currently held by Jon Cole, at my next meet.

Bell: What have you done for your squat over the past few years to go from around 700 to 881 lbs.?

Lilliebridge: Short cycles of one max rep set each workout, and I repeat them every few months. Basically just pyramid up each workout in weight, hit one max set of reps with a weight and continue the squat cycle. I usually start the squat cycle with a weight I think I can get for at least five reps, then the following workout try a weight I think I can get for four max reps, then three. At that point my squat is usually peaked and ready to try a new single max, but every squat workout is max effort. I also squat once every two weeks so I have plenty of time to recover from workouts. This has worked great for me for the past couple of years. Every cycle I hit new PRs in reps.

Bell: What do you think of Stan "Rhino" Efferding?

Lilliebridge: Stan is by far one of the nicest and coolest people I've ever had the opportunity to share the platform with. Even though we are both compete in the same weight class and going after the same world records, I think it's good to have rivalry, someone out there to push you to your limits. I actually made my biggest gains on the squat this past cycle and a lot had to do with seeing his progress up to the past meet. It really pushed me to try and keep up with him. The past couple of years he's really opened my eyes to see what I'm capable of doing, by watching and seeing him do it first. Overall I have nothing but respect for him and I can't wait to see what he does next!

Bell: What changes are you going to make to beat Jon Cole's 275-lb. raw record and make sure Rhino doesn't catch you?

Lilliebridge: A couple things I'm going to change are my bench training and deadlifts. For the bench I'm not going to go anywhere near as heavy to my chest as I did last cycle, which resulted in injuring my pec. I hit a 550-lb. paused bench in the gym before I strained my pec and it was down about 40 lbs. at my previous meet, which led to a big drop on my total. So my goal is to get my bench up to 550-plus lbs. again (safely). For deadlifts I'm going to start training some dead stop reps to work on my hip positioning off the floor and I'm going to practice holding each rep at the top for a few seconds to make my grip stronger. That should help get my total up to where it needs to be.

Mark Bell: Eric, how does it feel breaking the all-time raw squat record by nailing 881 lbs. at 275?

Eric Lilliebridge: It felt great to break a record that I've been chasing for the past couple of years. I hit my first 800-plus-lb. raw squat with wraps at 20 years old, and once I found out what the all-time world records were, a huge goal of mine was to break at least one of those while still being a Junior. I especially wanted the squat record because I knew it was well within my reach. I still have over a year left as a Junior, and next in line for me is to attempt to break the all-time raw total at 275 of 2,259 lbs., currently held by Jon Cole, at my next meet.

Stan Efferding

Bell: Stan, What happen at the back yard meet of the century? It looked like you were a lock for a 2,300-lb. total!



Stan Efferding: Rookie mistake. It's that simple. I've spent the majority of my weight lifting career training for, and competing in, bodybuilding shows. I've only done four full powerlifting meets in my life. The last meet was over a year and a half ago. I simply didn't warm up in a timely manner and only got up to a 700-lb. warm up squat backstage before I heard my name: "Efferding, you're four out." Oops! I went from 700 to 903 lbs., got forward on the weight and pulled some muscles in my back, so my day was over before it started. Live and learn. Redemption meet on March 24th at Super Training Gym!

Bell: What do you think of the youngster Eric Lilliebridge?

Efferding: He's a bully. Kicking sand in old people's faces isn't cool! I'd like to beat him with my cane. Kid's a savage.

Bell: Does Eric drive you to be better?

Efferding: He keeps me young. I watch his training videos and think to myself, "This kid still has milk on his breath. If he can do it, so can I." Then I wake up the next morning feeling like I got hit by a truck. Rewind, repeat.

Bell: What changes are you going to make coming up to beat Jon Cole's 275-lb. raw record and make sure Eric doesn't catch you?

Efferding: I started my prep for the backyard meet four months out and hit my 905-lb. training squat a month before the meet, so this time around I'll stay at 80-percent loads until 10 weeks out before I begin increasing weights for the meet. I want to peak at the meet. I'll also use a more conservative opener, like an 865-lb. squat, and make sure I time my warm ups better. As for Eric, even if I beat John Cole's 2,259-lb. total or even hit a 2,300-lb. total, I'll just be postponing the inevitable. Eric will own the 275-lb. world record, it's just a matter of time. He's the future. I'm gonna be put out to pasture soon. **PM**

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CHRIS HICKSON

BY JEFF "ROBOT" IRION

WHO ARE YOU AND WHAT ARE YOUR STATS? I am 20 years old, 6 feet, 2.5 inches and weigh anywhere from 235 to 265 lbs. I am a full-time college student.

WHAT ARE YOUR BEST LIFTS IN COMPETITION? My best competition lifts are an 800-lb. raw deadlift and a 655-lb. raw squat in wraps.

BEST GYM LIFTS? I have an 816 raw deadlift, 710 raw squat and 360 raw bench.

YOU PULLED 800 LBS. IN THE GYM AT 18 YEARS OLD AND 238 LBS. I HAVE TWO QUESTIONS: 1.) WHAT THE HELL? 2) WHAT WOODWORK DID YOU COME OUT OF? I'll take "what the hell" as a compliment! I was heavy into sports in my later years of high school which prevented me from gaining weight or getting stronger, so when I finished high school and had free time to eat and lift my numbers really shot up quickly.

DO YOU HAVE A COACH? DO YOU TRAIN FULL-TIME WITH THE LILLIEBRIDGES? I do not have a coach other than myself, nor would I ever be coached by anyone but myself. I lift with the Lilliebridges about once a week. I run similar workout templates to them as far as going heavy on the squat and deadlift, but I have a lot more light days in between



heavy ones. I talk to Eric a lot about training ideas. He's probably the smartest person I know when it comes to getting strong. Training with them is helpful since they can tell when I am doing dumb shit I don't normally do.

WHAT WAS YOUR WEIGHT WHEN YOU STARTED POWER-LIFTING? WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO WITH YOUR BODY WEIGHT IN THE NEAR FUTURE? AT WHAT WEIGHT DO YOU THINK YOU'LL BE YOUR STRONGEST? I started powerlifting at around 200 lbs. right after high school. I'm currently losing weight since I just did a competition and I always clean up my diet after them in order to lose any fat I gained in preparation. But when a

heavy pulls. Doing actual deadlifts is very taxing and requires a full one to two whole weeks to recover from. However, I have found doing Romanian deadlifts and high rep squats more often in between heavy pulls to be very beneficial. High rep squats can suck, they are a very mentally tough exercise, but they can help strengthen nearly every muscle in the body.

YOU DID A "BROS VS. PROS" DEADLIFT MEET. TELL US ABOUT THAT. AND PLEASE CLARIFY: ARE YOU A BRO OR A PRO? I am definitely a bro, but that's alright with me! Since the bros at the contest were me, the Lilliebridge brothers, Pete Rubish, Chris Duffin and Mark Lerch, that's some pretty good company!

"Doing actual deadlifts is very taxing and requires a full one to two whole weeks to recover from. However, I have found doing Romanian deadlifts and high rep squats more often in between heavy pulls to be very beneficial."

contest is approaching, I'll eat nearly as much as possible and gain anywhere from 10 to 25 lbs. With my height, I believe I will be strongest when I am low- to mid-300s in body weight. But I plan to approach this weight extremely slowly so that the weight will be quality.

HAVE YOU ALWAYS USED A HOOK GRIP FOR DEADLIFTING? AND WHY DO YOU USE A HOOK GRIP? I used to use a mixed grip but started doing the hook grip for safety to avoid tearing a bicep. I use it solely for this reason.

WHAT IS YOUR PHILOSOPHY ON DEADLIFTING WITH STRAPS IN TRAINING? DOES YOUR HOOK GRIP EVER FAIL? My grip has never failed with the hook grip, so I think training with straps is 100-percent fine. But if grip was a weakness, I'd be addressing it and not pulling with them, ever.

YOU HAVE AN INTERESTING SETUP FOR THE DEADLIFT. YOU SET YOUR GRIP WHILE KNEELING. THEN YOU HOP TO YOUR FEET, ROLL THE BAR IN AND GO! HAVE YOU ALWAYS DEADLIFTED LIKE THIS? WHAT ADVANTAGES DO YOU FEEL IT HAS? I just tried it out recently and now I prefer it. I find it reduces the time when you're bent over, which is when you lose that stretch reflex. Also, it avoids the all too common habit of overthinking before a lift.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE BIGGEST KEYS TO YOUR DEADLIFTING SUCCESS? Speed pulling every warm-up and every set as fast as possible every time I train has helped big time. Another big thing that has helped me is resting adequate periods between

DESPITE HAVING A CLASSIC DEADLIFTER'S BUILD, YOU'VE DONE A GREAT JOB OF BUILDING YOUR SQUAT UP. RUMOR HAS IT YOU RECENTLY HIT A 710 RAW SQUAT IN TRAINING. IN LIGHT OF YOUR LESS THAN OPTIMAL SQUATTING LEVERAGES, HOW DID YOU MANAGE THIS? Honestly, I did absolutely nothing to train for this lift but eat good that week and get my body-weight up to 260 lbs. I'm sure if I did a legit squat training cycle I could get my squat past 750 very easily. No doubt in my mind.

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'D LIKE TO SAY ABOUT THE BENCH PRESS? Even though my bench sucks, I know exactly what works to increase it. It's simply getting big and bloated and doing tons of upper body accessory work. My bench always lacks simply due to the fact that I stay lean pretty much year-round — and that both my pecs are torn and don't have enough cushioning around them to train heavy bench week in and week out. Another thing I would like to mention is that both my pec tears came as a result from benching with my elbows flared out. Unless your arms are extremely short, this puts a huge amount of strain on the pecs and is not the safest way to bench. Keep the elbows in!

IS THERE ANYONE YOU'D LIKE TO THANK? I'd like to thank all the people at Power for this awesome opportunity. I'd like to thank my mom for helping with food, the awesome raw training group at Pro Gym, the Lilliebridge family, my brother (who recently started to train with me), and all my Internet supporters. I have a site up (www.chrishickson.com) which is just getting started, but it will have a lot of great stuff soon, so check it out! **PM**



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KRISTEN BONIFAS



How old are you, where are you from and what are you wearing? I'm 24, I'm from Iowa and I'm wearing my favorite gym attire.

Where do you train? Eaton Barbell – one of the most badass gyms I've lifted in!

Do you lift with other girls, or is it all guys? My primary training partner is Chris Smith (Smitty). But we just recruited another girl to powerlift.

Are you in school? Do you have a job? I have a job.

How did you get involved in powerlifting? My brother inspired me to try weightlifting, so I started lifting in college. Next thing I knew, I was on a powerlifting team. I love it!

What do your "normal" friends say about how much you can lift? "OMG! She's an animal!"

When you go to a powerlifting meet with a room full of men with massive levels of testosterone, do you feel like the center of attention? Nah. Turns out most powerlifters at a meet are very focused on their lifting and not their surroundings.

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“Powerlifting adds a unique touch to my resume while interviewing for jobs.”



Do you have a boyfriend? Nope! Still waiting for Vin Diesel to holla at me.

Do you remember the first time you out-lifted a boy? How did it make you feel? Absolutely I do! I chuckled.

Do you wear make up to the gym? I don't intentionally put on makeup just to go to the gym. But hey, if it's still on from the night before, then whatever.

What do you have to say to women who don't lift weights because they think they'll get too big? You think you'll get too big by lifting weights? You'll get even bigger by not lifting weights.

How has powerlifting helped you? Powerlifting has not only helped me with overall wellbeing, but it has helped me develop awesome friendships throughout the years. Powerlifting adds a unique touch to my resume while interviewing for jobs.

What is your favorite lift? Deadlift. Boom.

Tell us about your current best lifts. My best raw lifts are: 220-lb. squat, 115-lb. bench and an easy 320-lb. deadlift. My best raw total is 645 lbs. Soon to be more!

What are some of your powerlifting goals? I'd like to have a raw total of at least 730 lbs. I would love to be able to be as strong as Kara Bohigian Smith or Laura Phelps someday. They are such motivational role models.

Anything you'd like to add? I've had such a strong support from everyone at Eaton Barbell. I still remember the first day walking in to squat and being told, "If your ass isn't touching the floor, you're too high." **PM**



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FROM GREEN TO GOLD

BY MARK BELL
PHOTOS BY SAM MCDONALD

MB: First, explain your hair. Do you summon strength from your hair?

Green: I do like to think of it as a powerful weapon. I'm certainly not cutting it. Since my son (who's 18 months old) hasn't cut his hair yet, I'm definitely not cutting it first. No kid respects a dad that they can already beat when they're not even two years old yet.

MB: Some critics, such as Ed Coan and myself, feel that your long hair is a form of cheating. How do you plan on silencing the critics?

Green: Haters are gonna hate, Mark. Nobody wants to accept getting beat by a guy with hair that a girl envies.

MB: How and why is your ass so huge?

Green: I'm not really sure what you're talking about. I can sit in many chairs successfully.

MB: You sent me a video of you doing a 600-lb. front squat. Do you mind explaining yourself?

Green: Back squats are great for size and strength, but what they inevitably leave you with are underdeveloped quads. Front squats, on the other hand, do not allow my lower back to take over and turn "squat day" into a "good morning party". They force my quads to do the work and they also really strengthen the erectors in a way that increases my deadlifting. So I like to train back squats very heavily for meet preparation, but I like to do front squats with a higher rep scheme and more volume to help me build a base of strength.





MB: Tell us about Craig Terry. You mentioned him briefly in your deadlift party article (Power, Sept./Oct. 2012).

Green: Craig Terry was a dominant midleweight deadlifter for the better part of two decades. He held No. 1 rankings almost every year in three weight classes: 181, 198 and 220. His long arms made his pulls look crazy. I was blown away the time that I saw him train. His session had three max-rep sets of pulls from the floor, from blocks and from a deficit. It was only a matter of time before I tried.

MB: You have an official 821-lb. deadlift (raw, sumo) to your credit. From what I can gather, that's at least top-five all-time for raw sumo pulling. How have you developed this?

Green: Many people have good "passive flexibility" in the hips to open wide and get the hips close to the bar before the lift, but not the "active flexibility" to basically hold the hips open and close to the bar under extreme loading. For beginners to master this, I think pulling sumo with weights on

blocks is the key as it narrows much of the focus to just that: building the hip strength to press the legs out while getting a heavy weight moving. After that, I don't think there is any method that's unique to sumo pulling. Leg strength, back strength, hamstrings, abs — it's all the same stuff as conventional.

MB: You gave out a lot of training information in your deadlift party article. What is your overall training philosophy/method and how do you train your other lifts?

Green: The big things for me are consistency, progressive overload and training — not testing myself. They go hand in hand: If I have a good set of reps, I don't need to test my max to see if it's gone up. I know because I'm consistent. If I just keep making steady progress, it'll add up to a big PR come meet time. Good form and always avoiding failure keeps progress steady. It's very important.

MB: Give us a little recap on your deadlift program for those slackers who

are not signed up for a subscription at www.ThePowerMagazine.com.

Green: For pulling sumo, I'll train reps off the floor then triples off 4-inch blocks and finish with conventional pulls for reps off a deficit or the floor. This ménage-a-trios of deadlifts covers leg drive, hip and core strength, and overall posterior chain development, respectively.

MB: Not all in the same day right? That would take too long and it would fry your Central Nervous System.

Green: Yeah, that would build way too much strength, way too fast. And it seems like it would be a lot of work. Then, you'd be sore and have to lift way longer than 45 minutes and your hormones would plummet. Everyone knows that.

MB: You, my friend, are a savage. I saw you struggle in a meet with a 760 squat, which is already an enormous squat, but then I saw you crush 800 in my gym and then 815 at CSA in Oakland. Can you please tell us what the hell is going on with your squat?

Green: Yeah, I just keep squatting. It's getting a little bit tiresome. Sometimes I feel like I don't want to, but I can't help myself. Like the other day, I squatted 815 and I told myself, "OK, that's good enough for the meet. Just stop squatting". But then, a few days later, I couldn't help myself and I went and front squatted for no good reason.

MB: It is clear that you are different than most powerlifters. Everything from your flowing locks to your sculpted Adonis physique. I also noticed that on "the FaceBooks", you were wearing a Michigan Wolverines cheerleading costume. Can you lie to us and tell us that it was a Halloween costume?

Green: That would be an embarrassing costume. Except, in college, that was what I did. I was a cheerleader, which meant that I would go to the gym and lift weights then go to practice and lift coeds. Now, I'm engaged to one.

MB: Is there something special you do to continue to make progress? I mean, how far has your squat, bench, dead and total moved in the past two years?

Green: Yeah, my squat has gone up about 200 lbs. in two years, my bench is up about 90 lbs. and my deadlift has increased about 100 lbs. I pretty much just train hard

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thing good has ever come from being skinny. So yeah, getting all “swoled” up is pretty important. To squat, I want bigger thighs. To pull, I want bigger lats. But big, raw benching is really where size is irreplaceable. Big chest, shoulders and arms, not to mention a thick upper back, all equate to a bigger bench. A lot of my training is divided into competition lifts for peak strength and technique, but I do much more volume on supplemental lifts that build size and strength in the right places.

MB: Tell me about Boss Barbell. Is that a place owned by Rick

Ross? Where is it? Who’s it for?

Green: For you, Mark, it can be whatever you want it to be. Right now, Boss Barbell Club (or BBBC) is located in Mountain View and we pretty much envisioned it as the fanciest, most bourgeois place to accommodate your need to stack plates and bang weights. We’re pretty much going straight to gold plated weights and Louis Vuitton benches.

MB: OK. We have the top 10 questions from Dan Green fans off the interwebs, AKA my Facebook page. What exercises helped your main lifts the most? (Asked by Aaron Gaines)

Green: Squat: front squats; Bench: paused wide grip bench; Sumo dead: block pulls

MB: Will you consider getting into powerlifting gear? (Asked by Glen Stewart)

Green: Not likely

MB: How do you ditch 20 lbs. (of bodyweight) in one day? (Asked by Robbie Bradford)

Green: It’s complicated, but it involves taking a few days of heavy drinking (water) to flush all of the salt out of the body so that you can sweat continuously when the time comes to dehydrate.

MB: What product do you use to main-

and analyze my weak points objectively. I also never get sucked into doing things the way other people say you have to. People get so dogmatic, but if you do the same stuff as everyone else, why would you expect better results? I’m a talented athlete, but there are people with more gifted genetics. And I work hard, but I doubt that I work the hardest. So it has to come down to what I actually choose to do differently.

MB: OK, it’s cool that you know a lot of magical cheating tricks to squat and deadlift big. But everyone knows the only lift that matters is da bench. So the question is, HowMuchYaBench?

Green: So true. I’m just going to put it out there that Dec. 1, 2012, is my 30th birthday, and the goal is to bench 500 as my birthday present. Benching less than 500 lbs. is OK if you don’t know any better, but it’s not how I want to go through life anymore.

(Editor’s note: We are happy to report that Dan Green’s current best bench is now 515 lbs. done in late November 2012 at his new gym, Boss Barbell.)

MB: What is your plan for bringing your bench up to 500 - 525-ish?

Green: Pretty much just keep doing what I’ve been doing. I’m almost there. Just progressions of paused bench reps, touch

“I pretty much just train hard and analyze my weak points objectively. I also never get sucked into doing things the way other people say you have to.”

bench reps and Sling Shot reps. Keep military pressing, maybe throw in some curls to pump up a little, you know?

MB: I’m glad you brought up the pump. I feel many powerlifters, weightlifters and CrossFitters have lost sight about how important some body building can be. A larger muscle can be a stronger one and create better leverages. You’re the biggest 220-lb. lifter in the history of forever-ness, so what’s your view on this? Is muscle building a focus, or was it ever?

Green: Well, I really don’t think any-



the word “passion” comes from the Latin word for “suffering.”

