

NUTRITION BASICS WITH LAURIN CONLIN

POWER

MARCH/APRIL 2016

Mark Bell
**WORLD'S
STRONGEST
MAN**

**BRIAN
SHAW**



**LAYNE
NORTON**

**SMALL LEGS
TO WORLD
RECORD SQUAT**

MARCH/APRIL 2016 • VOL 7, NO 2

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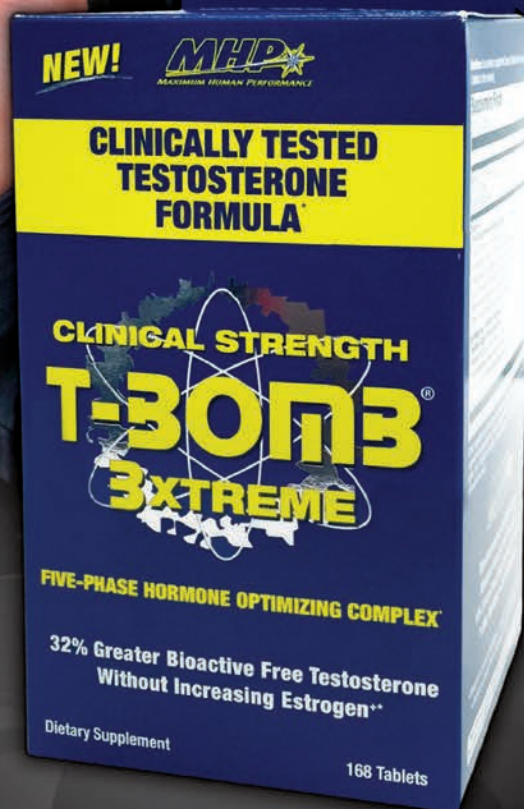
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POWER

MAGAZINE

VOLUME 7 • ISSUE 2

PUBLISHER

Andee Bell
andee@thepowermagazine.com
530-756-6085

EDITOR-AT-XTRA-LARGE

Mark Bell • SuperTrainingGym@me.com

MARKETING DIRECTOR

Steven Granzella
Steven@thepowermagazine.com

EDITOR

Nicole Dedrick

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Jeff "Robot" Irion

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Ken Richardson, Michael Ochnicki

ART DIRECTOR/PRODUCTION

Paul Graff • paul@graffixdesign.com

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

US Addresses: \$29/1 year
US Addresses: \$49/2 years
International Addresses: \$65/1 year
International Addresses: \$115/2 years

Address changes send to

andee@thepowermagazine.com

SUBSCRIPTIONS AVAILABLE AT

www.thepowermagazine.com
www.SuperTrainingGym.com

POWER Magazine (ISSN 2150-5411) is published bi-monthly by Power Media. POSTMASTER: please send address changes to **POWER Magazine**, 4516 Redbud Dr., Davis CA 95618

Printed in the USA



Cover photo by Michael Ochnicki

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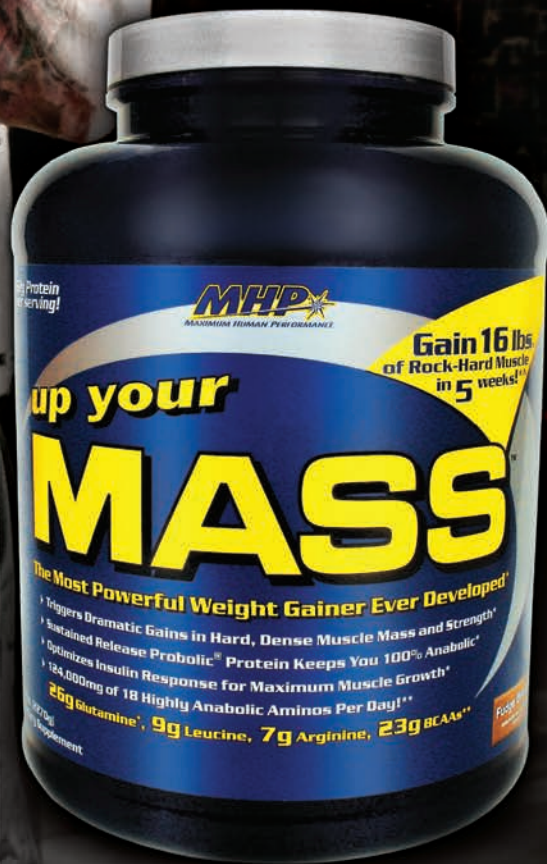


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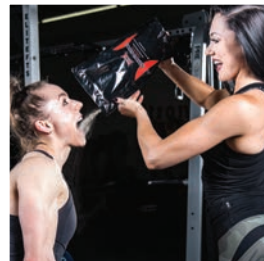
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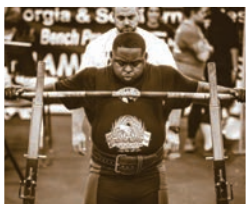
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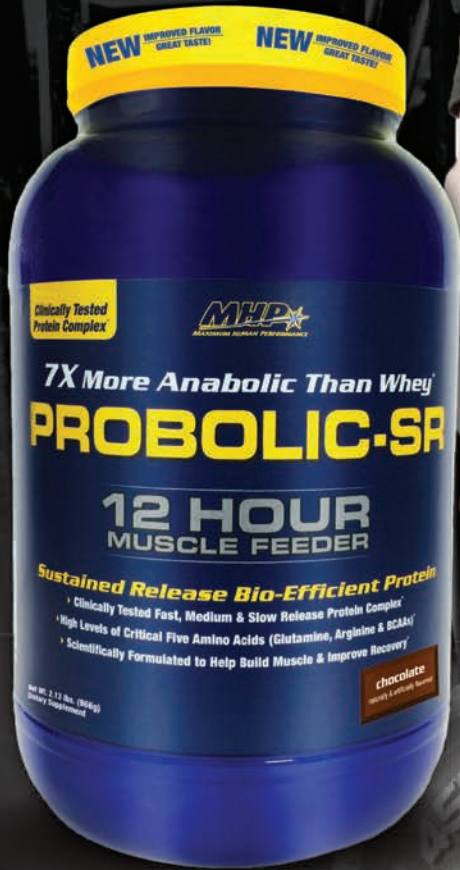
Luigi Fagiani

Ralph Murray was there when Fagiani deadlifted 800 lb for his opener at a recent competition. He catches up with this number one ranked deadlifter to find out how he reached this elite level of lifting.

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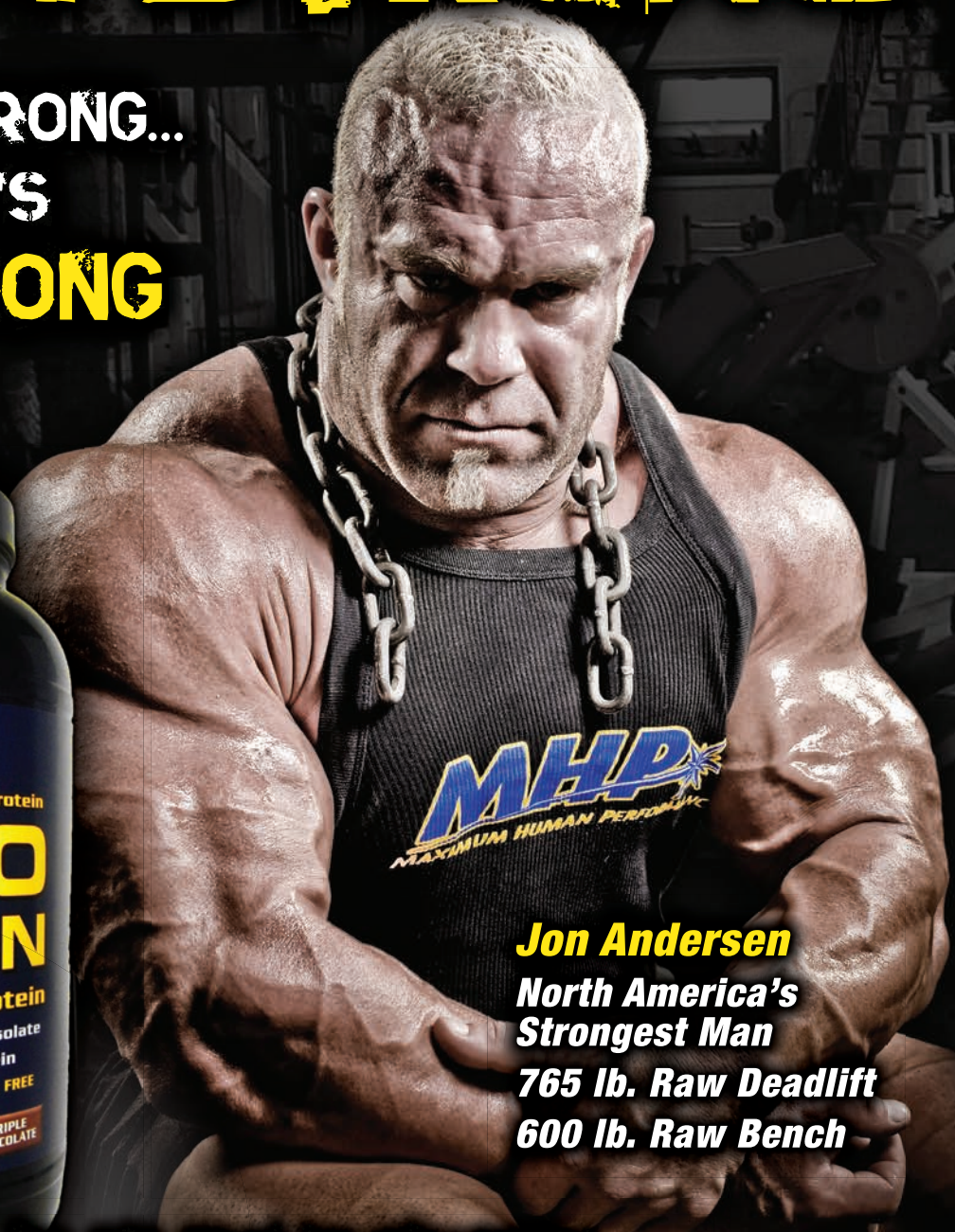
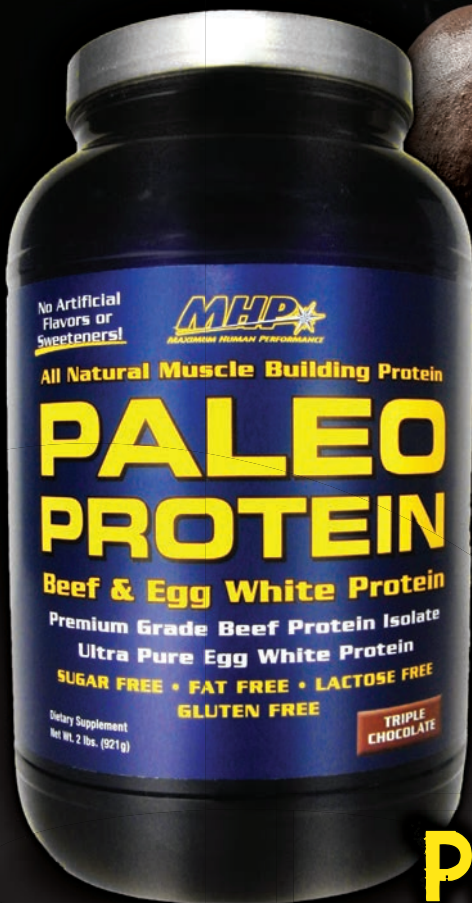
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MATT MILLS

STRENGTH ATHLETE EXTRAORDINAIRE

BY: JOSH BRYANT

The Internet has forever changed strength in a positive way. With the World Wide Web, it is now possible to learn how the best lifters train in an instant and to have access to once suppressed information.

The downside is the rise of a new breed of self-promoting "strength athletes" with zero accomplishments or even academic experience. These "athletes" are being touted as experts, or worse yet, legends.

In the "old school", if you wanted a seat at the table, you better have brought something to the table.

One person that lives by the old-school mentality and deserves the king's stool at the table is Matt Mills.

Matt is a top 105 kg Pro strongman, an 800 lb. competition deadlifter, and he also has the physique of an Adonis. Being far from all brawn, this Brainiac has a Master's degree in Strength and Conditioning from UConn.

I have been fortunate enough to coach Matt for the last two years; Matt is one of the hardest working athletes that I have ever worked with.

Without further ado, get ready for the treat of meeting Matt Mills.

JOSH: What got you started lifting? Any memorable moments or lifts that come to mind?

MATT: I started lifting pretty young in my basement with just a bench



and a few dumbbells. I was picked on a fair amount as a kid so I wanted to do something about it. I started reading all of the muscle magazines I could get my hands on, and I became obsessed when I started seeing progress.

When I received my driver's license, the first thing I did was sign up at the local gym so I could get out of my basement.

I read Arnold Swarzenegger's, Encyclopedia of Bodybuilding, cover to cover so I thought I knew everything. Pretty soon, I was one of the bigger kids at school, and I was getting asked questions about how to train properly.

JOSH: How were you introduced to strongman and powerlifting?

MATT: I went to college for Exercise Science at the University of Connecticut, and I was lucky enough

to meet Disa Hatfield, daughter of Fred Hatfield. Disa saw potential in me and taught me how to train and do the "big three" lifts properly.

After I graduated, I needed a reason to train harder so I thought about bodybuilding. However, the more I thought about it, the more it didn't interest me. Then, as I was reading an article on Elitifts.com about doing your first powerlifting meet, I decided right away that I was going to sign up for the first meet I could find. Luckily, there was a competition about two months away so I signed up and right away, I was more motivated than I have ever been to train.

After doing a couple of powerlift-



ing meets, I was getting a little bored just training the three lifts. I had mentioned to someone at a meet that I always wanted to try strongman, as I loved watching it on TV. At this time, I had no idea there were amateur contests right in my area. So once again, I looked up the nearest one, and I signed up. After doing my first strongman competition, I immediately knew this was the sport for me.

JOSH: What do you consider your proudest accomplishments in competing and training? Share some of your personal records with us.

MATT: In eight years, I believe I have competed in roughly fifty competitions, including strongman, powerlift-

ing, and CrossFit.

The first accomplishment that stands out is winning my pro card for strongman four years ago.

My second achievement is my first time going to the Arnold Classic. There were two days of competition, and only the top 10 make it to the second day. I was just happy to compete at such a huge event!

I always go into a competition believing that I can win it, but I had my doubts about making the cut to the second day. There was a mystery event at the end of the first day, and to my luck, it was a deadlift/grip event, which is a strength for me. I managed to get second place on the deadlift event, which secured me

in ninth place at the end of the first day, making the cut for the second.

At this point, I was by far the smallest guy, weighing around 250 lb., but I ended up nailing a 350 lb. overhead press PR [Personal Record].

My third proudest accomplishment and what I'm probably best known for in powerlifting is my 800 lb. deadlift at 255 lb. bodyweight. Since then, I have hit 810 lb. in the gym, and I always do a lot better in competition.

