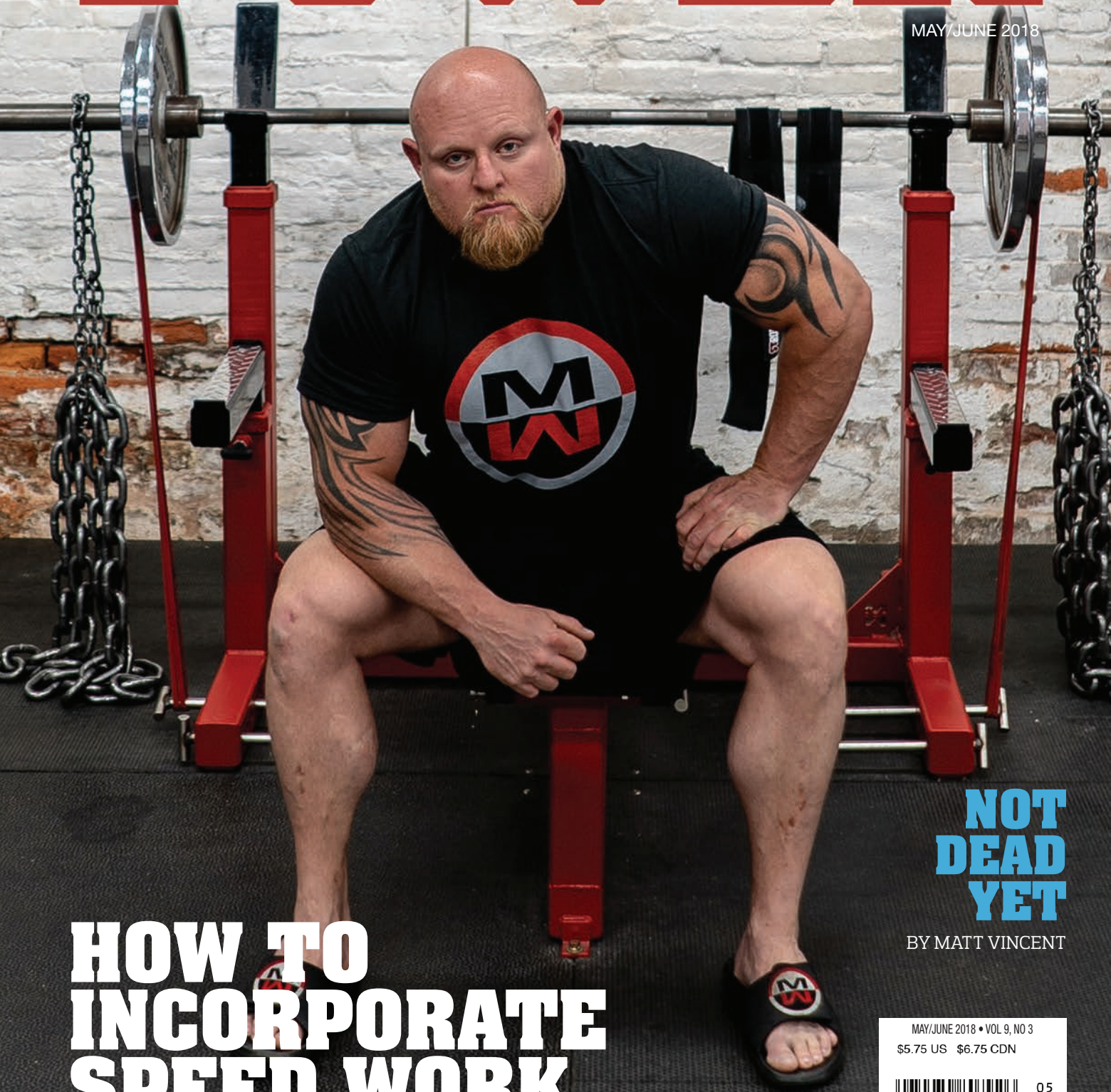


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POWER

MAY/JUNE 2018



HOW TO INCORPORATE SPEED WORK

BY MATT WENNING

NOT DEAD YET

BY MATT VINCENT

MAY/JUNE 2018 • VOL 9, NO 3

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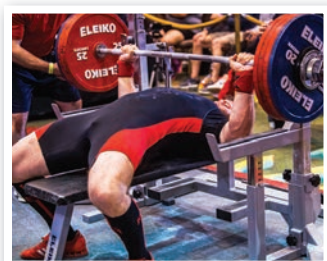
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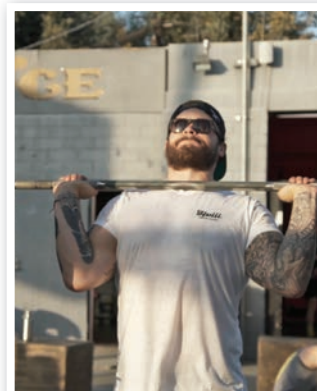
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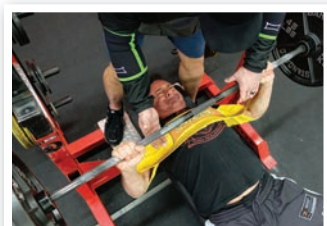
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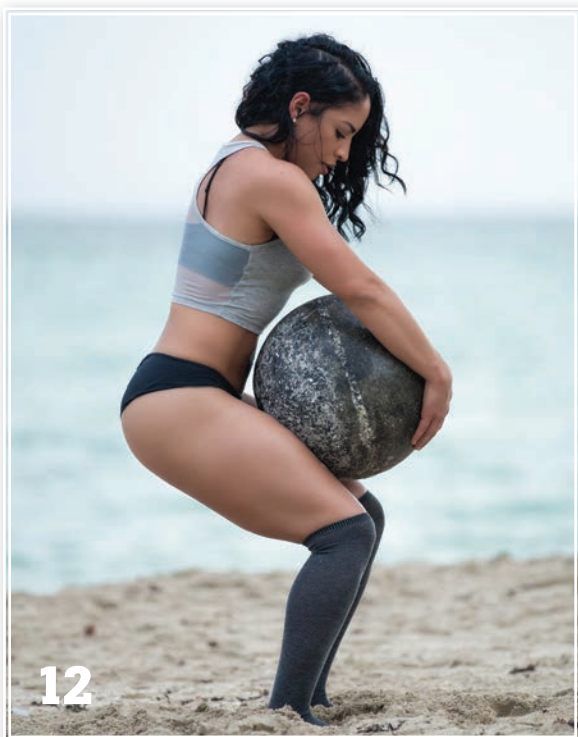
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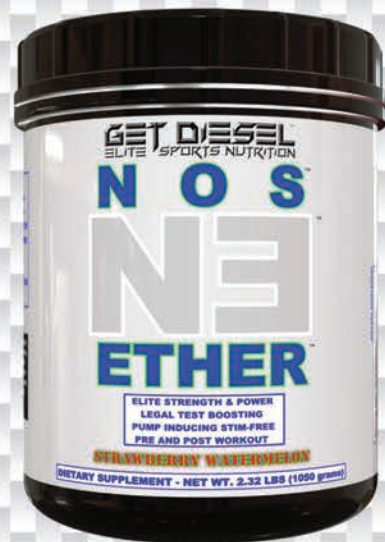
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ANDREW HERBERT



Age: 36
Height: 5'11"
Weight: 260
Hometown: San Jose, CA
Gym: Boss Barbell Club
Max S/B/D: 777 sleeved, 881 wrapped/507/865
Best Total: 2094 Raw in sleeves
Athletic Background: Wrestling
Instagram: @Herbietheluvbug

would-be bad guys intimidated by your stature? Or is knocking down doors and carrying people out of buildings a breeze since they only weigh 25% of your squat max?

To an extent, my training does help with both the police and fire aspects of my job. It has been my experience that criminals/suspects are less likely to try to physically confront me. In the rare times that they do, size and strength are certainly useful assets but my background in wrestling and jiu jitsu has probably been the most helpful. When we have to force entry into a residence/building, I am almost always assigned as the breacher, which means I get to force open the door. On the fire side, there are pros and cons to size/strength. It helps with tasks such as pulling firehose and throwing ladders but obviously is a hindrance when it comes to accessing confined spaces. Also, in a fire environment we wear an air pack known as an SCBA, and my bodies greater demand for oxygen makes me run through an air cylinder faster than most others during physical exertion. The majority of municipal firefighting actually has nothing to do with fires and is actually EMS (emergency medical services). On those calls, strength is very helpful because we are frequently lifting and moving patients from awkward positions and onto stretchers or gurneys.

Though you got injured, you seem to be back stronger than ever. Any advice on working through and overcoming injuries in powerlifting?

Injuries are an unfortunate part of this sport. We can do all the warm up, prehab, mobility, stretching, etc. in the world and still get catastrophically hurt. As far as working through injuries, it's important to have a long-run view to keep you from pushing too hard too soon. I always tell people it's a marathon and not a sprint. Unless you're in a full body cast, there are probably exercises that can be done.

You call yourself the "love bug", but you never show any love when you're murdering weight. You're have #4 all-time raw (no wraps) 242 lb. weight class total. That's incredibly impressive, considering how stacked this division has been as of late. How did you get here?

It's been a long road. I've always been obsessed with strength and power as long as I can remember. As a young kid, I begged my dad for some weights and he got me a pair of dumbbells when I was 8. Then a few years later he joined a local YMCA and took me with him to use the weight room. In middle school PE, we sometimes did weight training, and the PE teacher saw that I was so interested in it that he gave me the classic Bill Pearl book Strength Training. Once I started high school, I had constant access to a weight room and I used it regularly. I joined the weightlifting club and would later become the head of it. I played a variety of sports throughout childhood but in high school I found wrestling and began to focus on that. I ended up wrestling in college at Bucknell University and then Duke University after Bucknell cut the program. During the off seasons and for several years after college I was involved in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu under Ralph

Gracie. The strange thing is that through all this time, I was very passionate about lifting weights but it never dawned on me to actually compete at that. Strength has always been my greatest physical asset as well as the one I've enjoyed working on the most. I've been fortunate to have good genetics for muscularity and strength. My dad was a high school and college athlete. He clearly has a mesomorphic build but prefers more endurance based activities. My mom is in phenomenal shape and has climbed Mt Kilimanjaro, Mt Whitney, and Mt. Shasta to name a few. She also fed me well growing up so I definitely have to give a lot of credit to my parents. There were several years in my late 20s where I continued to go to the gym and train, but without much of a goal or focus. Part of this was due to being in the police academy and working a lot at that job, then later going into the fire academy. Thankfully, several guys at the gym I was training at saw me lifting and encouraged me to try powerlifting. They pointed out an upcoming meet at Old Skool Iron in Vacaville, CA and I decided to give it a shot. It went really well and from there I was basically hooked.

Does your training help with your day-to-day activities as a police officer/firefighter? For example, are

After my elbow surgery, I took a required couple weeks off but as soon as possible I got in the gym and did pin-loaded machines for my lower body and the muscles on the right side of my body. Anything is better than nothing.

According to Open Powerlifting, your first meet was in February 2014. In the last 4 years, you've steadily added almost 600 lbs. to your total. Over such a long period of time, many people tend to stall or plateau. Whether it was your total, or an individual lift, have you ever experienced stalls in progress? Do you have any advice on how to overcome these stalls?

My first meet was in February of 2014 at Old Skool Iron in Vacaville, CA, which is an awesome gym that puts on great meets. As I've progressed since then I have had some plateaus, which is to be expected. Some are easier to overcome

than others. My elbow injury stalled my bench press progress for approximately 3 years. That was unfortunately one where no matter what I did, I couldn't seem to get past. However, that's an extreme example. With pretty much all aspects of training, whether it's gaining or losing weight, prepping for a meet, or dealing with a plateau, I'm a firm believer in incremental change rather than throwing the kitchen sink at a problem. "You don't want to use all your weapons at once," is what I tell people. So, for example, say you're stalling in the squat. If there's a glaring muscle weakness/imbalance or technical deficiency then obviously, that should be addressed first, but let's assume that's not an issue. Then I'd look at what factors can be changed and these are volume, intensity, frequency, and exercise selection. The first three of these will usually adjust in tandem. I'd use experience and intuition to

decide which of these to tweak first, and then let that ride for a couple weeks or so before changing something else. So, you could add a drop set after your top sets to increase volume. Then say you've been working up to top sets in the 80-85% range; bump that up to 85-90% for a couple weeks and reevaluate. Then maybe you've been using Safety Bar Squats as a primary accessory movement; change that to high bar pause squats. In addition to all of this, I always advise people to keep a workout journal. I have workouts written down going back to 2001. This serves several purposes. You keep track of what your PRs are, you can remember what you did the previous week or previous workout so you can aim to beat that, and you can see over time where you've made progress and where you've stalled and then you can see everything you were doing at those times looking for clues.

When was the last time you set a PR outside the gym?

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THIS CHICK CAN KICK YOUR ASS.... AND YOU MAY LIKE IT! YESSICA MARTINEZ

Your total has progressed over the years and you are currently in the top 2 percentile female competitive powerlifters. To what traits and lifestyle choices do you attribute your success in powerlifting?