MB: Do you attribute any of your current strength to cheerleading in high school and college? (Asked by Charlie Telesco)

Green: Maybe in college, as it just gave me an excuse to lift all the time and to gain a bunch of weight doing power cleans.

MB: When did you start lifting and what were your lifts like then? (Asked by Lexington Plummer)

Green: I started lifting when I was 12. I could bench 70 lbs.

MB: (Editor’s Favorite) I have a question. What the hell? (Asked by Baker Leavitt)

Green: Good point. Maybe I’ll actually cover this one in more depth in a future issue.

MB: OK, that’s it for the Facebook questions, now give us a rundown of what the heck you eat to stay so ripped and jacked.

Green: Let’s see. When I’m focused on dominating anorexia, it’s burritos, Carl’s Jr., Triple Stackers, pancakes, eggs and bacon. Oh, and Oreos. When I’m dieting, I mostly just eat less of these items. I have also enlisted the help of the nutrition master, Mike Israetel, who operates Renaissance periodization.

MB: What’s the ultimate goal for 220 and possibly 242?

Green: I really just enjoy training and the process of getting better. If I had an ultimate goal, it wouldn’t be about how much I weighed, only how much I lifted, such as a 2,400 total or a 1,015 deadlift. Those are the numbers I am interested in.

MB: In a closing statement, give us your best “pre-game” speech to help some kid or newcomer be the next Dan “Goldie Locks” Green.

Green: I’d probably just say, “Don’t be an a-hole. Take the time to learn technique and don’t let skinny, negative people tell you what you can and can’t do.” **PM**

“I think I read somewhere that the word ‘passion’ comes from the Latin word for ‘suffering’.”

Green: I’ve been lifting for 16 years and competing for seven, so if that is achieving success “quickly,” I’d hate to imagine what “slowly” looks like! As for plateaus, that’s just part of the game. You have to love the challenge. I think I read somewhere that

tain those luscious locks? (Asked by Nathan Boone)

Green: I rub chalk in my hair when I lift. Otherwise, I don’t tamper with it. I just let my hair party.

MB: Did your wide-stance squat style come natural or was it something that took a lot of work? (Asked by Sam Nyman)

Green: I’ve always had a medium-wide stance, but what took a lot of work was learning not to sit back so much so that I could use more quad strength and less back strength.

MB: To have achieved success so quickly, what happens when and if the “wall” comes? How will you adapt? (Asked by Brandon Ol’Birddog Lilly)

| DATE | FEDERATION | WEIGHT CLASS | SQUAT | BENCH | DEADLIFT | TOTAL |
|------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-------|-------|----------|-------|
| 4/4/2009 | Tactical Strength Challenge | 220 | -- | -- | 650 | -- |
| 11/7/2009 | USAPL | 220 | 600 | 385 | 683 | 1670 |
| 4/10/2010 | Tactical Strength Challenge | 220 | -- | -- | 740 | -- |
| 7/16/2010 | USAPL | 220 | 600 | 396 | -- | -- |
| 5/15/2011 | SPF | 220 | 677 | 413 | -- | -- |
| 10/15/2011 | NASA | 220 | 639 | 407 | 705 | 1752 |
| 6/30/2012 | USPF | 220 | 705 | 473 | 771 | 1951 |
| 9/15/2012 | RAW 504 | 220 | 760 | 480 | 790 | 2030 |
| 9/29/2012 | USPA | 220 | -- | -- | 821 | -- |
| 11/3/2012 | SPF | 220 | 755 | 485 | 793 | 2033 |

FIVE DEADLY DEADLIFT EXERCISES

BY COREY HAYES

Everything I have learned in my years of lifting has been free of charge. Some information has been passed from other lifters or gathered from an article on a website such as ElitePTS.com or

T-nation.com, or – most importantly – learned through self-discovery. No matter what the source, it was always given freely. So, to give back, I've decided to share some of the information I have found most beneficial. Here are the "whys" and "hows" for some unusual or forgotten deadlift accessory work that I have implemented in my own and my teams training with success.

PULLBACK DEADLIFTS

The pullback deadlift is a movement I have recently discovered and added into my training while converting from a conventional

stance to sumo. Here's the "why:" I have been pulling conventional for so long the groove is pretty much second nature to me. I pull up to my knees, then thrust my hips forward like a hinge. I never had to worry very much about pulling the back into my body. When converting to sumo, I was having some major issues trying to pull with a similar groove. It wasn't working at all. Why? First of all, I was pulling straight up, leaving me on my toes and making lock out impossible because I had no hip drive and the bar was basically hanging in front of me. I watched a crew try this strange variation on YouTube and had to try it.

Description: Mini-bands are tripled or quadrupled and attached about a foot or two in front of the barbell, attached only from the front. This pulls the bar forward hard. To finish a lift you must pull back or the band will pull you forward and make

PULL BACK DEADLIFTS



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APEX

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GIANT CAMBERED BAR DEADLIFTS



the lift impossible to complete.

Rep scheme: This lift can either be a max effort lift or, my preference, an assistance lift for multiple sets of five to eight reps. The benefit as a secondary exercise for higher rep ranges is that the repetition begins to implant in your muscle memory. When the bar leaves the floor you had best be pulling the bar into the body.

PAUSED DEADLIFTS

This movement isn't for anyone with an ego. If so, it's going to be painful and I bet you call it stupid. I recently implemented this into my team's training to help strengthen our sticking points on the deadlift.

Description: Pull a normal power bar up to where you generally lose a lift. Pause for a three-count. I'm talking about a one Mississippi, two Mississippi kind of three-count. Hold your form by flexing everything you have. After three seconds, blast up to lockout. Use competition form. Really focus on squeezing your glutes and hamstrings, so when it's time to blast you

are engaged and ready to fire to the top. This is also an excellent way to bring up weak glutes.

Rep scheme: I would suggest a medium rep range on this exercise, around five or six per set. If you use a weight that is too light, the point of the exercise is lost. A weight that is too heavy will just stress the body without building the desired muscle groups and response.

GIANT CAMBERED BAR DEADLIFTS

This exercise came from my bearded friend, Brandon Lilly. This exercise will make your erectors into steel pillars and your grip stronger than the Hulk. I treat this like a bodybuilding exercise; it will put slabs of meat right where you need it.

Description: Using a 14-inch cambered squat bar and stand on enough mats to put the top of the bar right below your knee caps. Using a double overhand grip and no belt, stand up and lower with only a light touch on the floor. Keep the lower back tight and engaged at all times; never

release the lower back. The secondary benefit will be tons of lat and trap recruitment as you fatigue.

Rep scheme: Anywhere from two to four of eight to 12 is perfect. This is by no means a max-effort exercise. The pendulum motion of the cambered is by design a tool that is useful with moderate weight. It forces core tightness front to back and requires an iron grip, whereas too much weight could cause injury due to the pendulum effect. So check your ego and build muscle.

TRAP BAR DEFICIT PULLS

Everyone has a trap or diamond bar in the corner, rusty with cobwebs on it. I'll give you an excuse to get it out. This movement is a Bob Peoples original, so it's been around for about 300 years, minimum. The movement will develop some serious leg drive for getting off the ground.

Description: Stand on a very high deficit, up to 5-inches should be fine. Using the low handles, squat down to the bar and lift while maintaining a neutral spine.

Keyword being "squat." Make sure to keep the spine erect, head back and chest up. Learn to deadlift with your legs. The more leg drive you build and learn to recruit, the faster you will become off the floor — and the easier it will be for your back to take over for the lockout.

Rep scheme: For this movement I prefer four or five sets of five. You could go higher in reps, but I would advise against going lower.

ZERCHER-STYLE ROMANIAN DEADLIFTS

This is quickly becoming one of my favorite, and my training partners' most hated lift. This has to be one of the hardest lifts known to man, as are all of the Zercher variations. A harness is a must; the movement doesn't work as well with the bar in your arms.

Description: Set your harness to where the bar will be right around your pelvis.

"it's going to be painful and I bet you call it stupid. I recently implemented this into my team's training to help strengthen our sticking points on the deadlift."

This is key. Start the lift while standing erect with the bar in harness by arching your back and pushing your butt back with semi-stiff knees. Go down until you feel as if you are starting to lose your arch, then

push your pelvis forward. This movement should be a hip hinge instead of a back lift. Again, your ego has to be left at the door. Use weight that will allow you to build and develop the muscle groups we are targeting versus using more weight than anyone in the gym that day. All that matters is the end result and that is saved for the platform.

Rep scheme: Three sets of 10 to 15 reps are what I generally recommend. I have found that reps less than 10 increase the load to a point where it is too heavy to maintain proper form.

At Berea Barbell we have had great success with these exercises. Don't be afraid to work and try something different. Try adding any of these exercises to your training. It could just be the missing ingredient in your recipe for a huge deadlift! **PM**

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HEY CHICKEN NECK!

THREE PROBLEMS WITH YOUR HEAD POSITION

BY KELLY STARRETT
PHOTOS BY SAM MCDONALD

Why do you advocate so strongly that athletes keep a neutral head position in sports, powerlifting and Olympic lifting? I see many coaches teaching people to squat with the head up. What's wrong with this? This is a fair question and it deserves a straight answer. I care more about people's strength, power and their spines than they do. Seriously. Poor head positioning leads to a whole host of bio-mechanical compromises, shuts down power output, increases risk of injury and the chicken neck just looks bad on people – just to name a few of the problems off of the top of my head (pun intended). Let's pull a few of these apart.

PROBLEM NO. 1

First, let's take the big one off the table. As anyone who has ever tweaked or injured their back or neck can attest, an injury to your Central Nervous System (CNS) or the tissues that protect it and support it, is a real bummer. The fastest way to derail your training progress is to tweak your spine. No one wants to generate speed and force, or rapidly change directions, when their back or neck is hurting. Talk to Super D Donnie Thompson about how much time he wasted getting his foot to start working and his pain to subside after a poorly positioned deadlift a

few years ago. Watch how long Jesse Burdick takes to set up his big deadlifts, or how long Super D takes to simply squat the bar out of the rack. The best are always looking to maximize their spinal positioning because they know that messing around with your spine under large loads is a guaranteed recipe for disaster.

I've seen behind the curtains, I've looked at the MRIs and radiographs of those playing fast and loose with their spinal mechanics. By definition, good movement (squatting, running, snatching, pulling) means that you come out unharmed at either one rep or a million reps. Accidents happen, I know, but I'm talking about the simple act of moving. If you wear out a disc or fracture a pars [a bony arch at the back of your vertebra] in your vertebra, you have to ask yourself, "What is going on?" These tissues were built to be ridden hard and put away wet, and last a lifetime.

Everyone is training like maniacs these days. You can't afford to miss a week or two of training by nursing a tweaked spine if you plan on maximally leveraging your months and years of hard work on competition day. Besides, a CNS injury is a hard bell to unring. Some of these tissues are poorly perfused and heal slowly, and your brain wiring pretty much freaks out when you challenge the system that allows you to run away from dan-

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Example of deadlifting with a
"Pez Dispenser head" (incorrect)

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Breaking chronic pain patterns is a complex problem. You cannot generate peak force if you are being bombarded by pain signals, to say nothing of all the associated pain inhibition of your musculature. Your spine was designed to handle large loads in a neutral, optimally braced situation. It was not designed to deadlift repeatedly with a significant kink or hinge in the neural output hose (spinal cord). Everyone knows you should minimize spinal movements under load. This is why we frown on rounding our backs during deadlifts or butt-winking in the squat. So why is it so difficult to understand that throwing your head back when you pull (or even do a pull-up) is equally as bad? One of the real issues is that people just aren't simply "looking up" or "looking down," they are moving their heads, and by extension, their necks at some phase of

Example of squatting with the head up too high (incorrect)



the lift. Poor head positioning is bad but creating spinal movement under load (shear force) is begging for injury.

Besides the shear forces acting on the disc structures (discs don't handle repeated shear very well), your neural tissues are under extremely high tension during explosive movement and don't handle being "stretched" well at all (your neural tissues don't stretch, by the way). When this happens, we see the nervous system dump a ton of neural signaling output. You simply lose strength when you impart a shear force across the spine and neural tissues. It's like someone turns off a light switch. Some communities have estimated this force dump to be as large as 20 percent.

Besides, athletes are rarely in the stable (but less optimal position) of global extension. Instead, heads up (especially in my stiff turtle-like lifters like Mark Bell) means lower cervical flexion and upper cervical extension. So, basically you are lifting with a rounded "back" neck. Sweet. Let me know how that

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Example of deadlifting with the head forward (incorrect form)



works out for you over the long haul. Keep your head in as optimal (neutral, eyes-level posture if you were standing up) a position as possible for as long as possible.

PROBLEM NO. 2

The second problem with the head fault is the fact that it tends to destabilize your entire spinal system. That is, your head acts as a sort of keystone for your trunk and pelvis. I see a bunch of good coaches trying in vain to correct pelvic faults (winking and rounding) or thoracic spine problems (over-extended thoracic-lumbar junction) – all because they never correct the athlete's poor head positioning. Neck extension (looking up) while pulling tends to allow the lumbar to overextend, for example. Or, in our Olympic rowers, the head up (neck hinged in extension) allows for the loaded hamstrings to have their way with the pelvis by pulling it into flexion. When athletes are poorly braced into a stable, optimal, neutral position, they have to try and create some sense of spinal stability. You can try this yourself. Stand up and put your spine into a flexed position. Now, crank your head back as far as it will go. Poof, now you are stable. You look broken and ridiculous of course, but you feel stable.

The spine is a complete system. The division of the spine into cervical, thoracic, lumbar and pelvis regions is a handy way to think of them, but when you are moving, they are one system. So, of course what happens at one end affects the other. It's the same spine with the same contiguous nervous system running through it. You know that head positioning matters. The jaw is the largest open





Example of deadlifting with head neutral (correct form)

chain, unstable system in the body. This is why athletes will make so many crazy faces when they compete.

For years, great coaches have been telling us to put our tongues to the roofs of our mouths when we lift, for example. It turns out that your jaw is right in the middle of your anterior set of neck musculature. Making this jaw system more stable makes the whole neck and head more stable. Anecdotally, we know hundreds of great athletes who will only play or compete with gum in their mouths. Closing down on the gum helps to stabilize the jaw and, thus, the head. Watch Olympic lifters with their heads cranked back at the starting position. Their mouths are always gapping open. Poof, they are triaging their neck position by trying to stabilize their jaw with the “dynamic yawn” technique.

The real problem with poor head mechanics is the impact it plays down stream on the body’s primary engines of the shoulder and the hip. If your head is in a compromised position, we know we are going to see corresponding changes in the t-spine and lum-

bar/pelvis. The problem with losing position here is the fact that your trunk/spine-system acts as a chassis or carriage for your shoulders and hips. If you hinge your t-spine instead of arching your whole back when you bench, for example, you are going to lose your ability to stabilize your shoulders while pressing.

We see examples of this all over the place. Going back to our rowers, for example. When they hinge into neck extension, they lose the ability to stabilize their shoulders at the catch, which results in a horrible jerking/flinching-like motion at catch. In fact, I prioritize fixing spinal positioning before I try to go after the poor mechanics or tissue restrictions at the shoulder or hip because I’ll never really fix those big engines if the chassis onto which they hang is disorganized. Good pullers like Jesse Burdick or Laura Phelps will even set up with their arms out in front of them when they deadlift. The “arms out” set up allows for better upper back positioning because of the reduced internal rotation shoulder demands in that position. They don’t even really think about it as improving their thoracic positioning prior to gripping the bar - they just know it allows them to lift more. Simple, right? Get your spine in as excellent a position as possible, then organize your hips and shoulders.

Think of it this way. When we see athletes miss squats, it’s often when the demands on the posterior chain are at their highest. To maintain extension, an athlete will suddenly “look up.” When this happens, the nervous system initiates a serious force reducing, neural output dump, and the athletes’ shoulders immediately round, leaving them bent over and definitely not squatting. The head, in this case, acts like a keystone for the rest of the spine.

Run this little experiment on yourself. When you set up for your next deadlift or squat, crank your neck back as far as it can go. Clearly this isn’t a very good position in which to generate force. Yet, this is the same position that people adopt when they are in the bottom of the squat and deadlift set up. Or try this: Get into your benching position, but scoot back so that you can drop your head off the end of the bench. Neck extended like a broken chicken? Good! Now press!

PROBLEM NO. 3

The final reason I want athletes to reevaluate their head positions is because of the fact that we often confuse why many of us squat and deadlift in the first place. That is, we use these movements as training tools for sports other than powerlifting. Look, practice doesn’t make perfect, practice makes permanent. If you spend all of your time training under load in a broken neck position, that same position is going to be your default when the time comes to extend your hips in sports. Ask any good football player if they’d block at the line while looking up. Of course they wouldn’t. So, why are we training our athletes to adopt compromised positions during training if not to see them actually end up in those positions during sports? Movement is a learned skill, and you definitely want to play like you practice.

It’s simple: Keep your spine looking like your spine. If you want to look up, look up with your eyes like a wolverine stalking someone’s carb night desserts. Don’t put a 90-degree hinge in the middle of your beautiful neck. The best reason of all: Making yourself weaker just doesn’t look sexy. **PM**



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PLAYING MY CARDS

BY ROBERT L. WANAMAKER

I wake up just before the alarm. It's still dark outside, the night creatures are still making their noise, though it abates as they finish their shift. Laying there, I go through the same little drill as always, evaluating how much it was going to hurt to get out of bed. Low back? Left leg? Is the left big toe still feeling like it's on

pins and needles? Can I move the foot? What about the sciatic nerve on both legs? The shoulders?

As I stand, slowly, I wait to feel what's going to hurt, and how badly. Upper back? These days, I've noticed that I seem to shuffle along, with the left shoulder pulled further forward, for the first part



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of the morning. It seems to let up after a bit, but it could just be that my mind starts to focus on other things and ignores this deformity after a while.

I'm 3 inches shorter in the past 18 months. I think I just don't have the strength to fight my spine's natural curvature anymore. I discovered, recently, that it hurts quite a bit to maintain good posture. Something else to discuss with the neurosurgeon.

I shuffle off to the bathroom to take the first round of pain meds for the day. I have certain pain meds I take primarily at night, because they make my mind do funny things. During the day, I rely on more standard opioids; I've found that if I can get on top of the pain right away in the morning, I can generally have a pretty good day.

There are days when everything seems to hurt in my body when I finally make it to the gym. Every joint aches. I bend over, getting set to pick up the 12-inch log. My hands ache; the pain continues up my arms to my shoulders. I ignore this pain, get my back tight, my lats tighten up; I dip down and pull the log onto my lap, ignoring the burst of pain in my hips. I take a deep breath, focus on a big belly of air, set my lats one more time, squeezing that log into me with all my strength and explode up, sending the log flying up to land on my chest, nearly knocking me over backward.

All this takes only a few seconds. It's going to be a good day, despite the pain.

I push through and complete another training session. I know I'll feel better afterward, and I've come to accept that not all training sessions will be stellar. Gains are measured in months and years with this body; it took me a while to come to terms with this. I've come close to quitting many times as a new pain appears, as something else gets torn, as injury after injury stack up.

A HEAVY WEIGHT

I was competing as a Master Heavyweight at Oil Regions Strongest Man in 2010. I decided to try to pull 725 for my third attempt on max deadlift, despite not needing a third attempt to win the event. I'm dumb that way. It's one of my strengths.

I made the pull. It took, according to the announcer, a full 10 seconds from start to finish. The crowd was frenzied. I swear everybody who saw that lift remembers it years later.

I competed at the Oil Region again in 2012. This time, with no real training. My coach Mike Tuchscherer and I agreed that I needed to get a com-

petition under my belt, and that we would treat it as a training session. As is the case with Strongman competitions, you run into friends; catching up with one of those friends via email after the comp, I mentioned having limited time. Of course, he asked me why I felt there was this time constraint.