Currently, my PRs are an 810 lb. deadlift in training, 975 lb. yoke for 60ft in competition, 900 lb. hummer tire deadlift, and a 410 lb. farmer's walk in each hand.

JOSH: What's your opinion about training with implements? Do you feel strongmen should train with them year round or do you prefer periodizing in training periods without implements?

MATT: You absolutely need to take a break from the strongman implements!

When I first started, it's all I wanted to do, so I trained them year round. In doing so, I had a lot of joint pain from heavy yokes and farmer's. I got very familiar with the implements, but my body paid the price.

I compete fairly often, even in the pros. Once a year, I like to take a few months off from anything strongman and just focus on getting stronger on the barbell lifts.

JOSH: We have worked together for over two years. In this time frame, what differences have you noticed in your training?

MATT: It's been a huge difference!

I own a gym where I do a lot of pro-



gramming and coaching for everyone else, so when it came to my own, it was always put on the back burner.

I always trained hard, but I did need a kick in the ass to really push my weights to dominate at the Pro Level.

My squat was always something that I never really worked hard enough at, so it suffered. Without being able to back squat 600 lb. then, I am now nearly front squatting 600 lb. Having the weights planned out for me each week motivates me that much more to hit them.

JOSH: Initially, the overhead press was not your strongest suit, but it keeps improving. What do you believe have been the contributing factors in its increase?

MATT: My strict press was never anything special so that was something

I really wanted to work on. I believe that when I started with you, my max was around 255 lb. and now my current best is 320 lb.

The first thing you had me do was prioritize overhead pressing and start doing it twice a week. Before this, I would have a typical shoulder and then chest day like a bodybuilder. Also, I worked lifts that seemed to have specific carryover to the overhead presses like specific overhead triceps extensions or dicks press.

JOSH: You have deadlifted 800 lb. in competition and recently 810 lb., both sumo style. You have also pulled past the mid-700s with a conventional stance. For people looking to purely increase their deadlift, do you recommend training the opposing stance? (Ed

Coan did this)

MATT: Yes, and I didn't believe this prior to pulling 800 lb.

When I was training for powerlifting - all I did was pull sumo every week, and I didn't pull conventional at all. The main reason I didn't work on conventional was because it was a huge weak point for me.

When I started strongman, I never had to pull from the floor because everything was raised, so again, I could hide from my weak point. When I took a break from powerlifting, my best pull was 700 lb. and conventional was honestly around 600 lb., so there was a big discrepancy.

When I first started working with you, I only pulled conventional, getting stronger every week. After the Arnold, I

decided to do my first powerlifting meet in three years, and jumped right back into sumo. Immediately, the weights felt easy, and I didn't lose a step on my form. My conventional pull was up to 750 lb. and my sumo went up along with it.

Most people that pull conventional hate to pull sumo, but I always encourage it after finding this out for myself. The weaker stance absolutely brings up your stronger one.

JOSH: You are known for having one of the best physiques in all strength sports. Training wise, what do you do that helps build this physique?

MATT: I've always enjoyed training like a bodybuilder, so high rep sets and lots of accessory work were always important in my training. When I first started training as a teenager, looks were important to me, but I also liked being the strongest.

For some reason, there is this belief that to be your strongest, you have to carry around some extra body fat, and I

completely disagree with that!

You don't have to look like a bodybuilder, but you can't flex fat!

When I began strongman I gained muscle, and I lost fat simultaneously, which is extremely difficult the more advanced you get.

Training the events are always full body movements, so that did wonders for my physique. It's a huge compliment when I'm at big fitness expositions, competing as a strongman, and people ask me if I am there for bodybuilding.

Staying lean is important to me from a looks standpoint and for long-term health.

JOSH: Strength athletes are notorious for being on a "see food" diet. What does a typical day of eating look like for you?

MATT: I generally eat the same thing every day, except I carb cycle where I have higher carbs on training days and lower carbs on non-training days.

An example of a training day is:

Meal 1

2 whole eggs
2 scoops whey protein isolate
1 cup of oatmeal (uncooked)
1 med banana + 1 cup blueberries
1 tbsp. natural peanut butter
coffee and cream is fine

Meal 2 (Pre-workout)

3/4 cup 1% fat cottage cheese + 1.5 scoop whey isolate
1/2 cup cream of wheat
1 med banana
1 tbsp. natural peanut butter

Meal 3

Intra-workout 100 g simple carbs, 15 g pepto pro protein

Meal 4

8 oz chicken
2 cups jasmine rice or 14.5 oz sweet or white potato
green veggies of your choice
2 tsp. olive oil

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Meal 5

3 scoops whey isolate
 (70g carbs) large bagel
 1 med banana or 1 cup pineapple
 2 tbsp. peanut butter

Meal 6

12 oz steak or 12 oz salmon
 2 cup jasmine rice or 14.5 oz sweet or
 white potato
 large salad with mixed veggies

This is currently for gaining weight - when I am cutting weight, it would look different.

JOSH: You have to cut to make the 231 lb. class for Pro Strongman contests. What is the biggest you ever get in the off-season? After making weight the day before a competition, do you like to binge or do you do better with a structured plan?

MATT: So far I have gotten up to 262 lb. and my goal is cracking 270 lb.

Every year in the off-season, I'm about 5 lb. bigger, which I'm very happy about. Gaining solid muscle is not easy.

Dropping 30 lb. for a competition is probably the most mentally challenging thing I do all year. It's very easy to want to splurge right after making weight, but I have learned the hard way that it is not the way to go about it.

Having a pretty sensitive stomach, I can only tolerate certain foods. I can think of three times now that I have been sick the day of a show because of what I have eaten the day before when I couldn't control myself after I have made weight.

Lesson learned.

Now, I'm extremely careful and I use a food delivery website when I am traveling so that I don't have any risk of eating foods that are going to upset me.

JOSH: Some strongmen are good at moving events and weak with static strength limit lifts. Being one of the few, especially lighter weight strongmen that are able to move fast and lift heavy, training wise, what do you

attribute this to?

MATT: The static events in strongman came naturally to me.

However, the moving events were a big weak point for me when I first started out. The yoke used to crush me whenever it was in a competition, so I made a point to get better at it.

I started doing going heavy one session during the week and then a second session just for speed. It took me probably a solid year, but it became one of my strengths.

I enjoy sprinting, and still do it on my off days or do plenty of sled work. I hate to use the "C word" but "cardio" is very important in strongman.

I also have to say that I'm pretty spoiled at my gym, Lightning Fitness. I literally have everything you could possibly need for strongman and powerlifting.

Having enough indoor space for moving events is a huge help to my training, especially during Connecticut winters.

JOSH: Do you feel training strongman events should be periodized like regular barbell lifts?

MATT: Hell yes, the events are your priority!

You have to increase the weight, do one more rep or go the longer distance to improve; it's the law of overload. Failing to record your progress ensures that you will fail to make progress. There is no way you can remember each of your lifts in order to increase them each week.

I find it very motivating to look back in my training journal and see that I did more than the previous week.

JOSH: You don't deadlift sumo very frequently. What movements do you attribute to building one of the best deadlifts in the world?

MATT: My hips get pretty beat up from the wide stance. It took me three years to add 100 lb. to my deadlift, from 700 to 800 lb., and the biggest change in that time period was strongman training (most of the increase was the last six months).

I truly believe that training my weaker conventional stance helped tremen-

dously. Also, training stones on a regular basis definitely built both of my deadlifts. I recommend to any powerlifters to add some light strongman events to their training.

JOSH: You own an extremely successful gym. Is it hard to balance life as businessman and a pro athlete?

MATT: I have made training a top priority in my life so it really hasn't been difficult for me.

I have many people tell me they don't have the time to train because of other distractions in their life, such as their job. Training is a huge outlet for me, and it's something I need to do just to clear my head.

Also, being a pro athlete has only helped grow my business. I can easily say that if I never competed in the sport of powerlifting and strongman, my gym would be nowhere near as successful as it is today.

The bigger my name has gotten in the sport, the more competitors have found their way to my facility. I also have the luxury of being the only gym in the area that is as equipped as mine.

JOSH: What are some of your hobbies outside of strongman and powerlifting?

MATT: I am a huge comic book nerd. Most of my gym is covered in super hero posters. Reading comics is actually one of the reasons I got into lifting - I wanted to look and be as strong as Superman. Running a business takes up a lot of my time so when I do have some down time, I'm pretty lazy. Like most people, I love to watch movies and, of course, go out to dinner so I can stuff my face as much as I can.

JOSH: What's next for Matt Mills?

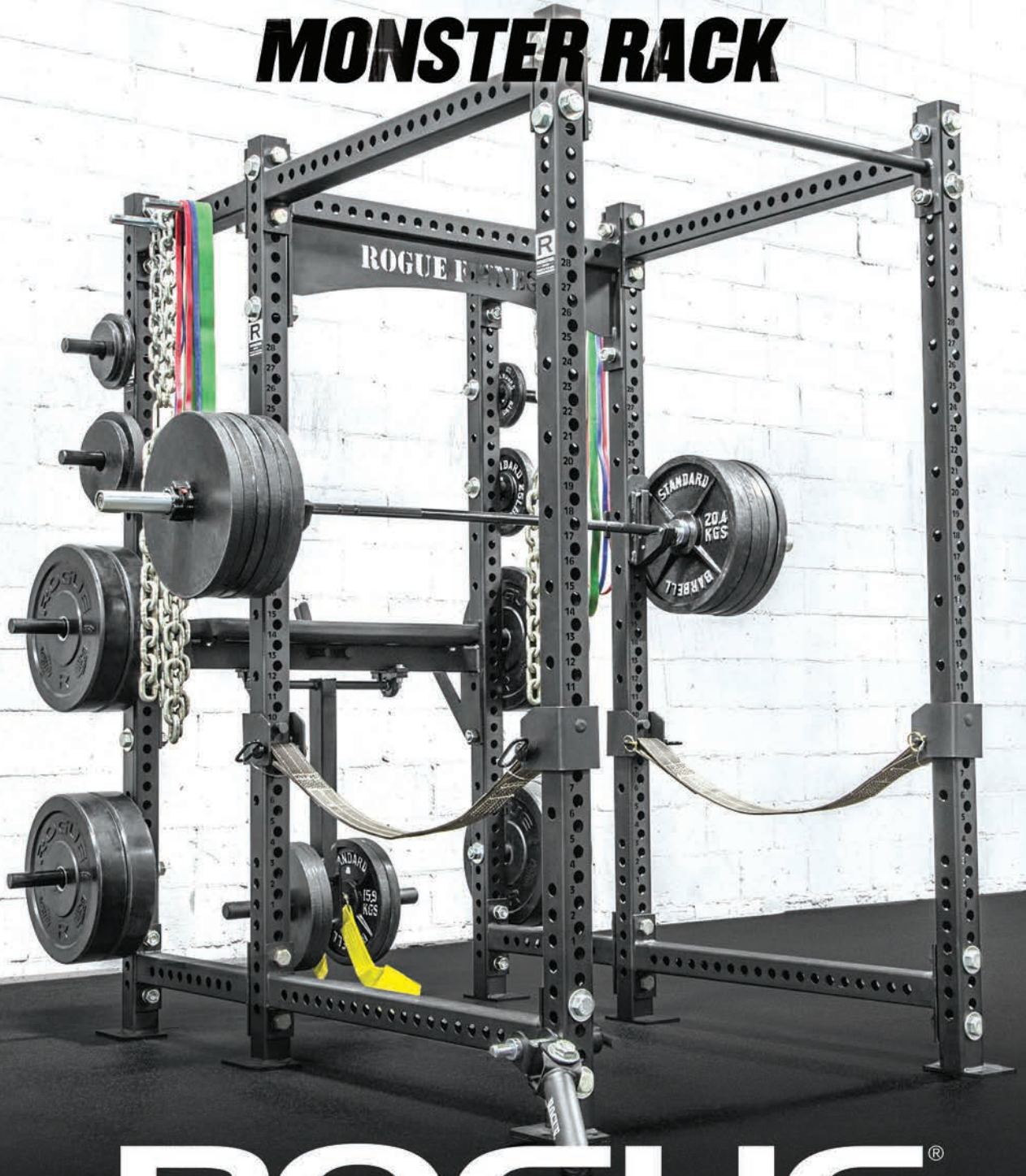
MATT: After pulling 810 lb. recently, I'll be doing the Pig Iron Classic April 30th in Fort Worth, Texas and going for 850 lb.

That is my current objective and after that, we will map out a strongman schedule.

JOSH: Thanks for taking the time to speak with us, Matt! We look forward to seeing your 850 lb. deadlift. PM

RM-6

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The World's Strongest Man

BRIAN SHAW

BY MARK BELL

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL OCHNICKI

Flipping tires, carrying odd objects, throwing kegs and lifting cars are all considered Brian Shaw's specialties. So much so that Brian Shaw is a 3-time World Strongest Man Champion. At 6'8" and 415 lb, Brian is the ultimate mixture of talent, genetics and working his ass off to continue to get better.





MB: Strongman has been on TV for many years. Did this have an influence on you getting in to strongman? If not, what got you into strongman?

SHAW: I watched The World's Strongest Man when I was growing up, and I have always been fascinated with strength. I was just a fan of the sport when I was younger, and I didn't have any dreams of competing in strongman when I got older. I was very into basketball growing up, and my dream was to make it to the NBA. I worked very hard and was able to earn a full ride scholarship to play basketball in college. When that ended, I needed another competitive outlet. After college, I was just training for no other reason than to get bigger and stronger and decided that it would be fun to enter a strongman contest. I won that first contest and instantly realized how gifted I was at strongman - I was hooked. I progressed quickly through the levels of strongman and earned my spot at World's Strongest Man about two and a half years after my first amateur competition. I started competing in strongman for fun, and I am still having fun!

MB: Which college did you go to

"I WON THAT FIRST CONTEST AND INSTANTLY REALIZED HOW GIFTED I WAS AT STRONGMAN - I WAS HOOKED. I PROGRESSED QUICKLY THROUGH THE LEVELS OF STRONGMAN AND EARNED MY SPOT AT WORLD'S STRONGEST MAN ABOUT TWO AND A HALF YEARS AFTER MY FIRST AMATEUR COMPETITION"

for hoops?

SHAW: I played my first two years at Otero Junior College in Colorado, and then I transferred to Black Hills State University in South Dakota for my final two years.

MB: What did you learn from basketball that you took into strongman?

SHAW: Even though basketball is a team sport, it is also one of the easiest sports to practice by yourself. As a kid, I would spend hours by myself practicing and trying to get better. I

always had the thought in the back of my mind that there was someone else out there working harder than me - that drove me to work even harder. I think this, along with learning how to work extremely hard and competing under pressure, are things that I have carried over to my career in strongman.

MB: Do you feel that the athleticism of basketball gave you an advantage over other athletes in strength sports? If so, how?