I come from an athletic background and competitive sports have always been important to me. The discipline and hard work that it demands has always kept me intrigued and interested. That commitment also carries over to my personal life. I've always kept my schedule full to maintain a balance in my life. If I was competing, that meant my nutrition and sleep had to be a priority. I must be more efficient with my time to accomplish a work/life balance. That lifestyle is a choice and I choose to live it every day. I think having a student mindset and surrounding myself with experienced lifters and coaches and all different types of athletes has contributed to my success the most. Some may describe it as surrounding yourself with the right people. Through that I've learned to embrace square one; building and rebuilding my approach and technique. If I've hit a certain point where technique goes to shit, or my strength has plateaued, that tells me I need to reassess and rebuild. A recent experience with this was my squat. I don't think I was able to hit over 305lbs without compromising my technique. This is also when I reached out to Steve Goggins to approach training with a different perspective and set of eyes. I went from a high bar to a low bar and from a 305lb squat down to a 135lb squat. I had to relearn and get comfortable with being uncomfortable. Fast forward 6 months, I added 60lbs to my squat. This is where I learned to trust the process and have confidence in my program and myself.

Throughout the years of lifting and exposing myself to different people [the right people], I have learned traits that have made me the lifter I am today—accountability and responsibility. If I had a bad training day, that is on me. If your coach sucks, that's on you. I try to find the controllable and uncontrollable and work from there. Developing communication skills to be a better coach. Learning how to coach myself and know when to call it quits or push myself to handle heavier weights. It's through continuous effort and struggle that really develop you as a lifter and as a person.

When is your next competition? Do you have an "off-season"? How does "off-season" training differ from your training when preparing for a meet?

My next competition will be the Iron City Open - a USPA meet and Union Fitness's first time hosting a meet. The gyms located in Pittsburgh and my fiancé Casey (goes by THE Casey Williams) runs the gym and I've seen it grow from ground zero. They went from 0 to 600 members in just over a year and I've been fortunate to be part of that growth and see the community evolve. So, to expose and showcase the sport I love so much to our community, it was a no brainer to sign up and be part of it. I am about 12 weeks out and under Steve Goggin's coaching. I think I can end up with a 925-950lb total. Typically, I have about a 14-week training cycle. After a competition, I take a week off from training, and depending on when my next competition is, my "off-season" will vary from two weeks up to two months following a bodybuilding regimen. I lean on my teammate Julia Ladewski for a template to follow,

Age: 26

Height: 5'3"

Weight: 131 lbs.

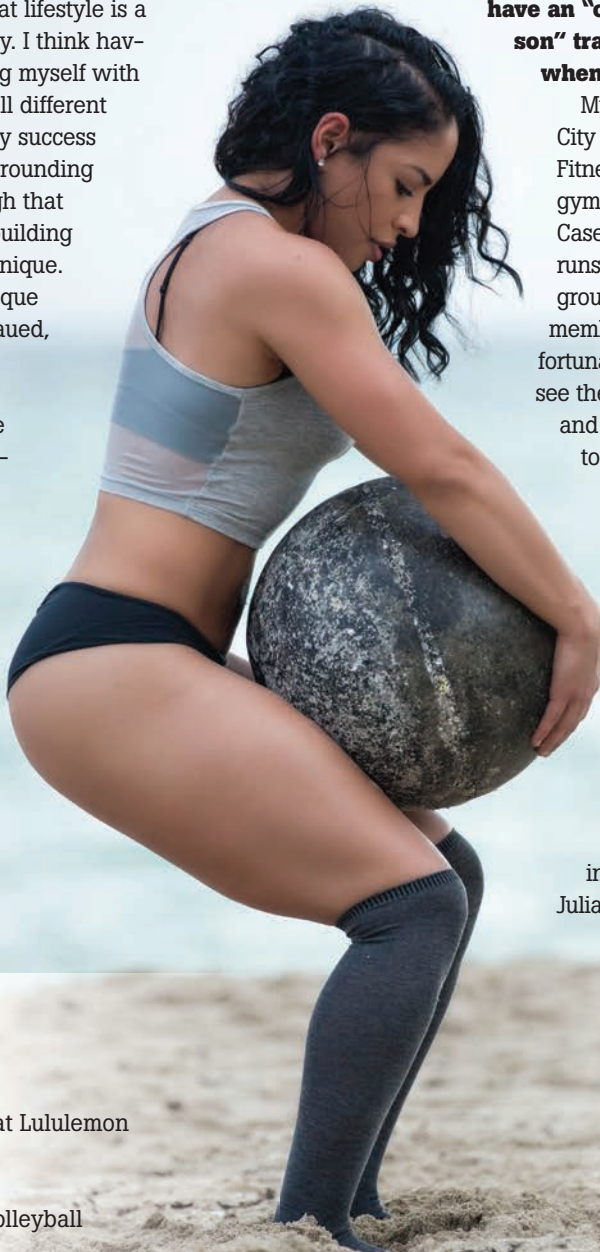
Hometown: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Community Connector at Lululemon

Gym: Union Fitness

Current Max S/B/D: 370, 191, 370

Athletic Background: Basketball, Volleyball





so it is a total stress free “off-season” and I don’t need to think much walking into the gym. Off season needs to be a mental break, too. I focus on building mass with higher volume work, unilateral work, and endurance-based training. Below is a 1-week example of what Julia has me doing:

DAY 1 - LEGS

Leg curls – 4x10, last set add 15-20 partials
Squats – 4x10, regular/strongest stance
Narrow stance leg press – 3x12, rest pause EACH set 1x. so, do 12 reps, rack and rest for 10-12 seconds, then do more reps till pumped. First 12 reps should be tough, so may only get 6-10 on the rest pause.
Leg extensions – 3x8 with a 3 second eccentric, then kick up hard
DB Stiff legged deads – 4x10
 superset with
Pulsed lunges – 4x15 each leg. Split squat stance, continuous up and down.

DAY 2 – SHOULDERS

DB Laterals – light, 3x10
DB Standing Shoulder press – x15, 12, 10, 8, 20
BB Upright Rows – 4x10
 Incline facing Y’s and T’s – 3x12 each
 superset with
Rope face pulls – 3x swole (20-30)
Machine shoulder press – 4x8/8... 8 regu-

lar grip (palms forward), 8 neutral grip
DB Laterals – 3x10, heavy

DAY 3- BACK

Rack Dead – x8, 6, 5, 5, 5, 15
Deadstop BB Bent over Row – 4x8
Under hand lat pulldown – 4x10, drop set the last set
 superset with
Straight bar Straight arm pulldown – 4x15, underhand grip
Wide grip low cable row – 3x10, drop set last set
Incline facing DB curls – 4x10, strict and good squeeze
Wide grip EZ curls, standing – 3x12
 superset with
Concentration Hammer curls – 3x10 each.

DAY 4 – LEGS

Box squat – 5x6
Hack squat – 2x20, narrow, 2x20 wide
Leg curl machine – 4x8 with a slow eccentric
Walking Lunges – 3x amap heavy weight, then drop the weights and do amap body-weight
Single leg extensions – 2x12 each leg
Single leg Calf Raises – 3x10 each leg

DAY 5 – BENCH AND SHOULDERS

Front and Rear Raise – 2x12 each, light
Bench Press – 4x10
DB Incline – 3x12, drop set last set
Single arm Laterals – 4x8 each

superset with
Rear Pec Deck – 4x15
DB Front Raises – 4x12
 superset with
Incline facing rear raises – 4x12 with a 1 second hold on each rep
Chest Press Machine – x15, 12, 10, drop set the last set

Many of us have not only a favorite lift, but a least favorite lift. Which lift is your favorite? Which lift do you like the least or find most difficult? What makes it most difficult for you and how do you stay motivated to keep training it?

This is a complicated question because my favorite and least favorite lifts are constantly changing. But I will say the lift I suck at the most at the time is my favorite. I get obsessed with it because I want to master it. I’m having the most difficult time with bench right now resulting from poor technique and shoulder pain. But a few years ago, bench was one of my best lifts. I’m constantly building and rebuilding. Goals keep me motivated and making goals achievable is a big one. I set a goal last year to hit a 900lb total. I accomplished that and now I’m headed to 950, then 1000 and so on. I inch my



way there to make it achievable and build confidence. It's more about being consistent and efficient. The most difficult thing for me is not the weight but the approach. Patience is something I continuously work on. With patience comes perspective and you learn who you are in the process. It's a combination of consistency, effort, and the ability to let go. As much as we work, we cannot dictate the desired endpoint. And when I can't hit a certain weight, or a meet didn't go as planned, taking accountability, and letting go allows me to approach my next chance as a new slate. The fact that I am able is motivating.

You used to be a strongman competitor. Has that experience augmented your training for powerlifting? Are there any specific movements from strongman that you feel have good carryover to powerlifting?

Competing in strongman added tremendous value to powerlifting and overall as an athlete gaining that experience and knowledge. Without fail, there will always be an overhead press event in a strongman competition. I went from overhead pressing 115lbs to 150lbs for reps.

I WENT FROM OVERHEAD PRESSING 115LBS TO 150LBS FOR REPS. WHEN I WENT BACK TO POWERLIFTING THAT SAME YEAR, I BENCHED 205LBS IN THE GYM.

When I went back to powerlifting that same year, I benched 205lbs in the gym. Conventional pulling also had some carryover to my deadlift. I went from a 295lb conventional pull to 345lb conventional pull. At the time, my best sumo pull was 345lbs as well. It's rare to have those stances comparable by weight. That year I was pulling sumo over 355lbs consistently and for reps—still interchanging those stances in my training. Overall, the intensity and conditioning that was demanded in strongman helped with mindset and mindset is everything.

What is your proudest moment

during your tenure as a competitive powerlifter? Why does it mean so much to you?

My proudest moment would have to be getting the call from EliteFTS asking if I would like to be part of the team. I was new to the sport and having that opportunity to be part of something bigger than myself was a highlight. It provided a platform for me to engage with women, and lifters in general, and talk about my journey and my experience. I was fortunate to be connected to the people who helped build this sport. And now it's my job to live, learn, and pass on as they did.

Many women have the misconception that powerlifting, or any kind of weight training in general, is strictly for men. Though powerlifting is a male-dominated sport, you demonstrate that physical strength and femininity are not mutually exclusive. Are there any changes in the sport you would like to see in the future to make it more amenable to the female population? How do you think the community can be improved?

The change is happening. When I started my journey, I didn't know what



powerlifting was. Once I was in it, for a slight moment I felt like I had to prove something. Looking back at old interviews I can see how little I knew but how much I felt I had to prove. There weren't a lot of women competing when I first started and one of my first competition experiences was another female yelling "yes!" when I failed a lift. Now we have powerlifting meets that are women only and everyone is offering a helping hand. The sport is still very much male dominant but it's more socially acceptable to be part of it as a woman. Stepping into the unknown is intimidating, especially when you fear breaking the mold of what (I felt like) society expected from me. Now I embrace the power it brings along with the community and connection it provides. I believe sharing my story or journey as a female has helped attract more females to the sport. With social media we're all connected and sharing your story can impact someone. I've found first hand that peeling back the curtain can go a long way in helping others realize that we're all more similar than we are different. I think we're on the right path and I wouldn't change much in those terms.

STEPPING INTO THE UNKNOWN IS INTIMIDATING, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU FEAR BREAKING THE MOLD OF WHAT (I FELT LIKE) SOCIETY EXPECTED FROM ME. NOW I EMBRACE THE POWER IT BRINGS ALONG WITH THE COMMUNITY AND CONNECTION IT PROVIDES

You often utilize cambered bars in your training. How do these specialty bars assist you?

Utilizing specialty bars adds variety, helps build weaknesses and improve positioning. They also allow me to work around injury. Shoulder pain is an issue right now and swapping the bar for a SSB saves my shoulders. It also makes the lift more challenging because it changes leverages and forces you to

adapt and get stronger.

What are some of your favorite non-lifting activities or interests? Are you involved in any philanthropic work?

That's a loaded question but I'll try to keep it somewhat short and simple. I am a community connector for Lululemon and sweating in the Pittsburgh community is part of my job. Yoga and Pilates are the most challenging. Many know I thoroughly enjoy Fixer Upper and this year I set a goal to redecorate the house. Bathroom is done. I have the rest of the house to go. I like to capture moments and invested in a camera this year.

Being part of EliteFTS, Dave Tate hosts events and seminars to support Make-A-Wish Foundation. Most if not all the proceeds go towards the foundation. That has influenced and impacted Casey and I to do more. This year we started the #powerthroughcancer series where we hosted seminars and collaborated with different gyms to raise money for a family going through cancer. We plan to make it a yearly event to raise money and awareness for a family or the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Social media: @yessie_mart



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INCORPORATING SPEED WORK

BY MATT WENNING, M.S. IN BIOMECHANICS

Matt Wenning holds world records in the squat, bench and deadlift. He recently took some time to share with us how to incorporate speed work most effectively into your strength training.

World record squat: 832 lbs.

World record equipped squat: 1197 lbs.

World record equipped total: 2665 lb.

2nd all-time raw total: 2204 lbs.

Raw No-Wrap Squat: 865 lbs.

Raw Bench: 611 lbs.

Equipped Bench: 840 lbs.

Deadlift: 804 lbs.



Often times when people train, especially in powerlifting, they don't think about bar speed. But really what happens is that you eventually run out of time to complete the lift. The ability to strain is needed in powerlifting and lifting in general, but it is equally as important to create force at a fast rate.

When you train speed, you actually teach the body to get to those deeper motor units and more muscle tissue more quickly. The body tends to have a ramping phase to create efficiency. That's the central nervous system turning on more and more tissue which is actually what you don't want to happen. You want to turn it all on immediately. So, when you train speed, it teaches the body to turn on those deeper motor units much quicker. That's why bar speed and speed work is very important to training.