There's no easy way to answer that question. I try to be very straightforward, and unemotional, but behind the keyboard, I'm pretty emotional as I'm typing the answer. Some days, the answer weighs heavily upon me.

I have a disease called Diffuse Idiopathic Skeletal Hyperostosis (DISH). This disease, in my case, is pretty advanced. On the one hand, it's simple: All my connective tissue is turning to bone. It's hit my ankles, hips and spine hard. Some days, I really notice how hard it is to get moving. Other days, things seem to tear apart in my body for no reason.

When I talk in a group setting about training with this disease, I like to relate a couple quick stories. The first story goes back to 1992, when I learned how to deadlift for the first time. I started with 95 lbs.; within eight weeks, I pulled 500 from the floor. I didn't think too much about it, and over the years, drifted away from training, spending more time with work and other things. I never did pull much more than 500 as a young man.

In 2005, I realized that my body was not happy with my choices. I was not happy with my choices. I decided, for my 45th birthday, to give myself a huge present: I would restructure my life to make training a priority. At that time, I had intermittent back and hip pain, and sometimes had trouble walking.

I was also morbidly obese. I weighed more than 350 lbs., with a 54-inch waist. I thought that most of my pain, stiffness and problems were just side effects of obesity.

So, I started to work out. I hiked regularly and revived my home gym. But I had a lot of pain, and major problems moving. I went to a doctor who told me there was nothing wrong with me, so I kept trying to lift, but getting nowhere.

I ended up seeing a chiropractor who actually listened to me, examined me and ordered X-rays. I was diagnosed with DISH in 2006.

I trained hard and smart, doing whatever it took. By the beginning of 2007, I had deadlifted 500 lbs. again. By the end of 2007, I had lost about 100 lbs. By mid-2008, I took first place in the Master's Class at the first Strongman competition I entered. It took me a lot of work and two-and-a-half years, but I had reached a goal.

Somewhere along my journey, I realized that I'm blessed. I could have lived out the rest of my life being unhappy, not reaching any kind of physical goals, had this disease not interrupted me and forced me to realize what was important, and who I am. My time may well be limited but, as the song goes, at least I'm enjoying the ride.

The gains are slow, so slow that I'll never be able to reach an early goal of competing in the open division and going to Nationals. I'm not so sure that I can set any goals anymore; I'm also willing to just let momentum carry me for a bit. Momentum, once gathered, propels me without any significant willpower investment. We all need periods when we cruise, I think.



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BORROWED TIME

Based on the buildup of bone on the anterior spinal ligaments in the thoracic region, spreading down into the lumbar region, various doctors guessed in 2011 that I probably had about seven good years left. Good, of course, being relative: My ankles really don't work, which means that my hips have to work harder with each step I take. Which may or may not encourage the disease to target my hips.

There's no cure. Standard medical advice is to basically become a couch potato, and avoid any activity that can stress the spine.

Think about that that last sentence, focusing on the part about stressing the spine. Now, think about your typical Strongman training session.

Nobody really knows much about this disease. I think the stats are something like 5 percent of people 75 and older will be stricken by this disease, and it will be diagnosed secondarily, as it causes other symptoms like nerve impingements. Only half of 1 percent of the population from age 50 to 70 will be diagnosed; nobody under the age of 50 is diagnosed.

I mentioned I was diagnosed in 2006, at age 45 — and the disease was already extremely advanced. I was diagnosed by a chiropractor, who I went to see because I was having trouble squatting, while the doctor I had gone to see told me nothing was wrong with me. The chiropractor looked at me, tried to move me and announced: "Dude, something is seriously wrong with your back. It's like a brick wall here. It doesn't move. At all. I won't treat you until we get x-rays to see what's going on." So, we got x-rays.

I remember May 6, 2006. Some dates never leave you. I had my second visit with the chiropractor. As soon as I got into the exam room, I could tell something was wrong; he was visibly upset. We went over the diagnosis of DISH, easily seen in the x-rays. My anterior spinal ligaments are huge, coated with excess bone, looking like somebody poured layers and layers of candle wax on my spine. As he put it, not good news.

We knew that I couldn't receive traditional chiropractic manipulations: one aspect of the disease is that the spine itself becomes weakened to the point that people with advanced cases of DISH have their spines spontaneously fracture from moving the wrong

way.

This chiropractor is an Active Release Technique (ART) practitioner. As part of my evaluation, we made a video of me doing basic movements, like raising my arms over my head. That video was reviewed by Dr. Leahy, the founder of ART. In his review, he stated that I was a lost cause and nothing could help me.

The chiropractor told me all this, talked with me about what he knew of my disease and how there was no good prognosis. He also told me that he felt, despite the bad prognosis, that he could help me.

After more than five years of twice-weekly visits, I actually got to a point where I could move somewhat normally, at least normally enough to do Strongman. This was not an easy five years: Those twice weekly visits, at \$100 a pop, were paid for out of pocket. Such is life. It's never simple.

I remember milestones along the way, like the first time I was able to retract my shoulder blades, even a fraction of an inch. I was so impressed and so happy that I could finally do this. It opened up a whole new way for me to approach pressing.

LIVING WITH COMPLEXITY

I've learned to live with complexity. I remember fall 2009. I was doing trap bar deads with a moderate weight, and something popped in my left shoulder. Within a few minutes I had extreme pain in my back. I drove to the ER and immediately had my thoracic spine x-rayed; everybody was concerned that my spine had fractured. I remember the radiologist on duty seeing my x-ray and asking what I was doing when this happened. I told her I was training and doing a deadlift variation with 520 lbs.

She looked at me, then back at my x-ray. "My son is a body-builder," she said. "He lifts weights all the time. He can't deadlift 520 lbs. Your spine is so twisted, so damaged. How can you pick up so much weight?"

This complexity throws doctors, I've found. I've always struggled with my left calf cramping up. Over the years, I've suffered from extremely painful plantar fasciitis. The day it started I had competed and had no problems during the comp. My wife and I drove home. When I stepped out of the SUV, it was like somebody drove a spike through my left heel.

The pain stayed with me so long and was so crippling that I seriously thought about having my foot amputated. I tried many pain medicines with no luck. Cortisone injections? No help. Nothing gave me relief.

Then suddenly, one day while training the axle press, something seemed to pop behind my left knee. I was unable to put any weight on the left leg, but the pain in my heel was gone. Fair trade — actually, more than fair. I was quite thankful, as I hobbled around on crutches, that I was no longer carrying that particular pain in my left heel.

Fast-forwarding a bit, I started to have a lot of pain in my low back. I went to a doctor. She pulled my history and immediately ordered thoracic x-rays. I got the x-rays, of course, and as I was reviewing them with her my low back was going into severe spasms. She was convinced that it was really my thoracic spine and ordered a DEXA bone density scan.

I left her office in terrible pain, my low back spasming, pain radiating into my left leg. I never got that DEXA scan, and I never went back to see her. She was missing the point, the complexity of my case baffling her.

WHAT'S REALLY IMPORTANT

There's a few things important to me: Strongman is right up there, but my Alaskan Malamutes and Siberian Huskies are at the top of the list. I love nothing more than hiking with them in the dead of winter.

In January 2011 I was hiking in a fresh snow when I knew that I was in trouble. I was having a lot of problems moving my left leg; there was a lot of pain, and it took all my effort to walk. It was cold out, there was a biting wind, it was snowing.

I was stripped down to a shirt with sweat dripping from my torso. It took me more than 20 minutes to cover 100 yards. It was that hard to move my left leg.

I decided to try a new chiropractor, and also to reach out to a powerlifting buddy who is a physical therapist. My buddy and I



talked for an hour, and he referred me to a neurosurgeon. I followed through with the new chiropractor as well.

On Feb. 2, 2011, I decided to have decompression therapy for my lumbar spine at L5-S1 and L4-L5. The chiropractor, and the radiologist he used for the MRI, both agreed that the discs were herniated and that this was causing a nerve impingement.

I know that was the date, because I'm looking at the payment screen for the loan I took out for \$8,000 to pay for the treatment. That's another thing I've learned to juggle: While I have excellent medical insurance, and I'm thankful I have it (along with the \$750 monthly premiums), it doesn't cover all services, and it didn't cover decompression therapy.

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Of course, in the interest of complexity, the neurosurgeon, as well as my buddy, who also read my MRI, and other doctors in the neurosurgery department, disagreed. They felt the impingement was not caused by disc herniation, but by stenosis. After all, my body is producing excess bone.

It's a tough call to make when it's \$8,000 of your own cash. I consulted with a neutral third party and finally decided it was only money. I had the decompression therapy. I felt immediate relief, although there was a rough spot in the treatment when my spine rebelled and I was in such immense pain that it took every ounce of my strength along with controlled, paced breathing, to make it through without breaking down completely in the treatment room.

My wife has told me that she will never witness another treatment session. She can't stand to see me in that much pain.

In the longer run, I got relief. I was able to resume walking with my dogs and doing chores around the house. So, success.

MEASURING PROGRESS

I've learned how to measure progress in months and years with this disease. While I still suffer from that pinched nerve, it's not nearly as bad as it was. My left leg is definitely weaker, and we have adjusted my training to address that issue; the doctors tell me I won't be successful in that quest. I can guarantee that I won't be successful if I don't try.

That's why I competed recently with no specific training. I've been unable to really crank up the intensity. As it was, on the final

event of the day, stones, I tore my left hamstring — probably because of the pinched nerve.

Now, I have something more to rehab. Such is life: I made a decision that the risk of something going wrong was worth taking, in light of the reward — competition, and getting a current baseline measurement of my performance.

The risk, as I identified it, was minor in light of my normal training, in light of the weights used in the comp, and in light of the fact that I could mitigate the risk by taking my time on setup, by holding back a bit on everything, stopping if I felt like I was unsafe, and relying upon my experience competing.

Chances were, I thought, given these facts, that any injury I risked was relatively minor: a muscle tear is minor, in my book. A detachment? Major. So, I was right, and I have a minor injury to rehab.

THE ROAD AHEAD

I'm still seeing that same neurosurgeon, and still get PT advice from my powerlifting buddy as needed. The neurosurgeon allows me to largely call my own shots. As he puts it, "You have five years left. You want to spend them tossing around rocks and hiking in the Arctic, well, that's your call. My job is to give you whatever relief I can so that you're successful in those endeavors."

Progress comes slowly. I take the time to review my training logs, to remind myself that back in 2007 I was unable to pick up a 220-lb. Atlas Stone. I'm now able to get 310 lbs. to 50 inches. Progress comes slowly, but I do my best to acknowledge it.

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Meanwhile, the disease marches on. Comparing x-rays from 2010-08, it's easy to see how the spinal ligaments are becoming more and more layered with bone. The layering is spreading down to the lumbar region. We haven't taken any c-spine pictures to see how it's progressing upward; honestly, I'm not sure I want to know. Every time I see the neurosurgeon, the cute little medical assistant asks me if I have any problems swallowing or breathing; the question is asked and answered briefly, matter-of-factly, but we both know what's coming someday.

So, one of a couple things will happen. The ossification will continue to build up in the thoracic region, which can ultimately impinge upon the heart. The other alternative is that it continues to spread throughout my body, impinging on nerves and reducing my mobility, or making it hard to swallow and breathe.

All these things could well happen. Whatever the case, it looks like my time for being mobile is limited.

In the meantime, I've competed a handful of times, and I've done pretty well. I can usually hold my own in the Masters Class. I truly believe that we manufacture our own destiny – I could have lis-



tened to standard medical advice and not tried to do Strongman, and just did the couch potato thing instead.

Here's my secret: Every time I train, every time I compete, I feel better. There's a psychological element at play, to be sure. We're supposed to love our bodies; that's something that I think is impossible for me to do. I hate everything about my body, I hate that I have problems moving, I hate the pain, I hate the disfigurement of my

hunchback, I hate knowing that I probably won't live to 60.

But every time I train, I cheat death and I cheat my body. Just a little bit. I make it perform. I make it move. I make it do something that many healthy people will never do. I love that I can do that.

To be sure, there's also a physical element. By moving heavy weight, I force myself to be mobile, and I encourage my body's muscles to take some load off the spine by staying larger and stronger. I always physically feel better when I train; perhaps it's placebo but, if so, I'll take it.

Some days are better than others, and we all must play the hand we're dealt. The choice is up to each one of us.

Choose wisely, stay strong, and be well. **PM**

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GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR BANDBELL BAR

BY JEREMY FRASIER



Bench Pressing using the standard setup - bands doubled-up with kettlebells.

Squeeze the bar. Drive your feet into the floor. Pull your shoulder blades together and remember, stay tight! I'm sure these are just a few of the phrases everyone hears from their training partners when they are under the bar getting ready to bench. I know they're right, but it's easier said than done when the weight really starts to get up there.

I'm not an expert bencher, and I don't pretend to be. I just like to pick up heavy things and put them down. At 40, I feel like I'm in the sweet spot of my lifting career. I live, work and train in Columbus, Ohio, but I've never been to Westside Barbell. I read everything I can get my hands on and built my own gym in my basement. I study, analyze and micro-manage every aspect of my training from diet to new, cutting-edge ideas. My training has changed quite a bit through the years, but I seem to adjust it more

as a result of injury rather than better training methods. Unfortunately, this seems to be a common theme with many powerlifters.

I can't say exactly when my right shoulder started to bother me, but it finally forced me to change how I trained my bench. It started out as a small twinge deep in the joint and developed to a point where it prevented me from locking out heavy weights. I'm not sure why, but my lockout suffered the most. I started doing more partial range of motion work, dropped the weight I was using, and increased my reps thinking it would come back. But it never did, and I figured my heavy bench press days were over.

I'm lucky that my wife is big into training, too. She reminded me that the best thing to do is to go with something that either helps me get stronger or aids in recovery. Two years ago, she did both.

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She bought me a Bandbell Earthquake Bar for our home gym. I half expected it to help the shoulder, based on what I read about it. And, yeah, it worked just fine bringing it back around to fully operational. But what I didn't expect — and hadn't read online or anywhere, for that matter — is what this article is all about.

TECHNIQUE

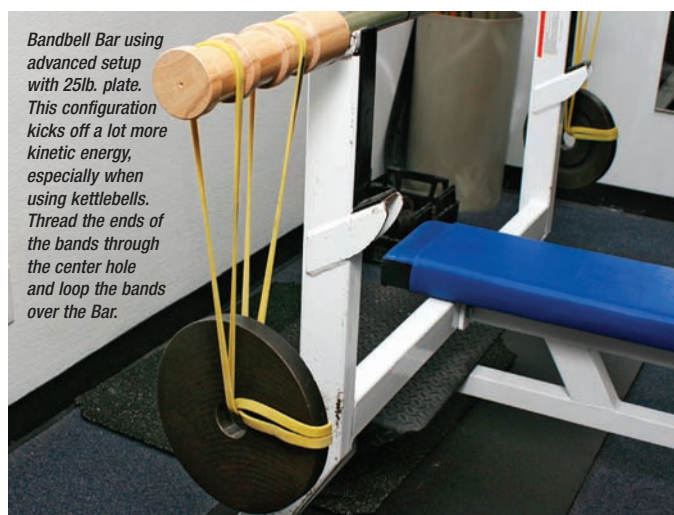
In a word, the big surprise is technique. The kind of technique most benchers don't think about until they're faced with stalled progress, forced cutbacks or injury. In my case, I had all three working against me, but the main culprit was still the nagging shoulder problem.

When you first start working with a Bandbell Bar, there's definitely a learning curve as your nervous system tries to deal with the crazy, chaotic energy being pumped into your upper body. You don't just jump under this bar and max out your first time. Like bull riding or base jumping, you had better work your way up. Take it slow and easy at first. Use light weight and high reps, especially if you're trying to rehab an injury. In three or four workouts, your shoulders will feel better and your ability to handle the bar will improve. This is using the bar in pure rehab mode: light weight and high reps, anywhere from 25 to 75 reps for sets of five or six. A 25-lb. Kettlebell or small plate is a good place to start, but be aware that Kettlebells kick out a lot more energy than plates, so adjust the energy dial accordingly. Again, this bar makes fast work of shoulder problems, but you have to stick to light weight, high reps and a max-energy setup like Kettlebells. When using the Bandbell Bar for shoulder rehab purposes it's very important not to let the bar touch the chest when benching. Like a high-voltage wire, the bar is a great conduc-

tor of kinetic energy and will lose some of its "juice," or energy, whenever it touches anything. Healing to the joint works best when the level of instability and chaotic movement is maintained at the highest level possible.

HOLD YOUR HORSES

Not long after the shoulder started feeling better, I wanted to add a lot more weight to see what this bad boy could do. But here's where the bar steps in and says, "Not so fast, dude! You need to fix a few things first." Hell, I didn't know anything was wrong, but the cold, hard reality is that as the weights get heavier, the bar begins to expose and pinpoint any weaknesses you have failed to correct. I saw this over and over again at this year's Arnold Classic Expo. There were literally hundreds of guys who were trying the Bandbell



Bandbell Bar using advanced setup with 25lb. plate. This configuration kicks off a lot more kinetic energy, especially when using kettlebells. Thread the ends of the bands through the center hole and loop the bands over the Bar.



Bandbell Bar with multiple sets of bands and kettlebells.

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Bandbell Bar using light-bands and chains. This setup allows you to handle a lot of weight, but is super-easy on the shoulders.

Bar for the first time, some of them seriously strong benchers, but you could see technique problems come to the surface right away. How do you explain to someone, in 30 seconds, what's happening and what can be done to fix it?

Here's what Bandbell teaches you about bench technique with no compromise. For powerlifters, this bar has benefits beyond most other sports because it forces you to use good bench technique whether you like it or not. As you add weight with more and more bands, the bar becomes increasingly unstable. It quickly turns into a kinetic monster at heavy weight, so the lifter has no choice but to use near-perfect bench form. So, when I'm benching heavy with the Bandbell Bar, here are the rules I have to follow very closely:

- 1.)** Squeeze and grip the bar as hard as I can. This is a thick, fat-grip bar, so if I don't squeeze hard, it feels like it wants to jump out of my hands.
- 2.)** Concentrate on "pulling the bar apart" with each rep. This allows me to keep stability and fight the kinetic forces that are trying to throw me off the bench.
- 3.)** Don't let my elbows flare out. The bar will let me know when this happens, but rewards me with more control when I keep my elbows in.
- 4.)** Seriously plant my feet under me. Tighten up and drive with my legs. If not, I get rocked from side to side.
- 5.)** Get my body set, squeeze my shoulder blades together, arch up and lock down.