SHAW: I have always thought that some of the best athletes come from the sport of basketball because it forces you to develop so many things including coordination, balance, speed, conditioning, etc. On top of all of that, shooting a basketball accurately is up there as one of the toughest skills to develop in sports. Since I developed all of these skills in order to play basketball at my size, transitioning into the sport of strongman was very easy for me. So that being said, I think it did give me an advantage over [other] guys, although I did have to work very hard to develop my skills as a strongman.

MB: What did you learn from falling short of making your dreams

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Shaw lovingly holds Bigger Stronger Faster® and Prescription Thugs director Chris Bell.

come true to be in the NBA?

SHAW: As a kid, I obviously dreamed of making it to the NBA, and I worked very hard to be able to play basketball at a high level in high school and college. As I got into college, I began to realize that I started to love lifting weights more than actually playing basketball. So instead of spending hours shooting and working on my game, I started spending hours in the weight room trying to get stronger. So when it came time for my college basketball career to come to an end, I was ready to be done. I have only played a time or two since my last college game ended, and I have not missed it at all.

“I OWE THE GAME OF BASKETBALL A LOT, AND I LEARNED A LOT ABOUT MYSELF GOING THROUGH ALL OF THE STRUGGLES IN TRYING TO BECOME A BETTER PLAYER. HOWEVER, I FOUND MY TRUE PASSION IN THE SPORT OF STRONGMAN, AND I COULDN’T BE HAPPIER ABOUT THAT”

Someday when I retire from strongman, I will probably get into some kind of men’s league or something because I do love the game. Hopefully, that doesn’t come anytime soon. I owe the game of basketball a lot, and I learned a lot about myself going through all of the struggles in trying to become a better player. However, I found my true passion in the sport of strongman, and I couldn’t be happier about that.

MB: What is it about strongman that you love so much?

SHAW: I love the sport of strongman for so many different reasons. I obviously came from a team sport with basketball and when you are part of a

team, you win and lose as a team. In strongman, whether you win or lose, you can only look in the mirror at yourself – you control your own performance and I really like that aspect. Another reason I love strongman is due to the fact that it is never the same. The implements we use are never standard, and there is always a new challenge. Finding different ways to train for everything that we have to do is never boring, and it constantly challenges me. On top of all of that, I love being able to test myself against the absolute strongest men on this planet.

MB: You are what I would like to call a “locked in” athlete, meaning

“MY TRAINING IS VERY MUCH A HYBRID OF A LOT OF DIFFERENT METHODS, INCLUDING MAX EFFORT WORKOUTS IN ORDER TO HELP ME ACHIEVE MAXIMAL RESULTS FOR STRONGMAN. I HAVE A LOT OF RESPECT FOR LOUIE SIMMONS AND WHAT HE HAS CONTRIBUTED TO LIFTERS EVERYWHERE”

that you’re so focused on the end result that you will do all the things (little or big) necessary to reach your goals. There is a saying that goes, “I will do today what others won’t, so tomorrow I can do things that others can’t”. To me, that quote really fits Brian Shaw. What makes you that way?

SHAW: I really love that quote, and I would like to believe that it really fits me. I have always been very driven to succeed, especially in competition. This started for me when I was a kid as I always hated losing. I have a brother that is two years older than me, and literally everything we did growing up was a competition. He would normally beat me, and it drove me crazy so I would practice and train until I could beat him and his friends. I have just carried that burning passion and desire into the sport of strongman, and it has

helped me to achieve everything that I have in this sport and in life.

MB: I find it very interesting that you are so meticulous to the point where you measure band tension, the height the bar is off of the floor, your food, and you track your calories. On top of all of this, you’ve invested probably over \$50,000 in equipment to make sure everything is one hundred percent identical to what you compete with. Why do you feel the need to be so precise?

SHAW: This is very much tied into my passion and desire to be the best. I am willing to do whatever it takes to be the best. I am constantly striving to get better. I am always adding new things in to my training plan or to my equipment if it will make me better. I have been doing this for a long time, and I have definitely spent way more than \$50,000 on equipment. It is worth it to me because this is not only my career, but it is also my passion and hobby all built into one.

SCIENCE MADE STRONGER

C

CARBON

BY LAYNE NORTON

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MB: Brian, tell us about your training. In my opinion, from what I have researched about your training and from what we have spoken about, it appears that you switch stuff up a lot. It also appears that you like using max effort workouts (going as heavy as possible), specialty exercises, and speed work. Are you a big fan of Louie Simmons' Westside Method?

SHAW: My training is very much a hybrid of a lot of different methods, including max effort workouts in order to help me achieve maximal results for strongman. I have a lot of respect for Louie Simmons and what he has contributed to lifters everywhere. I have learned from him, along with several other great strength coaches, including Joe Kenn, who has a ton of knowledge. I have tried to apply all of this knowledge to my own training. What I do now, I have learned from years of trial

“MOST SUCCESSFUL COMPETITORS LEARN TO LISTEN TO THEIR BODIES EARLY ON, AND THAT IS A SKILL THAT IS TOUGH TO MASTER. WHAT I NORMALLY DO IS TRY TO FIND THE LINE, GET CLOSE TO IT BUT NEVER GO OVER THAT LINE”

and error and my own research when it comes to getting ready to compete at the top level in strongman.

MB: You use many strongman and powerlifting methods. Do you incorporate any bodybuilding methods? If so, why?

SHAW: Strongman and bodybuilding are definitely two very different sports,

and the goals of each are also very different. I wouldn't say that I really incorporate any specific bodybuilding methods into my training, but I do use a repeated effort method in my training in order to add more volume. I guess you could consider this to be somewhat of a bodybuilding method.

MB: Give us a break down of your weekly workout split, as well as any treatment you do.

SHAW:

Monday: Squats/Lower Body/Posterior Chain

Treatment: Normally stretching and soft tissue work

Tuesday: Pressing/Shoulders/Chest/Triceps

Treatment: Chiropractic adjustment and any additional needed work



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Wednesday: Treatment and recovery day

Treatment: Deeper soft tissue work and joint manipulation along with contrast bath

Thursday: Deadlift/Back/Posterior Chain

Treatment: Chiropractic Adjustment, stretching and soft tissue work as needed

Friday: Treatment and recovery day

Treatment: Anything additional that might be needed along with contrast bath

Saturday: Event training for whatever contest that I might have coming up

MB: It seems like it would be tough to manage recovery in strongman. With a wide array of brutal exercises, how do you go about tuning in your training to peak for a strongman competition?

SHAW: It is definitely hard work to stay on top of recovery. Tuning in the training in order to peak for a strong-

"IF YOU REALLY WANT TO BE SUCCESSFUL AS A STRONGMAN COMPETITOR, YOU NEED TO TAKE YOUR EATING AS SERIOUSLY AS YOUR TRAINING. I HAVE ALWAYS TRIED MY BEST TO GET BETTER AT ALL ASPECTS OF BEING A SUCCESSFUL STRONGMAN, AND EATING IS NO EXCEPTION"

man competition is always a bit tricky. It is very hard not to overtrain with all of the different events we are getting ready for. Most successful competitors learn to listen to their bodies early on, and that is a skill that is tough to master. What I normally do is try to find the line, get close to it but never go over that line. I normally back off the super heavy training about two weeks before the contest so that I come in fresh and ready to compete.

MB: To be 420 pounds and to be

fairly lean, you literally must eat from the time you get up until the time you go to bed. I love food but stuffing yourself all day is miserable! Is it a real pain in the balls for you to cram in 8000 calories every day? I'd imagine it must be close to impossible to reach that caloric intake with 90-95% of your calories coming from healthy sources. Do you view your food as important as your training? Have you gotten better at eating like you have gotten better at lifting?

SHAW: This is a great question. I have said for a long time that the training is the easy part and that the eating is the hard part. If you really want to be successful as a strongman competitor, you need to take your eating as seriously as your training. I have always tried my best to get better at all aspects of being a successful strongman, and eating is no exception. I try to improve my diet and get even more dialed in at every contest that I do, and it has really helped me. Most of the time when we start getting closer to competitions, I get very sick of eating. It can be a real grind to get down all of the food that I need to. The



way I look at it...the food I am eating is the fuel that I am putting in my body to help me perform. If I slack on the diet, my performance will suffer. I don't ever want to look back and say that I could have done better with eating or training so I just get it done.

MB: With all of this food coming in, something needs to go somewhere! Do you spend a large portion of your day pooping? Also, where does a guy your size take a sh*t? In a special tub?

SHAW: How did I know a question like this was coming? I am happy to say that I definitely have no problem pooping, and it does happen frequently. Luckily, normal toilets work well, but I have to say it would certainly be nice to have bigger toilets! I am all about squatting to parallel, but most of the time, I feel like my ass is on my ankles when I am sitting on the toilet.

MB: What's something serious about Brian Shaw that people don't know?

SHAW: Honestly, [it's mainly that] I am a normal, down to earth guy that is still humble even with everything that I have accomplished.

"I DIDN'T GET INTO STRONGMAN FOR ANY OTHER REASON THAN TO HAVE FUN, AND TO ME, WINNING IS FUN. I STILL FEEL LIKE I AM JUST GETTING INTO THE BEST YEARS OF MY CAREER, AND I HAVE AT LEAST A FEW MORE GREAT YEARS IN ME. I AM STILL VERY MOTIVATED TO WIN AND AS LONG AS I HAVE THAT PASSION, I WILL KEEP GOING"

MB: What's something silly/dumb that people don't know about Brian Shaw?

SHAW: That I like to make up stupid songs and sing them around the house. My wife finds this pretty annoying, but it does make her laugh which is normally what I am trying to do.

MB: You won the World's Strongest Man and The Arnold. Those are

the biggest events in your sport, so what's next for Brian Shaw?

SHAW: I am coming off a great year in 2015 after winning both the Arnold and World's Strongest Man in the same year. I have won both of those contests multiple times now, and to be honest, it is a really great feeling. Like I said earlier, I didn't get into strongman for any other reason than to have fun, and to me, winning is fun. I still feel like I am just getting into the best years of my career, and I have at least a few more great years in me. I am still very motivated to win and as long as I have that passion, I will keep going. I have a motto that I go by that I started years ago and it is, "Be great". I think that sums up what I am trying to do now more than ever. I want to be known as an all-time great in the sport of strongman, and I also very badly want to leave this sport better off than when I started in it. I want to get to a place where I can give back after my competitive career is winding down and provide more opportunities for the athletes here in the USA and hopefully worldwide. **PM**





Interview with **LAYNE NORTON**

FROM SMALL LEGS TO WORLD
RECORD SQUAT HOLDER

BY: PAUL REVELIA

PR: Hello, Dr. Norton. I would like to start by thanking you for taking the time to allow me to interview you. Let's start with some general information. What is your height, weight and age?

LN:

Height: 5'10.5"

Weight: 205 lbs.

Age: 34

PR: Before we get into the really tough questions, can you please share with me your current personal records for the squat, bench and deadlift, in competition and in the gym?

LN:

Best Squat: 668 lbs. (competition)

Best Bench: 391 (competition), 395 (gym)

Best Deadlift: 711 (competition), 715 (gym)

PR: Do you feel that your background as a competitive bodybuilder early on in your career (NGA and IFPA Professional) has hindered or helped your progression as a competitive powerlifter?

LN: I think my background as a bodybuilder helped in regards to the mental aspect of things. It taught me to grind and to be ok with gains being made slowly. It showed me that consistency and time were the most important things and to not look for any magical shortcuts.

PR: What motivated you initially to get into lifting heavier, specifically with the squat?

LN: My legs were a huge weak point in my bodybuilding career and I felt that I had tried so many things to bring them up and I just wasn't getting any results. So, I decided that I was going to squat 500 lbs. for reps, and if I could do that, my legs wouldn't be small anymore. I used to say, "I'm sure there's someone out there who squats 500 for reps with small legs, but I haven't met them yet."

PR: What year was your first meet? What weight were you and what were your best lifts at that meet?

LN: My first meet was at the 2009 Crush Cupid in Indianapolis, Indiana with the APA. It was really small. My lifts were a 520 squat and a 645 deadlift in the 220 weight class. I weighed in at 215. I didn't bench because it was only 11 months after I tore my pec

PR: How do you feel about competing either too frequently or not frequently enough on the platform? What are the drawbacks and benefits of either?

LN: I think that for novices, competing more frequently is ok because they are going to continue making gains as long as their programming is good and it will allow them to gain more experience with the skill of competition. For advanced lifters, I think that 2-3x per year is probably most optimal so that they can program longer training blocks and make steady improvements.

PR: Regarding your programming, you get quite a bit of attention for the amount of volume and frequency that you train with. Can you explain a bit about your current training philosophy and how it has evolved?

LN: Well, as you know, I'm a man of science, so I value data. Looking back, for a long time I was a typical 'bro' and just did different routines, trying to figure out what worked and what didn't. This was all without having an understanding of what causes the adaptation of strength and hypertrophy. Many factors are involved in adaptation: intensity, frequency, time under tension, muscle damage and metabolic stress. The most important factor is volume. So, learning how to program in the context of volume in a daily undulating periodized form of programming has made the biggest difference to my progression. For that, I have to thank Dr. Mike Zourdos, Ben Esgro, and Matt Gary. I learned that there aren't any 'magic' programs, and that all rep ranges have value - it just depends on the specificity of how you program things.

PR: Your application of science to both your nutrition and training are well represented in your success. Another aspect of powerlifting that often gets overlooked is the ability to get yourself psyched up. Do you



have a scientific approach to this as well?

LN: Well, I suppose it's scientific because I have gotten really good at it through repeated data [laughter]. Many people can internalize everything and get focused and fired up without the antics that I have. However, I simply function better when I'm vocal and really extroverted with my "psych up". As someone who watches me train on a daily basis, you know that a good "psych up" for me can make well over a 100 lbs. difference on squats and deadlifts.

PR: Yes, your "psych up" has certainly been well documented - witnessing it is certainly eye opening. Early on in your powerlifting career, you competed with several organizations. For the last few years, you have been competing exclusively with the USAPL, the United States IPF affiliate. Could you share some of your reasons for doing so?

LN: Good question. When I first started competing, I just did meets that were close to me [location wise]. I also began to hear that the USAPL was so strict and that they didn't want to let you have fun at the meets. I was honestly intimidated by what I heard. So I held off competing with them until I started hanging out with Dr. Mike Zourdos and Ben Esgro. They told me that not only would I love it, but that it was my duty to compete in the best orga-

nization if I wanted to be considered a truly elite lifter. To be honest, I thought they were being a bit elitist at first. However, I have to tell you that after doing two raw nationals, IPF Worlds, and the Arnold, I can say without a doubt that there is ZERO comparison... no other organization comes even close. That's not to say that I agree with every decision they make. But, in my opinion, if you want to truly compete at a high level both nationally and internationally, the USAPL/IPF is the place to be.

PR: You mention the Arnold - this is where you won your class in 2015. What are your planned meets for 2016 and does the news that Jesse Norris has been suspended for 6 months change those plans at all?

LN: I will be doing the Arnold provided that I am healthy enough to do it (always a dicey situation given how the last few training blocks have gone) and I have just accepted a position on the world team for IPF Worlds this year. Other than those two [events], I have nothing else scheduled.