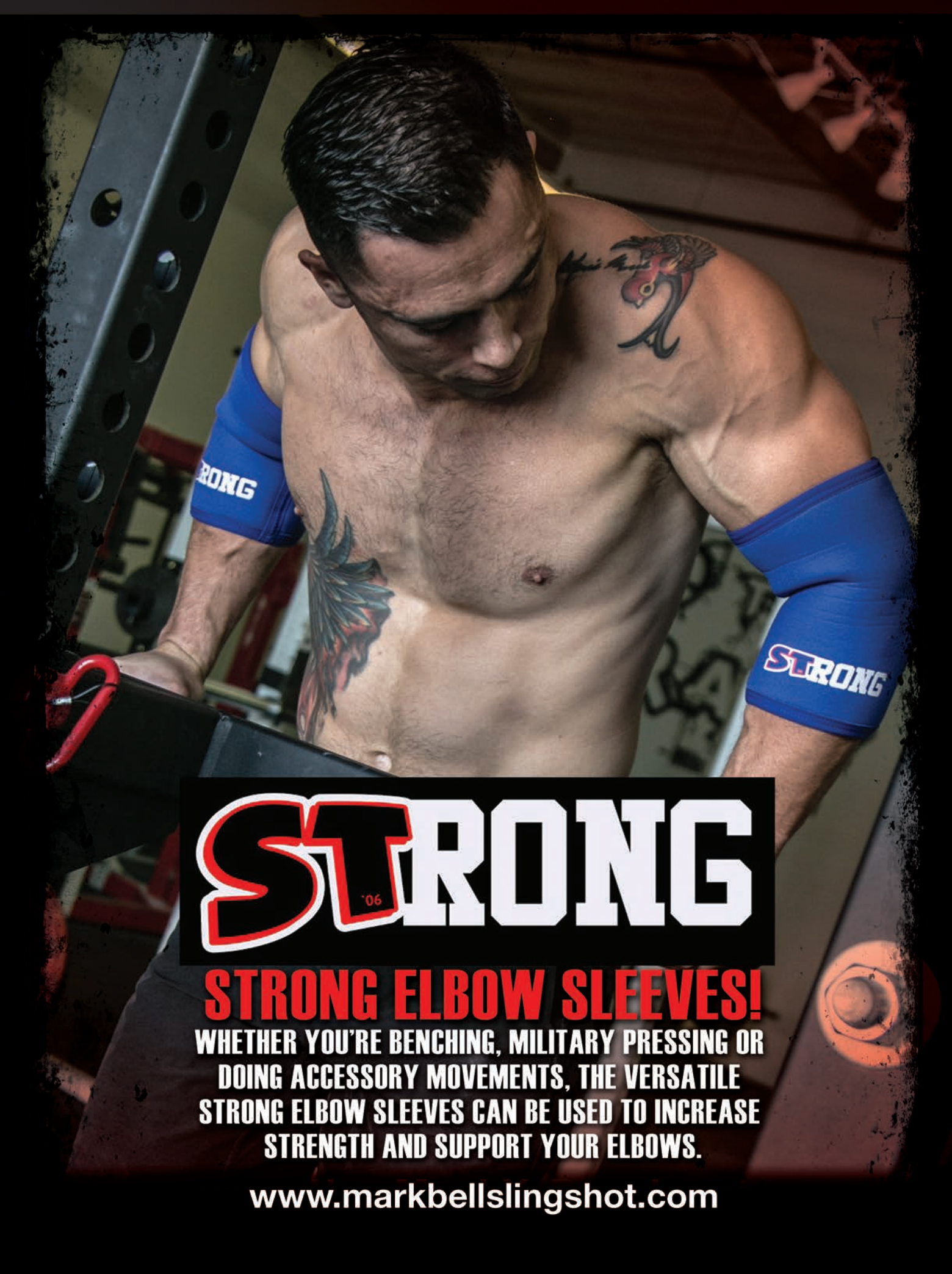
If you've ever seen someone train a max deadlift, you see they'll pull on the



weights for 2-3 seconds before the bar actually leaves the ground. This phenomenon is highly correlated with efficiency. What ends up happening is the body is trying to use the least amount of muscle tissue to lift the weights in order to be efficient. With speed work, we want to turn on as much muscle tissue as fast as possible.

Another factor to consider in speed work, is that people tend to train too heavy. What I found was that speed work needs to be closer to 30-45%, rather than what was originally thought of as 50-60% when equipped lifting was more popular.

The reason for that is that when you train raw, the body has only muscles, ligaments and tendons to rely on. But in raw work, you actually have to have a max day that's raw and a speed day that's raw, which means those percentages need to be slightly adjusted in order



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to keep muscle breakdown and tendon and ligament stress down at an easier level to separate the meters per second.

The reason that equipped lifting had to be 50-60% was that, when training in gear, the equipment tends to help the soft tissue and tendons and ligaments to lift the weights. Additionally, speed work day was the only day we trained raw, so the weight had to be heavier to sustain muscle mass.

Lifters used to think that .7 meters (when the weights were at 50-60%) per second was the optimal bar speed. But what I've found is that you want that bar speed around 1 meter per second, which usually calculates between 30-40%.

And here's why: The reason for this is because you need to have a vast separation between max effort day and speed day.





PROGRAM LAYOUT

Speed work needs to have its own day because of its high central nervous system excitation or activation. What ends up happening is that you have to have one day that's dedicated toward getting faster. You still do warm-ups like what

I'm famous for, but your core lifts are designed around bar speed as opposed to maximal weight. Every 144 hours, or once a week, you want to have speed work in your training that makes your body get to its maximal strength faster.

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real weight, but it's more optimal to use bands and chains because of this over speed of the bar. With free weights, the hardest part of the lift is usually where the lift reverses. So, on the deadlift, if you train free weights all the time, the hardest part is going to be getting it off

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the floor. In the squat, the hardest part is going to be reversing it out of the bottom. On the bench press, the hardest part is going to be getting it off the chest. Once the bar is in motion, it takes less energy to keep it in motion. So, when you hook a band or chain onto the bar, you're having to fight against a resistance that's getting heavier and harder every inch it moves up. When you use bands and chains, it accentuates speed work to a larger degree.

The bands and chains are not calcu-





lated into that percentage of 30-45%. That percentage is based off of weight only. So, the percentages for bands and chains is variable. Meaning that when you hook that band or chain onto the bar, you should have to work harder to move it the same speed but not visually be able to see the bar speed change. That's when you know you have the optimal amount of band or chain on it – when you can't see it kick in. For most people, that's going to be a double red band for speed bench, and a single-looped average band for squats. But you really have to play around with the band tensions until you find your optimal set up. For more information on that, check out my Bands and Chains Manual at www.wenningstrength.com

But the main thing is that bands and



chains should not visibly slow down the bar. They should be extra weight or resistance that is almost invisible, as far as watching the bar speed.

A mixture of bands and/or chains should be incorporated constantly. What I do is work bands for one week and then chains the next week. The big difference between bands and chains is that bands are more of an elastic energy and chains are more chaotic, creating more of a stability issue. Bands like to be in the same plane – they like to move a certain way. They get in a groove. And chains tend to fall in different and weird ways every rep. So, if you mix and max those you get more stable and more explosive.

But the real key to all training, especially speed work, is the rotation of demands on the body so that you not



only get stronger but you also maintain a low level of pressure on the same joint at the same angle. So, if I bench with chains one week and bench with bands the next and then switch the bars, the pressure on my body will be slightly different each week, allowing me to bench heavier constantly, creating consistent, specific progress. The other big bonus to this type of training is that you don't create specific wear and tear that is normally associated with powerlifting.

Contact Matt Wenning at www.wenningstrength.com with any questions. **PM**

HARTMAN PERFORMANCE TRAINING

BREEDING CHAMPIONS ON AND OFF THE PLATFORM

BY TESSA YANNONE

When Kloie Doublin and Shelby Miles began strength training in high school, they had no idea where it would take them. What began as an alternate to physical education class and a supplement to their respective sports turned into a passion for powerlifting and a bright future as both girls are World Record and American Record holders and champions on and off the platform.

"I started lifting because one of my best friends was taking the lifting class for her P.E. credit," says Doublin. "I thought if she's doing it then I'm doing it, too. It had nothing to do with actually wanting to lift."

At the time, Doublin was a dancer and Miles was a tennis player. At their high school in Franklin, Indiana, it is recommended that athletes take weights. Miles, especially, saw a carryover in her tennis game once she started lifting.

"My serves were so much more powerful, even my coach noticed," says Miles. "I just felt like everything was easier to learn because I had that foundation of strength."

Jeremy Hartman, physical education teacher at Franklin High School and strength coach at Hartman Performance Training has been with these girls since the beginning and really saw that



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they were different.

"It's not hard to pick out the kids who seem to be working harder than the others," says Hartman. "These girls came in after school and put in the time, in addition to what they were already doing,

and received even more technique work and practice."

Hartman says it's not hard to be a champion—it's not hard to outwork your opponent. It just takes an understanding of building the foundation, instilling

work ethic, overcoming adversity, and never giving less than 100 percent on the platform and in training. So, after quitting a 13-year dance career and getting a first taste of what a meet is like, both Doublin and Miles were hooked,

STRONG HAS MANY FORMS, FIND YOURS.





and there was no looking back.

BUILD THE FOUNDATION

"I have all of my freshman start with a half-pound PVC pipe learning the lifts," says Hartman. "For probably the first month of their life they are doing nothing but technique work and hundreds and hundreds of reps with that pipe. They don't move on to a barbell until I see fit."

This is something Hartman demands out of all of his athletes. He never wants a 16-year-old athlete coming up to him complaining of back pain, or that their shoulder is messed up, or their hamstring is torn—that shouldn't happen. Because of this, he never pushed Doublin to max weights for the first four years of her lifting career.

"It's about building a strong base with all the assistance work and developing the small muscle groups," says Hartman. "If I had just thrown all the weights on

her when she was young she would be seriously injured and have carried that on with her for the rest of her career."

Their attention to detail and technique has paid off on the big stages at Worlds and in other countries. Hartman says he has coaches from all over the world saying how phenomenal the girls look and he credits it to being critical of everything they did.

"At Worlds, I was pulling a max effort deadlift for me coming off the ground," Doublin says. "One side came up before the other because I didn't keep it close enough on my under-hand grip and we got a lot of comments after my technique and people were really impressed that it was a max effort lift and my back didn't round."

Their technique is no coincidence, it was years of Hartman bringing them up slowly and making sure every little thing on every single lift was dialed in and

perfect.

"When I took Shelby to her first meet I wanted to show off how much better our technique was than other kids," says Hartman. "It was her first time and she was watching seniors asking why they didn't know how to lift because their form was so bad and she got to see how we do it right here."

INSTILLING WORK ETHIC

Both Miles and Doublin were 4.0+ students in high school, both athletes of the year, and after transitioning into college, their lives off the platform have been filled with the same level of success than success.

"I told them that if we were going to do this we are going to be National champs, make the World team, and go for medals," says Hartman. "Their success is nothing more than expectation. It's kind of this unspoken thing that we

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don't miss training ever—when they're on vacation they have their workouts all planned out. They follow everything I tell them down to a tee."

It's no surprise that both girls balance more on their plate than the average teenager. Doublin is a high school student, applying for colleges (hoping to hear back from Harvard) and Miles is a sophomore at Indiana University pursuing a degree in Tourism and Event Management. She coaches and runs the marketing and PR for IU's powerlifting club and is the small group leader in her campus ministry.

"You just have greater expectations across the board," says Doublin. "A lot of people will say you can make a difference in the world but they haven't actually achieved that. They have goals too, which are great, but it's hard to actually believe those statements until you've done it. Setting world records and doing those things that people have never done before is a really eye opening experience."

Part of the reason Harvard is even

considering Doublin for acceptance is because of her powerlifting experience and representing her country, in a different country, on a world platform.

"We talk about this a lot," says Doublin. "I'll say I have something going on and Coach Hartman will say be honest now, that wouldn't happen if you would never have started lifting and I'm like yeah, that's true."

The experiences that Doublin and Miles have been so fortunate to have and the opportunities they have yet to come are endless because of, not only their upbringing, but also their coaching from Hartman.

"If kids don't learn the importance of work ethic early on it doesn't carry over into their lives down the road," says Hartman. "You'll see a lot of top lifters be pretty successful in other aspects of their lives and the girls are seeing it. Chelsea Savitt, who finished second at Nationals right before Kloie just graduated from Yale, Kim Walford was an FBI agent, and some of the top guys are lawyers and

medical doctors. It's a coach's dream to have World champion athletes who are also really successful in other parts of their lives."

OVERCOMING ADVERSITY

In a sport that typically was reserved for the macho, the overtly masculine, and that still receives some grief from people who just don't understand why women and girls would want to compete in such a thing—these girls continue to prove that your body is just a vessel to do some pretty cool things.

"Going from dance to powerlifting was a big change for me," says Doublin. "I definitely got healthier in a lot of different ways, not saying the dance community is bad by any means, but I changed my mindset about my body and began to view it as something I was using to do what I needed to do instead of using it to look like what someone else says it should look like."

Hartman thinks the biggest way to help girls embrace the way their bodies



change as a result of strength training and powerlifting is by seeing other girls emulate a healthy and positive body image participating in the sport.

"I have three girls right now who are 12 and 13 and they want to compete

because they've seen that it's okay," says Hartman. "They've seen Shelby and Kloie in here doing pull-ups and out lifting half the guys on the football team and they find excitement when they get a little stronger now because of that."

Unfortunately, still, for many girls that's not the narrative. Hartman says he has lost girls, not necessarily because powerlifting turned them away, but from the way their bodies were changing as a result of strength training.

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"You just look strong and you look healthy," says Miles. "When I get comments like oh you're going to get bulky or oh you're going to look like a man you just have to prove them wrong. I'm so much more confident in myself as a result of lifting and that's what truly matters."