When I was training injured, I used to do power movements like boards, chains, floor presses, etc., using only a partial range of motion to protect the area. It happens slowly, but you lose sight of the fact that you are no longer comfortable with max-weight workouts and heavier weights in general. But with healthy shoulders and good technique, I got comfortable and aggressive with the bigger



The "Top-Hat" configuration is for extreme levels of kinetic energy and really makes the Bar highly unstable. It's a favorite with lifters who have trained with a Bandbell Bar for a while. They also add one or two more pairs of kettlebells to each side to make it totally crazy.

weights and then back to using full range of motion. The results were new PRs and now handling more weight than ever. **PM**

TRAINING WITH THE EARTHQUAKE BAR

- 1.)** After a max-effort barbell workout, I do three or four sets of 15 to 20 reps with the Bandbell using moderate-heavy weight, followed by a 15-second "static hold" at the end of each set. Again, I'm squeezing the bar and trying to pull it apart at the same time.
- 2.)** For a recovery day workout, I do a progression of 10 rep sets. After each set, the weight is increased by 25 lbs. until I have done a total of five sets, with the top-end weight being somewhere around 250 lbs.
- 3.)** In a pre-workout warm-up, sometimes I'll do two or three sets, light weight, to warm up before a shoulder or triceps workout. Nothing warms the area up as quickly and safely as this bar. **PM**

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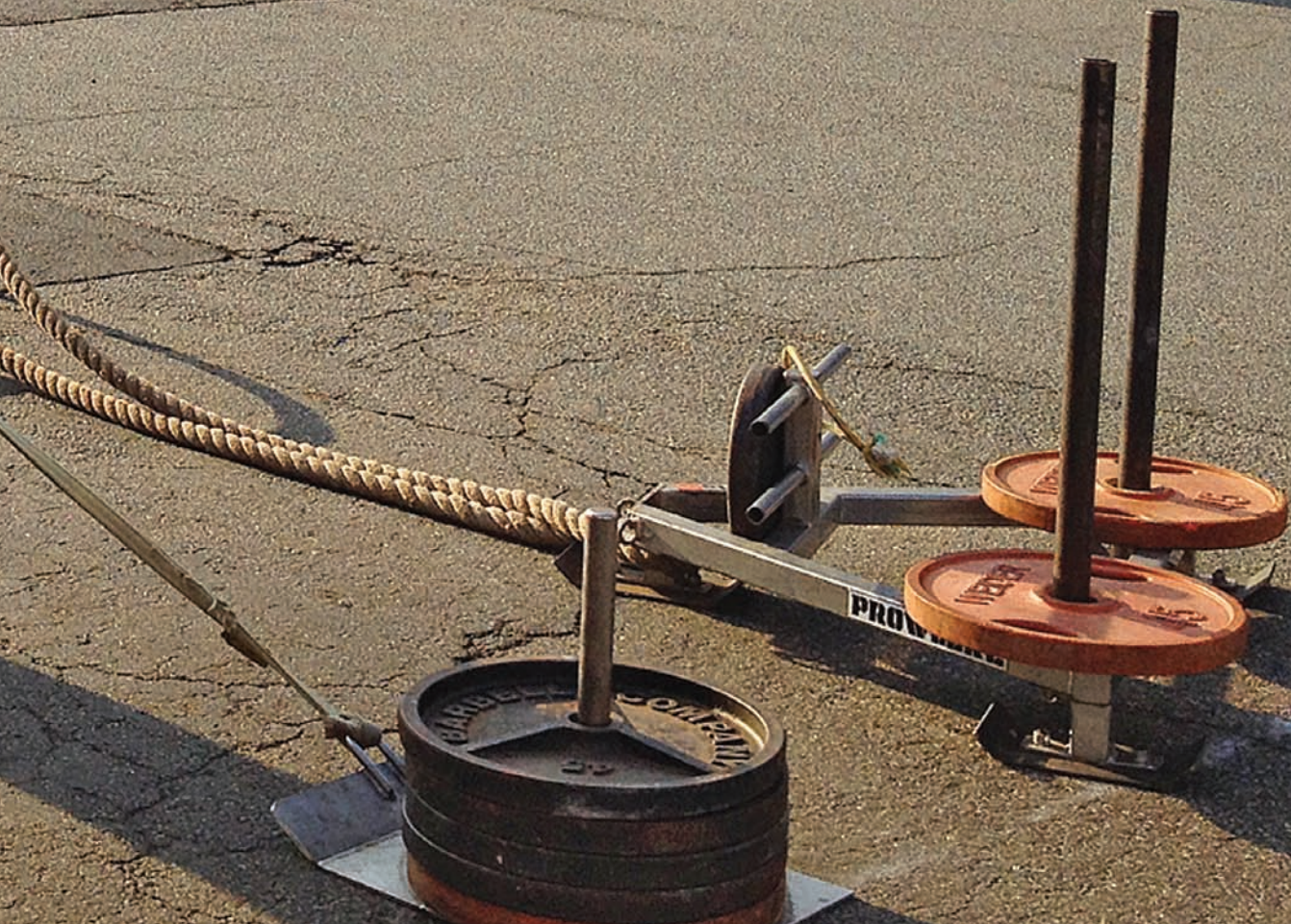
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THE

7

**HABITS
OF HIGHLY
EFFECTIVE
ATHLETES**

BY ZACH EVEN-ESH



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POWER MAGAZINE - JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2013 47



1) DON'T BE A FAT F**K

There are a few ways to guarantee that you'll be a fat f**k, so let's address them head on. Remember, all healing starts with the truth. If this bothers you, then I'm probably talking about you.

Stop eating a bunch of crap food. This

means cutting out breakfast cereal, no more buying the school lunch and kill the fast food when your friends take their weekly (or daily) trip to McDonald's.

Stop skipping breakfast. You may have heard about intermittent fasting while reading the 50 blogs that offer different

advice, each more confusing than the next. In high school, you don't need intermittent fasting. You need to eat three good meals along with some smaller meals in between. This will actually lean you out if you keep protein high, and fats and carbs moderate.

Commit to eating stronger, more nutritious foods. Your friends will think you're crazy and you won't fit in with the "normal crowd," but who cares? Being normal sucks, and normal never helped create any champions.

"Stop eating a bunch of crap food. This means cutting out breakfast cereal, no more buying the school lunch and kill the fast food"



2) BE A MAN (OR WOMAN) OF YOUR WORD

Learn it at a young age and live it. I've worked with countless athletes and their parents for more than 10 years and have seen one too many empty promises and sneaky tactics. I've seen famous people, looked up to by thousands and thousands of people, who don't live their words.

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It's a shame. An honest person is hard to find. If you say you're going to do it, then do it — and go all out. If you give your word, don't make excuses; make it happen.

3) LEAVE EVERYTHING IN THE GYM

This boils down to honesty. Be honest with yourself. When you look yourself in the mirror after your workout, ask yourself, "Did I give my all today?"

That is what training is all about. You vs. You. Push yourself to your limits and beyond. Learn what it means to tolerate pain and break through the pain barrier. Break records and always train to become at least 1 percent better than the last workout.

4) EXCUSES PAVE THE ROAD TO NOWHERE

Athletes make excuses about why they can't have a strong breakfast, why they ate a crappy lunch, why they can't get to the gym more than twice a week. Really? You only train twice week and on the other five days a week you can't train? The athletes who make excuses are simply giving themselves a green light to lose. You must be brutally honest with yourself if you want to achieve success.

Avoid the excuse making and learn to take responsibility for all your actions. Learn this skill now and you will be powerful not just during your teen years as an athlete, but for the rest of your life — if you continue living the code of no excuses.

5) WHEN THINGS GO WRONG, KEEP FIGHTING

You will hit walls, setbacks and obstacles, but this is when the true champion rises to the occasion. I've had athletes come to my gym with casts on their leg or arm. At first they tell me they need to take the four to six weeks off due to the injury. I tell them, "Hell, no!" I get them in the gym and, if the arm is in a cast, we do full body lifts with one arm, strap a belt around the waist and do sled sprints. There is always a way to train, to rise above, to conquer and crush obstacles. You will see big changes in your success when you have the right mindset. You have nothing to lose when you step up and give it your all. You

"The athletes who make excuses are simply giving themselves a green light to lose"

can walk away with your chin held high knowing you did all you could to achieve your goals.

6) BEAT THE GUY NEXT TO YOU EVERY TIME

When you train, get in there and compete. This goes for the weight room, practice and life in general. Average doesn't cut it in sports or life. The two go hand in hand. When you're training, you should be pushing at high intensity and making everyone else rise to your level.

If you've got a job, then don't be satisfied with only doing what's in your "job description." Go above and beyond the job

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description because that is what it takes to go from average to ass-kicker.

7) DON'T BE AFRAID TO FAIL

This is where many younger athletes go wrong. They set their sights on small goals, feeling they are not ready for the bigger goals. First you must decide that you are going to achieve a big, very specific goal. That goal will drive your actions to greater heights. Every rep, every set, every workout, every meal – they will all be done with the motivation to kick ass and take names to achieve your goal. Without a big goal, you will go stale and you'll hit a wall.

When you train, don't just think about how this workout is going to make you physically stronger, give you a bigger chest, bigger arms and so on. When we train at The Underground Strength Gym, we have a saying that we are "training for life." Each workout must make us a better person, a stronger person, on all fronts: physically, mentally and spiritually. That means each workout must push you out of your comfort zone so you begin getting

"There is always a way to train, to rise above, to conquer and crush obstacles"

used to overcoming obstacles, winning when the odds are against you, doing the little extra to prove to yourself that you're capable of achieving more than you thought possible from the onset.

Every workout, become 1 percent stronger on the inside, not just on the bar. You might be wondering how the heck you can achieve this. Well, let me preface my words by telling you that it's going to hurt. You're going to have to get comfortable being uncomfortable.

It might mean taking a heavy set of Kettlebells for a ¼-mile walk rather than the typical 150-foot carry. Every time you set the weights down you have to bang out 20 push-ups.

It might mean that after you hit your heavy squats, you drop the weight a bit and aim for a brutal 20-rep set of squats.

Rather than the typical prowler push, perform prowler sprint suicides and race against a training partner. The loser has to hit an extra round of prowler suicides. As the Navy SEALs say, "It pays to be a winner!"

When you start digging deep and begin using your training as a means to develop inner strength and not just physical strength, you will quickly realize that your workouts will become that much more powerful, as they now help you succeed in life and lifting.

Being a highly effective athlete truly means that you're an ass kicker in all facets of your life. This is beyond sports and athletics. Get your mind in the right place first. Decide what you want and refuse to allow anything or anyone to stand in your way.

The great men and women of this world think big and then do everything in their power to achieve big. In the end, it is you who decides how great you will become. **PM**

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TO HELL AND BACK

BY JEFF "ROBOT" IRION

Photos by Renee Needham

Who are you and why should we care? My name is Luke Edwards. I'm 30 years old and I train at Westside Barbell. I weigh 258 lbs. and am 5 feet, 9 inches. I have an elite total at 220 and pro totals at 242, 275 and 308. My best lifts are as follows:

| BWT | Squat | Bench | Deadlift | Total |
|-----|-------|-------|----------|-------|
| 220 | 750 | 575 | 700 | 2,025 |
| 242 | 1,025 | 685 | 810 | 2,405 |
| 275 | 1,000 | 700 | 840 | 2,455 |
| 308 | 1,020 | 690 | 775 | 2,465 |



What do you do for work? I work with juvenile delinquents. I wasn't a good kid growing up, but I changed my ways and now I try to help troubled youths do the same.

Out of all the guys currently at Westside, it seems like you're one of the veterans. When did you start training there? I started training at Westside Barbell in December 2007. I remember talking to Louie Simmons in August 2007 about moving to Columbus and training at Westside. I was very nervous about this. It was a dream of mine, and I could not believe that Lou felt I was good enough to train there. I was living in Fort Wayne, Ind., at the time and training at Big Ugly Barbell in Auburn, Ind. It was owned by longtime powerlifter and strongman Gabe Daniels. While there, I trained with a great group of guys. However, I felt that it was time for me to move on because I was just starting my powerlifting career and Gabe was ready to end his. I take great pride coming from that gym, as Gabe helped build my foundation for powerlifting and never charged me a dime to train there. Before powerlifting, I competed in bodybuilding, so I was always strong in lifts for reps. Gabe really helped build my absolute strength and got me ready for Westside.

My best total before coming to Westside was 2,226 at 242, which is good enough for a pro total. My wife and I saved up some money and we moved to Columbus to pursue a dream. I'll never forget when I first came to Westside because I would get so nervous before every workout. I was getting to train with legends!

You had some medical problems a few years ago and nearly died. Tell us about that. I was born with focal segmental glomerulosclerosis (FSGS) kidney disease. There is no known cause and there is no cure without a transplant. Even with a transplant, it can recur. It basically entails the buildup of scar tissue in the kidneys - like cancer of the kidneys- eating them until they're gone. When I was 17, I started puking every morning. Everyone thought I had a weak digestive system, as my blood work showed no signs of kidney problems. I guess I just got used to puking every morning - it became the norm for me.

At 25 I was diagnosed with the disease. I was cutting for a meet to make the 242s and I could not get my weight under 256, no mat-

ter what I did. I knew something was wrong. At the last minute I decided not to cut, and I weighed in at 273. The day of the meet I was 287. After the competition, I saw a doctor and he put me on lasix [treats fluid retention]. I lost more than 40 lbs. of water. I also had a kidney biopsy, and it was discovered that I had FSGS and was in Stage 2 kidney failure. However, you have to be in Stage 5 failure to get a transplant. A month later, I got my first pro total of 2,226 at 242. This was in January 2007.

In July 2010, I had hit a bench PR [Personal Record] in the gym one. Two days later, I had a little mark on my pelvis, but I thought nothing of it. However, by the end of that workout, that little red mark had turned into a huge red mark that spread from my stomach to my knees. I was still planning on going to work that day. I took a nap, and when I woke up, I was running a fever of 104°. I ended up puking everywhere, and we decided to go to the hospital. Blood work revealed that my creatinine level was 9.6 (normal is about 0.7-1.5). They sent me to a room and this lady comes in and was basically preparing me to die, asking questions like, "Do you have a living will?" and "Do you want a chaplin?" I was scheduled for dialysis, but I refused to get a port in my arm. I instead chose to continue training and praying for



a miracle. I competed three times that year, and I even took a Best Lifter award while being in Stage 5 kidney failure. I take great pride in that.

I needed a transplant, but that is a difficult process. I would've had to wait three to five years for a dead donor. Finding a living donor is hard because they have to be healthy enough to donate and have the same blood type as you. I was very lucky to have five people willing to get tested to donate, and my mother was the best candidate. For about a year, I lived through the hell that is Stage 5 kidney failure, but I still went to work every day and never missed a workout. Finally, on May 27, 2011, I was transplanted and given a second chance at life.

Tell us about your comeback after the surgery. When were you able to start training again? How much weight and strength had you lost? The day after my transplant, I opted to walk over to the next room, rather than be wheeled over. It was only about 50 to 100 feet, but it seemed like 5 miles! The next day, and every day



after, I walked three times a day for 20 to 30 minutes. It started to feel better every day. I know this helped me come back faster than most people.

At four weeks post-op, the doctor said I could lift a gallon of milk, or about 10 lbs. He didn't say how many times! I would go to the local YMCA every day and do every exercise I could think of with 10 lbs. for sets of 50 reps, plus cardio. People would look at me like I was so weak, but I didn't care because I had a goal in mind of coming back.

From the surgery, cardio and low-protein diet, my body weight had gone from 265 pre-op to 216 at eight weeks post-op. The loss of strength is a tricky question. I had lost so much strength while being in Stage 5 renal failure, but I just kept my head down and trained every other day, knowing deep in my heart that a comeback was coming. At eight weeks post-op, I was able to start lifting heavy again. I squatted 405 plus a green band for a few sets, I benched close to 300 and I deadlifted around 400.

At six months post-op, I competed at 220. My goal had been to compete one year post-op, so I far exceeded that. I totaled 2,025 and was one squat or one bench away from a pro total in my fourth weight class. This was huge for me considering that a lot of nurses said I would never lift heavy again. I recently competed at 14 months post-op. I weighed in at 258 and hit a 980 squat, 630 bench and 740 deadlift for a 2,350 total. I plan to compete again in March 2013 and total 2,500. It isn't a massive total, but considering what I've been through, I think it is very respectable.

You are jacked, but your wife is jacked and tan. How jealous does that make you

feel? This has got to be a California question! When I was a boy, I was shaved and tan, but now I am a man and I no longer need to do either! Actually, with my anti-rejection medications, I am unable to tan because my meds give me an increased risk of skin cancer. My wife is hot and naturally tan, just the way I like it, and I am completely fine with being pale and bald.

Why are your legs so big? My legs used to be even bigger! I did a ton of ass-to-grass front squats and heavy hack squats back in my bodybuilding days. My best front squat was around 550 for five reps. Also, when I first got into powerlifting, I was a narrow stance quad-squatter. My legs are still pretty big, I think 30 inches, give or take an inch. But I focus more on hamstring work and I squat wider, so they aren't as large.

Your stance seems extra wide, especially considering that you're not a tall guy. What are your reasons for using such a wide stance? When I first came to Westside, I was a narrow stance squatter. Chuck always told me to "get my legs out, get my legs out". It was very odd and uncomfortable for me. But what was I going to say to Chuck — no? So I slowly kept working them out and it just clicked one day. Now I only take a super wide stance in the gym and I do that when I feel my hips need more work. In a meet, I bring them in some.

What powerlifting accomplishments are you most proud of? **1.)** Pulling 810 at 242 to take Chuck's 805 deadlift off the record board, which had stood for about 12 years. Afterwards Chuck came up to me and shook my hand and said I'd earned it. Chuck doesn't respect lifts — he respects

work ethic. To have earned Chuck's respect is an accomplishment of its own. **2.)** Again, taking Chuck's 835 deadlift at 275 off the record board with an 840 pull. **3.)** Six months post-transplant, I pulled 700 at 220. At a time when most patients can't even pick up general items, I picked up 700 lbs.

I knew there'd be some deadlifts on that list! You're known for being a good puller, so give us your top tips for pulling big. **1.)** Train your lower back with heavy weight for a lot of sets and reps. Do reverse hypers, pin pulls against bands, and 45-degree hypers.

2.) Strengthen the tendons of your hamstrings. Once you get strong in the deadlift, it seems easier to tear hamstrings without that tendon strength. I use 10- to 20-lb. ankle weights and complete 100 to 400 reps total.

3.) For sumo, a lot of people start with their shins close to the bar. When they pull, it will start to windmill half way up. Try placing your feet an inch or two back from the bar. This will help the bar travel straight up.

4.) It's hard to pull big after a heavy squat and bench. You need to be in shape to have a good pull at the end of a meet. Like they say, the meet doesn't start until the bar hits the floor.

It appears that you don't have any grip problems with the deadlift. How do you train your grip? I really don't train my grip. I used to do a lot of Strongman training in Indiana, so I would say that's how I built my grip. Jake Anderson used to do Strongman, as well. Josh Conley, one of my current training partners, built his grip from doing years of construction work. I would say one of the main things for grip is to never wear straps. The only time I have ever worn them is if I've messed up any of my fingers while restraining at work. Other than that, I never use them.

You used to pull conventional, but now you're a sumo puller. Why did you make the switch? Do you still pull conventional in training? I made the switch because I figured I had better leverages for pulling sumo. It took me about a year of training sumo to feel confident in it. My first meet pulling sumo, I pulled 810, whereas the contest before I had pulled 744 conventional. That said, almost all of my training is



done conventional. I feel that the stronger my conventional is, the stronger my sumo will be. If I do too much sumo, it seems to go backward. In the gym, I have pulled 800 conventional from the floor using just a belt.

You changed things up again with your deadlift when you switched from pulling in a poly suit to a canvas. Once again, why did you make the switch?

What do you find are the pros and cons of each? The switch to canvas was not by choice. I had always pulled in poly. Leading up to this recent pro-am, I used poly briefs in the gym and that's all I planned on using. But at the pro-am, my legs swelled up and I was unable to get my briefs on. We tried and tried and could not get them up. After about 10 minutes, I got my squat suit and pulled in that. I had never pulled in canvas before. However, after using it, I do feel that I can hit a deadlift PR in it soon. I really don't have pros or cons to suits, but I would say that for any deadlift suit, you want it tight in the hips but not too tight, otherwise you can't get down to the bar and get set right.

Speed bench is a highly controversial subject on the Internet. Some try to go as heavy as they can while still moving relatively fast, while others say that you need to use light weight in order to benefit from it. Help set the record straight by telling us what kind of weight you use for speed bench. And for reference, can you tell us what your raw and shirted maxes are? I currently use 185 to 205 plus minis or two chains, but I used to use a lot more. I would use the same weight as Dave Hoff

until one day it clicked for me that I was not an 850-plus bencher, so I lightened it up. Lighter weight and focusing on speed works for me right now, but like everything else, nothing is set in stone and it could change any time. As far as my strength right now, I would say I'm around 490 raw and I just benched 650 shirted, and I've hit 750 and 775 off a two- and three-board, respectively.