PR: At last year's IPF World Championships, you competed in the 93kg class, which is quite a bit lighter than you were in 2009. However, your lifts have all increased significantly. Can you discuss how your nutrition has been handled in order to allow you to carry less body fat yet continue to improve on the platform?

LN: When I decided that USAPL/IPF was the path I wanted to take, obviously, the weight classes are different than other organizations and I didn't want to compete at 231. So, I decided to make a slow and deliberate cut. I actually did this over the course of about 10 months. I first cut from 220 down to 212 then I reverse dieted my calories back up to 3200 and actually dropped to 208 while doing that. Then, at six weeks out from raw nationals, I began the final cut and easily dropped to 205 and actually weighed in at 202.5. This accomplished two things: 1) It gave me time to get used to my lower weight. Many people are able to make weight cuts but they don't get used to the new biomechanics associated with that weight. Your belt may fit quite differently and the movements may feel a lot different. 2) I was able to keep my calories high even while cutting because I did it slowly.

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This maximized my lean body mass and strength retention. I think my background in nutrition gave me an advantage in preparing myself while moving down a weight class and still gaining strength. Also, proper programming helped a lot

PR: Health is always an issue with longevity and success.

What measures do you currently take in to ensure that you stay as healthy as possible? Do you currently have a warm up routine? Do you do foam rolling, stretching, and massage or do you use any mobility work to allow your body to perform at its best year round?

LN: Probably not as much as I should. I do some mobility work – stretching and foam rolling before I train and then I ice down when I need to. I also work on trying to constantly refine my technique but invariably, injuries do occur when you have to train the way we train to get to that level. I also get adjusted regularly and see a massage therapist. In addition, my physical therapist, Rori Alter, does frequent Skype assessments of me to try to keep me in one piece.

PR: As someone who is at the top of the sport, who are some athletes from others sports, both current and past, who inspire you?

LN: This is going to sound weird but I don't really get inspiration from others. I've never wanted to be like anyone else, just myself. My motivation has always been intrinsic. That being said, I've had some truly great people influence myself as well as my mindset, including Dr. Joe Klemczewski and Dave Goodin in natural bodybuilding. In powerlifting, obviously Ed Coan is someone that has had an influence on everyone. But on a more personal level, people like Mike Zourdos, Matt Gary, and Ben Esgro have completely changed my mindset and how I approach things.

PR: A common theme I am noticing with you is the mindset. Can you explain some of your early memories where that mindset was created? Perhaps you can describe some setbacks or opportunities that you feel defined your approach.

LN: Yes, definitely. When I was 8



years old, I played in what we called 'minor league baseball', which was after t-ball but before little league. I kind of spent my practice time goofing around. One day my mom told me, "I'm glad you are having fun but I want you to work hard at it because we are paying quite a bit of money [we didn't have much money] for you to play and we do want you to have fun but we want you to work hard. Otherwise, we will have to take you out of it." From that point on, I really made it a focus to work hard at practice and HUSTLE. At the end of the season, I was selected as The Most Improved Player and I even received a trophy for it. It was something I was really proud of and it was my first 'ah ha' moment that hard work could make me better.

PR: In 2015, you tied a world record squat at the Arnold Sports Festival. Was this a calculated decision on your part?

LN: Definitely not calculated. I had the best training cycle of my life preparing for the Arnold. I was absolutely crushing weights, including hitting 600 lbs. for 5 reps on a squat about a month out. I was tracking for a 672-677 lbs. squat. Unfortunately, a week before the meet, I strained my lower back. I was pretty sure that there was no way I would be able to compete, but thankfully, I was able to heal quickly and stay in

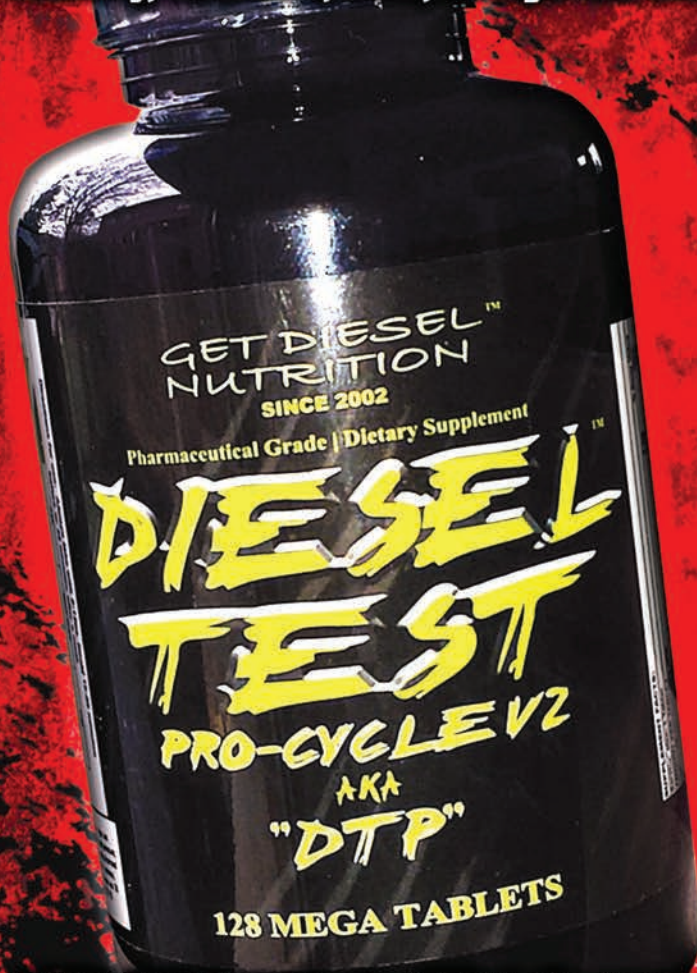
the meet. On my first attempt, I did 606 (275kg) and it felt pretty good. On my second attempt, I hit 639 (290 kg) and it felt good, as well. When I got done with that rep, I told Ben I thought we should put in 666 (302.5kg) with the current world record being 300kg. We must have gotten our signals crossed up and Ben put in the attempt at 300kg. By the time we realized what happened, it was too late and we couldn't change the attempt (once you put in a squat attempt you cannot change it). It was actually pretty tough to get my head back in the game and get fired up for the last attempt because the plan had been to break the record. I decided to use it as a "gut check moment" and I put the onus on myself to go out and execute even though we were facing some adversity. After it was over, Ben said it perfectly, "Now you get to go break it at Worlds, on the biggest stage."

PR: How has setting the USAPL Raw 93kg world record in the squat changed you, if at all?

LN: It's given me more confidence that I can face adversity and keep pushing forward. I think that many times when things don't go according to plan, it's easy to give up on ourselves early on. I think it's important to understand that it's not always going to happen like you planned it. Hell, more often than not, things will not go as planned. If you keep pressing forward day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year, regardless of the setbacks and frustration you encounter, if you don't quit, then one day it may be your day. If you quit, it will never be your day (quote adapted from Eric Thomas). Has it [the world record squat] changed how I live my day-to-day life? No. I'm still the same dude. I know that record will not stand forever – it probably won't even stand for more than a year or two. Hopefully, I'll break it again at some point, but I know that someday it will no longer be there. However, that doesn't mean I can't look back at that point in my life and say to myself, "I didn't quit, I kept going, and I stepped up on the biggest stage and executed [it]." I think that will always put a smile on my face. **PM**

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Perry Ellis Jr.

BY JOHN GREAVES III

Perry Ellis Jr. stands near the top of the USAPL, USPA and APF rankings. This is his hobby and he's good at it. Ellis has squatted, benched and deadlifted his way to a 2083 lb. total, competing as a drug free competitor against drug tested and non-drug tested opponents alike. Perry goes where the competition is, picking meets based upon fun and where they'll be held. I sat down with Perry in Stone Mountain, GA, to talk about life, lifting and his killer French bulldog.

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Bench set up with 3 chains so one link will be on the ground at lockout.



How tall are you? What do you weigh and what weight classes do you compete in? I know you believe in “No Skinny Champions” and all of that.

No skinny champions! Ha! Yeah, that came from my boy, Dan Green, out there at Boss Barbell Club with his “No Skinny Champions.” I’m 5’7”. I usually weigh anywhere from 270-280. I don’t have any problem putting on weight, unlike some people. I also think that’s why I gain strength so well. I don’t like cutting [weight] so I try to stay close to my weight classes.

What weight classes are those?

Umm, primarily 275, but with USAPL, 264. I try not to lift in the Super Heavies.

Before we talk about your own accomplishments, I know that you’ve got pictures with CT Fletcher and Ed Coan, but who have you met and actually had a chance to interact with?

Down in Tampa, it was Tony Conyers – he was at the first meet, as well. [I’ve also interacted with] James Jacobs and Hennis Washington – I don’t know if you remember Hennis, but he was a USAPL guy. He’s small, in the 132lb class but he is one of the best in the country (note: Hennis Washington posted a 529lb deadlift at 123lbs). There’s also a guy named Joe Hill, a big bench only guy, as well as Beau Moore – Beau used to train down in Tampa with Tony and that whole crew at the old school Powerhouse Gym off of Viola down there. Tony and Hennis would be the ones who, early on, had the most influence on getting me to get into it all the way.

These are the people that you grew up in the sport with?

Yeah, and I was already 25 or 27 years old but I didn’t know about powerlifting. If I had known about powerlifting coming out of high school,

I would have done it. If I had kept lifting throughout high school, I would have broken all sorts of teen and junior records because I know I squatted 515 in high school and I clean and jerked 320 and I benched 420. That was with no nutritional guidance, no creatine, no protein; my version of a diet in high school was to just not eat.

What are some of your best gym and raw numbers?

COMPETITION LIFTS

Squat 810 lbs.
Bench 490 lbs.
Deadlift 832 lbs.
Total 2083 lbs.

GYM LIFTS

Squat 755x2
Bench 475 lbs.
Deadlift 805 lbs.

I never do singles in the gym with squats – I will [do singles] with the

deadlift and I will sometimes on bench but I always have my best lifts on the platform.

So you're a guy who gets better on competition day?

Yeah, and a big part of that is that I train so much by myself at LA Fitness and if you ever see me train, I never get hyped up to train like you see some other people do. So, it's never like a meet environment. So, once I'm actually in a meet environment and I get that adrenaline flowing, everything feels light and I like it that way. I like to make my training conditions almost as hard as possible so that when I get to a meet, it's like nothing can be bad. So, that's why I like pulling at LA Fitness with the stiff bars and the squared off plates because I know that once I get to a meet, it's going to be easier and that's when I want it to be easier.

I can see that. Some old school lifters preferred heavy training. Heavy Harris used to say, "If you want to drive a race car on the big day, you need to have taken it around the track a few times first." So, is that what you use your training with the Goggins Force team for - a chance to gauge where you are?

I've been going to Steve for maybe about six months and I go there one to two times a week. I do a heavier week and a lighter week based on my work schedule. So, on my lighter week, I just do the lighter stuff at LA Fitness by myself. Some of that's just due to the proximity [of the gym]. If I stayed closer to Steve, I would probably go more often and also, I'm just so used to training by myself. It's whatever is convenient for me. I think that's another reason I stay away from equipped - you can't really lift by yourself equipped. I'm not one to have to depend on somebody to go to the gym, so I probably couldn't make it. And I just don't like equipment. I don't like belts - they're not comfortable and then I hear people talk about equipped and they're like, "This hurts or that." I'm not a glutton for pain. You'll never see me bleeding on the platform or lifting something until I throw up. That's not me; I have no desire for that.

So, you don't like wearing a belt... is that why you started not wearing a belt when deadlifting?

At my first full power RAW Unity, I to-

taled 1966 or so with just knee sleeves and no belt. I squatted 749.5, so the only reason I put on a belt for squatting is because everybody kept telling me it would add 10-20lbs. maybe.

And do you think that's true?

Umm, maybe. The fact that I squatted 749.5 in 2010 and here it is 2015 and I've only squatted 810 - I think that if I didn't ever put a belt on, to be honest, I could still be squatting 810.

Well, you said that you don't get a lot of internal pressure when you put a belt on.

With squats, I do. On deadlift, I can't. I think that one of the reasons that I haven't necessarily gotten a bigger increase out of a belt is that I don't know how to use it well. I still tend to fill up and get tight myself because I'm just so used to doing that.

How would you describe your training philosophy? DUP [Daily Undulating Periodization] or Linear Periodization? Conjugate or RPE [Rate of Perceived Exertion]? What would you call your training approach?

Ha! [I call it] "Perry's Training By Feel Technique." I don't follow any official program; I think that you go through years of lifting weights and you kind of figure out what works for you. You take bits and pieces of stuff and then it changes sometimes, so it's ever evolving. It wasn't like this before. I would go heavy every single week. I used to joke with Hennis that I tried to always be three weeks out, ready for a meet at any time. I used to always train relatively heavy but it was all completely by feel. I have certain numbers in my head that I say I want to do and I want to get to a certain point before I change my reps. So, I guess it's linear because when I come back from a meet, I'm usually lighter and do more reps and as I get closer to a meet, I'm up in weight with lower reps and less sets.

What does your squat training look like with this approach?

I'm getting a lot of volume, so if I'm squatting, I'm going to squat regular and do pause [squats]. I do heavy good mornings and glute ham raises. I'll do six to seven exercises and workout for four to five hours on a good squat day. That's just how I've always been and I feel like if I'm not getting enough volume in, then I don't really get stronger

like I want.

Let's talk about the bench - America's favorite lift. It used to be your strongest lift and now you say that it's not. What are you trying to do to fix it?

It's my least favorite lift. I call my bench, "Can't Get Right," and it's because I have a torn supraspinatus in both rotators.

So what are you trying to do for it since they can't surgically fix it? Are you doing stuff for your upper back or what?

I stopped doing heavy benching. I've been doing high rep, high volume for the past four or five months and it seems to be working. So, this summer I did Summer Showdown and I only benched 407 lbs. I missed my second two attempts at 429 lbs. but then at Boss of Bosses 2 at the end of August, I hit 441 and it went well. In between that summer meet and Boss of Bosses, I didn't go heavy. I went 385x4 and that was after doing five weeks of light, high rep stuff. So, I started at 275 and 315. [I benched] 275 for as many reps as possible, trying to get at least 60 reps [completed] in as few sets as possible and [I benched] 315 trying to get 30 reps in as few sets as possible. I did that for about five or six weeks so I got to the point where I was doing 275 for about 16-17 reps per set and I got to where I was doing 315 for about 11 reps per set. That is how it helped start strengthening some of the smaller muscles and created thickness and making things stronger than they were.

On to deadlifting. You said on Instagram that you don't feel as much internal pressure when you wear a belt - it doesn't matter if you wear it high or low. So what do you do to make up for not having a belt?