Doublin says it's about making the shift from just weight acceptance to also accepting strong bodies for women. And their bodies have been through a lot—training at the top level is not easy, but they don't make it harder for themselves by hating their features and the body that enables them to compete at the highest level.

EXECUTE—LEAVE IT ALL ON THE PLATFORM

Both girls are coming off of a phenomenal 2017 season. Doublin came home from IPF Worlds in Belarus with a first-place medal, after redeeming herself from the previous year, and a third place finish in the open at Raw Nationals, among others. Miles brought home first at Bench Worlds in Killeen, Tx. and first place finishes at the A7 Bar Grip Pro Raw Challenge at the Arnold, among others. Next on their schedule is the Pro American at the Arnold this March.

"It's all about looking at your athlete's yearly plan and at where you want them to be a year from now," says Hartman.

"You have to set milestone numbers along the way but you have to keep the big picture goal, or meet, in mind and that's exactly what we do. Each week I give my athlete's numbers I want them to hit and ranges they need to be in. There aren't any pre-determined templates or percentages we go off, it's based off what I see and what I think is best for them moving forward."

Miles says the key to good training that leads to successful meets is not letting a bad training day follow her to the next week and just thinking about each day as a new chance to do well. Sound advice coming from the girl who Doublin looked up to while she was learning to lift, and now they push each other in training to hit heavier weights and continue to get better while supporting each other in competition.

"It's what I like to call silent competition," Hartman says. "They're all three [talking about his third lifter Jennica Baldrige] in different weight classes but they're all super close in Wilks. As they approach meets they're all texting each other asking what they hit that day in

training and they're always competing no matter what. It keeps them honest and their training intense."

Between the two girls they have competed in a combined 26 meets. With their combined experience, Miles says don't wait to compete. Many people think they aren't strong enough or to wait until they have more experience but the only way to gain more experience, she says, is by just doing it. Both girls believe you truly don't know what a meet is like until you've done it.

"I've only ever missed one lift in a meet," Doublin says. "It was a big deal for me because whatever goes on that bar I trust that Hartman believes I can do it, so there is no reason why I shouldn't get it. I don't plan on missing any other lifts."

It's about leaving it all on the platform, all of your hard work comes to one concluding point, as Miles puts it, and when you get to that point you don't want all your hard work to be for nothing. Powerlifting is a rare sport in that you don't have games or meets every week, you have a couple a year, so you have to make them count. Whether that's on a lift or in life, there's no reason why you shouldn't succeed if you've put in the work and have put your trust in the process. **PM**

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THE BEST BENCH PRESSES

BY R.L. MURRAY

In December of 1981, I attended my first powerlifting meet and for these past thirty-odd years I have been completely infatuated with the sport – especially the bench press discipline. Having competed in over 100 meets, I have seen a variety of lifters, styles, techniques and programs. For much of my career, admittedly, I paid little attention to these factors, mainly because I was successful in my own realm – raw and geared bench press competitions (achieving a 480 Raw and 518 geared in competition lifts – with the old Inzer “Blast” shirt). While working my way through the Masters category, and especially once I turned fifty, I decided brains accompanying brawn would be a wiser course of action. Therefore, over the last five years I have become a serious student of lifting technique, especially the bench press.

As part of the effort to maximize my lifts through technical improvements, I embarked on a study of world-class benchers, analyzing aspects of their bench press mechanics. My “study group” included recent successful lifters, as well as past greats. I looked at large weight-class brutes and small finesse record breakers (and the best female bencher in history), and those from both the tested and untested realms. Utilizing competition videos found on YouTube, I decided to look at the following: bench grip (width), arch (or lack of), foot placement, bar placement on chest, and descent (eccentric movement) speed. While watching these videos, I thought it would be interesting if I could ask them a few questions about their training. What follows are the generous responses to four questions I posed, which provide some interesting and thought provoking material.

For each lifter, I started with their background (awards and accomplishments) and then included my general observations (not critique) of their bench press mechanics.

BRETT GIBBS

Awards, records: IPF World record holder for raw bench press in the 83 kg / 183 lb weight class (as well as IPF World Champion Powerlifter).

Grip: wide (but not extreme)

Foot placement: fairly wide with flat feet (IPF rules)

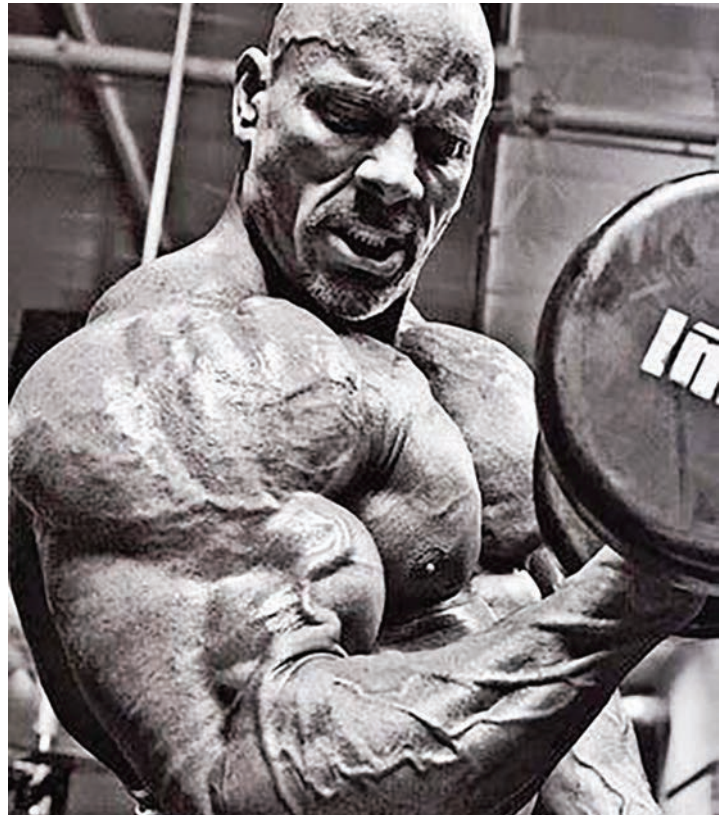
Descent (eccentric) speed: moderate

On chest: sinks slightly

Arch: Significant arch, but not extreme.

Comments: Technically one of the best benchers in the world. Interestingly, in the 2015 IPL Raw Worlds, Gibbs was forced to use a very narrow grip on the bench (due to a pec injury) and still managed to lift over 400 pounds in a full meet competition.

In six to eight weeks leading up to a contest how many times a week are you benching?



The question itself implies that things change or may change when we are X amount of weeks out from a meet. I think it is important to remember now days that it is quite often the case the frequency tends to remain the same throughout the year, regardless of where you are in training. Of course, that's not the case for everyone, but it tends to be for me. Lifters should not need to worry or feel they may be doing something wrong if they don't change their frequency 6-8 weeks out. Three to six months ago I was benching five days a week, each session had one exercise. I am currently benching three days a week with two exercises. To add to this, I've noticed better recovery recently even though over all work load seems to be similar, however I had a day's rest in between sessions.

How many times a week do you lift heavy (max effort - 90% or more)?

In most phases of training I'll have some sort of heavy pressing, that may not be in the direct competition lift, it may be an accessory lift like "Spoto press" or "pin press." As far as getting to 90% or more of my E1RM session to session, it would be around 1-2 of the 5-6 exercises I do each week that would have one set in that range.

Most common mistake you see in

GOOD raw benchers that could make them even better (feel free to explain in detail)?

Good raw benchers is quite a broad definition these days; is it how much you lift compared to your own size, general weight on the bar or is your technique that makes you a good bench? I call good benchers the guys that have good amounts of weight on the bar and have really sound technique. I think most people know what they need to work on at times with the usual cues we hear every day. But one thing I really like to see and want to see more of is control of the bar at all times. I might have one of my athletes in the gym about to go through a set of five. At any point throughout the set, I expect them to be able to do any of the following - Touch and go, pause, two-count pause, Spoto press, soft or a heavy touch on the chest. This teaches control of the bar at all times by the athlete.

Best advice you received or biggest correction you made that helped your bench improve (feel free to explain in detail)?

Early on in my lifting, I loved to bench. It was the lift that I always put the most emphasis on and it always came natural to me. I was pressing one day and heard a rip in my chest, I jumped up and took my shirt off in front of the

mirror. Luckily no major pec tear, but I did need to go see a Physio. Scans later showed a partial pec tear and six weeks followed with no benching (bummer). Whilst it was great for my squat and deadlift, I think long term it was best for my bench. I was given exercises to work external shoulder rotation, activate lower and middle traps and in turn get much better shoulder and scapula control. Doing exercises three times per week every day for six weeks, I was back benching PBs within weeks back in the gym.

Most important accessories for the bench press (generally for those who are already GOOD lifters)?

I am a firm believer in every one being different. Some lifters are very muscle based benchers, some are very leverage based; some have long strokes whilst others are short strokes. So that alone plays a big role in logical exercise selection. You would not prescribe two board press to Sean Noriega, like you would for John Haack [who is tall for his weight class].

Making a logical decision to start with is the best we can do, from there we adjust the exercises to see what is producing results to our competition exercise. For me personally, I enjoy 3s and 5s in the competition pause bench, mid rep ranges in the low pin press and high rep



ranges 8-10 in the touch and go bench

COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE.

Enjoy your time on the bench! I've found this to be the most successful when wanting to build the best, have fun with it. The secret exercise with the 20 rep skull crusher will never be the answer. We are better than that now, we know that more specific exercises have better carry over and are going to keep pushing us to new limits. Bring on 500lb for me soon!

JENNIFER THOMPSON:

Awards, records: IPF multiple time World Champion and Bench world record holder, 311 pound competition bench at a body weight of 134 lbs.

Grip: wide

Foot placement: fairly wide, with flat feet (IPF rules)

Descent speed: moderate

On chest: light touch – does not sink

Arch: moderate (especially compared to other female lifters)

Comments: Jenn Thompson is a fairly tall lifter for her weight class, but is pound for pound the best female bench presser in the world. Although Jenn does not utilize an excessive arch, she does maximize her positioning on the shoulders and traps in her pre-lift setup. Jenn is a student of technique, who maximizes her leverages.

In six to eight weeks leading up to a contest...

* how many times a week are you benching?

* how many times a week do you lift heavy (max effort – 90% or more)?

I bench once every eight days. I have

an accessory day four days after my bench day. We have a heavy week and a speed week. So, every other week I am hitting max weights.

Most common mistake you see in GOOD raw benchers that could make them even better?

Most common mistakes good benchers make are pulling the feet back too far towards the hips to obtain a larger arch. This inevitably takes away from leg drive, which brings me to the next mistake. Most people don't use leg drive effectively. You should engage your quads 25% of your strength on the bar's descent. Then on the press, drive the other 75%. Most people give a little jab with their legs and don't truly commit all their leg strength towards the bar.

Best advice you received or biggest correction you made that helped your bench improve?

The biggest correction I have made is to increase the speed of the bar on the descent. The faster you can bring the bar down with control allows muscles to use "reflex receptors" thus giving you a boost off the chest. Much like the reflex in your knee, if you bring the bar

down quickly, it stretches those muscle fibers and you can take advantage of the release. There was a study that said it improves concentric strength.

Most important accessories for the bench press (generally for those who are already GOOD lifters)?

The best bench accessory exercises for those advanced lifters are; heavy holds, t-shirt presses, 3 board presses (with Slingshot) and band presses. T-shirt or (JT) presses (similar to the Spoto press but actually touches the chest) work in the strength off the chest, what we call "bottom end strength". The board allows you to push around weight much more than you can bench, but within your natural bar path. Band presses under the bench make you have to push the bar off your chest quickly or they are nearly impossible to complete.

STAN EFFERDING

Awards, records: A 606 pound raw bench in a full meet, making him number seven on the "All-time" bench list. Stan did this in a full meet, on the way to setting a new world record total. He has the top bench for those on the "All-

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time Total" list.

Grip: fairly wide

Foot placement: wide and flat

Descent speed: slow (very slow)

On chest: light touch

Arch: moderate to fairly flat

Comments: Stan utilizes a slow descent followed by an explosive concentric press, while yelling on the way up. He tends to have wider elbow flair as the concentric movement progresses.

In six to eight weeks leading up to a contest...

* how many times a week are you benching? / how many times a week do you lift heavy (max effort – 90% or more)?

I benched twice per week. One heavy day less than 90%, one accessory day, sets of 8-10 reps, dumbbells/incline/dips/triceps).

Most common mistake you see in GOOD raw benchers that could make them even better?

Not gaining weight. Bench goes up and down with body weight.

Best advice you received or biggest correction you made that helped your bench improve?

Don't flare your elbows too early, if at all.

Most important accessories for the bench press (generally for those who are already GOOD lifters)?

Dips (great for triceps).

Comments you would like to make (optional):

I relied on resisting the weight on the way down using my lats pinned against my triceps. I also flared my lats to initiate the press, which helped me break inertia so my chest/triceps and shoulders could take over from there. Therefore, a strong back and big lats helped my bench press. My favorite back exercises for this purpose are chins, rows and deadlifts.

SCOT MENDELSON

Awards, records: Current "All-Time" World Record Holder for Raw Bench in the 308 class, with 701 (set at an APF Meet in 2002). Former "All-time" record holder overall, with a 717 pound Raw Bench as a Super Heavyweight.

Grip: wide

Foot placement: tucked and up on his toes

Descent speed: slow

On chest: very light touch

Arch: significant

Comments: Mendelson is one of the

few large weight class benchers with a significant arch, who presets his shoulders before the lift. He is a big man who maximizes his leverages, positioning and leg drive. He is one of the most technically proficient "Big-man benchers."