Who would you like to thank? I would like to thank God for giving me the ability to work through any obstacle thrown my way and for blessing me with all that I have. I want to thank my mother for giving me a second chance at life and for being such a brave lady, raising me as a 16-year-old single mother. I want to thank my beautiful wife Molly for all she does, and especially for being by my side while I was sick and I told her to leave. Thanks to my grandma and grandpa for teaching me that if I have a dream to go after it. I want to thank Louie Simmons for everything he has done for me, and for visiting me in the hospital and telling me what I needed to hear. Thanks to all of Westside Barbell; they're like my brothers and sisters and they help push me every day. Thanks to Jake Anderson for visiting me every day in the hospital and being such a good friend and training partner; to Mike McClain, Mike Frank, AJ Roberts, Sarah and Ryan Block, Dave Hoff, and Jason Coker for always being there any time; to Gabe Daniels for giving me a chance to train at his place and being a good friend. I'd also like to thank Mark Bell and everyone at Power for this interview. **PM**

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TOP 50 WORLD RANKINGS: 242 WEIGHT DIVISION

SQUAT

| RANK | LBS. | ATHLETE | NATIONALITY/YOB | DATE | LOCATION | FEDERATION |
|------|--------|--------------------------|------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| 1 | 1140.0 | CHUCK VOGELPOHL | US/65 | (8/23/09) | SHARONVILLE, OHIO | SPF |
| 2 | 1107.8 | SAM BYRD | US/81 | (6/14/08) | KENNESAW, GEORGIA | APF |
| 3 | 1085.0 | JUSTIN GRAALFS | US/79 | (7/23/06) | YORK, PENNSYLVANIA | IPA |
| 4 | 1063.7 | BRIAN CARROLL | US/81 | (5/28/11) | NEW PORT RICHEY, FLORIDA | APF |
| 5 | 1055.0 | GREG PANORA | US/80 | (8/24/08) | SHARONVILLE, OHIO | IPA |
| 6 | 1050.0 | JASON COX | US/72 | (11/18/07) | YORK, PENNSYLVANIA | IPA |
| 7 | 1047.2 | JUHA SOMEROJA | FINLAND/75 | (10/8/11) | HELSINKI, FINLAND | GPC |
| 8 | 1047.2 | CRAIG COOMBES | GREAT BRITAIN/75 | (10/8/11) | HELSINKI, FINLAND | GPC |
| 9 | 1045.0 | STEVE GOGGINS | US/63 | (3/5/05) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | WPO |
| 10 | 1041.7 | COREY AKERS | US/75 | (3/19/11) | DEKALB, ILLINOIS | APF |
| 11 | 1038.4 | ED COAN | US/63 | (8/12/01) | ORLANDO, FLORIDA | WPO |
| 12 | 1036.2 | JASON EHLERT | US/78 | (3/19/11) | ROSEMOUNT, MINNESOTA | APF |
| 13 | 1030.0 | BRIAN HOPPER | US/83 | (2/27/10) | ORLANDO, FLORIDA | APF |
| 14 | 1025.0 | LUKE EDWARDS | US/81 | (12/5/09) | NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE | SPF |
| 15 | 1025.0 | DAVE HOFF | US/88 | (12/5/09) | NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE | SPF |
| 16 | 1015.0 | JAMES GRANDICK | US/68 | (8/24/08) | SHARONVILLE, OHIO | IPA |
| 17 | 1014.1 | MATT KROCZALESKI | US/73 | (7/13/08) | DUBUQUE, IOWA | UPA |
| 18 | 1014.1 | JOE NORMAN | US/68 | (5/9/10) | WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA | APF/WPC |
| 19 | 1008.6 | TOBY IRBY | US/74 | (5/4/08) | BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA | APF/WPC |
| 20 | 1008.6 | MIKE JOHNSTON | US/68 | (10/27/12) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | XPC |
| 21 | 1004.2 | WILLIE WESSELS | US/63 | (11/11/95) | CHICAGO, ILLINOIS | APF/WPC |
| 22 | 1003.1 | JASON PATRICK | US/72 | (6/26/04) | WAUKEGAN, ILLINOIS | APF |
| 23 | 1003.1 | CHRISTIAN SIMMONS | US/80 | (4/23/05) | BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA | APF |
| 24 | 1003.1 | JUSTIN REDDING | US/77 | (11/10/07) | OMAHA, NEBRASKA | APF |
| 25 | 1003.1 | JEREMIAH FREY | US/81 | (1/31/09) | DUBUQUE, IOWA | UPA |
| 26 | 1000.0 | BRIAN WESTON | US/68 | (5/30/04) | BETHLEHEM, PENNSYLVANIA | IPA |
| 27 | 1000.0 | DONDELL BLUE | US/75 | (4/1/06) | JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA | APF |
| 28 | 1000.0 | VLADIMIR VENGLOVSKI | UKRAINE/79 | (3/6/11) | KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE | SPF |
| 29 | 1000.0 | CHRIS DELLA-FAVE | US/88 | (5/19/12) | PAULSBORO, NEW JERSEY | RPS |
| 30 | 981.1 | TONY ACOME | US/72 | (11/10/07) | OMAHA, NEBRASKA | APF |
| 31 | 981.1 | DELROY MCQUEEN | GREAT BRITAIN/76 | (7/13/08) | BOURNEMOUTH, ENGLAND | WPC |
| 32 | 975.5 | JOSE GARCIA | US/77 | (6/26/04) | WAUKEGAN, ILLINOIS | APF |
| 33 | 975.0 | JESSE JAYNE | US/86 | (9/9/12) | NEWARK, NEW JERSEY | RPS |
| 34 | 970.0 | JO JORDAN | US/73 | (1/20/08) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | IPA |
| 35 | 960.0 | SHANE CHURCH | CANADA/83 | (8/22/10) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 36 | 960.0 | JIM BENSON | US/86 | (3/5/11) | KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE | SPF |
| 37 | 960.0 | RYAN SELK | CANADA/86 | (3/3/12) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | XPC |
| 38 | 959.0 | PAUL URCHICK | US/59 | (4/11/98) | AURORA, ILLINOIS | APF/WPC |
| 39 | 955.0 | MATT "POWERDAG" CHRISTIE | US/82 | (6/19/11) | GATLINBURG, TENNESSEE | SPF |
| 40 | 953.5 | TRAVIS MASH | US/73 | (6/5/05) | DETROIT, MICHIGAN | APF/WPC |
| 41 | 953.5 | WILLIAM "CARTER" CARTER | US/77 | (3/17/07) | ATTALLA, ALABAMA | APF |
| 42 | 953.5 | CLINT SMITH | US/79 | (9/10/11) | HIRAM, GEORGIA | APF |
| 43 | 950.0 | BILL NICHOLS | US/58 | (4/18/87) | NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS | APF/WPC |
| 44 | 950.0 | JARED SKINNER | US/87 | (8/21/09) | SHARONVILLE, OHIO | SPF |
| 45 | 948.0 | NIKOLAI SUSLOV | RUSSIA/79 | (3/4/06) | UFA, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 46 | 945.0 | MIKE SZUDAREK | US/72 | (8/20/11) | COVINGTON, KENTUCKY | SPF |
| 47 | 942.5 | LARRY HOOK | US/69 | (3/14/09) | OREGON CITY, OREGON | APF |
| 48 | 940.0 | MIKHAIL STAROV | UKRAINE/73 | (7/7/96) | NEW YORK, NEW YORK | IPA |
| 49 | 937.0 | ANDREY BELYAEV | RUSSIA/83 | (5/24/09) | SAINT PETERSBURG, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 50 | 935.0 | ZANE GEETING | US/83 | (5/12/12) | MIDDLETOWN, OHIO | SPF |

BENCH

| RANK | LBS. | ATHLETE | NATIONALITY/YOB | DATE | LOCATION | FEDERATION |
|------|-------|------------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1 | 920.4 | JAKE PRAZAK | US/77 | (7/15/11) | DUBUQUE, IOWA | UPA |
| 2 | 905.0 | ROB LUYANDO | US/70 | (9/1/07) | DUBUQUE, IOWA | UPA |
| 3 | 903.9 | JIMMY KOLB | US/90 | (2/25/12) | LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA | WABDL |
| 4 | 850.0 | JASON COKER | US/75 | (7/7/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 5 | 848.8 | RICHE BRIGGS | US/84 | (11/10/07) | OMAHA, NEBRASKA | APF |
| 6 | 835.0 | MATT MINUTH | US/80 | (10/22/11) | NORFOLK, VIRGINIA | SPF |
| 7 | 815.7 | VITALY PONOMARENKO | UKRAINE/74-08 | (7/28/07) | KRIVOI ROG, UKRAINE | WPO |
| 8 | 810.0 | CLINT SMITH | US/79 | (2/19/11) | ORLANDO, FLORIDA | APF |
| 9 | 810.0 | JUHA SOMEROJA | FINLAND/75 | (8/21/11) | COVINGTON, KENTUCKY | SPF |
| 10 | 805.0 | JAMES GRANDICK | US/68 | (8/24/08) | SHARONVILLE, OHIO | IPA |
| 11 | 805.0 | HARLEY TIMBS | US/70 | (6/6/10) | NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE | SPF |
| 12 | 804.7 | CHIP STEWART | US/75 | (7/29/06) | CLAYTON, NORTH CAROLINA | APF |
| 13 | 804.7 | JASON "ACTION" JACKSON | US/64 | (11/16/06) | LAS VEGAS, NEVADA | WABDL |
| 14 | 804.7 | BRAD HEIN | US/80 | (5/30/08) | OMAHA, NEBRASKA | APF/WPC |
| 15 | 801.4 | MATT LAMARQUE | US/74 | (6/11/05) | HONOLULU, HAWAII | WABDL |
| 16 | 800.0 | GREG PANORA | US/80 | (12/6/08) | MURFREESBORO, TENNESSEE | SPF |
| 17 | 785.0 | BRIAN CARROLL | US/81 | (8/24/08) | SHARONVILLE, OHIO | IPA |
| 18 | 785.0 | DAVE HOFF | US/88 | (12/5/09) | NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE | SPF |
| 19 | 780.0 | TIM GALE | US/73 | (4/9/11) | GLENOLDEN, PENNSYLVANIA | APA |
| 20 | 772.5 | BRAD KELLEY | US/71 | (3/5/05) | WILLIAMSTON, SOUTH CAROLINA | APA |
| 21 | 771.6 | TONY ACOME | US/72 | (3/3/07) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | WPO |
| 22 | 771.6 | JEREMIAH FREY | US/81 | (1/31/09) | DUBUQUE, IOWA | UPA |
| 23 | 771.6 | CRAIG COOMBES | GREAT BRITAIN/75 | (10/8/11) | HELSINKI, FINLAND | GPC |
| 24 | 766.1 | GEORGE HALBERT | US/71 | (9/25/04) | ORLANDO, FLORIDA | WPO |
| 25 | 766.1 | DONDELL BLUE | US/75 | (12/3/06) | LAKE CITY, FLORIDA | APF |
| 26 | 760.6 | AARON WILSON | US/74 | (3/4/06) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | WPO |
| 27 | 760.6 | ALEXSANDR TRETAKOV | RUSSIA/67 | (9/27/11) | YEKATERINBURG, RUSSIA | WPC |
| 28 | 760.6 | SCOTT MECHAM | US/79 | (12/4/11) | LAS VEGAS, NEVADA | USPA/IPL |
| 29 | 755.1 | CHRISTIAN SIMMONS | US/80 | (12/3/06) | LAKE CITY, FLORIDA | APF |
| 30 | 755.0 | BOBBY FIELDS | US/71 | (12/8/07) | LEESPORT, PENNSYLVANIA | IPA |
| 31 | 755.0 | CHRIS SMITH | US/68 | (7/7/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 32 | 752.9 | DENIS KNYAZEV | RUSSIA/87 | (8/14/11) | KURSK, RUSSIA | WPC |
| 33 | 751.8 | VIKTOR NAYDENOV | RUSSIA/87 | (3/20/10) | KURSK, RUSSIA | WPC |
| 34 | 750.0 | CHRIS TAYLOR | US/73 | (8/24/08) | SHARONVILLE, OHIO | IPA |
| 35 | 750.0 | VINCENT COOKE | US/71 | (11/21/10) | YORK, PENNSYLVANIA | IPA |
| 36 | 749.6 | ANDREY PALEY | RUSSIA/61 | (11/2/10) | MIKKELI, FINLAND | WPC |
| 37 | 744.1 | BILL CARPENTER | US/73 | (3/6/04) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | WPO |
| 38 | 744.1 | GARY LARSON | US/82 | (3/3/07) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | WPO |
| 39 | 744.1 | JAKOB COOK | US/79 | (6/6/10) | CHICAGO, ILLINOIS | APF/WPC |
| 40 | 741.0 | CHRIS CONFESSORE | US/65 | (6/17/95) | PEORIA, ARIZONA | APF/WBC |
| 41 | 740.0 | NEIL CUOMO | US/70 | (12/17/05) | LAKE GEORGE, NEW YORK | APF |
| 42 | 738.5 | CORY DEXTER | US/73 | (5/30/08) | OMAHA, NEBRASKA | APF/WPC |
| 43 | 738.5 | ZOLTAN CSEPREGI | HUNGARY/74 | (6/10/10) | MOSONMAGYARÓVÁR, HUNGARY | WPC |
| 44 | 738.5 | DMITRY GORBACHEV | RUSSIA/70 | (6/10/10) | MOSONMAGYARÓVÁR, HUNGARY | WPC |
| 45 | 738.5 | JOHN BERDING | US/66 | (7/30/10) | DUBUQUE, IOWA | UPA |
| 46 | 735.0 | JOHN ZEMMIN | US/69 | (6/30/12) | BROWNSTOWN, MICHIGAN | APF |
| 47 | 733.0 | JOE LADNIER | US/63 | (3/5/05) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | WPO |
| 48 | 733.0 | CHIP TALLMAN | US/68 | (3/3/07) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | WPO |
| 49 | 733.0 | JAMES HUNTER | US/70 | (11/20/10) | LAS VEGAS, NEVADA | WABDL |
| 50 | 733.0 | CHRISTOPHER CARSON | US/82 | (5/7/11) | CANTON, OHIO | WABDL |

List compiled by Michael Soong, "All Time Historical Powerlifting World Records/Rankings" statistician. To make sure your lifts are considered for future rankings, please email Michael your meet results: soongm@comcast.net • <http://www.powerliftingwatch.com/records> • <http://www.thepowermagazine.com/> • <http://www.criticalbench.com/powerlifting-benchpress-halloffame.htm>
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MEN'S POWERLIFTING

*List Includes International Lifters

DEADLIFT

| RANK | LBS. | ATHLETE | NATIONALITY/YOB | DATE | LOCATION | FEDERATION |
|------|-------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------|------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | 892.9 | YURIY FEDORENKO | RUSSIA/74 | (3/4/06) | UFA, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 2 | 887.4 | ED COAN | US/63 | (12/20/98) | LAS VEGAS, NEVADA | USPF/WPL |
| 3 | 871.9 | STEVE GOGGINS | US/63 | (3/6/04) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | WPO |
| 4 | 870.8 | JOHN KUC | US/47 | (11/9/80) | ARLINGTON, TEXAS | USPF/IPF |
| 5 | 865.0 | ORLANDO GREEN | US/77 | (4/2/11) | DALLAS, TEXAS | HPL |
| 6 | 859.8 | BRET RUSSELL | US/60 | (11/2/86) | PARKERSBURG, WEST VIRGINIA | APF/WPC |
| 7 | 859.8 | NIKOLAY ILYCHEV | RUSSIA/77 | (1/22/06) | CHEREPOVETS, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 8 | 854.3 | JOHN KUC | US/47 | (5/4/79) | HONOLULU, HAWAII | AAU/IPF |
| 9 | 854.3 | CHARLIE DRISCOLL | US/60 | (6/8/86) | DALLAS, TEXAS | USPF |
| 10 | 854.3 | JUHA SOMEROJA | FINLAND/75 | (10/8/11) | HELSINKI, FINLAND | GPC |
| 11 | 854.3 | HANIBAL COIMBRA | LUXEMBOURG/72 | (11/3/12) | AGUADILLA, PUERTO RICO | IPF |
| 12 | 848.8 | AARRE KAPYLA | FINLAND/64 | (11/17/90) | THE HAGUE, NETHERLANDS | IPF |
| 13 | 845.0 | JIM CASH | US/49 | (12/14/85) | LONGMONT, COLORADO | NSM |
| 14 | 843.3 | ALEXEY GANKOV | RUSSIA/70 | (11/14/98) | CHERKASY, UKRAINE | IPF |
| 15 | 843.3 | DELOY MCQUEEN | GREAT BRITAIN/76 | (10/4/08) | RUISLIP, ENGLAND | WPC |
| 16 | 843.3 | CHRIS DELLA-FAVE | US/88 | (10/22/11) | ELIZABETHTON, TENNESSEE | NOTLD |
| 17 | 837.8 | ARTHUR WHITE | GREAT BRITAIN/51 | (4/17/82) | MUNICH, WEST GERMANY | IPF |
| 18 | 837.8 | DAVE CARTER | GREAT BRITAIN | (4/18/82) | FEATHERSTONE PRISON, GREAT BRITAIN | IPF |
| 19 | 837.8 | MIKE PORETTA | US | (7/10/88) | LAS VEGAS, NEVADA | USPF/IPF |
| 20 | 837.8 | ROMAN VOROSHILIN | UKRAINE/83 | (3/6/05) | MARIUPOL, UKRAINE | IPF |
| 21 | 837.8 | MAXIM BARKHATOV | RUSSIA/81 | (10/19/07) | SOELEDEN, AUSTRIA | IPF |
| 22 | 837.8 | KONSTANTIN POZDEEV | RUSSIA/84 | (6/30/12) | ARKHANGELSK, RUSSIA | WPC |
| 23 | 832.2 | TERRY MCCORMICK | US/46 | (7/13/80) | MADISON, WISCONSIN | USPF/IPF |
| 24 | 832.2 | STEVE WILSON | US/54 | (6/29/86) | DAYTON, OHIO | APF/WPC |
| 25 | 832.2 | WILLIE BELL | US/61 | (12/3/88) | ADEL, GEORGIA | USPF |
| 26 | 826.7 | GEORGE HECHTER | US/61 | (3/23/87) | HONOLULU, HAWAII | USPF/APF/WPC |
| 27 | 826.7 | NIKOLAI SUSLOV | RUSSIA/79 | (3/4/06) | UFA, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 28 | 825.0 | MARK CHAILLET | US/57 | (5/1/82) | NORWALK, OHIO | NSM |
| 29 | 825.0 | CHAD HOLMES | US/71 | (11/18/00) | FREDRICKTOWN, MISSOURI | SLP |
| 30 | 825.0 | BRANDON "C4" CASS | US/74 | (4/2/11) | DALLAS, TEXAS | HPL |
| 31 | 821.2 | DAN WOHLBER | US/61 | (7/12/81) | CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS | USPF |
| 32 | 821.2 | DAVE SCHNEIDER | US/56 | (2/7/82) | CLEVELAND, OHIO | USPF |
| 33 | 821.2 | CARL SNITKIN | US/46 | (2/12/82) | HONOLULU, HAWAII | USPF/IPF |
| 34 | 821.2 | WAYNE BLOOM | US | (6/5/83) | CHARLOTTEVILLE, VIRGINIA | USPF |
| 35 | 821.2 | DAN MARTINEZ | US | (6/7/87) | KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI | USPF |
| 36 | 821.2 | SCOTT WARMAN | US/56 | (12/3/89) | STONE, ENGLAND | APF/WPC |
| 37 | 821.2 | ANDREW "BULL" STEWART | US/57 | (8/25/96) | CHICAGO, ILLINOIS | ADFFPA/WDFPF |
| 38 | 820.0 | NICHOLAS LAVITOLA | US/62-12 | (11/20/94) | BRICK, NEW JERSEY | APF/WPC |
| 39 | 820.0 | CHUCK VOGELPOHL | US/65 | (8/23/09) | SHARONVILLE, OHIO | SPF |
| 40 | 820.0 | JEREMIAH FREY | US/81 | (3/3/12) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | XPC |
| 41 | 815.7 | MILOS SNAJDR | CZECHOSLOVAKIA/50 | 1982 | EAST EUROPEAN RECORD | IPF |
| 42 | 815.7 | OLEKSIY ROKOCHYY | UKRAINE/81 | (3/6/05) | MARIUPOL, UKRAINE | IPF |
| 43 | 815.7 | ALEKSEI VISHNITSKIY | UKRAINE/79 | (11/6/05) | HELSINKI, FINLAND | WPO |
| 44 | 815.7 | IGOR FILATOV | RUSSIA/80 | (3/4/06) | UFA, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 45 | 815.7 | TIMUR ANDREEV | RUSSIA/83 | (3/19/10) | KURSK, RUSSIA | WPC |
| 46 | 815.7 | VUSAL MARDANOV | AZERBAIJAN/85 | (5/7/11) | SOTCHI, RUSSIA | IPA |
| 47 | 815.0 | GREG PANORA | US/80 | (12/6/08) | MURFREESBORO, TENNESSEE | SPF |
| 48 | 813.0 | JON COLE | US/43 | (3/14/71) | TOLLESON, ARIZONA | AAU |
| 49 | 810.2 | JIMMY PEGUES | US/64 | (2/12/86) | FORT LEWIS, WASHINGTON | USPF |
| 50 | 810.2 | BJOER KRISTIANSEN | NORWAY/60 | (5/4/87) | BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND | IPF |

DONE WITHOUT A BELT.