I think that a lot of times, it's what you get used to. A lot of times people start out with a belt so young or so early on that they're unfamiliar with anything else. So, to try to [deadlift] without it is foreign and they think they're just going to kill themselves. Since I didn't know anything about a belt, I didn't train in it. I didn't get my first pair of Chucks to lift in until three weeks before my first meet at which I totaled 1875 lbs. So, I was in LA Fitness squatting in basketball shoes, like LeB-



rons or something.

How do you train yourself to be able to pull 800 plus pounds without a belt?

So, I've trained for so long without a belt that I guess my core didn't have a choice but to get stronger. Since I'm naturally built with this power belly, I think it's kind of like having a "built in belt" – so, I guess you could say I'm blessed that way. I don't do any core specific work at all. My core work is beltless deadlifting and squatting. I don't do abs. I do abs, maybe four times a year.

What is your favorite recovery method? I know we've had an in-depth conversation on Instagram about Epsom Salts, which my wife thinks is funny. What else do you do

for recovery?

Massage - I use deep tissue massage once every month or two. I like ART (Active Release Therapy) chiropractor work - I have a regular sports chiropractor that does great adjustments and then I have an ART chiropractor that gets the ART tissue work done and then I also just rest. I do Epsom Salts, like you said, and my wife walks on my back. Little stuff like that.

You got some pretty good insight from Track and Field Coach/48kg weightlifting competitor, Cicely Kyle, about external rotation in the shoulder when you tore your hand while pulling heavy triples. How important is it to share knowledge with other strength athletes across other strength disciplines whether they

also powerlift or not?

Oh, very much so. That goes for across different sports and within the powerlifting community. You should always be looking for new ideas where someone may have had the same issue that you have and they know what worked for them to fix it. Cicely is actually an accomplished fitness woman, you could say – she has done fitness competitions and she was a track and field athlete in college. We grew up in the same city - she was one of the few girls on the high school weightlifting team.

You're a top lifter in the USAPL, which is an IPF affiliate – this means that you have a good shot at making Team USA. The IPF rulebook restricts members of Team USA from

competing in international level events if they are sanctioned by federations that are considered non-IPF affiliates. These include meets like Boss of Bosses 2, which was sanctioned by the USPA. I just want to ask you some questions about your relationship with USAPL and your career plans in powerlifting.

First of all, what do you like about competing in USAPL?

It's the largest drug tested federation and I know that there are people who try to cheat the system and that happens everywhere you go – with anything you do, there's always going to be somebody who's trying to push the boundaries of the rules and all that, but at least I know that they're making an effort to test and hold people to a standard as far as drug testing goes. Now, I don't have a care or concern in the world whether or not somebody decides to juice all day, every day – it makes no difference to me. I just know that it's not something for me and it's not something that I want to do, and so it doesn't bother me either way. I like USAPL because of the fair, consistent judging and the fact that I know that I'm lifting against guys that are at least somewhat on the same playing field as me in regards to not taking any kind of substance that helps make them stronger.

The IPF - I know that you've done USAPL and not IPF international meets but they have a jury at international meets. Given what you've seen at Raw Nationals, for example, Jesse Norris had his squat red lighted - do you think it would be a good idea to have a jury at USAPL's national level meets? And do you think that this is something that other federations should adopt, too?

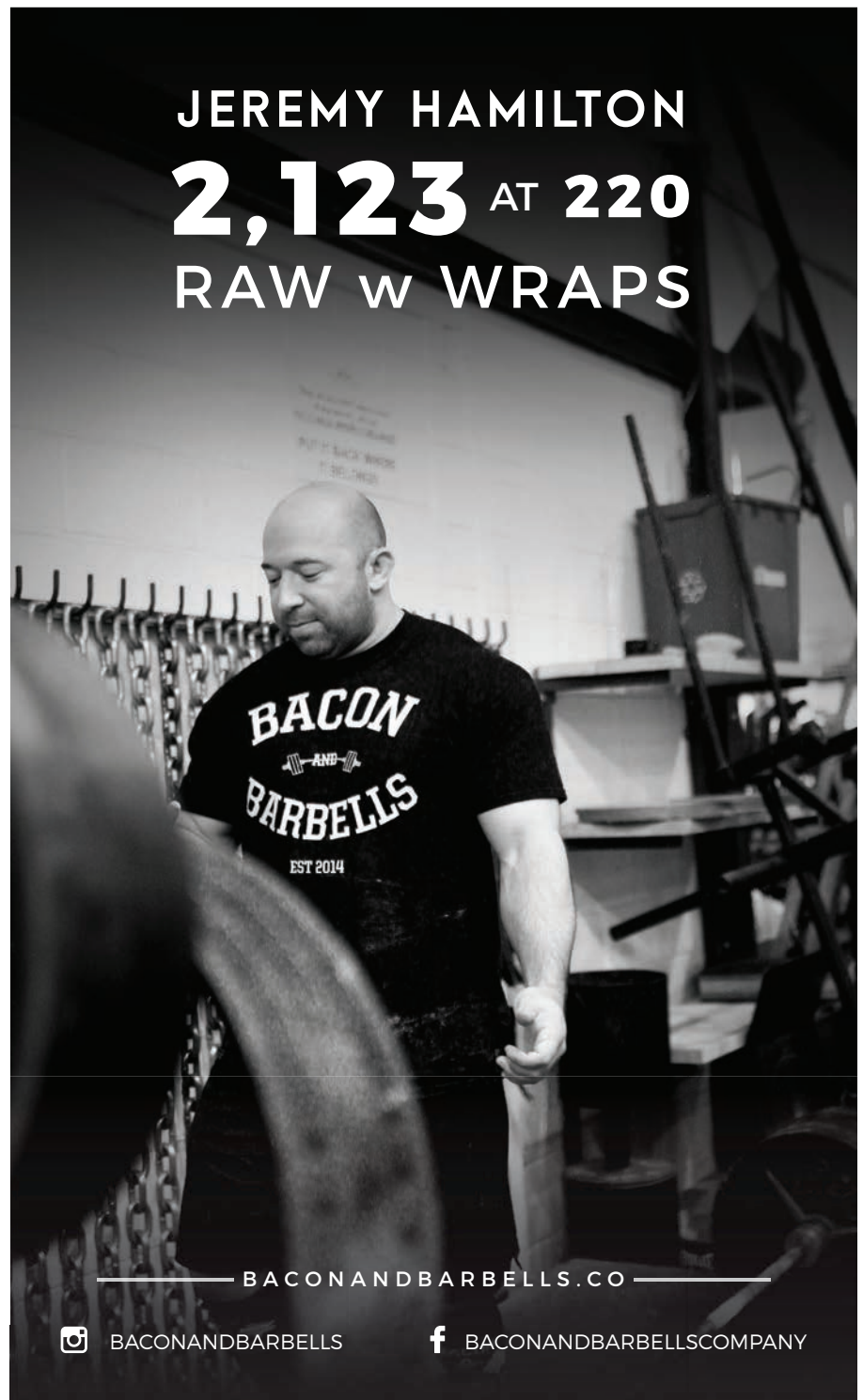
Yeah, I can agree with that; it's another level of being consistent and fair. So, it could be a good thing due to the fact that we're all human and you can't tell me that some judge couldn't have it out for a lifter or have something else going on – having that jury would actually hold those judges accountable instead of taking away something that somebody has worked so hard for. A lot of those USAPL guys don't do more than two meets a year because they plan their life around their state meet,

whether it's a National meet or World's or something like that. By having the jury, you help to remove the human element.

The International Powerlifting Federation General Assembly met in Luxembourg on November 8, 2015. In the Meeting Agenda, IPF President Gaston Parage said, "We cannot tell people who have been involved in and representing the IPF for a long time, now we do not want you



anymore, you can go." Does hearing this make you hopeful about being allowed to compete at Worlds despite doing meets in other federations?

At some point, maybe. I didn't do Nationals this year based off of the fact that they had told me that I probably wouldn't be able to do World's next year, which is in Texas. If I had known that I would not have been able to do World's before I registered for BOB2 and



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had made the commitment, I maybe would have thought about it. That's also because I hadn't ever experienced Boss of Bosses. I didn't go to the first one. Now having done it, would I put down Boss of Bosses to do a World's? I don't know. I don't know if it means that much to me. I mean, just hearing some of the experiences about World's, it would be nice. IPF World's is the biggest, most legit World's.

It's the closest thing powerlifting has to an Olympics.

Right, and because of that, I would want to, but it would have to be convenient. It would have to work for what I want to do and [also fit into] my schedule. I love traveling but if it's not to one of the places that I want to go to, then I'm probably not going to pay to go there.

I'm just a stickler on being able to do whatever I want to do. When it comes down to it, I pay for everything that goes along with my powerlifting because it is a hobby. I feel like I'm the powerlifter - I'm the one who put in the work and I'm the one who gets in the gym doing all of the sets, all of the reps. So if anything, you ought to want me. It's not that I need you, you need me, because without me, you have nothing and I think that if more powerlifters had that feeling, or took that stand, it could seem like it was more for the lifters.

I mean, I pay for all of my entry fees and I pay for all of my travel [expenses]. My wife and I go to every meet together so that we make vacations out of it. You're talking about a big investment when you're talking about going to some of those World's. A lot of the time, you're talking about \$1200 flights and we're going to make the most of that. I think that sometimes USAPL doesn't do stuff for the lifter. It's about USAPL as the organization because they know people don't have much of a choice. If you want to lift drug tested, you have to lift USAPL. If you want to do a national meet for drug tested, you've got to go USAPL so we can put it wherever and you're going to come anyway. It needs to be somewhere that's appealing, not just somewhere you want to have it at because somebody put their name in a hat. It needs

to meet certain criteria. Just like the Olympics can't be anywhere, you have to put a bid in, and there have to be certain things that you have to meet. You have to have so many hotels lined up; you have to treat it the same way to me.

Do you think that if we started adding powerlifting to events like the American Open last year, where they had a USAPL meet and a USA Weightlifting competition at the same time, that would help us to get better destinations? You'd certainly have more volume as far as fans attending.

It's possible. That could definitely be a consideration. As big as CrossFit is, a lot of powerlifters bash CrossFit, but as big as CrossFit has grown, powerlifting needs to play off of that. There are a lot of movements they do in CrossFit that are considered powerlifting. So, you need to play off of that popularity to see if there's a way to squeeze in there. I can honestly say that powerlifting isn't as exciting to sit and watch, unless you're really into it. So, we have to figure out a way to make it more exciting. I know that in 2011, when they had a powerlifting championship, a company called XPTV did a powerlifting championship where you had to do four meets - these included Clash for Cash, a couple of APF meets, a Europa and at the end, whoever had the highest Wilks average for all four meets would win a belt. When they put it on TV, they cut it up to where it was going back and forth. They showed the people who were competing against each other and it actually was good to watch on TV. I like how they did it. Powerlifting could be something great. It used to be on TV back in the days of Steve Goggins and Ed Coan. I mean, you look at the crowd at those things and it was crazy. We just have to figure out how to get it more mainstream again.

You're sponsored by NSA/NSP. How did that relationship begin and how long have you been with them?

That is Natural Strength Athlete/Natural Strength Powerlifters-it's a small company started by Matt Somer. He's a powerlifter, a USAPL powerlifter, and that's just promoting what he consid-

ers real strength. [He considers real strength to be] Drug free lifting and trying to show some of the younger generation, the younger guys [what real strength is]. Matt is pretty young, he's 21 or 22 years old and he is just trying to show some of the younger guys that you can be strong and you can compete with the guys that aren't lifting tested or that are juicing and be natural. It is possible. That's what that is about. They've only been sponsoring me for about four months.

Is there anybody you'd like to recognize or thank before we close?

I'd like to thank some of the guys that I've mentioned, such as Tony Conyers - he was one of the first guys that wanted to help me, not expecting anything. He just saw some potential in me and wanted to encourage me to try to do more. Hennis Washington - he was my workout partner for about a year or so. I want to thank him and Joe Hill down in Tampa for the time I spent with them. Steve, of course Steve Goggins, for looking out [for me] - he'd been trying to get me over to his place to train for years and the only reason it took so long was location.

Where can people follow your training and learn more about you?

Okay, I don't post my training anywhere but I probably should start. I do keep track of it. There was a point where I didn't. I probably started keeping track of my training in 2010. Before that, I would just go off of memory but now I do keep track of all of my training - I keep it in my phone and email it to myself. So, I could probably post my training in a blog, but I just never have. A lot of stuff with me is just time because it is a hobby, like I keep saying, I don't dedicate as much time to it as I should. That's why I know that I'm not necessarily as popular on Instagram as I could be, because I don't video every set I do and put it out there. I may video something every two months or so, when I think about it.

So, where can people find you assuming you get around to posting those videos?

Instagram: @perryellisjr
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THE HIERARCHY OF IMPORTANCE IN NUTRITION

WHAT YOU THINK IS MOST
IMPORTANT MIGHT NOT BE

BY LAURIN CONLIN

When it comes to nutrition, a lot of people are hung up with the small details – nutrient timing, when do I take XYZ supplements, etc. In reality, these components only make up a small portion of the ‘big picture’ and are often taken out of context. Ironically, it is usually those that are just getting started (therefore those who should be caring the least about the small details) that are misled to these conclusions. Thanks to the media, many are more concerned with how frequently they should eat a meal versus how many total calories they are consuming. This article cuts through that nonsense and gives a step by step look into the hierarchy of what is most to least important in regards to nutrition.

ONE: Total calories consumed

This is it – the holy grail of nutrition. I am the first one to admit that there is more to it than just calories in versus calories out, but we cannot ignore the facts that if you either in a deficit or a surplus of calories, typically your body will respond accordingly. There are anomalies, of course, but generally speaking most people are not outliers and should not be treated as such. If you are eating more than you need to maintain your body weight each day, you will gain weight (except for the genetic freaks). Taking a look at the total calories consumed each day should be the starting point for all nutritional interventions and therapies.

TWO: Macronutrient ratios

After you have a grasp on the amount of calories you are eating every day, now we can take a deeper look at how those calories are arranged each day. There are three macronutrients – carbohydrates, fats and proteins. Carbohydrates and proteins have 4 calories/gram while fats have 9 calories/gram. Therefore, 1000 calories of fat versus 1000 calories of carbs is going to look a lot different and effect you quite differently. Macronutrient ratios will look different for everyone depending on their goals, their bodies and their lifestyles. The takeaway here is that proper macronutrient ratios are key for each individual to reach their desired goals, ideal body composition and maintaining a sustainable diet.

THREE: Nutrient timing

Contrary to popular belief, this is not most important. However, just because it is not the most important component of nutrition, does not mean it is unimportant. Nutrient timing typically refers to how calories are partitioned during the day. More specifically for the athlete, calories peri-workout (before, during and after). Nutrient timing will not make or break your performance or physique goals but proper nutrient timing can definitely help! If you look to the scientific research on this topic, it is often very unclear what is 'optimal' because there are a lot of conflicting findings. It is generally regarded that carbohydrates



peri-workout is the most advantageous time to ingest them. This would lead to meals not around training being comprised of mostly proteins and fats while peri-workout would focus on mostly proteins and carbohydrates. However, there are some people who would rather eat balanced meals all day – and that is fine! The research is not conclusive enough to say one thing or another so if you will stick to one way of eating over another, that is more important in the long term. This goes back to the first principle – total calories consumed. 'Don't lose the forest through the trees' (or something like that) and place too

much emphasis on nutrient timing when you can't stick to meals someone else deemed 'optimal' and disregard the larger picture, like total calories and macro ratios.