In six to eight weeks leading up to a contest...

* how many times a week are you benching?

* how many times a week do you lift heavy (max effort – 90% or more)?

Eight weeks out I am benching twice a week and go heavy all the time. Even training raw, I am using board presses, but no chains or bands.

Most common mistake you see in GOOD raw benchers that could make them even better?

Most benchers, even high-end guys, do not use their bodies when they bench. I drive my bench from the hips, which is the biggest, strongest joint and base of power.

Best advice you received or biggest correction you made that helped your bench improve?

Biggest correction I ever made was learning to pin my shoulder blades together while benching. Oddly, this came about through an accident – actually

due to an injury. I was training with JM Blakely at the time and while recovering from an injury I found it was more comfortable to pin my shoulder blades together while pressing. When I did this, J.M. said, "What did you just do?" I told him, and he said, "That just cut your range of motion significantly." So we are the ones that first came up with this technique.

Most important accessories for the bench press (generally for those who are already GOOD lifters)?

Number one, and most good benchers don't do it - rear delt work! Your back is an intricate part of the bench press. During the lift you should squeeze your rear delts, it will add drive and get many lifters through their sticking spot. Most fail to do this.

Comments you would like to make:

Most raw benchers do not know how to bench with good technique. Benching is the hardest, most technical of the three lifts and it takes longer to learn and adapt. They do not utilize their whole body and fail to get themselves in the most advantageous position. I tore my quad while benching at the Arnold one year - that tells you how much drive I am getting.

LARRY PACIFICO

Awards, records: 1936 Total at 198, no wraps, raw, with a 530 raw bench in a full meet. Best raw bench, 590 bench at 227 bodyweight, and just missed 605 (in July of 1973).

Grip: wide

Foot placement: wide with flat feet (AAU / IPF rules)

Descent speed: moderate

On chest: slight sinking into chest

Arch: moderate / fairly flat

Comments: Larry still ranks high on the "All-time" bench record list in the 198 and 220 classes with a 531 and 592 pound raw benches (590 bench officially weighed out at 592). One of the greatest full meet benchers ever.

In six to eight weeks leading up to a contest...

* how many times a week are you benching?

* how many times a week do you lift heavy (max effort - 90% or more)?

Three times a week. Heavy day, sort of a half-heavy day, and then another heavy day.



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Most common mistake you see in GOOD raw benchers that could make them even better?

Today the raw lifters doing big numbers are an educated group, more so than those ten or fifteen years ago. They know how to peak better today. Technique wise, I favor elbows out more than most, elbows too close tends to wreck shoulders.

Best advice you received or biggest correction you made that helped your bench improve?

Move elbows out. I observed Mike MacDonald bench with elbows out. I would bench with elbows tucked and then flair out on the way up.

Most important accessories for the bench press (generally for those who are already GOOD lifters)?

I say this in my seminars, 70% of the bench is triceps. I recommend skull crushers, skull crushers, skull crushers. Just be careful not to overdo frequency so you do not wear out your elbows.

Comments you would like to make (optional): I recommend push-ups for younger kids in preparation for benching. Doing this, they will be way ahead of their peers.

JEREMY HOORNSTRA

Awards, records: "All-time" record bench press holder in the in the 242 class, with a 662.5 and in the 275 class, with a 675 bench.

Grip: narrow

Foot placement: moderate and flat

Descent speed: fast

On chest: sinks deep into chest

Arch: fairly flat

Comments: Jeremy is the best raw bench in the world under 300 pounds. His bench technique is characterized by a narrow grip, fast descent, and deep inset of the bar into his chest. He utilizes an explosive thrust off the chest to carry the lift through the concentric phase.

In six to eight weeks leading up to a contest...

* how many times a week are you benching?

My training schedule has two days usually where I bench. One is a hard, heavy one with more volume, more weight, and usually takes around three hours. My second day is focused more on shoulders and accessory muscles and speed work for bench. That way I am benching, but not getting to the point at which I can't lift again in a few days. I will say, however, that after my chest day, I am completely annihilated and not good for anything upper body wise for a few days.

* how many times a week do you lift heavy (max effort - 90% or more)?

I guess my last answer pretty much answered this as well, but one day is heavy and depending on where I am in relation to the show, the amount of reps, the amount of weight, etc., but obviously

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as I get closer the weight and percentages go up. Keeping in mind that my normal gym for the last few years has been wherever I can train, commercial gyms with crap benches, Crossfit boxes, etc and now that I own my own gym, I do have a competition bench, but it's also middle of summer in Florida so it's hot and I'm usually lifting alone with one or two guys I trust to spot me. Therefore, gym lifts are usually higher with everything being more favorable as far as adrenaline, environment, etc.

Most common mistake you see in GOOD raw benchers that could make them even better?

I know that everyone has their own way of lifting and I am an advocate for doing what works for you. So, I won't talk too much about hand placement, etc., but I will say that the two things I notice is accessory muscles don't get engaged as much as possible and speed is not where it needs to be. Force is mass times acceleration, so speed is equally as important. If you are not fast, you're coming in disadvantaged. The accessory muscles get engaged through practice. It's hard to use legs on a movement that is lying on your back pushing up. However, the more muscles you have working together, the more weight will go up no matter what.

Best advice you received or biggest correction you made that helped your bench improve?

The best advice I ever had was when I was eight years old. My pediatrician told me I had an umbilical hernia and it was very important for me to not lift anything heavy. Tell me not to or that I can't, and not only will I – I will with a passion behind it that can't be stopped. With training, I was doing great, had never had an injury and it caught up to me. I kept going back and forth with little things like tendonitis, strains, etc. and had no game plan. I connected with Josh Bryant and he basically set up a plan for me to not only get me balanced, but work on weaknesses. Going into battle with no plan would get you killed, so going into the gym with the same lack of planning is a waste of time and will get you nowhere.

Most important accessories for the bench press (generally for those who are already GOOD lifters)?

Accessory lifts I like are, somewhat in

order, dead presses, weighted dips with a pause at top, close grip bench, military press, and bent-over rows. All of those either focus on one of the major muscles in the lift or speed itself. I honestly believe that benching gets you somewhat strong at benching, but accessory lifts get you insanely strong at it. Just like in sports, if you take a defense and break it down to each position, you are only going to play better as a team. If your lats aren't up to par with your delts, you aren't where you could potentially be. Do what needs to be done to get stronger, not make you feel or look stronger.

GARRETT BLEVINS

IPF Raw World record setter in the squat, 730 lbs, the Bench 494 lbs and the Total, 885.5 kg / 1952 lbs and IPF gold medalist in bench press.

Grip: wide (but not "extreme" because of his wide frame, utilizes maximum legal grip width).

Foot placement: fairly wide with flat feet (IPF rules)

Descent speed: moderate

On chest: very light touch / egg shell

Arch: Significant arch, but not extreme.

Comments: Often the tallest lifter in his weight class, but also with the largest bench. In his setup, Blevins visibly retracts his shoulder blades even before laying on the bench, and maximizes his leverages. Incredibly, he does not use a liftoff from a spotter, even for record attempts (combination of training alone and USAPL/IPF rules that you cannot use your own spotter for a liftoff – potentially unpredictable liftoffs).

In six to eight weeks leading up to a contest...

* how many times a week are you benching?

* how many times a week do you lift heavy (max effort – 90% or more)?

Usually three to five benching days per week, including active recovery. This includes benching heavy two times, with the other days 60%. Closer to the meet at least one day with above 90%, almost always a single with competition grip. I will also utilize heavy pin presses.

Most common mistake you see in GOOD raw benchers that could make them even better?

What I see most is more from their training than competition. It is easy for

lifters to get lazy with their [technique] when doing rep work [which can carry over to the competition platform]. The tendency with lighter weights you can manhandle is to not completely lock out reps (or have 'soft elbows') and to lose tightness in the back – losing the important scapular retraction that they need to hammer in. [All too often] you will see them miss a bench press in a maximal attempt as they unlock the shoulders a little bit as the bar comes off the chest and their elbows will flair too fast, then they miss the lift as the bar drifts toward their face. [It is all too common for a lifter] to unlock the shoulder blades as the bar comes off the chest, especially as the weight gets heavier and it is easy to panic a little bit because you want to get the weight moving as fast as you possibly can.

Best advice you received or biggest correction you made that helped your bench improve?

Goes back to unretracting, unlock-ing the shoulder blades off the chest... Too much touch and go training and not enough pause work. My touch and go bench was probably ten percent stronger than my competition pause bench. I began using long Spoto presses, but closer to the chest for three to five seconds, to improve my pause bench. Also, I realized there was a problem with doing higher reps sets, which got my chest pumped, but maybe at the expense of my triceps, taking them out of the equation a little bit. These fast rep sets, I believe, contributed to me having 'soft elbows' at lockout.

Most important accessories for the bench press (generally for those who are already GOOD lifters)?

For me triceps are my weak point, so I start with a lot of close grip benching in the early stages of training. I then move into Spoto and pin press... as I get closer to competition. The Spoto press in particular has helped my bench break through a couple of plateaus just because it highlighted [my weakness] and improved them.

Comments you would like to make: The most common question I get asked is, "What is wrong with my bench press?" The first thing I look at is the relationship between their wrist and elbow. Keep your forearm perpendicular to the ... floor. **PM**

MARK BELL'S POWER PROJECT EPISODE 22 WITH DANIEL ORREGO

If you are looking for more Ketogenic information than your glucometer can handle, this episode is for you. Co-Founder and Ketogenic Diet expert, Daniel Orrego, returns to the Power Project Podcast. He and Mark Bell discuss the Ketogenic diet in full detail and give you a ton of information.

MARK: We're here today with Daniel Orrego and we're going to dive deep into the ketogenic style diet and nutrition in general, and some of his background and story. He was sharing a good story with us earlier about Robbie Robinson who is now 74 years old? And still jacked as shit.

DANIEL: Yeah, his physique is still phenomenal in just about every respect. That's a guy who has not lost a lot off his fastball, that's for sure.

MARK: That's awesome. You know the ketogenic style diet gets to be so confusing for people. Many people think that everything is wrapped around those ketones and that's the real crucial thing and that they've got to pee on these sticks and it's got to be purple and they have to measure the ketones and that they have to be above .5 mm and all these different things. But what I've learned is that the main thing with a diet is to be able to adhere to it. And when we start to look into things like weighing your food and measuring this and measuring that those things can be part of the plan but they don't always have to be. What I always advise people, and in my book 'War on Carbs', it's very simple: let's get you on board with eliminating some carbohydrates from





your lifestyle. It doesn't have to be forever but for a period of time if you want to lose weight. Because you're abstaining from eating carbohydrates. And when you have enough fat in your diet you can still eat foods that satisfy you. You can still have foods that are delicious. Like an omelet. And because I have some of these foods I am able to follow the plan. So, because I can get you to adhere to something, I can motivate you and inspire you to lose weight. If the plan itself is too difficult then you are going to throw your hands up and the plan itself won't work.

DANIEL: I actually really like the psychology you're bringing to bear here because you're moving the needle from food being entertainment to food being fuel. That's a huge leap for most people. And that's a hard one.

MARK: That's a hard one for most people. Even for me. The big struggle for me is still the movie theater. But now I'm just like, "I don't see that many movies. So just relax and eat what I want."

DANIEL: And that's the other thing too. When you're moving someone onto a structured meal program, whether that's keto or any style of eating, it's to get people to recognize that food is fuel. And additionally, that that structure is part of a self-accountability program. Right? And that really speaks more to teaching people how to have success, generally. Right? They're applying it to a meal program, but these are general principles for how to have success.

MARK: Yeah, that's what I've kind of been teaching from day one. And through different things like Instagram and different messages, saying that these disciplines that we have through our diet can manifest themselves in every aspect of our lives. And you know this full well from training with some of the guys down there at Gold's Gym Venice, the Mecca of Bodybuilding, and training with guys like Mike O'Hearn. Mike is an amazing athlete. He's incredibly strong, he's shredded all the time, I think he's got to be late-40's. And he's learner now and in better shape than I've ever seen him. But look at that discipline. It can't help it. He's done it for so long, the 4 a.m. workouts and everything else for so long, he's been bringing

it hard for so long, that success is going to happen in other aspects of your life when you're crushing things that hard. You get to train with him sometimes, right?

DANIEL: Indeed. In fact, it's quite a privilege on several levels. Not the least of which is how careful and considerate he is, not just with me but with everyone who comes in to train with him, to elucidate what he's actually doing. Because a lot of times that gets missed on camera.

MARK: He's very smart. A lot of people think that he's just a meathead based on his looks, but he's very smart.

DANIEL: Right. There's an intelligence there, but there's also this phenomenal intuition about what to do and why. And there's also a lot of things he does that are counter-intuitive. A lot of the movements he performs are "bad form." But the way he's doing it and the reason he's doing it and the manner in which he's executing those movements, is one of the reasons why he's been injury free for so long and maintain that beastly strength as well.

MARK: Does he kick the shit out of you?

DANIEL: There's no two ways about it--the workouts are tremendously brutal. There's just no getting around that.

MARK: Yeah, people will say, especially when it comes to strength training, you can't do high volume and heavy weight and have high frequency. But Mike O'Hearn is the kind of guy who says, "You know what? We're just going to grin and bear it and plow through all of it and everything is going to be high as shit all the time. The reps are going to be high, the weights are going to be high, the sets are going to be high."

DANIEL: Well, and it's possible, provided that the recovery and nutrition is commensurate with that style and that approach to training. If you have those other two pieces, it's actually possible to do it.