TOTAL

| RANK | LBS. | ATHLETE | NATIONALITY/YOB | DATE | LOCATION | FEDERATION |
|------|--------|---------------------------|------------------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1 | 2695.2 | JUHA SOMEROJA | FINLAND/75 | (10/8/11) | HELSINKI, FINLAND | GPC |
| 2 | 2630.0 | GREG PANORA | US/80 | (12/6/08) | MURFREESBORO, TENNESSEE | SPF |
| 3 | 2600.0 | DAVE HOFF | US/88 | (12/5/09) | NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE | SPF |
| 4 | 2579.4 | JEREMIAH FREY | US/81 | (1/31/09) | DUBUQUE, IOWA | UPA |
| 5 | 2570.0 | BRIAN CARROLL | US/81 | (8/24/08) | SHARONVILLE, OHIO | IPA |
| 6 | 2565.0 | JAMES GRANDICK | US/68 | (8/24/08) | SHARONVILLE, OHIO | IPA |
| 7 | 2557.4 | CRAIG COOMBES | GREAT BRITAIN/75 | (10/8/11) | HELSINKI, FINLAND | GPC |
| 8 | 2502.2 | MATT KROCCZALESKI | US/73 | (7/13/08) | DUBUQUE, IOWA | UPA |
| 9 | 2485.0 | CLINT SMITH | US/79 | (12/11/10) | TAMPA, FLORIDA | APF |
| 10 | 2481.3 | STEVE GOGGINS | US/63 | (3/6/04) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | WPO |
| 11 | 2465.0 | CHRIS DELLA-FAVE | US/88 | (5/19/12) | PAULSBORO, NEW JERSEY | RPS |
| 12 | 2463.7 | ED COAN | US/63 | (12/20/98) | LAS VEGAS, NEVADA | USPF/WPL |
| 13 | 2452.6 | COREY AKERS | US/75 | (7/28/12) | PARK FOREST, ILLINOIS | APF |
| 14 | 2447.1 | SAM BYRD | US/81 | (6/14/08) | KENNESAW, GEORGIA | APF |
| 15 | 2447.1 | JUSTIN GRAALFS | US/79 | (11/19/11) | DUBUQUE, IOWA | UPA |
| 16 | 2441.6 | TOBY IRBY | US/74 | (5/4/08) | BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA | APF/WPC |
| 17 | 2430.6 | DONDELL BLUE | US/75 | (12/3/06) | LAKE CITY, GEORGIA | APF |
| 18 | 2419.6 | JASON PATRICK | US/72 | (6/6/10) | CHICAGO, ILLINOIS | APF/WPC |
| 19 | 2410.0 | CHUCK VOGELPOHL | US/65 | (7/9/11) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | IPA |
| 20 | 2405.0 | LUKE EDWARDS | US/81 | (4/24/10) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | SPF |
| 21 | 2403.0 | WILLIE WESSELS | US/63 | (4/6/97) | PEORIA, ILLINOIS | APF/WPC |
| 22 | 2403.0 | CHRISTIAN SIMMONS | US/80 | (6/17/06) | FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA | APF |
| 23 | 2397.5 | YURIY FEDORENKO | RUSSIA/74 | (3/4/06) | UFA, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 24 | 2397.5 | NIKOLAI SUSLOV | RUSSIA/79 | (3/4/06) | UFA, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 25 | 2386.5 | IVAN FREYDUN | UKRAINE/81 | (5/26/12) | SAINT PETERSBURG, RUSSIA | COT |
| 26 | 2381.0 | TONY ACOME | US/72 | (11/10/07) | OMAHA, NEBRASKA | APF |
| 27 | 2381.0 | LARRY HOOK | US/69 | (3/14/09) | OREGON CITY, OREGON | APF |
| 28 | 2375.5 | JOSEPH BAYLES | US/76 | (6/5/05) | DETROIT, MICHIGAN | APF/WPC |
| 29 | 2370.0 | MATT MINUTH | US/80 | (7/28/12) | PARK FOREST, ILLINOIS | AAPF |
| 30 | 2364.5 | ALEXEI SOLOVIOV | UKRAINE/75 | (11/6/05) | HELSINKI, FINLAND | WPO |
| 31 | 2360.0 | MIKE JOHNSTON | US/68 | (4/14/12) | YORK, PENNSYLVANIA | RPS |
| 32 | 2358.9 | ANDREY BELYAEV | RUSSIA/83 | (5/24/09) | SAINT PETERSBURG, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 33 | 2355.0 | BRIAN HOPPER | US/83 | (2/27/10) | ORLANDO, FLORIDA | APF |
| 34 | 2350.0 | AARON WILSON | US/74 | (8/23/09) | SHARONVILLE, OHIO | SPF |
| 35 | 2342.4 | MAXIM BARKHATOV | RUSSIA/81 | (11/12/10) | POTCHEFSTROOM, SOUTH AFRICA | IPF |
| 36 | 2336.9 | JOE NORMAN | US/68 | (4/30/11) | ORLANDO, FLORIDA | APF |
| 37 | 2325.9 | TRAVIS MASH | US/73 | (6/5/05) | DETROIT, MICHIGAN | APF/WPC |
| 38 | 2325.9 | DELOY MCQUEEN | GREAT BRITAIN/76 | (7/13/08) | BOURNEMOUTH, ENGLAND | WPC |
| 39 | 2325.9 | KONSTANTIN LEBEDKO | RUSSIA/81 | (2/26/12) | CHELYABINSK, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 40 | 2325.0 | JO JORDAN | US/73 | (1/20/08) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | IPA |
| 41 | 2325.0 | JESSE JAYNE | US/86 | (9/9/12) | NEWARK, NEW JERSEY | RPS |
| 42 | 2320.4 | SERGIY PYEVNYEV | UKRAINE/78 | (2/21/10) | KHARKOV, UKRAINE | IPF |
| 43 | 2316.0 | TIMUR ANDREEV | RUSSIA/83 | (3/19/10) | KURSK, RUSSIA | WPC |
| 44 | 2315.0 | PATRICK HAKOLA | US/79 | (3/5/11) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | IPA |
| 45 | 2315.0 | VLADIMIR VENGLOVSKI | UKRAINE/79 | (3/6/11) | KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE | SPF |
| 46 | 2309.3 | VALENTIN DEDULLA | RUSSIA/77 | (8/27/05) | ORLOI, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 47 | 2309.3 | HANIBAL COIMBRA | LUXEMBOURG/72 | (11/3/12) | AGUADILLA, PUERTO RICO | IPF |
| 48 | 2300.0 | JIM BENSON | US/86 | (3/5/11) | KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE | SPF |
| 49 | 2300.0 | TIM GALE | US/73 | (4/9/11) | GLENOLDEN, PENNSYLVANIA | APA |
| 50 | 2300.0 | MATT "POWERDAGG" CHRISTIE | US/82 | (3/11/12) | KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE | SPF |

List compiled by Michael Soong, "All Time Historical Powerlifting World Records/Rankings" statistician. To make sure your lifts are considered for future rankings, please email Michael your meet results: soongm@comcast.net • <http://www.powerliftingwatch.com/records> • <http://www.thepowermagazine.com/> • <http://www.criticalbench.com/powerlifting-benchpress-halloffame.htm>
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ALL TIME HISTORICAL TOP 50 WORLD RANKINGS: 181 WEIGHT DIVISION

SQUAT

| RANK | LBS. | ATHLETE | NATIONALITY/YOB | DATE | LOCATION | FEDERATION |
|------|-------|------------------------------|-------------------|------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1 | 770.0 | LAURA PHELPS-SWEATT | US/80 | (1/27/07) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | APF |
| 2 | 650.4 | JILL BROWN-MILLS | US/71 | (7/22/06) | SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS | APF |
| 3 | 630.0 | SHANY GILBERT | CANADA/90 | (4/14/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 4 | 628.3 | KRISTA FORD | US/66 | (6/11/11) | SUN PRAIRIE, WISCONSIN | APF/WPC |
| 5 | 625.0 | BROOKE FINEIS-CURRY | US/77 | (4/14/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 6 | 623.9 | DEB WIDDIS | US/60 | (6/2/06) | LAS VEGAS, NEVADA | APF/WPC |
| 7 | 622.8 | KRYSTAL CARY | US/84 | (6/13/09) | PALM BEACH GARDENS, FLORIDA | APF/WPC |
| 8 | 620.0 | TAMARA RAINWATER-GRIMWOOD | US/64-00 | (4/15/95) | LEBANON, PENNSYLVANIA | IPA |
| 9 | 617.3 | STEPHANIE VANDEWEGHE | US/55 | (6/5/10) | CHICAGO, ILLINOIS | APF/WPC |
| 10 | 597.5 | SVELTANA DEDULIA-MIKLASEVICH | RUSSIA/75 | (8/24/08) | BERDSK, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 11 | 595.2 | YEVGENIYA MAZAYLOVA | RUSSIA/82 | (8/26/04) | VORONEZH, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 12 | 584.2 | TATYANA MEREZHKO | RUSSIA/78 | (4/22/12) | ROSTOV, RUSSIA | WPC |
| 13 | 582.0 | PETRA STUMPFVOVA | IRELAND/79 | (10/23/07) | CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA | GPC |
| 14 | 580.0 | DAWN RESHEL-SHARON | US/55-00 | (6/16/90) | WILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN | APF/WPC |
| 15 | 580.0 | ANNA MCCLOSKEY | US/93 | (4/18/10) | YORK, PENNSYLVANIA | IPA |
| 16 | 580.0 | NIKKI ANDERSON | US | (8/25/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 17 | 573.2 | YULIA ZAUGOLOVA | RUSSIA/81 | (8/1/03) | MOSCOW, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 18 | 573.2 | ALEXANDRA MURASHOVA | RUSSIA/83 | (3/11/04) | KRASNOYARSK, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 19 | 573.2 | SHAWNA MENDELSON | US/72 | (6/5/04) | BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA | APF/WPC |
| 20 | 573.2 | YULIA MEDVEDEVA | RUSSIA/79 | (11/11/10) | MIKKELI, FINLAND | WPC |
| 21 | 573.2 | OLENA KOZLOVA | UKRAINE/90 | (11/22/12) | AGUADILLA, PUERTO RICO | IPF |
| 22 | 567.7 | TERRY BYLAND-ROHAL | US/60 | (7/17/88) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | APF/WPC |
| 23 | 562.2 | ELENA IGNATENKOVA | RUSSIA/71 | (3/2/00) | SYKTYFKAR, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 24 | 562.2 | TATIANA PUZANOVA | RUSSIA/74 | (5/24/03) | CHICAGO, ILLINOIS | IPF |
| 25 | 562.2 | YULIA KURINA | RUSSIA/81 | (3/3/05) | KAZAN, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 26 | 557.8 | STELLA KRUPINSKI | US/62 | (6/8/08) | NORFOLK, VIRGINIA | APC/WUAP |
| 27 | 551.2 | SHETTY SARALA | INDIA/59 | (5/3/01) | NEW DELHI, INDIA | IPF |
| 28 | 551.2 | ALI HUSTON | US/85 | (6/4/05) | DETROIT, MICHIGAN | APF/WPC |
| 29 | 551.2 | SARAH KELLER | US/83 | (6/16/07) | DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA | APF/WPC |
| 30 | 551.2 | COURTNEY GATHRIGHT-MEEKER | US/88 | (3/29/08) | HOUSTON, TEXAS | APF |
| 31 | 551.2 | SVELTANA TSVETKOVA | RUSSIA/80 | (5/5/11) | PILSEN, CZECH REPUBLIC | IPF |
| 32 | 550.0 | NIKI STEIN | US/81 | (4/14/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 33 | 546.7 | KATERYNA BORODAY | UKRAINE/83 | (3/4/05) | MARIUPOL, UKRAINE | IPF |
| 34 | 540.1 | VIKTORIA POSMITNAYA | UKRAINE/66 | (6/1/02) | RIESA, GERMANY | IPF |
| 35 | 540.1 | ANNIE RIVIECCIO | US/63 | (6/7/03) | LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA | APF/WPC |
| 36 | 540.1 | ELENA POVOLOTSKAYA | RUSSIA/78 | (8/21/10) | MOSCOW, RUSSIA | WPC |
| 37 | 540.1 | MARIA PANFEROVA | RUSSIA/77 | (9/22/10) | IZHEVSK, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 38 | 540.0 | LYNNE BOSHOVEN | US/57 | (5/30/99) | WYOMING, MICHIGAN | NSM |
| 39 | 540.0 | MOLLY EDWARDS | US/84 | (4/14/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 40 | 534.6 | ANNE SIGRID STIKLESTAD | NORWAY/75 | (3/8/97) | SANDNES, NORWAY | IPF |
| 41 | 534.6 | HEIDI HILLE ARNESEN | NORWAY/70 | (6/2/12) | HEDMARK, NORWAY | IPF |
| 42 | 532.4 | CATHY MILLEN | NEW ZEALAND/67 | (11/2/91) | PAKURANGA, NEW ZEALAND | IPF |
| 43 | 529.1 | NATALIA RUMYANTSEVA | RUSSIA/71 | (12/3/00) | HAMM, LUXEMBOURG | IPF |
| 44 | 529.1 | LARISA IVANOVA | UKRAINE/63 | (12/1/02) | LAUKAA, FINLAND | IPF |
| 45 | 529.1 | JESSICA WATKINS-O'DONNELL | US/80 | (9/11/03) | KOSCIAN, POLAND | USAPL/IPF |
| 46 | 529.1 | IELJA STRIK | NETHERLANDS/73 | (3/21/04) | NIJMEGEN, HOLLAND | IPF |
| 47 | 529.1 | YA-WEN CHANG | CHINESE TAIPEI/84 | (10/18/07) | SOELDEN, AUSTRIA | IPF |
| 48 | 529.1 | NADEZHDA SINDIKAS | RUSSIA/86 | (8/24/08) | BERDSK, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 49 | 529.1 | ELIZAVETA IVANOVA | UKRAINE/88 | (5/9/09) | YLITORNI, FINLAND | IPF |
| 50 | 529.1 | EVGENIYA DUKACHEVA | RUSSIA/83 | (8/22/09) | ORLOV, RUSSIA | IPF |

BENCH

| RANK | LBS. | ATHLETE | NATIONALITY/YOB | DATE | LOCATION | FEDERATION |
|------|-------|------------------------------|-------------------|------------|------------------------------|------------|
| 1 | 540.0 | LAURA PHELPS-SWEATT | US/80 | (2/4/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 2 | 463.0 | SVELTANA DEDULIA-MIKLASEVICH | RUSSIA/75 | (8/24/05) | ORLOV, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 3 | 425.0 | SHANY GILBERT | CANADA/90 | (4/14/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 4 | 420.0 | YULIA MEDVEDEVA | RUSSIA/79 | (9/28/11) | YEKATERINBURG, RUSSIA | WPC |
| 5 | 418.9 | VIKTORIYA SHELLUDKO | RUSSIA/73 | (7/2/11) | PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC | WPC |
| 6 | 413.4 | SARAH KELLER | US/83 | (10/27/07) | PLANO, TEXAS | APF |
| 7 | 407.9 | STEPHANIE VANDEWEGHE | US/55 | (6/11/11) | SUN PRAIRIE, WISCONSIN | APF/WPC |
| 8 | 407.9 | KRYSTAL CARY | US/84 | (6/26/11) | PARK FOREST, ILLINOIS | APF |
| 9 | 405.0 | KATHY GOLISZEK-FIELDS | US/73 | (7/15/06) | RIVERHEAD, NEW YORK | APF |
| 10 | 405.0 | NIKKI ANDERSON | US | (8/25/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 11 | 402.3 | TAMARA RAINWATER-GRIMWOOD | US/64-00 | (5/29/94) | OCEANSIDE, NEW YORK | APF/WPC |
| 12 | 396.8 | TATIANA KUDRYAVTSEVA | KAZAKHSTAN/82 | (8/14/11) | KAOSHIUNG, TAIWAN | IPF |
| 13 | 396.8 | ANNA TURAEVA | RUSSIA/78 | (10/20/12) | KRASNOGAR, RUSSIA | WPC |
| 14 | 395.0 | NIKI STEIN | US/81 | (4/14/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 15 | 395.0 | MOLLY EDWARDS | US/84 | (4/14/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 16 | 391.3 | JILL BROWN-MILLS | US/71 | (7/22/06) | SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS | APF |
| 17 | 385.8 | EVGENIYA ALEKSEYEVNA SUKHOVA | RUSSIA/80 | (11/20/08) | PALM BEACH, FLORIDA | WPC |
| 18 | 385.8 | LIANE CATALDO-BLYN | US/72 | (3/4/12) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | USAPL/IPF |
| 19 | 381.4 | KAREN CAMPBELL | US/63 | (4/25/09) | WISCONSIN DELLS, WISCONSIN | WABDL |
| 20 | 380.3 | EMMA JAMES | GREAT BRITAIN/70 | (11/19/09) | BOURNEMOUTH, ENGLAND | WPC |
| 21 | 380.0 | KATARINA MURANCANOVA | SLOVAKIA/79 | (12/17/05) | LAKE GEORGE, NEW YORK | APF |
| 22 | 374.8 | TIMEA ZAVODSZKY | HUNGARY/71 | (12/5/04) | CLEVELAND, OHIO | IPF |
| 23 | 370.0 | MICHELLE WORTHAM | US/73 | (11/20/10) | ELKHORN, NEBRASKA | SPF |
| 24 | 370.0 | JASMINE TODD | US/84 | (3/10/12) | KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE | SPF |
| 25 | 369.3 | ELENA SHEVERDINA | RUSSIA/69 | (11/1/07) | TOGLIATTI, RUSSIA | WPC |
| 26 | 365.0 | JAN HARRELL-GABLE | US/59 | (7/26/86) | SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA | NSM |
| 27 | 365.0 | MELISSA HENRY | US/71 | (7/10/10) | HILLIARD, OHIO | IPA |
| 28 | 363.8 | ANNA TEREITYEVA | RUSSIA/75 | (5/28/04) | RYBINSK, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 29 | 363.8 | SHAWNA MENDELSON | US/72 | (6/4/05) | DETROIT, MICHIGAN | APF/WPC |
| 30 | 363.8 | IRYNA KARPOVA-YAVORSKA | UKRAINE/81 | (11/6/08) | SAINT JOHN'S, CANADA | IPF |
| 31 | 363.8 | DEVAN DOAN | US/87 | (3/5/11) | CLEVELAND, OHIO | USAPL/IPF |
| 32 | 363.8 | REBECCA ROBERTS-GORSHE | US/77 | (3/19/11) | DEKALB, ILLINOIS | APF |
| 33 | 358.3 | HILLARY HARPER | US/79 | (12/6/09) | CONCORD, CALIFORNIA | UPA |
| 34 | 358.3 | LUDMILLA PROTCHENKO | RUSSIA/86 | (3/11/12) | SUZDAL, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 35 | 355.0 | SANDI "CANDYAZZ" MCCASLIN | US/64 | (8/27/05) | BEAVER SPRINGS, PENNSYLVANIA | USA |
| 36 | 355.0 | BROOKE FINEIS-CURRY | US/77 | (4/14/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 37 | 353.8 | KATERYNA BORODAY | UKRAINE/83 | (9/10/04) | PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA | IPF |
| 38 | 353.8 | KELLY WOMACK | US/84 | (11/21/05) | RENO, NEVADA | WABDL |
| 39 | 352.7 | BONNIE PRIEST | US/72 | (6/3/00) | SEGUIN, TEXAS | USPF |
| 40 | 352.7 | YEVGENIYA MAZAYLOVA | RUSSIA/82 | (3/11/04) | KRASNOYARSK, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 41 | 352.7 | OLESYA RYCHKOVA | RUSSIA/74 | (3/3/05) | KAZAN, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 42 | 352.7 | MIN-CHU HUANG | CHINESE TAIPEI/83 | (5/4/08) | TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN | IPF |
| 43 | 352.7 | NATALIA KOPYLOVA | UKRAINE/77 | (5/29/10) | DONETSK, UKRAINE | IPA |
| 44 | 352.7 | RIIKKA YLITALO | FINLAND/82 | (5/5/11) | PILSEN, CZECH REPUBLIC | IPF |
| 45 | 347.2 | ANNIE RIVIECCIO | US/63 | (6/7/03) | LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA | APF/WPC |
| 46 | 347.2 | MARIA PANFEROVA | RUSSIA/77 | (9/22/06) | SYKTYFKAR, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 47 | 347.2 | COURTNEY GATHRIGHT-MEEKER | US/88 | (11/18/07) | ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA | WABDL |
| 48 | 342.8 | TATIANA PUZANOVA | RUSSIA/74 | (6/1/02) | RIESA, GERMANY | IPF |
| 49 | 341.7 | NATALIA RUMYANTSEVA | RUSSIA/71 | (9/27/00) | SOTCHI, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 50 | 341.7 | IELJA STRIK | NETHERLANDS/73 | (6/5/04) | CAHORS, FRANCE | IPF |

