

**BENCH PRESS FOR FULL POWER** BY DONNIE THOMPSON

# POWER

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2010

**WHEN WORLD'S COLLIDE:  
CROSSFIT AND  
POWERLIFTING**

BY PAUL SOUTHERN

**DEADLIFT  
TRAINING FOR  
STRONGMAN  
SUCCESS**

BY KARL GILLINGHAM

**FRANKL WAGES WAR  
ON POWERLIFTING**

**START  
SMALL TO  
SQUAT  
BIG**

BY BRIAN CARROLL

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# ISSUE 6 'THE FREAK SHOW'

This is *Power Magazine's* one-year anniversary! With that being said, we want to give you the best issue yet. Thanks to everyone for all the support and feedback.

I competed at the 2010 Pro AM and underperformed big-time. It was not a wasted trip by any means; I got to rub fat elbows with some current greats in this sport: Chuck Vogelpohl, Shawn Frankl, Michael Cartainin, Al Caslow, David Hoff, Brian Carroll, AJ Roberts and, of course, my sensei, Lou Simmons. I learned a lot on this trip. I saw the great Chuck V. smash a PR squat of 1,175 lbs., and he nearly pulled off a PR total.

I spoke with him afterward and he said he was screwed up for a while and couldn't make progress, so he worked hard on holding the bar lower on his back in the squat. Later I talked to the guys from BIG Iron and Westside. They explained how small changes shot their numbers through the roof. It made me really think, "Dude, you need to get your fat head out of your ass and crush some personal records next time."

Frankl is indomitable, indestructible, inhuman, unbelievable and perhaps unbeatable. He ripped through the competition at 2010 Pro AM like Donnie Thompson rips through a king-sized peanut butter cup. Frankl's coach and mentor, Rick Hussey, looked on with a half smile nearly all day as the machine he finely tuned chewed up and spit out the competition. All of BIG Iron had outstanding performances, but the day belonged to Frankl as he went into this Ed Coan-like state of dominance. Frankl totaled 2,715 lbs. at 216 for yet another world record. He destroyed the previous total of 2,552 lbs. set by Matt Kroczaleski.

Think about it this way: 2,715 lbs. is 12.5 times bodyweight. To put it all into perspective, the 5-foot, 6-inch block of granite "The Freak Show" would be 7th all-time on the super heavyweight list – 10 lbs. ahead of Andy Bolton.

Big D. lays it out for full powerlifters in "Bench Press for Full Power." Bench-only guys can specialize and focus on one lift, but a full powerlifter has to juggle all three. Big D. explains how you can learn from the bench-only crowd, but you may burn out fast if you don't account for the heavy squats and deadlifts.

Mike T gives outstanding perspective on the different Feds and squat depth.

Rob Luyanado talks about overcoming failure. He is one of the greatest benchers of all time, but recently he's had some setbacks – and he isn't happy about it. Luyanado plans to become the fourth man in history to bench 1,000 lbs.

The Gillingham family knows all about deadlifting. Check out Karl Gillingham's article on deadlift training for Strongman, and how strengthening your deadlift can help in many aspects of that competition.

Dan Harrison has fought through the tragic death of his girlfriend, Olivia, to chase his dream of becoming a professional Strongman. He discusses the many ups and downs he has had trying to become pro, and what he did to get better.

Brian Carroll hits us with useful info on how to squat big. He has hit many 1,000-lb. squats and even a few 1,100-plus-lb. squats. He also tried to start a fight with me at a bar, but knew I'd go into Ninja mode and embarrass him in front of his wife!