FOUR: Supplementation

Supplements can be very useful for increasing performance and overall improving your health. However, without sound nutrition, supplements are typically not as effective. Now this statement does depend on a variety of factors. For example, supplementing with a multi-vitamin, fish oil and BCAA's on top of a proper nutrition plan is a great idea. On the other hand, going out and buying a pre-workout, thermogenic and beta-alanine before you have any idea what to eat is not such a great idea. Supplements should do just that – supplement your diet – not be the first area you wish you change.

BONUS: Food quality – Where your food comes from and what is in it

This is a hot topic that will vary wildly depending on who you talk to and what you believe. There are some who choose to eat 100% organic, unprocessed foods while there are others who disregard what is in their food but eat within their caloric needs – both are on the extreme end of the spectrum. Neither is right or wrong, this is all personal preference. Everyone will

have their own opinion but my take is this – eat mostly whole nutrient dense foods, enjoy a variety of options and don't miss out of a few treats if you feel like indulging.

Where do I start?

Now that you know the hierarchy of importance in nutrition, most people will ask 'Alright, well where do I start?' What I typically recommend is at least 3-7 days of tracking what you are eating – this is the best place to start. Make sure to include weekdays and weekends. This is important because many people will start off the week eating a certain way, and eat very differently (read overeat) over the weekend. A key aspect to properly tracking your current intake is to not change how you are eating just because you are tracking. That will defeat the purpose and not give you an accurate baseline to work with! Be truthful and write down everything. You can either journal your food intake and then research the nutrition information or

use a macro tracking app to start – My Macros+ or My Fitness Pal both being great options.

After you have gathered your baseline intake, you now have an idea of how many calories you are consuming daily. The next step is to ask yourself these questions: Am I gaining, losing or maintain weight? What are my goals? Does my intake fluctuate wildly? These answers will all be highly individualized from person to person but are important for everyone. I see a majority of people whose intakes has very low lows and very high highs – consistently eating in this yo-yo type pattern is the metabolic equivalent of running in circles getting nowhere fast. Just by simply tracking your intake you have a better understanding of your daily and weekly eating patterns and behaviors.

Only after you have an idea of your total calories consumed should you venture into the other points I mentioned in the article – macronutrient ratios, nutrient timing and supplementation. Everyone will adhere to different

macronutrient ratios better than others so play around with different amounts of carbs, fats and proteins. Look to the average amounts of these that you consume and increase or decrease depending on goals and preferences. The final step is to look at how nutrient timing is affecting your consistency, adherence, performance and goals and how the proper supplements can aid in your goals, performance and overall health.

FINAL POINT: Adherence

A pervasive theme of the article is adherence. You can follow all these principles to the tee, but without adherence, you will not have success. Something that is often overlooked in nutrition (especially nutrition within the fitness industry) is the idea that something needs to be sustainable in order for you to stick to it long term. Once you make your diet sustainable, you can maximize adherence. And once you maximize adherence, you can achieve and maintain your nutritional goals. **PM**

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LUIGI FAGIANI

BY RALPH MURRAY

At a recent powerlifting meet, I had the opportunity to observe my first successful 800 lb. raw deadlift when Luigi Fagiani called for this as his opener. Amazingly, because the plates used were wide 45 lb. plates, the weight went clear to the end of the bar. With the crowd cheering, he easily hoisted the bar up smoothly, receiving three white lights. Of course, it did not hurt that the incomparable Ed Coan was at the meet and was one of the fans that was shouting encouragement. Afterwards, I had the opportunity to talk with Lou.





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Give us a little background information: how old are you, where do you live and what do you do for a living?

I'm twenty-five years old, and I was born and raised in Niagara Falls, New York. I am currently employed with a pro audio company, working in logistics.

What does your normal week of training look like? What is your meal plan and daily routine?

My typical day begins at 7:00 am and after I eat breakfast, I am out the door by 7:50. I will usually have a meal around 10 am and then at noon, I usually go home to eat lunch. Then, I take a nap for about half an hour. Around 4:00 pm, I have another meal and I finish work by 5 pm. After work, I go home for another quick nap and then I shower and head to the gym from about 7:30 to 9:30. I then return home to eat dinner, shower and am in bed by 11:30 or 12:00.

For me, sleep is the key. I need my sleep in order to get a good workout. You need a good amount of sleep to

grow and recover and in powerlifting - that's what is needed!

How long have you been strength training and how long have you been competing?

I've been lifting since I was seventeen years old. At that time, it was more to stay in shape for hockey. I've been strength training since I was about nineteen years old. This means that I was lifting to get big rather than just to stay in shape. My first meet was a push/pull at a local meet, Mickey Rats [a popular "bench on the beach" meet near Buffalo], when I was nineteen. I did this meet just for fun with a bunch of guys from my gym. I didn't really start to get competitive and serious until I was about twenty-two years old. It was not until the end of 2012 and the beginning of 2013, that I began looking into bigger meets.

Give us a little insight as to the progression of your lifts: how much have your lifts gone up over the past few years and what are your current best lifts in competition?

When I started to get serious with

lifting, my best lifts were a 525 lb. squat, 365 lb. bench and a 684 lb. deadlift (raw with no wraps at 220). My best current numbers at each weight class are [squat/bench/deadlift/total/weight class]:

- 628-419-727-1805 - 220 raw.
- 650-445-727-1810-220 raw with wraps.
- 644-441-782-1851-242 raw
- 744-464-821-1989-242 raw with wraps.

I realized how good my pull was, so I wanted to get it even stronger. However, down the road, I realized a big deadlift wouldn't take me all the way. A big pull alone wouldn't win meets, so I started cracking down on my other lifts. I figured out what I needed to fix and worked on it every time I was in the gym.

What type of a training routine do you follow?

From day one, no one has helped me. I've done everything on my own for the most part. I've never had a trainer or a nutritionist or anything like that. The way that I train, eat and take supplements has been figured out just by

reading up on things or with trial and error. I spend about six days a week in the gym, usually about two hours each day. I do my own "programming or training" because it works for me. A lot of people think my type of training is stupid, but it's what I like and it's helping me with what I need help on. If my squat is lagging, I'll work on it more and work less on my pull. If my bench is down, I'll bench three days a week instead of two.

Your squat and bench are very impressive, but your deadlift is world class – A Number One ranking on Powerlifting Watch. Tell us a little bit about your deadlift training.

I've always been a good deadlifter from day one. I guess I was just born to deadlift – that's what got me into the sport of powerlifting. In the beginning, I used to train really stupidly – deadlifting three days a week, without a belt or straps, using bad form and wearing running shoes. But I believe this made me stronger in the long run. The more I got into lifting and watching videos on YouTube, seeing what people wore and

"MY DEADLIFT TRAINING USUALLY INVOLVES WORKING UP TO A HEAVY SINGLE, DOUBLE OR TRIPLE, THEN BACK DOWN TO A MODERATE WEIGHT FOR A FEW SETS OF 3S, 4S OR 5S IN ORDER TO WORK ON SPEED"

how they pulled, I started doing that, as well. Then, over time, I started my own way of deadlifting. Taking things from other lifters and incorporating them into my deadlift.

So, like I said, when I started lifting I loved to deadlift and I used to pull three days a week. But I was also 19-20 years old and didn't know anything. But nowadays, if I'm in the mood and feeling good (or if I'm having a sh*tty

day and need to get some anger out), I'll usually pull once a week or maybe twice. I've never been a fan of band or chain work because I like the feel of the raw weight. I don't want to be guessing what I'm pulling and what the bands are giving or taking away. My deadlift training usually involves working up to a heavy single, double or triple, then back down to a moderate weight for a few sets of 3s, 4s or 5s in order to work on speed. I also like to incorporate a lot of deficit work and I feel like that is what I'm gaining a lot of strength from.

After pulling, I do a lot of accessory work. This is what gets you a big pull! People don't see what people like me or guys like Pete Rubish do behind the camera. They don't see the things that we don't post on social media. They just want to see the big weights, not the 30 lb. back flies. My deadlift training takes about forty minutes. Now that is only a third of my back day! I spend another hour and twenty minutes doing more bodybuilding type workouts – a lot of reps, but with heavy weights and a lot of rows, pull downs and stuff like

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Fagiani and his father.

that. I pound my body when it comes to that type of workout. Deadlifting is fun, but you are going to grow from doing those types of accessories. You have to build a solid foundation and work even the smaller muscles to support the bigger muscles.

Would you mind sharing some specifics, such as numbers or percentages that you use for your squat and bench routines? For instance,

leading up to a meet, what would your last four weeks look like for your bench and/or squats?

The last four weeks leading up to a meet are almost the same every time I go into a meet. Four weeks out, I'll usually hit my planned opener and second [attempt] for my squat. Then about ten to twelve days out, I'll take my opener again, and maybe a little less, and then [I'll hit] a planned second attempt.

I do bench a lot differently. Four weeks out, I'll test my max and then three weeks out, I'll bench twice. The first day, I'll work up to a second attempt, and then I'll back down for a few working speed sets. Two weeks out, I'll hit my opener for a double and then take my second attempt after that (if can hit my second attempt after a heavy double, I should have no problem hitting it in a meet). Then the second



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day that week, I'll hit my opener one more time (usually about six to seven days out from my meet). With bench pressing, I need to keep feeling the weight. It's the one lift that I feel like I'll forget the movement of – I worry that I'll forget what the weight feels like with too much time off. So, I go in and reassure myself by hitting my planned attempts over and over. Also, I feel like my recovery on my bench is

better than my other lifts.

For deadlifts, I usually take my opener and second attempt four weeks out then again three weeks and two weeks out. I've learned how my body works now and I don't pull for about twelve to fourteen days leading up to a meet and it seems to be working very well for me. Rest is the key.

You mentioned that you learned a lot from reading and watching You-

Tube. Are there any specific sites or YouTube channels that you used?

My main motivation starting out was Pete Rubish and his crazy ass deadlifting in his basement. I used his channel more to inspire me than anything. At that time, I was only pulling low 600s – now we're at about the same weight. Also, just watching guys like Benedikt Magnússon – that's where I got my roll from on deadlifts.

I remember one time I took a guy to the gym with no real free weight experience and he deadlifted 500 pounds the third time he touched a bar. Were you like that? Do you remember your first deadlift experience?

When I first got into lifting, I didn't really know what deadlifting was, so I never really trained it. The first time I did it, [I pulled] 495, with no belt, in Nike socks and horrible form - from then on, I was hooked. My first meet, I pulled 633 on a deadlift bar and I went crazy because the most I pulled up until that day was 585. From then on, I knew I was made to deadlift.

Can you tell us a little about your training partners and the gym where you workout?

In the past few years, I've been through too many training partners - it has gotten to the point where I just like training alone. For a good year or so, my lifting started to get a lot better when I trained alone. I like to train late, around 7:30 pm, and not many people like doing that - I wasn't going to change my

"MOST OF THE PEOPLE I'VE TRAINED WITH OVER THE YEARS DIDN'T REALLY HAVE THE LOVE AND DEDICATION THAT I HAD AND SOMETIMES THEY DID NOT SHOW UP"

schedule for them. Most of the people I've trained with over the years didn't really have the love and dedication that I had and sometimes they did not show up. That could be really sh*tty if you're planning a high percentage bench or squat day. But over the past year or so, I found a good group of guys to train on and off with. One of my main training partners that I train nearly every night with is Joey Casero. We drove fifteen hours to Southaven, Mississippi, to compete in the USPA "Load The Bar" meet. He's been the best training

partner I've found over the years. He loves lifting and is super dedicated. He's never missed a planned workout and he pushes me to do better. Another good training partner and long-time friend is Adam Ferchen, owner of the new powerlifting gym, Elite Iron. We have different training methods, but sometimes we train together and when we do, it's always a good session. We barely talk and get right to lifting. Most of the talking will be about what we want on the bar. Adam and I have done multiple meets together over the past year or so.

How many meets have you done in the past twelve months and in how many of those meets did you deadlift (or attempt) 800 or more pounds? How many times have you ever deadlifted 800 or more in a meet?

In the past twelve months, I've competed maybe a total of twelve times. Yes, I know that is a lot [laughter]. There is just something about being on the platform that is unexplainable. I compete for fun because I love the camaraderie of the lifters, as well as



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the experience that I gain. The reason I compete so much is because I like going away to do the big meets with the big name guys. Those are the meets I really train for. But then, when meets are close to home, I can't miss them. I get to lift with people that I see training at the gym, or my friends who aren't the strongest, but still love lifting. These are the meets that are most fun for me because they are laid back and I don't take it too seriously. In the past twelve months, I've probably failed 800 about five times (a couple attempts were very close, but just not there). I have now completed 800 twice, 804 twice, and 821 once in a meet.

We talked a bit about your experience at the USPA Nations in Las Vegas, last August. I was impressed with your positive attitude towards the officials [Lou was red-lighted on his first two squat attempts and then was bizarrely interrupted just before attempting his 800 pound deadlift – breaking his concentration and psych]. Would you mind sharing some thoughts on this experience, including your effort to cut weight to make 220?

In my mind, the judges don't want to give you red lights - they want to see you get the lift and do well. At Nationals, I feel like my first two squats were deep enough, but at the end of the day, they were red lighted. So, I had to get my sh*t together and I had my teammate, Brandon Allen, in my ear telling me what I had to do. His advice was to sink it and that is what I did. In my eyes, USPA is one of the strictest federations and I would not want it any other way. I don't want gifts and they don't give them.

Ahhh...stopping me before my 804 attempt - it was a pretty crappy thing to happen. I think I would have pulled it if I wasn't stopped. I was ready to go, but then [the official from the head table] stopped me right before I approached the bar [and delayed the lift for almost a minute], so I lost a lot of my adrenaline. If you watched the [You-Tube] video, I still almost got it - I just could not get that last inch of lockout. But in the judge's defense, they were just doing their job and making sure everything was correct [with the weight I called for], but it was just bad timing for

“IN MY MIND, THE JUDGES DON'T WANT TO GIVE YOU RED LIGHTS - THEY WANT TO SEE YOU GET THE LIFT AND DO WELL. AT NATIONALS, I FEEL LIKE MY FIRST TWO SQUATS WERE DEEP ENOUGH, BUT AT THE END OF THE DAY, THEY WERE RED LIGHTED”

me. 804 at 220 has been the monkey on my back that I just can't get.