FIRST WOMAN TO BENCH PRESS 400 POUNDS.

List compiled by Michael Soong, "All Time Historical Powerlifting World Records/Rankings" statistician. To make sure your lifts are considered for future rankings, please email Michael your meet results: soongm@comcast.net • <http://www.powerliftingwatch.com/records> • <http://www.thepowermagazine.com/> • <http://www.criticalbench.com/powerlifting-benchpress-halloffame.htm>
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WOMEN'S POWERLIFTING

*List Includes International Lifters

DEADLIFT

| RANK | LBS. | ATHLETE | NATIONALITY/YOB | DATE | LOCATION | FEDERATION |
|------|-------|------------------------------|-----------------|------------|----------------------------------|------------|
| 1 | 590.8 | CORAL BLAIR | AUSTRIA/64 | (11/19/99) | CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA | WPC |
| 2 | 590.0 | DAWN RESHEL-SHARON | US/55-00 | (6/16/90) | WILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN | APF/WPC |
| 3 | 573.2 | YEVGENIYA MAZAYLOVA | RUSSIA/82 | (8/26/04) | VORONEZH, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 4 | 567.7 | CATHY MILLEN | NEW ZEALAND/67 | (7/25/93) | HAGUE, NETHERLANDS | IPF |
| 5 | 562.2 | KRISTA FORD | US/66 | (6/5/04) | BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA | APF/WPC |
| 6 | 562.2 | JILL BROWN-MILLS | US/71 | (7/22/06) | SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS | APF |
| 7 | 552.3 | OLENA KOZLOVA | UKRAINE/90 | (11/21/12) | AGUADILLA, PUERTO RICO | IPF |
| 8 | 551.2 | SVETLANA DEDULIA-MIKLASEVICH | RUSSIA/75 | (3/5/06) | UFA, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 9 | 550.0 | TAMARA RAINWATER-GRIMWOOD | US/64-00 | (11/20/94) | BRICK, NEW JERSEY | APF/WPC |
| 10 | 540.1 | ANJA WIEZKOWIAK | GERMANY/75 | (5/27/00) | PINAMAR, BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA | IPF |
| 11 | 540.1 | SVETLANA TSVETKOVA | RUSSIA/80 | (11/4/11) | MOSCOW, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 12 | 540.0 | DEBBIE SORENSON | US | (4/18/87) | BELPRE, OHIO | APF/WPC |
| 13 | 534.6 | OLESYA RYCHKOVA | RUSSIA/74 | (3/3/05) | KAZAN, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 14 | 534.6 | ALEXANDRA MURASHOVA | RUSSIA/83 | (9/10/05) | FORT WAYNE, INDIANA | IPF |
| 15 | 530.0 | JESSICA SCOFIELD | US/82 | (1/29/12) | NEWARK, NEW JERSEY | RPS |
| 16 | 530.0 | SHANY GILBERT | CANADA/90 | (4/14/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 17 | 529.1 | YULIA ZAUGOLOVA | RUSSIA/81 | (1/16/04) | MOSCOW, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 18 | 529.1 | TAMARA BAGRIY | UKRAINE/74 | (5/12/06) | PROSTEJOV, CZECH REPUBLIC | IPF |
| 19 | 529.1 | SARAH KELLER | US/83 | (10/27/07) | PLANO, TEXAS | APF |
| 20 | 529.1 | LAURA PHELPS-SWEATT | US/80 | (11/7/10) | SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA | SPF |
| 21 | 529.1 | YULIA MEDVEDEVA | RUSSIA/79 | (9/28/11) | YEKATERINBURG, RUSSIA | WPC |
| 22 | 523.6 | DEB WIDDIS | US/60 | (11/3/06) | LAKE GEORGE, NEW YORK | APF/WPC |
| 23 | 523.6 | DALJANN JAMES | US/87 | (3/7/09) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | USAPL/IPF |
| 24 | 523.6 | IRYNA KARPOVA-YAVORSKA | UKRAINE/81 | (7/26/09) | KAOHSIUNG, CHINESE TAIPEI | IPF |
| 25 | 518.1 | TERRY BYLAND-ROHAL | US/60 | (11/10/85) | PARKERSBURG, WEST VIRGINIA | USPF |
| 26 | 518.1 | NATALIA RUMYANTSEVA | RUSSIA/71 | (5/23/98) | MO I RANA, NORWAY | IPF |
| 27 | 518.1 | ELENA IGNATENKOVA | RUSSIA/71 | (5/27/00) | PINAMAR, BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA | IPF |
| 28 | 518.1 | TATIANA PUZANOVA | RUSSIA/74 | (6/11/02) | RIESA, GERMANY | IPF |
| 29 | 518.1 | ALI HUSTON | US/85 | (6/4/05) | DETROIT, MICHIGAN | APF/WPC |
| 30 | 518.1 | TAYLAR STALLINGS | US/85 | (1/30/10) | TAMPA, FLORIDA | RUPC |
| 31 | 515.0 | LYNNE BOSHOVEN | US/57 | (5/30/99) | WYOMING, MICHIGAN | NSM |
| 32 | 512.6 | NATALIA PAVOUSOVA-ZOTOVA | RUSSIA/75 | (3/3/01) | SAINT PETERSBURG, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 33 | 507.1 | JEANETTE MILLER | GREAT BRITAIN | (11/18/00) | LAS VEGAS, NEVADA | WPC |
| 34 | 507.1 | TATIANA KUDRYAVTSEVA | KAZAKHSTAN/82 | (5/2/03) | ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN | IPF |
| 35 | 507.1 | JESSICA WATKINS-O'DONNELL | US/80 | (9/11/03) | KOSCIAN, POLAND | USAPL/IPF |
| 36 | 507.1 | NICOLAI MEADOR-STERN | US/67 | (11/7/10) | SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA | SPF |
| 37 | 502.7 | YANA PETRENKO | UKRAINE/81 | (2/28/03) | MAKEEVKA, UKRAINE | IPF |
| 38 | 502.7 | REBEKAH SCHMIDT | US/78 | (8/7/10) | MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA | WABDL |
| 39 | 501.6 | VICTORIA GAGNE-HEMBREE | US/61 | (5/12/81) | HONOLULU, HAWAII | USPF/IPF |
| 40 | 501.6 | DAWN YOUNG | US | (12/14/91) | IRVING, TEXAS | USPF |
| 41 | 501.6 | BONNIE PRIEST | US/72 | (6/3/00) | SEGUIN, TEXAS | USPF |
| 42 | 501.6 | VIKTORIA POSMITNAYA | UKRAINE/66 | (2/28/03) | MAKEEVKA, UKRAINE | IPF |
| 43 | 501.6 | TAMMY THOMAS | US/70 | (10/18/03) | GAUTIER, MISSISSIPPI | APF |
| 44 | 501.6 | GISELLE COSTAS-DELGADO | PUERTO RICO/81 | (12/3/04) | LAUGHLIN, NEVADA | AAU |
| 45 | 501.6 | HILLARY HARPER | US/79 | (12/6/09) | CONCORD, CALIFORNIA | UPA |
| 46 | 501.6 | INGER BLIKRA | NORWAY/61 | (3/6/10) | COLUMBUS, OHIO | IPF |
| 47 | 500.0 | SUE MEANY | US | (6/8/85) | AKRON, OHIO | NSM |
| 48 | 500.0 | TORI MASONIS | US | (1/16/93) | NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY | NASA |
| 49 | 500.0 | KYM ALLEN | US/69 | (6/11/95) | MARGATE, FLORIDA | APA/WPA |
| 50 | 496.0 | TIMEA ZAVODSZKY | HUNGARY/71 | (11/6/99) | BUDAPEST, HUNGARY | IPF |

FIRST WOMAN TO DEADLIFT 500 POUNDS.

LIFTS DONE WITHOUT A SQUAT SUIT OR A BENCH PRESS SHIRT.

TOTAL

| RANK | LBS. | ATHLETE | NATIONALITY/YOB | DATE | LOCATION | FEDERATION |
|------|--------|------------------------------|-----------------|------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| 1 | 1770.0 | LAURA PHELPS-SWEATT | US/80 | (5/23/09) | NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE | SPF |
| 2 | 1603.9 | JILL BROWN-MILLS | US/71 | (7/22/06) | SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS | APF |
| 3 | 1592.8 | SVETLANA DEDULIA-MIKLASEVICH | RUSSIA/75 | (3/5/06) | UFA, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 4 | 1585.0 | SHANY GILBERT | CANADA/90 | (4/14/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 5 | 1540.0 | TAMARA RAINWATER-GRIMWOOD | US/64-00 | (4/15/95) | LEBANON, PENNSYLVANIA | IPA |
| 6 | 1499.1 | YEVGENIYA MAZAYLOVA | RUSSIA/82 | (8/26/04) | VORONEZH, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 7 | 1499.1 | YULIA MEDVEDEVA | RUSSIA/79 | (9/28/11) | YEKATERINBURG, RUSSIA | WPC |
| 8 | 1480.0 | DAWN RESHEL-SHARON | US/55-00 | (6/16/90) | WILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN | APF/WPC |
| 9 | 1477.1 | STEPHANIE VANDEWEGHE | US/55 | (6/5/10) | CHICAGO, ILLINOIS | APF/WPC |
| 10 | 1460.0 | NIKKI ANDERSON | US | (8/25/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 11 | 1456.2 | OLENA KOZLOVA | UKRAINE/90 | (11/21/12) | AGUADILLA, PUERTO RICO | IPF |
| 12 | 1449.5 | SARAH KELLER | US/83 | (6/16/07) | DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA | APF/WPC |
| 13 | 1438.5 | KRISTA FORD | US/66 | (6/5/04) | BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA | APF/WPC |
| 14 | 1433.0 | KRYSTAL CARY | US/84 | (6/26/11) | PARK FOREST, ILLINOIS | APF |
| 15 | 1416.5 | ALEXANDRA MURASHOVA | RUSSIA/83 | (9/10/05) | FORT WAYNE, INDIANA | IPF |
| 16 | 1416.5 | DEB WIDDIS | US/60 | (11/3/06) | LAKE GEORGE, NEW YORK | APF/WPC |
| 17 | 1416.5 | SVETLANA TSVETKOVA | RUSSIA/80 | (11/4/11) | MOSCOW, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 18 | 1411.0 | YULIA ZAUGOLOVA | RUSSIA/81 | (8/1/03) | MOSCOW, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 19 | 1411.0 | IRYNA KARPOVA-YAVORSKA | UKRAINE/81 | (7/26/09) | KAOHSIUNG, CHINESE TAIPEI | IPF |
| 20 | 1406.5 | CATHY MILLEN | NEW ZEALAND/67 | (7/25/93) | HAGUE, NETHERLANDS | IPF |
| 21 | 1405.4 | OLESYA RYCHKOVA | RUSSIA/74 | (3/3/05) | KAZAN, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 22 | 1400.0 | BROOKE FINEIS-CURRY | US/77 | (4/14/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 23 | 1400.0 | NIKI STEIN | US/81 | (4/14/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 24 | 1400.0 | MOLLY EDWARDS | US/84 | (4/14/12) | CINCINNATI, OHIO | SPF |
| 25 | 1388.9 | ELENA IGNATENKOVA | RUSSIA/71 | (5/27/00) | PINAMAR, BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA | IPF |
| 26 | 1388.9 | TATIANA PUZANOVA | RUSSIA/74 | (2/27/03) | KAZAN, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 27 | 1375.7 | PETRA STUMPFVOVA | IRELAND/79 | (10/23/07) | CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA | GPC |
| 28 | 1372.4 | NATALIA RUMYANTSEVA | RUSSIA/71 | (12/3/00) | HAMM, LUXEMBOURG | IPF |
| 29 | 1372.4 | HILLARY HARPER | US/79 | (12/6/09) | CONCORD, CALIFORNIA | UPA |
| 30 | 1370.0 | LYNNE BOSHOVEN | US/57 | (5/30/99) | WYOMING, MICHIGAN | NSM |
| 31 | 1361.4 | ANNIE RIVECCIO | US/63 | (6/7/03) | LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA | APF/WPC |
| 32 | 1361.4 | LIANE CATALDO-BLYN | US/72 | (11/11/11) | PILSEN, CZECH REPUBLIC | USAPL/IPF |
| 33 | 1358.0 | TATIANA KUDRYAVTSEVA | KAZAKHSTAN/82 | (5/2/03) | ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN | IPF |
| 34 | 1355.8 | SHAWNA MENDELSON | US/72 | (6/5/04) | BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA | APF/WPC |
| 35 | 1350.3 | TERRY BYLAND-ROHAL | US/60 | (11/10/85) | PARKERSBURG, WEST VIRGINIA | USPF |
| 36 | 1350.3 | JESSICA WATKINS-O'DONNELL | US/80 | (9/11/03) | KOSCIAN, POLAND | USAPL/IPF |
| 37 | 1345.0 | MELISSA HENRY | US/71 | (7/10/10) | HILLIARD, OHIO | IPA |
| 38 | 1344.8 | CORAL BLAIR | AUSTRIA/64 | (5/13/99) | ST. HELIER, JERSEY, GREAT BRITAIN | WPC |
| 39 | 1344.8 | TIMEA ZAVODSZKY | HUNGARY/71 | (11/6/99) | BUDAPEST, HUNGARY | IPF |
| 40 | 1344.8 | ANJA WIEZKOWIAK | GERMANY/75 | (5/27/00) | PINAMAR, BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA | IPF |
| 41 | 1344.8 | JILL BROWN-MILLS | US/71 | (11/3/01) | SEGUIN, TEXAS | USPF |
| 42 | 1344.8 | KATERYNA BORODAY | UKRAINE/83 | (9/10/04) | PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA | IPF |
| 43 | 1344.8 | ALI HUSTON | US/85 | (6/4/05) | DETROIT, MICHIGAN | APF/WPC |
| 44 | 1344.8 | MARIA PANFEROVA | RUSSIA/77 | (9/22/06) | SYKTYFKAR, RUSSIA | IPF |
| 45 | 1344.8 | ELIZAVETA IVANOVA | UKRAINE/88 | (5/9/09) | YLITORINO, FINLAND | IPF |
| 46 | 1344.8 | STELLA KRUPINSKI | US/62 | (6/13/09) | PALM BEACH GARDENS, FLORIDA | APF/WPC |
| 47 | 1333.8 | IELJA STRIK | NETHERLANDS/73 | (3/21/04) | NIJMEGEN, HOLLAND | IPF |
| 48 | 1333.8 | ELENA POVOLOTSKAYA | RUSSIA/78 | (8/21/10) | MOSCOW, RUSSIA | WPC |
| 49 | 1333.8 | NATALYA KUZMINA | KAZAKHSTAN/92 | (9/1/12) | SZCZYRK, POLAND | IPF |
| 50 | 1333.8 | HEIDI HILLE ARNESEN | NORWAY/70 | (11/2/12) | AGUADILLA, PUERTO RICO | IPF |

List compiled by Michael Soong, "All Time Historical Powerlifting World Records/Rankings" statistician. To make sure your lifts are considered for future rankings, please email Michael your meet results: soongm@comcast.net • <http://www.powerliftingwatch.com/records> • <http://www.thepowermagazine.com/> • <http://www.criticalbench.com/powerlifting-benchpress-halloffame.htm>
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THE NATURAL TRUTH

Eating organically won't solve all your problems. It may even create some new ones.

BY JOHN KIEFER

We're all eating "better" these days, no matter what diet plan we're on. From my Carb Back-Loading and Carb Nite Solution systems to popular movements like Paleo, powerlifters are paying far more attention to nutrition than ever – and this attention extends even further when we try to improve these plans more by monitoring the quality of the food we're taking in. For many people, that means a near-monastic devotion to all things organic. If I tell you to eat a bell pepper, you're thinking you can raise the ante on me and buy a bag of organic ones. Before you think you've one-upped me at my own game, however, you need to take a look at the facts.

The organic revolution kind of snuck up on me while I was occupied with other things – sort of like everything else that's transformed into the latest training and nutrition trend by people who have no clue what they're talking about. When I think about the term "organic," it calls to mind a distant past where everyone grew their own food and we ran naked through the forest picking berries, nuts and leafy greens, the way nature seemingly intended us to. I had no idea what this movement would turn into.

That's the impression I was under when I first moved to San Francisco, which, as you can imagine, is an organic-thinking stronghold. Anything billed as closer-to-nature embeds itself 200 feet into the bedrock here in the Bay Area and refuses to budge regardless of science, common sense or exorbitant cost. That's why you see Whole Foods outlets on every corner around here. It's in our faces every single day.