*Knowledge is Power,*  
**Mark Bell**

*One last thing, Power magazine and Super Training will be exhibiting at the LA Fit Expo at the Los Angeles convention center on January 20th and 30th. Come by and say hello!*



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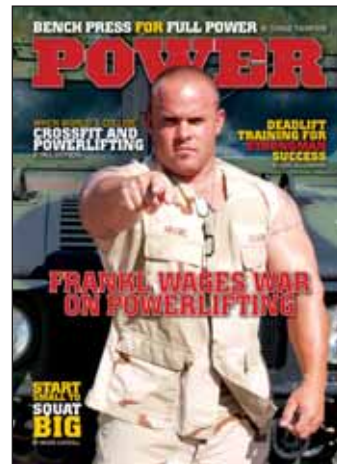
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- Stan Efferding

“ I got my Sling Shot yesterday and I really like this thing! I have a pain in lower position in bench press, but with the Sling Shot it went away! I did 480 lbs for 5 reps with my close grip. You cannot bench close grip in bench shirt and I don't like wearing a shirt, but I will use the Sling Shot all the time in my bench program for many different things... most importantly in recovery from chest and shoulder injuries. ”

-Konstantins Konstantinovs

Mark Bell

# SLING SHOT

HowMuchYaBench.net

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**Brian Siders -Team MHP Member  
World Record Total  
2,575 lbs.**

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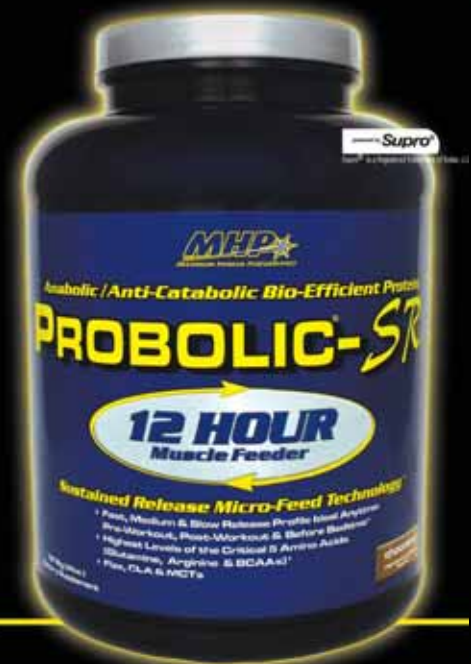
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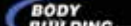
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**Joe Mazza** -Team MHP Member  
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MHP's **BCAA 3300** is the most sophisticated, advanced anabolic BCAA formula available and is a must-have for all serious powerlifters looking to up their lifting poundages to record-setting levels!

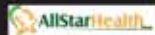


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Karl Gillingham gives us some more awesome tools for Strongman training. In this article he looks at deadlift training and how integral it is to dominating Strongman competitions.



# EVERY WORKOUT ENDS WITH **DARK MATTER!**



**Rob Luyando - Team MHP Member**  
World Record Bench Press  
909 lbs. @ 275 lbs.

## THERE'S STRONG... THEN THERE'S **MHP STRONG!**

### THE ULTIMATE POST-WORKOUT FORMULA!

Watching Rob Luyando train is an eye-opening experience. The amount of intensity he puts into every workout is mind blowing. The fact that his body can withstand so many grueling workouts day after day defies human physiology. How does this phenom of strength do it? DARK MATTER!

After every workout, Rob refuels his body with DARK MATTER — the ultimate post-workout recovery and growth accelerator. DARK MATTER takes a quantum leap forward into a new dimension of post-workout muscle growth called the ANABOLIC AXIS. The Anabolic Axis is the time and point at which insulin levels simultaneously peak with amino acids, creatine and glycogen transport into muscle tissue during the critical 1- hour period immediately after your workout. DARK MATTER blasts open the critical "Anabolic Window" faster, wider and longer, allowing you to enter the ANABOLIC AXIS for the most powerful anabolic reaction you've ever experienced!