To hear the rest of Mark Bell's Power Project EP. 22 with Daniel Orrego, visit Mark Bell's Power Cast YouTube Channel or search iTunes Podcasts. **PM**





LIFTING WITH SCOLIOSIS

BY TRAVIS BARKE

I was born with scoliosis — a curvature of the spine. Growing up I didn't see this as much of a problem. I did everything all the other kids did — played contact sports, ect. Bur over time the curve worsened.

I grew up in North Tonawanda, a suburb outside of Buffalo. I Started powerlifting at the early age of 12 thanks to my cousin Dennis Brochey who entered me into the first Red Brick Bench Press Competition to support the soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq. I benched the bar

and I was hooked. I Started working out in my school's weight room for football and it felt so natural — I knew I was built for it — mentally and physically. I competed in the Red Brick Bench Press Contest every year and did better and better each year.

In middle school, I pressed 150 lbs. and it was announced over morning announcements. I felt invincible. I joined the North Tonawanda Powerlifting team and we did the state championships every year, which was a full-power

meet. It lasted all day. I absolutely loved the atmosphere and the intensity. I kept working out hard 5-6 days a week after high school, but I mostly focused on bench.

My orthopedic spine doctor at the time told me the curvature was locked in and my growth plates were fused. That was great news because it meant no surgery, at least for the time being. Only annual visits would be needed. I always had back pain, and over the years it slowly intensified. You could





clearly see my right side ribs sticking out further and further. I would deadlift and squat occasionally but mainly focused on bench press. I benched 286 lbs. at a bodyweight of 148 lbs. for a then NYS record in my class. It was finally time to go to my new orthopedic spine doctor Dr. Hamill.

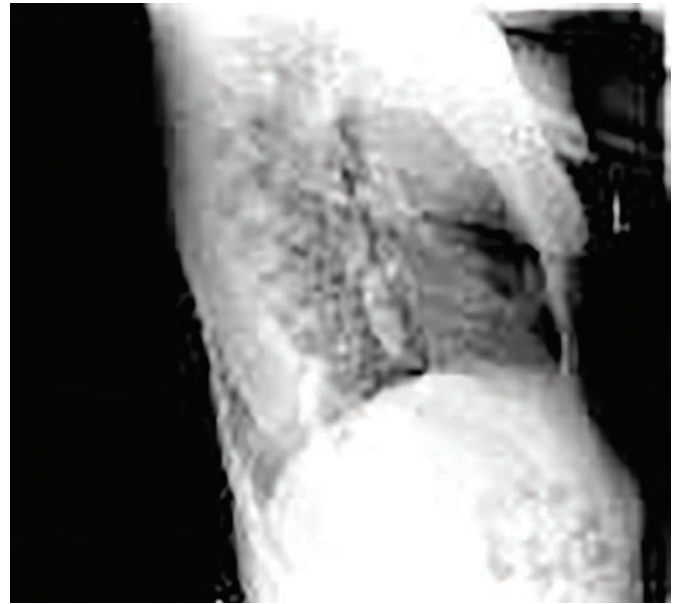
I had a feeling things weren't right. He could not believe how many degrees the curve progressed -- to 58 degrees. He started bring up surgery, and he even said that eventually my spine would cut into my lung which could be fatal. All this information at once was overwhelming, but I dealt with back pain all my life so I wasn't really surprised. I went to get a second opinion, because major back surgery with rods, screws

and fusion at 20 is a pretty big and intimidating decision. It was a done deal that I needed the surgery and Dr. Hamill was the best around.

Now I have always been known to be a tough, resilient kid but I severely underestimated the magnitude of how my life was going to change. I went in and had to get put under anesthesia for eight hours! I was very thankful and blessed that my family and girlfriend waited the whole time. I woke up and started throwing up right away from the anesthesia, and another fifteen times throughout the night that seemed endless.

My back was fused with 17 screws and two titanium rods. IT HURT! I spent three days in the hospital. It was pure

hell. I had to get up and walk and that's when I knew it was going to a long road to even step into a gym. I was not allowed to bend at all for the first three months -- no lifting anything over 10 lbs, no twisting, no nothing. I had to log roll in and out of bed, needed help showering, if I something dropped someone else had to pick it up. I felt useless. I went from being super strong, and athletic to being crippled hurt sitting/standing. I couldn't start physical therapy until six months later. I was paranoid to bend even after given permission, and the surgery was taking a toll mentally and physically. I remember thinking that I was never going to be able lift again. I was depressed. I was out of work for eight months. All I could



do was have people take care of me, and that is not how I am, or ever will be. I saved up enough money before surgery because I didn't even want disability. I was always taught that a man needs to stand on his own two feet, and I didn't want any handouts. A big moment for me was when a state bench record was broken by a kid I knew and he posted "It was your time, now it's mine" on social media. This motivated me like nothing else. I'm very competitive. Physical therapy couldn't come sooner, and they started me slow. I was so damn pumped up to even be breaking a sweat again. Weeks and weeks of therapy went by and I was actually building some confidence, even though we were still mainly just doing stretches. I went to a doctor to check up on how PT had been going. She said I should get an office job and that I'd never be lifting as heavy like I was before surgery. I remember her saying it was "time to find a new hobby." I bit my tongue, I knew I had a lot of people to prove wrong.

When it came my year appointment with Dr. Hamill, he liked what he saw and said I was good to go for boxing and regular workouts. I remember being so happy to finally step into a gym again. I knew I had to start from scratch and at the time totally ruled out deadlifts and squats.

My first day back discouraged me. I laid down on the bench and it hurt. I benched the bar and it hurt my back. I curled 15s and it hurt my back. I sat there thinking maybe I can't do this any-

"MY BACK WAS FUSED WITH 17 SCREWS AND TWO TITANIUM RODS. IT HURT! I SPENT THREE DAYS IN THE HOSPITAL. IT WAS PURE HELL. I HAD TO GET UP AND WALK AND THAT'S WHEN I KNEW IT WAS GOING TO A LONG ROAD TO EVEN STEP INTO A GYM"

more, but I knew I had to keep pushing. I felt the desire to prove to myself, and doubters that I am the definition of resilient. My bench slowly went up every week from 95 lbs. to 135 to 185 to 225. This progression was over a period of months and months but when I hit 225 lbs. I knew I still had it. Lifting weights is in my blood. I've been tied to it since an early age and I'd rather die than live scared to move and not do what I love. Eventually I built the courage to step in the squat rack and do a rep with the bar. This was the same with deadlift. I wanted to so badly but I was too paranoid of messing my spine up and having surgery for nothing. I went online and searched and searched for people in similar situations. Every time I read one, I wished I hadn't. They would explain how their lower back is messed up, could barely walk, or how they didn't

listen and popped out a pin or screw. Once again, I was discouraged but inside I knew I was different than everybody else. Always known for my heart and relentless quest to be great. I asked my surgeon if I could powerlift, which requires the squat and deadlift. The physician's assistant I talked to did not sign off on the squatting and deadlifting. I had enough of everyone telling me what I could or couldn't do. I worked my way up to 135 lbs. for reps on the squat and deadlift. It was a little painful but that is because I didn't have quality muscle back there for support yet. So each week I would add a 5 or a 10 to each lift and I felt like I was on top of the world.

My confidence was sky high. After being so depressed with feeling crippled, the iron gave me something I cannot describe. My family and girlfriend were extremely nervous. They did not like what I was doing. At the same time, they saw the change in energy, the focus, the drive and were happy for me. I remember when I hit three plates on the squat and deadlift I felt unstoppable. People that knew my story always came up to me calling me insane but also an inspiration. I was a sumo puller back then and hit 405 and no one could believe it. I did a comeback meet at the USPA Winter Classic Ironman where I pressed 308 and pulled 407. It was more than the kid that doubted me benched, plus it's the best I ever did period. I did it, and I was even more hooked after competing in the environment of a powerlifting meet. I did



another meet only a few weeks later. At the USPA West New York Championships I benched 315, squatted 330 and pulled 414 at 165 lbs body weight. I switched to conventional after and once again everybody thought I was crazy because of the fusion -- 10-inch titanium rods held in place by 17 screws. I've trained at gyms all over western New York. I am a member at Elite Fitness and Personal Training, owned by Adam Ferchen, most certainly the strongest gym in the WNY area. All of the members know how I train -- like a mad man, very stubborn and absolutely relentless. I follow my own program, listen to my body, train with crazy intensity, and lift heavy every day. As of now, the most I've deadlifted was at Mickey Rats gym this past August with 518 lbs. I also benched 325 lbs. that day at 186 bodyweight. My best gym numbers are a 355 bench, 405 squat, and 520 deadlift. I competed in

"MY CONFIDENCE WAS SKY HIGH. AFTER BEING SO DEPRESSED WITH FEELING CRIPPLED, THE IRON GAVE ME SOMETHING I CANNOT DESCRIBE. MY FAMILY AND GIRLFRIEND WERE EXTREMELY NERVOUS. THEY DID NOT LIKE WHAT I WAS DOING"

the USPA Winter classic in the 181 class -- I squatted 391 lbs, benched 319, and deadlifted 523. I totaled 1,234 lbs. I plan to compete at 165 in July and smoke those numbers! It's always been a dream to start a brand relating to powerlift-

ing, coming back and facing adversity. I would also love to own my own training facility based around the same concepts someday. Overall I just want to inspire. Every single person who thinks they need to give up what they love because of an injury or surgery, take it one step at a time. It does not come over night. There have been many instances where I thought "Damn, that lift hurt maybe I screwed up, maybe they were right I'm going to mess myself up." Keep pushing. If you are truly obsessed like I am with lifting heavy, you will find a way. I pulled 485 beltless this week, and deadlift twice a week along with benching and squats. Trust me: your body can handle more than you think. The only way to truly know if you are mentally and physically strong is to be counted out completely and make everyone eat their words -- not only deal with adversity but overcome and destroy it. **PM**

NOT DEAD YET!

BY MATT VINCENT

Injuries are going to happen to all of us. Some small, some big and catastrophic. And for most of us lifers it will be a combination of the two. There is an intersection that eventually comes from the strength we are chasing and the years we have put in. This is the cost we all agree to pay when we dive in. If you're competing and pushing yourself as an athlete, there is a risk to it. None of this should be a surprise, but how you react and handle those injuries is a whole different world.

For those who don't know, I have had some serious knee injuries and seven surgeries that have led to my retirement from competing in Highland games. Having a thing that you train for, love to compete in, and enjoy is a tough thing to lose. If you're like me you spent years (8 years for me) chasing progress and pushing yourself to perform at your best. When you wake up one day and all that is gone, it is time to make some changes and reevaluate where you're headed.





The loss of direction has been the hardest part for me. Realizing that it is done and accepting that fact is an important step. It's important to know that you are not just your accomplishments. You are not a character. People that loved you yesterday will love you tomorrow. This also doesn't mean you don't still have value to the people around you or the sport you love.

For me, I realized my experience is not unique. At some point, Father Time wins and we all are done playing our respective sport. However, your journey within that sport still holds value in the rest of your life. Don't abandon the thing that made you. I was able to reflect on the basics regarding what I loved about training. For me that was pushing myself to make progress over yesterday. Keep learning and helping others love the barbell the way you did.

In my opinion, the general perspec-





tive on progress and strong will needs to change. Once you're in my position, it's important to understand that you're not the same person you were when you were healthy. You're playing with a new deck of cards and new rules. It's in our best interest to take time to master these rules again and figure out a new direction. Is it going to be weight loss? Is it going to be finding new goals to chase? Maybe compete at a different weight class? Or different parameters.

Making the shift to new goals for me had to be treated like anything else—establish the new goals and dive in. Even a little easier for me was to pick goals that were not on the same path





as the previous ones. For example, as a thrower I was chasing strength and power for performance. This also left me bigger than I needed to be in the rest of my life. Weighing 290lbs was great for me throwing my best, but not what I needed for the rest of my life to be the best it can be. So, I started attacking my diet now that I don't have the excuse of

"I need to be this big to compete." Also, the farther I got into it, the more I was able to realize that I was done with that chapter of my life and career.

With that change of focus I was able to drop 60lbs. This was what I looked at as step one. Then I start looking at my weaknesses as a person. Well, my cardio isn't great. My mobility needs some

serious attention. Finally, it was time to look like a person that has lifted for 22 years. These other facets of strength and conditioning are not something I know enough about. So I am approaching them with the same drive that I brought to pursuing my sport. This keeps me focused on goals and the task at hand.

The farther removed I am from the Highland Games and competition I realize that it is just a thing I did. I loved it and it helped me start a business and meet the most amazing people. These things are what I start to recall from the sport. Not my PRs or my total, but the relationships and the experiences I gained along the way.

Not being defined by these things that we do but owning them as a great thing we did. Then being strong enough to look forward and continue to make it happen. Be the person that learns how to perform the best as a human and not just on the platform. This will be hard. Injuries suck and a lot of baggage comes along with them. I dealt with depression, anxiety, and anger. "Why did this happen to me? What do I do now? Can I ever compete again? Will I always be in pain?" These questions are normal for us after a major injury. Anger is a tough one. For those of us that compete, we know that gear really well and have been able to access it when things go south. We can use it as a positive to power through lifts and training. However, when it is anger focused on a circumstance that you can't change, it will eventually turn in to resentment. You will resent those around you still doing

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it and resent yourself for not being able to. This is fucking cancer and you have to avoid this.

This journey is yours. These are your experiences. The time you have to push hard and participate in a sport is finite and no one knows how long that will be when they start. Enjoy the time you have and love that you got to do a thing. Help others love it. Be the type of

person that can show other people the way. Help others learn from some of the mistakes you made. Just don't let anger take over and ruin the rest of the time you have to pursue being happy.