The cut to 220 lbs. wasn't too bad until I got to Vegas. I started the cut a week out at 244 lbs. Stan "the Rhino" Efferding helped me with the cut and he did a great job - getting me to 218 lbs. on weigh-in day. When I left home on Thursday, I weighed 233, so I had about 13 lbs. to lose. When I landed in Vegas, I was at 228 lbs. still feeling fine, but that night was not good. I couldn't sleep and I was exhausted. At 4 am, I started my hot baths. At this point, I had been about twenty-six hours without water and food. At 8:00 am, Adam and Noah (the owners from Apeman Strong) came to check on me; they could see how badly depleted I looked, but I made weight!

After weigh-ins, I could not get my weight back up and I did not feel well. The next day, I only weighed 226 lbs., and my feet were swollen and it hurt to move them. Vegas is a tough place to cut weight and try to put it back on because of how dry and hot it is. I had a horrible meet, and not to make excuses, but the weight cut hurt me. I will probably never cut weight while traveling again. I totaled 1950+ twice before that meet, but only totaled 1747 at Nationals.

Lou, we talked a bit and you said that powerlifting has really helped you come out of a dark place. It has helped you mentally get through

some tough times. Would you mind sharing this with the readers?

After my mother passed away about three years ago, I went into a dark place. At first, I blocked everyone out. I took time off of work, didn't talk to anyone and didn't want to be around anyone. A couple of months passed and I thought I was ok, but I was wrong. I started going out, getting drunk and getting into fist fights over and over. I didn't care about anything in the world at all. Then I had two bad weekends in a row. I got a DWI one weekend and then the next weekend, I got arrested for getting into a fight and hurting a guy pretty badly. Well at that point, I realized I needed to wake up. I realized that this isn't what my mother would want. So instead of going out and drinking, I went to the gym for hours, until I was too tired to do anything else. I would beat myself up in the gym because I had so much anger, but when I left, I was too tired to think about anything but going to bed. That is when I realized I was good at this sport and I can become something. I also changed into a better person. I became more caring about things and people. My mom always believed in karma, so that is something I strongly believe in now. You help someone and good things will eventually happen to you. That is why when people want to talk or ask questions at meets or in the gym, I try to help them the best that I can instead of blowing them off.

I can personally attest to your good attitude at meets. You were friendly to others and you were always smiling at the two meets I saw you at recently. As we close, is there anyone you would like to thank?

The first person, and the most important person I would like to thank, is my mother. Each time I step on the platform, it's for her - to make her proud. Also, my father, because without his support, a lot of this wouldn't be possible.

I would also like to thank my sponsors, Apeman Strong, who I've become great friends with - they have helped me in my personal life and in powerlifting. Additionally, thanks to Andee and Mark Bell for this recognition in POWER magazine. **PM**

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Super Training Corner

Having powerful hamstrings and a STrong back is key in powerlifting. Your backside is one of the critical muscle groups used within the "Big Three" lifts (squat, bench and deadlift). In order to increase muscle growth and mass, volume is essential. This particular training session focused on speed and form for the two main types of deadlift movements. This training day was followed by hypertrophy to increase blood flow and growth.

DEADLIFTS:

70%x10x3 reps

STIFF LEG DEADLIFTS (varying feet width each set):

3x6 reps

GHR (or Hamstring Curls if at a commercial gym):

3x20 reps

SINGLE ARM DUMBBELL ROWS:

2x20 reps, 2x15 reps, 1x10 reps (increasing weight each set)

CHIN UPS:

5x10 Reps

BANDED OR WEIGHTED BACK EXTENSIONS:

3x10 reps

WEIGHTED PLANKS:

3x60 seconds

After the first two movements, you can lessen the amount of time between sets. If you are unable to accomplish the entire set, take a short break and finish the set after a brief rest. The last several movements should get the heart going and the body sweating. Check back next issue for another routine from Super Training Gym - "The STrongest Gym in the West!"





Mark Bell

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Current Top 50 Rankings: Men, 220 lbs...

For these rankings, we're taking the top lifts out of raw, raw with wraps, single-ply, and multi-ply.

SQUAT

Rank	Name	Federation	Date	Division	Squat
1	Jimmie Pacifico	SPF	2015-12-05	Multi-Ply	1020
2	Matt Minuth	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	965
3	Jason Coker	IPA	2015-03-14	Multi-Ply	950
4	Sam Byrd	SPF	2015-03-21	Raw with Wraps	915
5	James Burdette	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	905
6	Derek Wilcox	RPS	2015-07-18	Multi-Ply	900
6	Jeff Wampler	SPF	2015-12-05	Multi-Ply	900
8	Joe Buck	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	885
9	Zac Whalen	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	865
9	Joseph Sonntag	APF	2015-04-12	Single-Ply	865
11	Anthony Oliveira	SPF	2015-11-22	Multi-Ply	850
11	Chad Hammond	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	850
11	Kevin Oak	RPS	2015-07-12	Raw with Wraps	850
11	Luis Vasquez	SPF	2016-01-23	Raw with Wraps	850
15	Jj Thomas	UPA	2015-03-27	Multi-Ply	843
15	Daniel Tinajero	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	843
17	Tee Cummings	SPF	2015-04-26	Raw with Wraps	840
18	Dan Green	RUPC	2015-02-08	Raw with Wraps	837
19	Amit Sapir	UPA	2015-11-14	Raw with Wraps	832
20	Tee Cummins	SPF	2015-12-05	Raw with Wraps	830
20	Joshua Smith	RPS	2015-12-12	Raw with Wraps	830
22	Joe Jester	IPA	2015-03-14	Multi-Ply	825
22	Zane Geeting	XPC	2015-03-07	Multi-Ply	825
22	Brodie White	SPF	2015-12-05	Multi-Ply	825
22	Augie	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	825
26	Jeremy Hamilton	USPA	2015-08-29	Raw with Wraps	821
26	Amit Sapir	UPA	2015-11-14	Raw	821
28	Justin Jackson	SPF	2015-12-05	Raw with Wraps	820
29	Shaun Morgan	RPS	2015-06-20	Multi-Ply	815
29	Shawn Morgan	RPS	2015-06-20	Multi-Ply	815
31	Ben O'Brien	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	810
31	Jonathan Ross	RPS	2015-08-29	Multi-Ply	810
31	Fred Seewald	UPA	2015-04-18	Raw with Wraps	810
31	Jim Jones	RPS	2015-04-18	Multi-Ply	810
31	Clint Moore	UPA	2015-11-07	Multi-Ply	810
36	Pete Sengos	RPS	2015-04-18	Multi-Ply	805
37	Greg Denny	USPA	2015-04-25	Multi-Ply	804
37	Tom Finn	IPA	2015-02-28	Raw with Wraps	804
39	Mark Slivinski	SPF	2015-06-20	Single-Ply	800
39	Paul Oneid	RPS	2015-02-07	Raw with Wraps	800
39	Carlos Reyes	RPS	2015-02-07	Raw with Wraps	800
42	Logan Kunkel	RPS	2016-01-16	Multi-Ply	785
42	Jordan Wong	RPS	2015-05-30	Raw with Wraps	785
42	Jordan Wong	RPS	2015-05-31	Raw	785
45	Nick Graves	RPS	2015-12-06	Raw	775
45	Nick Graves	RPS	2015-12-05	Multi-Ply	775
45	Bob Merkh	RPS	2015-08-28	Raw with Wraps	775
48	Brandon Franklin	SPF	2015-11-07	Raw with Wraps	770
49	Cham Huy	RPS	2015-04-18	Multi-Ply	765
50	Shawn Buckley	USPA	2015-05-30	Single-Ply	761

BENCH PRESS

Rank	Name	Federation	Date	Division	Bench
1	Matt Minuth	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	870
2	Jason Coker	IPA	2015-03-14	Multi-Ply	860
3	Jimmie Pacifico	IPA	2015-03-14	Multi-Ply	765
4	scott mecham	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	755
5	James Burdette	UPA	2015-08-01	Multi-Ply	744
6	Joe Buck	UPA	2015-11-07	Multi-Ply	735
7	Tom Waldrep	APF	2015-10-03	Single-Ply	733
8	Timothy Hensley	RPS	2015-08-29	Multi-Ply	715
8	Tim Hensley	RPS	2015-08-28	Multi-Ply	715
10	Adam Mamola	USAPL	2015-03-08	Single-Ply	701
11	Greg Powell	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	700
11	Tom Waldrep	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	700
11	Eric Decaires	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	700
14	Tony Carlino	USPA	2015-06-13	Single-Ply	683
15	Daniel Tinajero	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	672
16	Jj Thomas	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	660
17	Jonathan Ross	RPS	2015-08-29	Multi-Ply	635
18	Ben O'Brien	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	633
19	Zac Whalen	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	625
20	Brodie White	SPF	2015-12-05	Multi-Ply	615
21	Shawn Morgan	RPS	2015-06-20	Multi-Ply	600
21	James Matta	RPS	2015-08-28	Multi-Ply	600
21	Joe Jester	IPA	2015-03-14	Multi-Ply	600
21	Clint Moore	UPA	2015-11-07	Multi-Ply	600
21	Shaun Morgan	RPS	2015-06-20	Multi-Ply	600
26	Victor Mistratov	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	595
27	Pete Grohoski	IPF	2015-04-18	Single-Ply	594
28	Augie	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	585
29	Jeff Johnston	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	584
30	Chris Bartl	RPS	2015-08-28	Multi-Ply	580
31	Bruce Mendoza	USPA	2015-06-20	Single-Ply	578
32	Corey Leeves	SPF	2015-12-12	Multi-Ply	567
33	Matthew Williams	RPS	2015-12-12	Raw	565
34	Derek Lankford	APF	2015-03-28	Multi-Ply	562
35	Derek Wilcox	RPS	2015-07-18	Multi-Ply	560
36	Brandon Dunbar	APF	2015-10-23	Multi-Ply	556
36	Ryan Marble	USPA	2015-09-12	Multi-Ply	556
36	Joseph Sonntag	APF	2015-04-12	Single-Ply	556
36	Rodney Wood	USPA	2015-03-28	Single-Ply	556
40	Riley Burrows	USPA	2015-02-28	Multi-Ply	551
40	Kurt Larsen	UPA	2015-04-11	Multi-Ply	551
40	Shawn Frankl	UPA	2015-03-27	Raw	551
40	Josh Stottlemire	USPA	2015-12-12	Single-Ply	551
44	Asa Barnes	USPA	2015-02-21	Single-Ply	545
44	Sherman White	SPF	2015-06-06	Raw	545
46	Matt Phelps	USPA	2015-02-14	Raw	540
46	Isaac Moises	USPA	2015-09-13	Single-Ply	540
46	Sheyne Demello	USPA	2015-06-13	Single-Ply	540
49	Chad Hammond	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	535
50	Jimi Gordon	APF	2015-10-23	Single-Ply	534
50	Joseph Sonntagg	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	534
50	Matt Ladewski	RPS	2015-12-12	Raw	534
50	Doug Noebe	UPA	2015-04-25	Multi-Ply	534

Free For All! (Raw, Single-Ply or Multi-Ply)

DEADLIFT

Rank	Name	Federation	Date	Division	Deadlift
1	Ian Bell	USAPL	2015-03-08	Single-Ply	854
2	Mike Conley	SPF	2016-01-16	Raw	800
3	Jeremy Hamilton	USPA	2015-08-29	Raw	783
4	Fred Seewald	UPA	2015-04-18	Raw	782
4	Dan Green	RUPC	2015-02-08	Raw	782
6	Jesse Norris	USAPL	2015-10-15	Raw	777
6	Michael Armendariz	USPA	2015-09-12	Raw	777
8	Jimmie Pacifico	IPA	2015-03-14	Multi-Ply	770
9	Kevin Oak	USPA	2016-01-23	Raw	766
10	Tee Cummins	SPF	2015-12-05	Raw	765
10	Zane Geeting	XPC	2015-03-07	Multi-Ply	765
12	Jake Frazier	USPA	2015-08-22	Raw	760
12	Pete Rubish	USPA	2015-02-07	Raw	760
12	Matt Ladewski	RPS	2015-12-12	Raw	760
15	Daniel Tinajero	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	749
15	Alastair MacNicol	RUPC	2015-02-07	Raw	749
15	Greg Wise	USPA	2015-08-08	Raw	749
15	Ernie Lilliebridge Jr	UPA	2015-11-14	Raw	749
19	Ogden Myklebust	USPA	2015-08-23	Raw	744
19	Ben O'Brien	USPA	2015-02-07	Raw	744
19	Tom Finn	RPS	2015-12-12	Raw	744
22	Adam Ferchen	RPS	2015-12-12	Raw	740
22	Justin Jackson	SPF	2015-12-05	Raw	740
24	Ben Rice	USPA	2015-02-14	Raw	738
24	Victor Biryukov	USPA	2015-07-11	Raw	738
24	Sean Hoey	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	738
24	Garrett Bailey	USAPL	2015-03-08	Single-Ply	738
28	Alfonso Avalos Jr	USPA	2015-04-26	Raw	733
28	Alfonso Avatos	USPA	2015-08-29	Raw	733
30	Logan Kunkel	RPS	2016-01-16	Multi-Ply	730
30	Bryan Doberdruk	RPS	2015-09-19	Raw	730
30	Tee Cummings	SPF	2015-04-26	Raw	730
30	Joe Hardy	RPS	2015-05-17	Raw	730
34	David Labrie	USPA	2015-10-10	Raw	727
34	Cory Svenson	UPA	2015-11-14	Raw	727
34	Cardell Oliver	USPA	2015-10-31	Raw	727
37	Kevin Dickhut	SPF	2015-03-14	Raw	725
38	Kenneth Coleman	USPA	2015-05-02	Raw	722
38	Ben O'Brien	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	722
38	Mike Peltz	USPA	2015-08-29	Raw	722
38	Luigi Fagiani	USPA	2015-07-11	Raw	722
42	James Robinson	SPF	2015-04-18	Raw	720
43	Garrett Bailey	USAPL	2015-03-06	Raw	716
43	Brandon Franklin	USPA	2015-02-07	Raw	716
43	Brandon Tunquist	UPA	2015-12-12	Raw	716
46	Matt Minuth	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	715
46	Jj Thomas	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	715
46	Chad Croteau	RPS	2015-11-21	Raw	715
49	Payton Cox	SPF	2015-02-21	Raw	710
49	Daniel Tinajero	RUPC	2015-02-08	Raw	710
49	Layne Norton	IPF	2015-06-13	Raw	710
49	James Yourkoski	USPA	2015-08-15	Raw	710
49	Corey Svenson	UPA	2015-04-18	Raw	710