What we need to think about, however, is whether this all makes sense. Is organic nutrition the way to go? How beneficial does science say it really is?

As it turns out, not very.

FAULTY LOGIC MAKES GOOD MARKETING

Fear sells in America, and the organic food industry has taken full advantage. It's assumed that anything made by nature is safe at any level and that anything synthetic is likely carcinogenic, even at the lowest possible dosage.

Scientists check for carcinogenicity by feeding rats the maximum tolerated dosage (MTD) of a substance for the lifetime of the rodent, followed by testing for any correlation between cancer risk and the rate of ingestion. Bear in mind, here, that the MTD is the maximum dose that won't immediately kill the animal, so it's already being administered at a level that's almost deadly. After this, we get a skewed assessment of cancer risk.

Dr. Bruce Ames and his colleague Lois Gold decided to catalogue every known toxicity study with rats, and they discovered something telling: 50 percent of all carcinogen studies show positive results, even for natural chemicals that we eat in far greater abundance than synthetics. They went on to describe the relative dangers of synthetic pesticides as compared to natural ones, and found that 99.99 percent of the carcinogens we ingest come from the plants themselves. For example, cabbage contains 49 naturally occurring carcinogens – with broccoli posting a similar number.

We measure the levels of synthetic pesticides in our food in parts-per-billion, but with natural pesticides, we measure in parts-per-thousand or million. This means our exposure to natural carcinogens in our food is 10,000 times greater than our exposure to synthetics. Virtually everything you can think of contains massive levels-compared to synthetics – of 27 different naturally occurring chemicals labeled as carcinogens: anise, apple, apricot, banana, basil, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cantaloupe, caraway, carrot, cauliflower, celery, cherries, cinnamon, cloves, cocoa, coffee, collard greens, comfrey herb tea, currants, dill, eggplant, endive, fennel, grapefruit juice, grapes, guava, honey, honeydew melon, horseradish, kale, lentils, lettuce, mango, mushrooms, mustard, nutmeg, orange juice, parsley, parsnip, peach, pear, peas, black pepper, pineapple, plum, potato, radish, raspberries, rosemary, sesame seeds, tarragon, tea, tomato and turnip.

POISON POTENTIAL

Simply put, organics contain more toxic chemicals than non-organics. Why? Because the organic varieties we breed to be pest-resistant become so by producing higher levels of toxins. As damage occurs from pests, the rate of toxic chemical production skyrockets. Meanwhile, synthetically treated plants can spend more time and energy making the chemicals that make them healthy, both for themselves and for us.

Take, for example, a breed of organic celery grown and marketed a few years ago. Celery produces a family of toxins known as psoralens that act as a natural pesticide. Researchers developed a breed of celery that overproduced psoralens, making it impervious to pests. Sounds great, right? Well, when people touched this particular celery stalk, they broke out in rashes. This made rational people pay attention to one simple fact: Plants make chemicals that make us sick.

Do you really want to worry this much about your food, or the parts-per-billion worth of pesticides that find their way into what you're eating? Trust me, that danger is miniscule compared to the havoc that obesity wreaks on your health. You'd be better off worrying about all those juice boxes you're giving your kids every day, because that kind of dosage of fructose as such a young age will cause far more profound health issues than trace levels of pesticides. Let's worry about what's important first, and save the minutiae for later.



THE BOTTOM LINE

To real scientists, the health claims of the organic food industry are equivalent to the fertilizer used on organic farms: total bullshit. The real message that's unfortunately been lost in the organic marketing onslaught – and the hunt for profits – is that you should buy your food locally, grown and raised as close to where you

live as possible. Eating locally protects the environment, which is something organic farming on a commercial scale fails to do.

In reality, the organic food movement serves the interests solely of those producing organic food. Organics still get caked with pesticides – ones the government has agreed to call organic, like rotenone, a known toxin that can cause Parkinson's-like symptoms and DNA damage in brain cells. The government banned rotenone in 2005, but it was approved for use in organic farming in 2010 – and they don't even monitor it anymore.

I should note here that I'm talking about produce, not animal products. There's a measurable difference in food quality when comparing grass-fed beef to feed-lot beef, among other types. When it comes to animal products, however, my recommendation remains the same: go local.

The best way to think about your produce comes, for me, from the vendors at my local farmer's market. When I wander through, I see a lush variety of fresh, colorful, aromatic fruits and vegetables that, most times, aren't labeled as organic. When I've asked merchants why they don't choose to go organic, they've all had the same response: "We went to produce the healthiest food possible on the least amount of land with the least amount of pesticides. We can't do that if we want to meet the guidelines for organic." That's good enough for me. **PM**

**“If you crossed
Jason Bourne with
Julia Child, you’d end up
with Tim Ferriss.”**

—Marco Canora, Chef-Partner of
Hearth & Terroir

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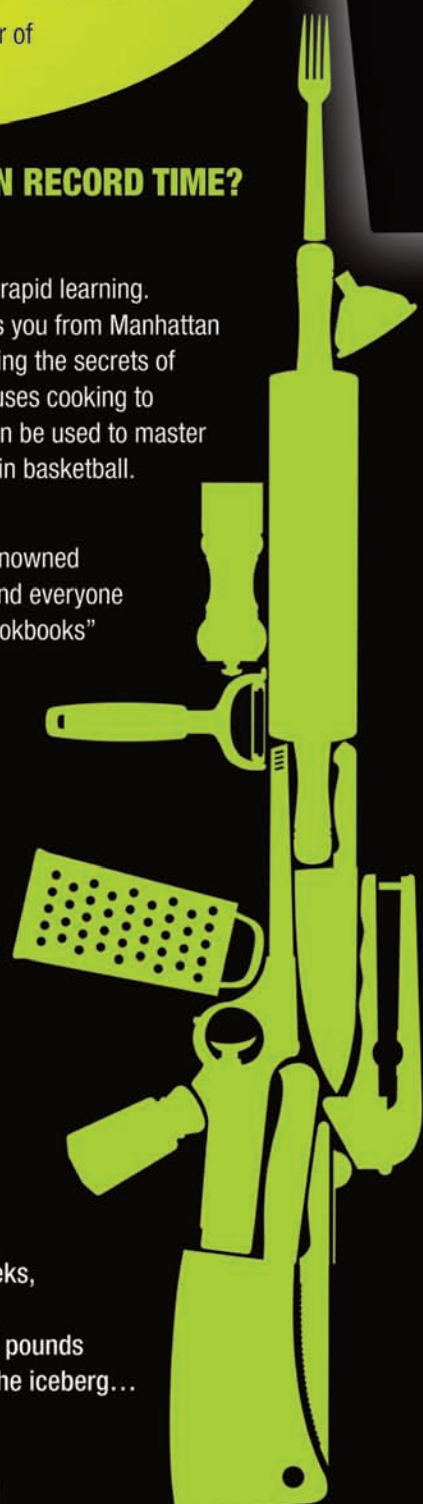
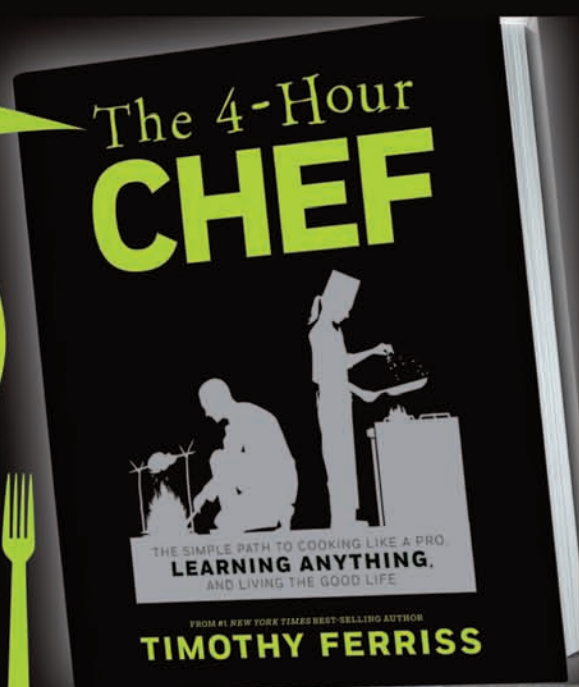
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CUBE METHOD DEADLIFTS: A NEW LOOK AT AN OLD TOOL

BY BRANDON LILLY

Deciding to throw my hat into the world of raw powerlifting – or raw with knee wraps (the Internet hounds make sure you specify) – opened a new world to me. It was clear that no longer would I be able to improve form or leverages based on what gear I used, so I had to figure out how to get a better deadlift and I had to do so in a hurry. I had always done okay in the deadlift, managing a max geared pull of 765, but for my weight class 308, I needed to be pulling over 800. It wasn't for a lack of training hard, it turns out I wasn't training the best way to benefit my body, or my weaknesses.

I had always been decently fast off the floor, but what kept happening over and over, no matter how much I tried, was bar drift about 6 inches off the floor. I just kept reasoning that I was doing something wrong, rather than taking a step back and looking at other factors. Now, on my Cube method, I rotate my deadlift in a three-week cycle – week one: heavy; week two: speed; week three: reps.

HEAVY DAYS

I never pull heavy from the floor, rather rotating pulls from a 1-inch deficit, a 2-inch block and a 4-inch block. The reason I fashioned the rotation with these three exercises is because all three put the body in different leverage angles, and require different muscle recruitment to finish the lift. Also, to give credit to an idea that Chuck Vogelpohl stressed to us, "If you can be strong with the weight out of position, then you will definitely be strong when the weight is in position." He works a variety of different exercises to maximize this belief, but for me I was striving for simplicity, and this idea made sense. So, in an effort to maximize muscle recruitment, allow the bar path to be slightly out of position on each of the starting positions and to create a simple set up these were the exercises I built my program around.

SPEED DAYS

My speed day is always done competition stance from the floor. Why full gear (if you wear it)? And why speed work from the floor?



The problem I see with most powerlifters is they only use full gear when the weight is heaviest. When weight is at or near a maximum there is a higher degree of difficulty to perform the lift with perfect technique. Think free-throws in basketball: A basketball player uses them to work the technique of his shot with a less than challenging situation (not moving, no defender), and this allows them to perfect their technique, so as you add in those other variables the technique and form becomes so ingrained you do it without thinking. Not many great basketball players became great by learning to shoot from the three-point line with a defender in their face. Use the same principle for lifting: Keep the weight lighter and manageable so you do every rep the same.

Another revelation came to me while watching a deadlift video of myself. The more I looked the more I found I was pulling with bands almost constantly. Realizing the bands can mimic a Smith Machine in their ability to keep a bar in a straight line, I was always pulling with a stabilizing mechanism that prevented bar "sway" that I was experiencing when I pulled without bands. Next I began to analyze and speak with other great pullers, and I found that most of them have massive speed off the floor, like unreal speed off the floor. That being said, I began looking at my lift and seeing that in a bar lift with bands, the lightest part of the pull is actually from the ground, and the band causes acceleration toward the top. This is fantastic if you struggle at lock-out, but I was also told you can hide a lot of weak spots in your deadlift with speed off the floor carrying you through. How do I achieve that?

What I did was eliminate bands on my speed day altogether. This day was about speed, so I wanted nothing that would diminish my much-needed speed off the floor, and I reasoned that if in the past I had used 50 percent bar weight of my max and 25 percent band tension of my max, then a good straight weight was about 70 percent. Now instead of doing 375 lbs. straight weight and 190 to 200 lbs. in band tension at the top, I was now using 525 straight weight

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(at the time I was based off 750 lbs.). What I found immediately was a new kind of fatigue. While my reps looked solid and fast, I found myself curling my hips under more to start the weight and felt more hamstring and glutes recruitment. This was not a conscious decision, but one that came about due to the muscles I normally use to pull fatiguing early, and having to call upon dormant muscles to do the lifting. Within just a few weeks, the constantly plaguing “bar drift/sway” was gone, and my glutes and hamstrings were noticeably bigger. As I’ve gone on my first speed week is 65 percent, second is 70 percent and third is 75 percent, and then the cycle begins again with 5 to 10 lbs. additional bar weight.

REP DAYS

Rep days are designed to be just that, a day in which I purposefully choose exercises that pinpoint weak areas and “build” muscle rather than lifting maximum weight as a purpose. For some people this day may be a day without deadlifts entirely. I like to have some people do barbell rows or moderate weight good mornings instead of doing deadlifts on this day. For others it may be pin pulls, block pulls, deficits or reverse bands deadlifts. This day is unique to each lifter because it is totally designed to recruit muscles that are underdeveloped and build them up to the level of the other muscles we use when we deadlift.

People frequently ask me about percentages and rep ranges to use when training, and this is as detailed as I can get while maintaining fairness to my trainees. Further out from a meet, say 10 to 12 weeks out, we are looking at doing something like four or five sets of eight to 12 reps on the main movement, and this would remain the same until eight weeks out. At this point it will be three or four exercises in the six to eight rep range. At four weeks out we are looking at two or three sets of two to three reps, and the weight will be at its heaviest at this point. All in all, this day prepares us for the increasing demands of our heavy day, and preps us for the meet.

I felt like my rep work should be done with straight weight as well, but I reasoned that since on my heavy days I was doing singles or doubles, and from specified weak areas, the bands could actually be of great benefit. When pulling from a block or deficit, our leverages are never like a ground pull, so the bands would be implemented on my block days. I felt the deficit added enough extra “stress” to the legs. A cycle would look like this:

Week 1: Heavy pulls up to 600 with 200 lbs. of band tension at the top, off a 4-inch block.

Week 2: Speed Pulls, 525 x 1 x 10 sets with 30 seconds rest between sets.

Week 3: Pin pulls for reps, 585 x 5 x 3 sets.

When I began this thought process, I was fresh off a very slow, shaky, 725-lb. raw deadlift on April 28, 2012, to a very fast and solid 775 on June 5, 2012, and the gains have kept coming. I pulled 804.5 lbs. on Nov. 3, 2012, at the Super Training “Backyard Meet of The Century.” The average increase for my trainees on the Cube is 48.7 lbs. in a 10-week time frame. One example is John Bieg. He had been stuck at 655 lbs. as a raw lifter for a couple of years, but after

eight weeks he completed a meet with PRs on all his lifts, but specifically a 700 lbs. deadlift. I have one current trainee who is on pace for a 75-lb. meet PR in the deadlift, and over 125-lb. total PR.

ASSISTANCE WORK

While the rotation of the days is unique for the Cube, there are also some things my trainees notice immediately.

Olympic Squats after main lower movements. The purpose of this is not weight; I want my lifters to keep a narrow stance (narrower than shoulder width), and I want their glutes to touch the lower portion of the leg before they come up. I see a lot of guys who call wider stance squats Olympic squats — they aren’t — and I see a lot of partial squats that don’t count. It’s your total, so do it right.

Snatch grip deadlifts from blocks. This is a favorite of my lifters. We set up the blocks on 2, 4 and 6-inch inch levels, and rotate from where we pull. We use straps on these, grab wider than the lines on the bar and perform anywhere from one set of 20 to three sets of 12, using any weight range from 45 to 60 percent. These will absolutely kill your middle back, erectors and glutes. Definitely make these a staple in your routine.

Lat work is a must four days per week. We do rows, pulldowns with and without bands, chest supported rows and low cable rows. The lats are so underappreciated for what they give to a powerlifter. In the bench it is crucial to flex your lats when lowering and reversing the weight. In the squat, your lats maximize upper back tightness, and in the deadlifts the lats help the bar explode once the bar leaves the floor.

Cover as many body parts as possible. We train biceps, quads, calves, forearms and pecs — muscle groups that have kind of been labeled as unnecessary in powerlifting. But I have adopted the belief that a weak muscle equals a lower total, so I want to be as strong as I can from top to bottom.

THINK TOTAL, NOT JUST INDIVIDUAL LIFTS

The best advice I got was from a friend of mine, who said, “The total is all that matters, right?” You are probably thinking that is basic knowledge, but it’s true. I stopped thinking that this is my deadlift, bench or squat day. I started thinking that all my days were connected, and each was significant to the next. It’s cool to be strong in one of the lifts, but at the end of the day if you squat big, but your bench is weak and your pull is subpar, then you most likely won’t be in competition for the top spot. Make your weaknesses strengths, and your strengths stronger!

We all want to be the best, so make all of your lifts better. Make every day have the same importance as your favorite lift and I promise you will notice the benefit. When you come into a meet with the confidence that your training was solid, you covered all your bases and you have built belief in yourself, then you should know the only thing separating you from success is the platform. If you’ve left no stone unturned in your training, the meet should be little more than a showcase for your hard work. Now take what you deserve! PM



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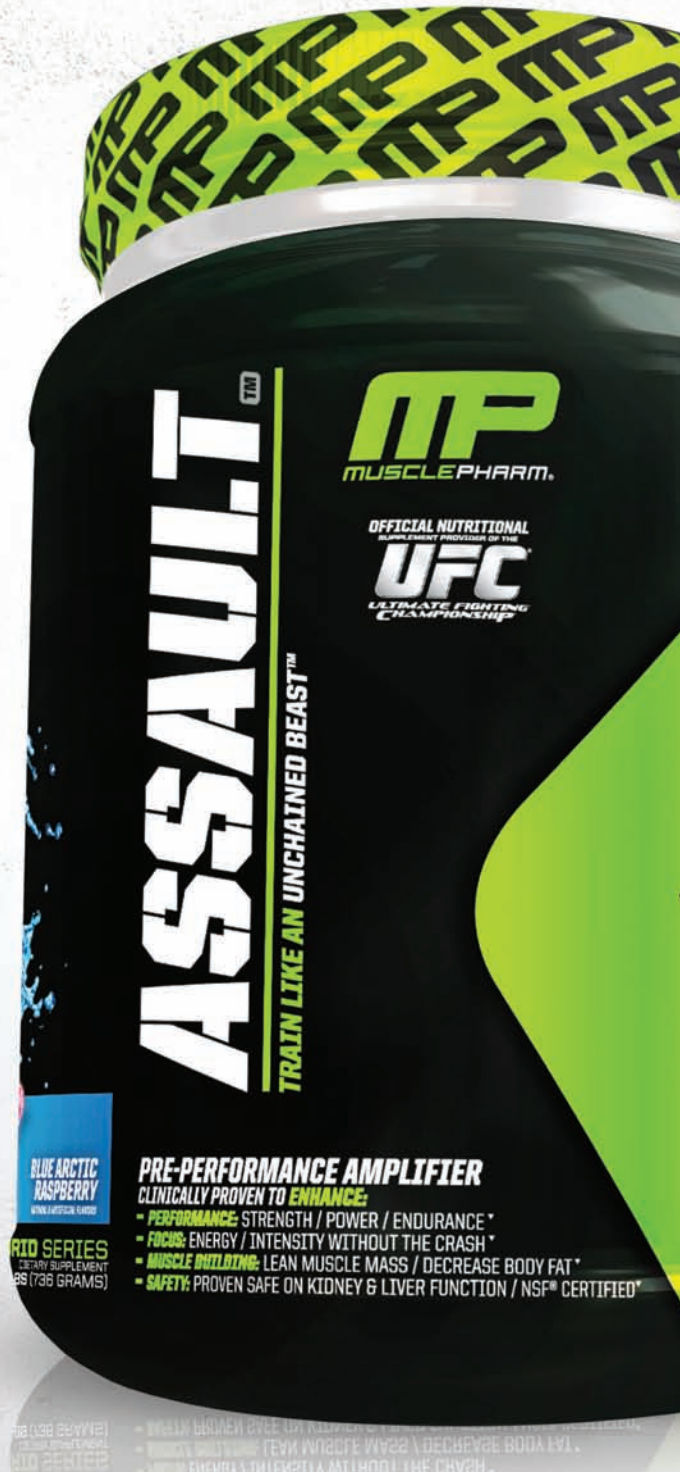
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