This has been a challenging two years for me. But I'll look back at it as some of the years I grew as a person the most. Everything that happens, good or bad, is an opportunity to grow and get better

from it. Remember to stay focused on today and making progress over where you were yesterday. For those of you not injured and towards the end of your career — listen to the guys that lived it and still are. Enjoy the day and make your body the strongest it can be. Injured, competing, retired, or healthy, a strong life is still and always will be a better one. **PM**

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Super Training Corner

By Steven Granzella

Accessories are to the bench press like a Strong woman is behind every successful man—in order to push the limits of your bench press “success” you must first establish yourself a hot piece of tail that pushes you to be great. For the next 4 weeks, you’re going to implement a variety of accessories that will help increase your overall upper body strength which will in turn increase your bench press. Treat this strength wave as seriously as you would in meet prep. Focus on pushing as much weight as possible when labeled “Heavy” and pushing past painful hypertrophy when labeled “Light”.

Many of you have a 2-day upper-body training split, but for the next 4 weeks, you will be adding in 2 additional days that will take about 15–20 minutes. Days 1 and 3 should be after your main bench press work and days 3 and 4 can happen on off days or after lower-body work. These shorter workouts are designed to get additional blood flow to your upper-body and add get additional work in. Although short, these are a must to safely add additional volume to your overall training cycle.

Check back next issue for another routine from Super Training Gym – “The Strongest Gym in the West!”

WEEK 1:

- Day 1:** Close Grip Bench Press – 5x5 (Heavy)
DB Bench Press – 5x8 (Heavy)
Pull Ups – 5x Failure
Barbell Curl – 5x10 (Heavy)
DB Hammer Curl – 5x20 (Light)
Cable Tricep Push Downs – 5x20 (Light)
- Day 2:** Wide Grip Lat Pull Downs / Cable Tricep Extensions / Face Pulls – 5x30 (Light)
- Day 3:** Neutral Grip DB Press – 5x8 (Heavy)
Incline Flies – 5x10 (Heavy)
Skull Crushers – 5x10 (Heavy)
DB Hammer Curls – 5x10 (Heavy)
Preacher Curls – 5x20 (Light)
Cable Tricep Push Downs – 5x20 (Light)
- Day 4:** Reverse Grip Pull Downs / Cable Tricep Extensions / DB Side Raises – 4x25 (Light)

WEEK 2:

- Day 1:** Spoto Bench Press – 5x5 (Heavy)
DB Bench Press – 5x15 (Heavy)
Pull ups – 5x Failure
Rolling Tricep Extensions – 5x8 (Heavy)
DB Hammer Curls – Walk the line Up (Heavy)
Cable Curl – 5x20 (Light)
Cable Tricep Extensions – 5x20 (Light)
- Day 2:** Wide Grip Lat Pull Downs / Cable Tricep Extensions / Face Pulls – 5x30 (Light)
- Day 3:** Incline DB Press – 5x8 (Heavy)
JM Press – 5x10 (Heavy)
Tate Presses – 5x 10 (Heavy)
Reverse Grip Curl – 5x10 (Heavy)
Seated Incline DB Curl – 5x20 (Light)
Banded Tricep Extension – 5x25 (Light)
- Day 4:** Reverse Grip Pull Downs / Cable Tricep Extensions / DB Side Raises – 4x25 (Light)



WEEK 3:

- Day 1:** Incline Barbell Bench Press – 5x5 (Heavy)
DB Bench Press – 5x8 (Heavy)
Pull Ups – 5x Failure
Barbell Curl – 6x8 (Heavy)
DB Hammer Curl – 5x25 (Light)
Cable Tricep Push Downs – 5x25 (Light)
- Day 2:** Wide Grip Lat Pull Downs / Cable Tricep Extensions / Face Pulls – 5x30 (Light)
- Day 3:** Floor DB Press – 5x8 (Heavy)
Incline Flies – 5x10 (Heavy)
Skull Crushers – 5x10 (Heavy)
DB Hammer Curls – 6x8 (Heavy)
Preacher Curls – 5x25 (Light)
Cable Tricep Push Downs – 5x25 (Light)
- Day 4:** Reverse Grip Pull Downs / Cable Tricep Extensions / DB Side Raises – 4x25 (Light)

WEEK 4:

- Day 1:** Floor Bench Press – 5x5 (Heavy)
DB Bench Press – 5x15 (Heavy)
Pull ups – 5x Failure
Rolling Tricep Extensions – 5x8 (Heavy)
DB Hammer Curls – Walk the line Up (Heavy)
Cable Curl – 5x20 (Light)
Cable Tricep Extensions – 5x20 (Light)
- Day 2:** Wide Grip Lat Pull Downs / Cable Tricep Extensions / Face Pulls – 5x30 (Light)
- Day 3:** Flat Db Press – 5x8 (Heavy)
JM Press – 5x10 (Heavy)
Tate Presses – 5x10 (Heavy)
Reverse Grip Curl – 5x10 (Heavy)
Seated Incline DB Curl – 5x20 (Light)
Banded Tricep Extension – 5x25 (Light)
- Day 4:** Reverse Grip Pull Downs / Cable Tricep Extensions / DB Side Raises – 4x25 (Light)

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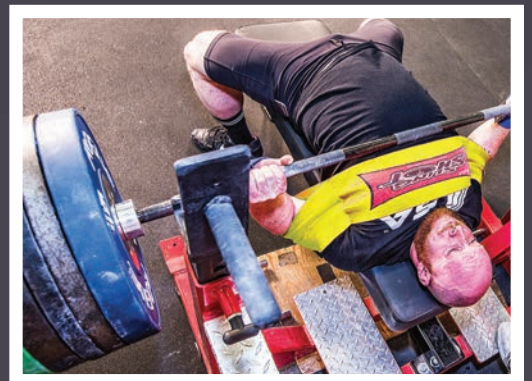
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Current Top 50 Rankings: Men

SQUAT

Rank	Name	Federation	Date	Squat
1	Anthony Conyers	USPA	2018-02-17	589
2	Richard Navarra	USPA	2018-01-06	551
3	Vincent Falzetta	AWPC	2017-09-09	523
4	Griffin Walizer	IPA	2017-12-09	520
5	Christian Kearney	NASA	2017-12-16	507
6	Romeo Tendencia Jr	RPS	2017-05-20	500
6	Dustin Craigo	XPC	2018-03-03	500
8	Austin Elpers	AWPC	2017-09-09	490
9	Nathan Weaver	RPS	2017-06-11	475
9	Steve D'Alessandro	APA	2018-02-24	475
11	Corey Crook	IPL	2017-11-04	473
11	Jesse Lanuevo	USPA	2018-02-10	473
13	Nick Vogelsang	XPC	2018-03-03	470
13	Mark Zaccadelli	RPS	2018-03-24	470
15	Brandon Joyner	APA	2017-07-29	468
15	Jorge Saldana	USPA	2017-12-09	468
17	Alec Enkiri	USPA	2017-05-20	462
18	Damien Seales	APA	2017-05-13	460
18	Michael Bowman	XPC	2018-03-03	460
18	Sean Fagan	RPS	2017-12-02	460
21	Chris Rodgers	USPA	2017-07-08	457
22	Ryan Diogo	RPS	2017-10-15	455
23	Aaron Purdy	USPA	2017-12-09	451
23	Marcus Mccord	USPA	2017-10-28	451
23	Matt Wallace	AAPF	2018-03-24	451
26	Taylor Ball	USPA	2018-03-24	440
27	Timothy Romm	IPA	2017-06-17	435
28	Cole Lavergne	USPA	2017-11-18	429
29	Scott Reaves	SPF	2017-10-14	420
30	Jon Maneen	USPA	2017-06-10	418
31	Eric Moore	USPA	2017-10-14	413
32	Christian Labash	IPA	2018-03-03	410
33	William Lamond	USPA	2017-07-08	408
34	Matthew Rutledge	USPA	2018-01-27	407
35	Tyler Golick	RPS	2017-05-20	405
36	Fardin Ahmed	USPA	2018-02-17	402
36	John Harden	USPA	2017-05-13	402
36	Mauricio Felix	RPS	2017-10-28	402
39	Theo Ussery	IBP	2018-02-03	400
39	Rob Rawn	WNPF	2017-09-17	400
41	Michael Hernandez	USPA	2017-07-29	391
42	Joshua Lipp	USPA	2017-12-09	385
43	Michael Monistere	USPA	2017-11-18	380
43	Daniel Dollopac	USPA	2018-03-25	380
43	Seth Baldwin	USPA	2018-01-27	380
46	Zach Rizzo	RPS	2017-12-03	375
46	Taylor Ticknor	IPA	2018-02-24	375
46	Brian Melville	RPS	2017-11-18	375
46	Mark Aceto	RPS	2018-04-08	375
50	Graham Dowers	IPL	2017-11-04	374
50	Nick Baradgie	USPA	2017-05-13	374

BENCH PRESS

Name	Federation	Date	Bench
Gerald Dionio	SPF	2017-11-11	402
Michael Estrella	IPL	2017-11-18	385
Charles Okpoko	USAPL	2017-10-14	352
Felix Wynn	USPA	2017-07-29	352
Ryan Diogo	RPS	2017-10-15	350
Jonathan Garcia	USAPL	2017-10-14	347
Keith Mchoney	USAPL	2017-10-14	347
Timothy Romm	IPA	2017-06-17	347
Theo Ussery	IBP	2018-02-03	340
Jeff Cohen	USAPL	2017-10-14	336
Phillip Brown	USAPL	2017-10-14	336
Theopolis Ussery	IPL	2017-11-18	336
Jon Maneen	RPS	2017-12-09	335
Lenard Jones	IPF	2017-06-24	330
Michael Hernandez	USPA	2018-02-17	330
Dallas Bey	USAPL	2017-10-14	330
Richard Navarra	USPA	2018-01-06	330
Anthony Conyers	USPA	2018-02-17	330
Rocky Magbual	USPA	2018-01-20	330
Mark Zaccadelli	RPS	2018-03-24	330
David Acilis	IPL	2017-11-18	325
Patrick Mason	RAW	2017-06-03	325
Douglas Maiorana	USPA	2017-06-10	325
Derek Miw	USPA	2017-10-01	319
Aaron Purdy	USPA	2017-12-09	319
Jesse Rodriguez	USPA	2017-07-08	319
Jordan Harris	SPF	2018-01-27	315
Christopher Macera	365 STRONG	2017-10-28	314
Willie Lim	USAPL	2017-10-14	314
Thomas Soto	USPA	2018-02-10	314
Kane Garcia	USPA	2018-02-10	314
Cesar Guadalupe	USPA	2017-07-08	314
Ryu Tran	USPA	2017-10-07	314
Jared Mishlove	USPA	2018-01-06	314
Sean Fagan	RPS	2017-12-02	310
Christian Maldonado	USAPL	2018-01-14	308
Denny Sou	USPA	2017-12-02	308
Richie Perrin	USPA	2017-07-29	308
Maximilian Finnegan	USPA	2017-09-16	303
Jorge Saldana	USPA	2017-12-09	303
Marcus Mccord	USPA	2017-10-28	303
Clifton Pho	NAPF	2018-03-03	303
Vincent Falzetta	AWPC	2017-09-09	303
Minh Tran	USPA	2017-09-16	303
Stephen Zathang	USPA	2017-12-09	303
Daniel Chen	USAPL	2017-10-14	303
Evan Murakami	USPA	2017-09-10	303
Steven Gassert	USAPL	2017-10-14	303
Tyler Yanez	AAPF	2018-02-10	303
Zachary Mcgillis	USAPL	2017-10-14	303
William Ho	USPA	2017-11-18	303

148 lbs. - Raw with Wraps

DEADLIFT

Name	Federation	Date	Deadlift
Gerald Dionio	USPA	2017-08-26	661
Christian Kearney	NASA	2018-03-10	650
Clifton Pho	NAPF	2018-03-03	633
Thomas Soto	USPA	2018-02-10	617
Vincent Falzetta	AWPC	2017-09-09	611
Anthony Conyers	USPA	2018-02-17	611
Keith Mchoney	USAPL	2017-10-14	606
Ryu Tran	USPA	2017-10-07	600
Terel Monroe	APF	2017-05-06	584
Jesse Lanuevo	USPA	2018-02-10	584
Charles Okpoko	USAPL	2017-10-14	578
Jonah Geremia	HERC	2018-02-03	575
Kane Garcia	USPA	2018-02-10	573
Samuel Yoon	USPA	2018-01-20	573
Jorge Saldana	USPA	2017-12-09	567
Bill Tenerelli	USPA	2017-10-14	562
Sean Fagan	RPS	2017-12-02	560
Dallas Bey	USAPL	2017-10-14	556
Cesar Guadalupe	USPA	2017-07-08	556
James Cabajar	USPA	2017-06-10	556
Chris Rodgers	USPA	2017-07-08	551
Alex LaRochelle	RAW	2017-06-03	551
Michael Estrella	IPL	2017-11-18	551
Hanh-Thien Elston	USPA	2017-11-18	551
Felix Wynn	USPA	2017-07-29	551
Albert Caval	USPA	2018-01-20	551
Vincent Farin	USPA	2017-12-02	545
Sawyer Yandell	IPF	2017-06-24	545
Damien Seales	APA	2017-05-13	545
Aaron Purdy	USPA	2017-12-09	545
Richard Navarra	USPA	2018-01-06	545
Victor Madarang	USPA	2017-07-29	545
Richie Perrin	USPA	2017-07-29	545
Jonathan Garcia	USAPL	2017-10-14	540
Corey Hoffman	USPA	2017-06-10	540
Nathan Weaver	RPS	2017-06-11	535
Minh Tran	USPA	2017-09-16	534
Jared Mishlove	USPA	2017-07-08	534
Albert Nitz	USPA	2017-07-08	534
Sean Ambrocio	USAPL	2017-10-14	534
Romeo Tendencia Jr	RPS	2017-05-20	530
Dustin Craigo	XPC	2018-03-03	530
Griffin Walizer	IPA	2017-12-09	530
Jeffrey Wong	RPS	2018-03-17	530
Harrison Conner	USAPL	2017-10-14	529
Matt Wallace	AAPF	2018-03-24	529
Jesse Rodriguez	USPA	2017-07-08	523
Raleigh Dia	USPA	2018-03-24	523
Allen Zou	USAPL	2017-10-14	523
Willie Lim	USAPL	2017-10-14	523
Robert Saunders	SPF	2017-10-28	523