TOTAL

Rank	Name	Federation	Date	Division	Total
1	Matt Minuth	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	2550
1	Jimmie Pacifico	IPA	2015-03-14	Multi-Ply	2550
3	Jason Coker	IPA	2015-03-14	Multi-Ply	2420
4	James Burdette	UPA	2015-08-01	Multi-Ply	2270
5	Daniel Tinajero	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	2265
6	Joe Buck	UPA	2015-11-07	Multi-Ply	2200
7	Zac Whalen	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	2175
8	Ben O'Brien	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	2166
9	Jj Thomas	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	2150
10	Jonathan Ross	RPS	2015-08-29	Multi-Ply	2145
11	Kevin Oak	USPA	2016-01-23	Raw with Wraps	2127
12	Jeremy Hamilton	USPA	2015-08-29	Raw with Wraps	2123
13	Dan Green	RUPC	2015-02-08	Raw with Wraps	2110
14	Shawn Morgan	RPS	2015-06-20	Multi-Ply	2105
14	Shaun Morgan	RPS	2015-06-20	Multi-Ply	2105
16	Zane Geeting	XPC	2015-03-07	Multi-Ply	2100
16	Brodie White	SPF	2015-12-05	Multi-Ply	2100
18	Derek Wilcox	RPS	2015-07-18	Multi-Ply	2085
18	Augie	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	2085
20	Jeff Wampler	SPF	2015-12-05	Multi-Ply	2070
21	Clint Moore	UPA	2015-11-07	Multi-Ply	2060
21	Chad Hammond	XPC	2015-03-06	Multi-Ply	2060
23	Tee Cummins	SPF	2015-12-05	Raw with Wraps	2055
24	Tom Finn	IPA	2015-02-28	Raw with Wraps	2028
25	Joshua Smith	RPS	2015-12-12	Raw with Wraps	2025
26	Jeremy Hamilton	RUPC	2015-02-07	Raw	2017
27	Tee Cummings	SPF	2015-04-26	Raw with Wraps	2015
28	Sam Byrd	SPF	2015-03-21	Raw with Wraps	2005
29	Fred Seewald	UPA	2015-04-18	Raw with Wraps	2000
29	Anthony Oliveira	SPF	2015-11-22	Multi-Ply	2000
29	Corey Leeves	SPF	2015-12-12	Multi-Ply	2000
29	Justin Jackson	SPF	2015-12-05	Raw with Wraps	2000
29	Joseph Sonntag	APF	2015-04-12	Single-Ply	2000
34	Chris Bartl	RPS	2015-08-28	Multi-Ply	1995
35	Greg Wise	USPA	2015-08-08	Raw with Wraps	1967
36	Luis Vasquez	SPF	2016-01-23	Raw with Wraps	1960
37	Logan Kunkel	RPS	2016-01-16	Multi-Ply	1955
38	Shawn Buckley	USPA	2015-05-30	Single-Ply	1952
39	Riley Burrows	USPA	2015-02-28	Multi-Ply	1951
40	Pete Sengos	RPS	2015-04-18	Multi-Ply	1950
40	Mark Slivinski	SPF	2015-06-20	Single-Ply	1950
42	Carlos Reyes	RPS	2015-02-07	Raw with Wraps	1945
43	Paul Oneid	RPS	2015-02-07	Raw with Wraps	1930
44	Erik Kasabuske	USAPL	2015-03-07	Single-Ply	1929
45	Joe Schillero	RPS	2015-05-09	Multi-Ply	1925
45	Joe Jester	IPA	2015-03-14	Multi-Ply	1925
47	Josh Lentz	UPA	2015-05-16	Raw with Wraps	1918
48	Daniel Tinajero	RUPC	2015-02-08	Raw with Wraps	1912
48	Cory Svenson	UPA	2015-11-14	Raw with Wraps	1912
50	Ben O'Brien	USPA	2015-02-07	Raw with Wraps	1908



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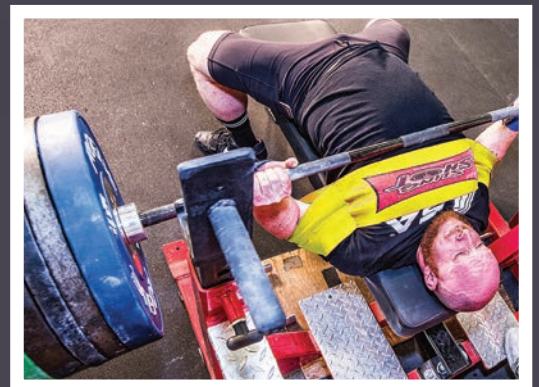
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Current Top 30 Rankings: Women 148 lbs...

For these rankings, we're taking the top lifts out of raw, raw with wraps, single-ply, and multi-ply.

SQUAT

Rank	Name	Federation	Date	Division	Squat
1	Tracey Patrick	SPF	2015-04-11	Multi-Ply	540
2	Gracie Vanasse	SPF	2015-06-27	Multi-Ply	501
3	Caitlin Sullivan	APF	2015-10-03	Multi-Ply	485
3	Vikki Traugot	RPS	2016-01-09	Multi-Ply	485
5	Emily DeMorest	RPS	2016-01-16	Multi-Ply	460
5	Kirstin Vaziri	UPA	2015-11-07	Multi-Ply	460
7	Cara Westin	SPF	2015-04-11	Multi-Ply	435
8	Tammy Howard	RPS	2015-04-26	Multi-Ply	430
8	Leah Benoit	RPS	2015-12-06	Multi-Ply	430
10	Beth Poplin	RPS	2015-12-12	Multi-Ply	420
10	Iryna Piatrovich	XPC	2015-03-06	Raw with Wraps	420
12	Janel Vegter	UPA	2015-04-19	Raw with Wraps	413
13	Rachael Frady	APA	2015-11-07	Raw with Wraps	410
13	Rita Carlsson	IPA	2015-03-14	Multi-Ply	410
15	Casey Strobe	USPA	2015-05-16	Multi-Ply	407
16	Laura Bellerose	RPS	2015-09-05	Multi-Ply	405
16	Melissa Zupec	IPA	2015-10-24	Raw with Wraps	405
16	Tammy Green	SPF	2015-10-10	Multi-Ply	405
19	Cristal Carbral	USPA	2015-04-25	Single-Ply	396
19	Eiraz Katz	USAPL	2015-04-11	Single-Ply	396
21	Renae Holmdahl	USPA	2015-02-14	Raw	385
21	April Harper	RPS	2015-10-03	Raw with Wraps	385
23	Monique Jackson	USPA	2015-10-31	Raw	381
24	Noelia Corona-Terry	USPA	2015-07-11	Raw	380
24	Molly Mullikin	USPA	2015-02-07	Raw with Wraps	380
24	Cayte Bona	RPS	2015-04-26	Multi-Ply	380
27	Bonnie Thomas	SPF	2015-04-11	Multi-Ply	375
27	Pamela Dorn	UPA	2015-11-07	Multi-Ply	375
29	Rebecca Gleich	USPA	2015-08-29	Raw with Wraps	374
30	Sarah Gannon	RPS	2015-06-27	Raw with Wraps	370
30	Jane Stabile	RPS	2015-11-21	Multi-Ply	370

BENCH PRESS

Rank	Name	Federation	Date	Division	Bench
1	Tracey Patrick	SPF	2015-04-11	Multi-Ply	355
2	Vikki Traugot	RPS	2016-01-09	Multi-Ply	345
3	Beth Poplin	RPS	2015-12-12	Multi-Ply	340
4	Cara Westin	SPF	2015-04-11	Multi-Ply	320
5	Tammy Howard	RPS	2015-04-26	Multi-Ply	315
6	Leah Benoit	RPS	2015-12-06	Multi-Ply	310
6	Monique Jackson	USPA	2015-10-31	Raw	310
8	Jennifer Thompson	IPF	2015-06-06	Raw	309
9	Gracie Vanasse	SPF	2015-06-27	Multi-Ply	303
10	Iryna Piatrovich	RUPC	2015-02-07	Raw	270
11	Tracey Patrick	UPA	2015-08-22	Raw	255
12	Cayte Bona	RPS	2015-09-05	Multi-Ply	250
13	Caitlin Sullivan	APF	2015-10-03	Multi-Ply	242
14	Sierra Nevels	SPF	2015-12-12	Raw	231
15	Stephanie Tomlinson	RPS	2015-05-09	Raw	230
15	Hannah Johnson-Hill	SPF	2015-02-28	Raw	230
17	Sophia Veiras	USAPL	2015-04-11	Single-Ply	227
18	Kirstin Vaziri	UPA	2015-11-07	Multi-Ply	225
18	Erika Hipwell	USPA	2015-12-12	Raw	225
18	Mary Bender	RPS	2015-11-14	Raw	225
18	Danielle Szocik	RPS	2015-08-28	Raw	225
18	Noelia Corona-Terry	USPA	2015-07-11	Raw	225
23	Celina Romera	USAPL	2015-04-11	Single-Ply	220
23	Maureen Clary	APF	2015-10-03	Raw	220
23	Stacie Wallace	USPA	2015-05-23	Single-Ply	220
23	Blanca Rodriguez	SPF	2015-07-18	Raw	220
27	Melissa Zupec	IPA	2015-10-24	Raw	215
27	Steph Tomlinson	XPC	2015-03-06	Raw	215
27	Loma Amore	Raw United	2015-07-18	Raw	215
30	Monica Morris	USPA	2015-10-17	Raw	214
30	Gabriella Grant	USAPL	2015-04-11	Single-Ply	214
30	Jessica Kratz	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	214
30	Peach Presley	WABDL	2015-08-29	Single-Ply	214
30	Jeanne Kairys	RUPC	2015-02-07	Raw	214

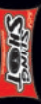
Free For All! (Raw, Single-Ply or Multi-Ply)

DEADLIFT

Rank	Name	Federation	Date	Division	Deadlift
1	Kimberly Walford	NAPF	2015-03-09	Single-Ply	562
2	Stephanie Powell	USPA	2015-06-13	Raw	507
3	Monique Jackson	USPA	2015-10-31	Raw	490
4	Gracie Vanasse	IPA	2015-03-14	Multi-Ply	480
5	Gracie Vanasse	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	462
6	Emily DeMorest	RPS	2016-01-16	Multi-Ply	460
6	Vikki Traugot	SPF	2015-04-11	Multi-Ply	460
8	Iryna Piatrovich	RUPC	2015-02-07	Raw	457
9	Molly Mullikin	USPA	2015-02-07	Raw	451
10	Tracey Patrick	UPA	2015-11-07	Multi-Ply	435
10	Jennifer Thompson	IPF	2015-06-06	Raw	435
10	April Harper	RUPC	2015-02-08	Raw	435
13	Rachael Frady	APA	2015-11-07	Raw	430
14	Erika Hipwell	USPA	2015-12-12	Raw	429
15	Jessica Kratz	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	424
16	Hannah Johnson-Hill	SPF	2015-02-28	Raw	420
17	Natalie Terrana	RUPC	2015-02-07	Raw	418
17	Kelly Reece	USPA	2015-07-11	Raw	418
19	Jane Stabile	RPS	2015-11-21	Multi-Ply	415
20	Ewa Januszkiewicz	USAPL	2015-10-15	Raw	413
20	Candace Puopolo	UPA	2015-03-27	Multi-Ply	413
22	Lauren OToole	RPS	2015-06-27	Raw	410
23	Caitlin Martinez	USPA	2015-12-05	Raw	408
24	Victoria Liang	USAPL	2015-10-15	Raw	407
24	Caitlin Sullivan	APF	2015-10-03	Multi-Ply	407
24	Ana Malagon	USPA	2015-10-03	Raw	407
24	Cristal Carbral	USPA	2015-04-25	Single-Ply	407
24	Meghan Pellatt	USAPL	2015-03-06	Raw	407
24	Suzanne LaForge	USAPL	2015-06-13	Raw	407
24	Janel Vegter	UPA	2015-04-19	Raw	407
24	Chinwendu Utom	USPA	2015-08-29	Raw	407
24	Ashlyn DiNinni	RUPC	2015-02-07	Raw	407

TOTAL

Rank	Name	Federation	Date	Division	Total
1	Tracey Patrick	SPF	2015-04-11	Multi-Ply	1325
2	Vikki Traugot	RPS	2016-01-09	Multi-Ply	1280
3	Gracie Vanasse	SPF	2015-06-27	Multi-Ply	1278
4	Monique Jackson	USPA	2015-10-31	Raw	1182
5	Cara Westin	SPF	2015-04-11	Multi-Ply	1155
6	Leah Benoit	RPS	2015-12-06	Multi-Ply	1135
6	Iryna Piatrovich	XPC	2015-03-06	Raw with Wraps	1135
6	Caitlin Sullivan	APF	2015-10-03	Multi-Ply	1135
9	Beth Poplin	RPS	2015-12-12	Multi-Ply	1125
10	Emily DeMorest	RPS	2016-01-16	Multi-Ply	1105
11	Tammy Howard	RPS	2015-04-26	Multi-Ply	1095
12	Iryna Piatrovich	RUPC	2015-02-07	Raw	1091
13	Jennifer Thompson	IPF	2015-06-06	Raw	1059
14	Rachael Frady	APA	2015-11-07	Raw with Wraps	1045
15	Janel Vegter	UPA	2015-04-19	Raw with Wraps	1030
16	Melissa Zupec	IPA	2015-10-24	Raw with Wraps	1025
17	Kirstin Vaziri	UPA	2015-11-07	Multi-Ply	1020
18	Molly Mullikin	USPA	2015-02-07	Raw with Wraps	1019
19	April Harper	RPS	2015-10-03	Raw with Wraps	1015
20	April Harper	RUPC	2015-02-08	Raw	1003
21	Hannah Johnson-Hill	SPF	2015-02-28	Raw with Wraps	1000
22	Jessica Kratz	USPA	2015-09-18	Single-Ply	997
23	Cayte Bona	RPS	2015-04-26	Multi-Ply	995
24	Erika Hipwell	USPA	2015-12-12	Raw	982
25	Cristal Carbral	USPA	2015-04-25	Single-Ply	981
26	Noelia Corona-Terry	USPA	2015-07-11	Raw	975
27	Eliraz Katz	USAPL	2015-04-11	Single-Ply	964
27	Casey Strope	USPA	2015-05-16	Multi-Ply	964
29	Kelly Reece	USPA	2015-07-11	Raw	959
30	Jane Stabile	RPS	2015-11-21	Multi-Ply	955
30	Danielle Szocik	RPS	2015-08-28	Raw with Wraps	955
30	Steph Tomlinson	XPC	2015-03-06	Raw	955



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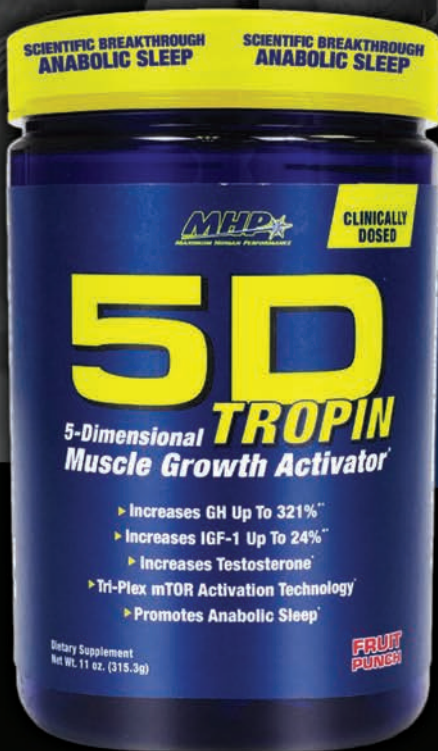
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