TOTAL

Name	Federation	Date	Total
Anthony Conyers	USPA	2018-02-17	1532
Vincent Falzetta	AWPC	2017-09-09	1438
Richard Navarra	USPA	2018-01-06	1427
Christian Kearney	NASA	2017-12-16	1399
Griffin Walizer	IPA	2017-12-09	1350
Jorge Saldana	USPA	2017-12-09	1339
Sean Fagan	RPS	2017-12-02	1330
Jesse Lanuevo	USPA	2018-02-10	1322
Aaron Purdy	USPA	2017-12-09	1317
Romeo Tendencia Jr	RPS	2017-05-20	1310
Nathan Weaver	RPS	2017-06-11	1300
Dustin Craigo	XPC	2018-03-03	1300
Austin Elpers	AWPC	2017-09-09	1278
Marcus Mccord	USPA	2017-10-28	1278
Chris Rodgers	USPA	2017-07-08	1273
Mark Zaccadelli	RPS	2018-03-24	1270
Michael Bowman	XPC	2018-03-03	1265
Steve D'Alessandro	APA	2018-02-24	1265
Corey Crook	IPL	2017-11-04	1262
Ryan Diogo	RPS	2017-10-15	1260
Brandon Joyner	APA	2017-07-29	1256
Damien Seales	APA	2017-05-13	1255
Matt Wallace	AAPF	2018-03-24	1251
Theo Ussery	IBP	2018-02-03	1250
Nick Vogelsang	XPC	2018-03-03	1245
Timothy Romm	IPA	2017-06-17	1242
Alec Enkiri	USPA	2017-05-20	1212
Cole Lavergne	USPA	2017-11-18	1212
Jonah Geremia	HERC	2018-02-03	1200
Jon Maneen	USPA	2017-06-10	1179
William Lamond	USPA	2017-07-08	1169
Taylor Ball	USPA	2018-03-24	1168
Michael Hernandez	USPA	2018-02-17	1151
Tyler Golick	RPS	2017-05-20	1135
Brandon Adams	USPA	2018-02-17	1135
Brian Melville	RPS	2017-11-18	1125
John Harden	USPA	2017-05-13	1124
Matthew Rutledge	USPA	2018-01-27	1113
Eric Moore	USPA	2017-10-14	1113
Daniel Dollopac	USPA	2018-03-25	1113
Denny Lawrence	USPA	2018-03-24	1107
Zach Rizzo	RPS	2017-12-03	1105
Fardin Ahmed	USPA	2018-02-17	1102
Wayne Cook	HERC	2017-11-18	1095
Graham Dowers	IPL	2017-11-04	1071
Taylor Ticknor	IPA	2018-02-24	1070
Christian Labash	IPA	2018-03-03	1065
Scott Reaves	SPF	2017-10-14	1065
Mark Aceto	RPS	2018-04-08	1065
Seth Baldwin	USPA	2018-01-27	1063



Current Top 30 Rankings: Women....

SQUAT

Rank	Name	Federation	Date	Squat
1	Kim Tran	SPF	2017-06-11	363
2	April Shumaker	USPA	2018-02-17	336
3	Jaycie Sluss	RPS	2018-01-27	235
4	Maria Pappa	RPS	2018-03-24	220
5	Judy Cabaal	APF	2018-03-24	203
6	Sudana Krasniqi	RPS	2017-11-18	185
6	Kate Guiliani	SPF	2017-09-23	185
8	Sarah Bryant	USPA	2018-03-10	181
9	Ciana Lot	RPS	2018-04-07	180
10	Stephanie Mattina	APA	2018-01-27	175
11	Michelle Arbov	RPS	2017-05-20	135
12	Lucila Mc	USPA	2017-10-14	115
13	Lucila McMahon	IPL	2017-11-04	110

BENCH PRESS

Rank	Name	Federation	Date	Bench
1	April Shumaker	USPA	2018-02-17	225
2	Samyra Abweh	WRPF	2017-08-25	214
3	Angelina Hong	USPA	2017-08-19	203
4	Kim Tran	SPF	2017-06-11	176
5	Stacia-Al Mahoe	USPA	2017-06-10	170
6	Allegra Hudson	NAPF	2018-03-03	159
7	Heather Connor	IPF	2017-06-24	154
7	Sabrina Clever	USPA	2018-03-17	154
7	Michelle Rodriguez	USPA	2017-09-30	154
7	Kati Jones	USPA	2017-10-22	154
11	Alexis Callejo	IPL	2017-11-04	148
11	Emily Ho	USAPL	2017-10-14	148
11	Raishel Phares	USPA	2018-01-20	148
11	Violeta Kudrevich	USAPL	2017-10-14	148
15	Jaycie Sluss	RPS	2018-01-27	145
16	Vanessa Ferla	USPA	2017-12-09	144
17	Toni Cabral	APF	2017-05-06	143
17	Miriam Beltran	USPA	2017-05-20	143
19	Gabrielle Polanco	USAPL	2017-10-14	137
19	Tracey Le	USPA	2017-07-29	137
19	Amber Chapman	USPA	2017-12-02	137
19	Alyssa Mirasol	IPF	2017-06-24	137
19	Hedda Nguyen	USPA	2017-05-20	137
19	Peggy Box	USPA	2017-05-13	137
25	Marily Solares	USAPL	2017-10-14	132
25	Lisa Abarca	USPA	2017-09-09	132
25	Lisa Rothman	USAPL	2017-10-14	132
25	Melissa Cotton	USPA	2017-07-08	132
29	Nicole Nguyen	USAPL	2017-10-14	126
29	Kelli Ennis	USAPL	2017-10-14	126
29	Caralee Suchomel	USAPL	2018-01-20	126

105 lbs. – Raw with Wraps

DEADLIFT

Rank	Name	Federation	Date	Deadlift
1	Kim Tran	SPF	2017-06-11	380
2	Alexis Callejo	IPL	2017-11-04	375
3	Heather Connor	IPF	2017-06-24	374
3	Stacia-Al Mahoe	USPA	2017-06-10	374
5	Samyra Abweh	WRPF	2017-08-25	369
6	April Shumaker	RPS	2017-09-30	347
7	Allegra Hudson	NAPF	2018-03-03	330
8	Alyssa Mirasol	IPF	2017-06-24	325
9	Natalie Do	USPA	2018-01-20	319
9	Tracey Le	USPA	2017-11-12	319
11	Nicole Nguyen	USAPL	2017-10-14	314
11	Gabrielle Polanco	USAPL	2017-10-14	314
11	Maryam Rushdi	USPA	2018-02-10	314
11	Peggy Box	USPA	2017-05-13	314
15	Tiffany Thamanaeth	USPA	2018-03-24	308
15	Sutkan Parkeevincha	USPA	2017-07-08	308
17	Brianne Hancy	USAPL	2017-10-14	303
17	Anika Mejia	USPA	2017-06-10	303
19	Keri Davis	RAW	2017-06-10	297
20	Rosalyn Malihan	USPA	2017-11-12	292
20	Tiffany Trinh	USAPL	2017-10-14	292
22	Mary Cuaresma	USPA	2018-01-20	286
23	Jaycie Sluss	RPS	2018-01-27	285
24	Susan Lee	USPA	2017-10-01	281
24	Lisa Rothman	USAPL	2017-10-14	281
24	Raishel Phares	USPA	2018-01-20	281
27	Christina Ngo	USPA	2017-10-14	275
27	Kelli Ennis	USAPL	2017-10-14	275
27	Tiffany Nguyen	USAPL	2017-10-14	275
27	Nicole Yu	USAPL	2017-10-14	275
27	Kathryn Skarin	APF	2017-05-27	275

TOTAL

Rank	Name	Federation	Date	Total
1	Kim Tran	SPF	2017-06-11	920
2	April Shumaker	USPA	2018-02-17	909
3	Jaycie Sluss	RPS	2018-01-27	665
4	Maria Pappa	RPS	2018-03-24	570
5	Judy Cabaal	APF	2018-03-24	567
6	Sudana Krasniqi	RPS	2017-11-18	520
7	Sarah Bryant	USPA	2018-03-10	518
8	Stephanie Mattina	APA	2018-01-27	495
9	Ciana Lot	RPS	2018-04-07	490
10	Kate Gulliani	SPF	2017-09-23	450
11	Michelle Arbov	RPS	2017-05-20	435
12	Lucila Mc	USPA	2017-10-14	374
13	Lucila McMahon	IPL	2017-11-04	369
14	Lindsay Kephart	RPS	2018-04-07	345
15	Lindsay Kephart	RPS	2017-12-03	325





Instagram Highlight

NAME: Sean "Hercules" Parker | **AGE:** 32 | **HOMETOWN:** London, England | **IG:** @SeanFrederickParkerFitness



You're obviously no stranger to the weight room. Your physique and your strength are clear indications of your dedication to training. What are your best lifts for squat, bench, and deadlift? Have you ever competed in a powerlifting meet? If not, would you ever consider it?

Over the years, I have competed in multiple different disciplines, Powerlifting and Strongman being two of them.

My Personal Best Lifts Are:

- Squat - 335kg / 740lbs
- Bench - 260kg / 575lbs
- Deadlift - 390kg / 860lbs
- Dumbbell Bench Press - 105kg / 232lbs Dumbbells (Unassisted)
- Log Press - 185kg / 408lbs

Very few people have exceptional strength/power and very few people have a phenomenal physique. However, tremendously few people possess both at the same time. How did you experience so much success in becoming a hybrid athlete?

From a young age, I have always wanted to do the things that other can't. This for me has never been driven by the motives that most would expect, not for ego or arrogance. The reason has always been from far deeper within, it has always been a personal battle with myself, a journey of self-discovery to see how mentally strong I can be. Mental fortitude is so important in life, and I truly believe once you possess it, the impossible becomes possible.

While you excel at both physique and strength, it is often



difficult to be exceptionally skilled at multiple things. What do you find most challenging about being a hybrid athlete?

By far the hardest thing about being a Hybrid Athlete is recovering from the intense training. Pushing my body to its maximum capacity requires fuel, so for that reason I do not eat like a body-builder. I do not restrict calories, I eat like an athlete, I eat to fuel my body and the daily demands I put it through.

I create such dramatic caloric deficit through the multiple training sessions that I do every day that my body requires sufficient food and sports supplements to repair and recover from the grueling training sessions.

I am very fortunate to have Project AD support me with an incredible range of sport and health supplements.

Squatting and deadlifting are essential to powerlifting. Though they're highly beneficial to overall strength, they can also be incredibly taxing on your body. They can also be damaging if routinely performed with subpar form. For lifters that are not powerlifting oriented, do you implement these lifts in their training? Do you modify them at all (e.g. box squats instead of free squats, trap bar deadlifts instead of barbell deadlifts, etc.)?

As an athlete, I train "Lower Body" a minimum of three times a week, utilizing different training principles - specificity, overload, rest, adaptation and reversibility (SORAR), Plus Plyometric, Sprint and Speed Training.

For me the most important part of one's body is the Posterior Chain and Core. Two areas I feel that are very underdeveloped in most.

For many people, bench press strength is directly correlated to their body weight. For example, my bench press is strongest when I'm heavy, but suffers when I lose weight. Have you personally experienced any correlation between strength and body weight/composition, or have you observed it with clients?

I do believe there is a direct correlation with the level of ones Strength to their body weight, but I also believe that by training to

become more efficient in each movement, and by improving ones' overall body composition (Muscle Mass to Fat) a conditioned muscle will always be more functional than just chasing body weight.

Are there any lifters you idolize? Why do they inspire and motivate you?

I respect and admire anyone that has achieved greatness in their chosen craft.

Being blessed with talent is a great gift, but when someone channels that gift, and combines it with hard work, passion and desire, that is when you have something truly amazing.

I have been fortunate to work with some truly incredible people in my life, people that are actually making a difference in our world. That is what I truly admire.

At 6'4" and ~300 lbs., you must have dabbled with sports in the past. What's your athletic background? How has this experience helped guide you to where you are today?

I have trained and played sports for most of my life, I was always very active as a child, I was never one for computer games or sitting around. I was always outdoors playing.

I have trained martial arts since I was young, the discipline and focus learned has most certainly carried over into adult life.

Throughout my life, I have studied many different styles. But now my focus is staying consistent with my striking and grappling. For me, the most relevant to my work and real world situations.

How has your diet evolved over your years of training? Do you tend to be more flexible or is being on track 99% of the time crucial?

My diet has most certainly evolved over the years, as I have learned what my body requires to recover from my intense training.

For many years, I was eating far too clean, which resulted in my body not having sufficient calories. This then created prolonged recovery periods and an inability to grow and progress.

Always remember, we are our own experiment, learn your body, and its requirements, once you understand this science, you really can optimize your performance. **PM**



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