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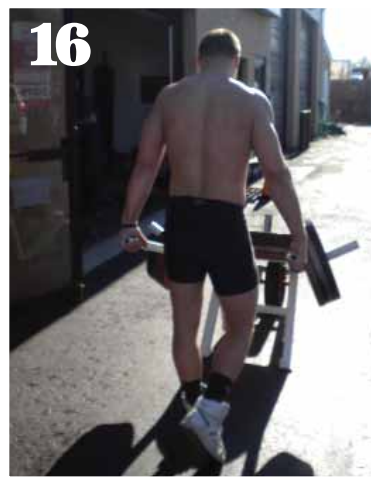
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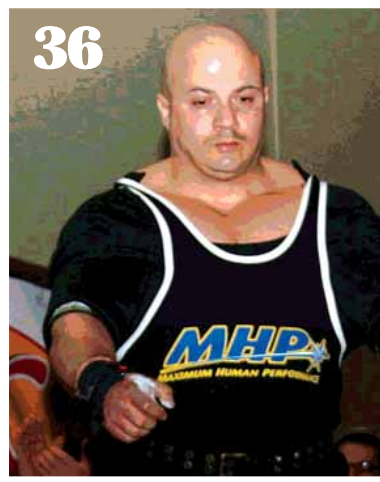
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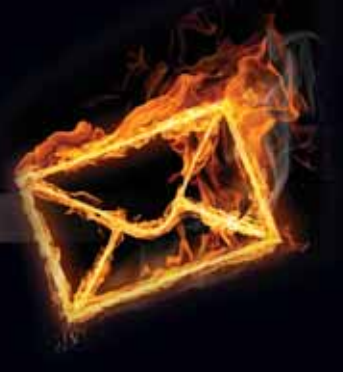


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## POWER IS GOING STRONG

**To the Editor-at-Xtra-Large:**

This is an excellent publication and I recommend a subscription to everyone. All the issues so far have been interesting and great reads.

**Gerry T.**

via Facebook

**To the Editor-at-Xtra-Large:**

I just wanted to thank you for a great magazine. The articles are very helpful to me, as I am just getting started. Keep up the good work.

**John**

via email

**To the Editor-at-Xtra-Large:**

I saw in the latest issue that you were thinking about re-releasing your premier issue. That would be great. If you do, count me in for one. I've really enjoyed *Power*. Thanks for an awesome product.

**James**

via email

## SOME GREAT FEEDBACK ON THE SLING SHOT

**To the Editor-at-Xtra-Large:**



I let a friend of mine use my *Sling Shot*. He is 39 and hasn't flat-benched in years because of shoulder pain. All he has been able to do is incline and decline. The first time he used the *Sling Shot* he worked up to 405 lbs. x three! I believe he

will order one of his own. He was super excited about it.

**Kelly S.**

via Facebook



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Send us your comments, suggestions, gripes or whatever. We would love to hear from you. Submit your questions for Power's staff and advisory board at [www.thepowermagazine.com](http://www.thepowermagazine.com)



**To the Editor-at-Xtra-Large:**

I wanted to let you guys know the *Sling Shot* is an awesome product. I was not sure about it at first because I am a raw lifter, but I was wrong. Simply being able to handle more weight and the triceps overload has added 20 lbs. to my raw bench in about five to six weeks.

**Thomas Lower**  
via email

**To the Editor-at-Xtra-Large:**

I got my *Sling Shot* yesterday, and I really like this thing! I have a pain in lower position in bench press, but with the *Sling Shot* it went away. I did 480 lbs. for five reps with my close grip. You cannot bench close grip in bench shirt and I don't like wearing a shirt, but I will use the *Sling Shot* all the time in my bench program for many different things – most importantly in recovery from chest and shoulder injuries.

**K.K.**  
via email

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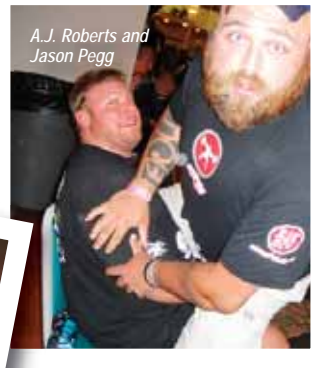
A.J. Roberts, Matt Smith and Tony Bolgne



Ricky L. and Justin Randall



A.J. Roberts and Jason Pegg



Westside's Louie Simmons and Big Iron's Rick Hussey



Matt Kroczaleski and Mark Bell



David Hoff



Paul Childress



Mark Bell and Jim Wendler



Laura Phelps-Sweatt



BFF's Meghan Maclaughlin and Quinn Bell enjoying some birthday cake



SF Bay area CrossFit ladies testing out the Sling Shot



The two that make Westside run...Janelle Goldbach and Doris Simmons



# POWER

## NEW PRODUCTS



### THE ISOLATOR

[www.isolatorfitness.com](http://www.isolatorfitness.com)

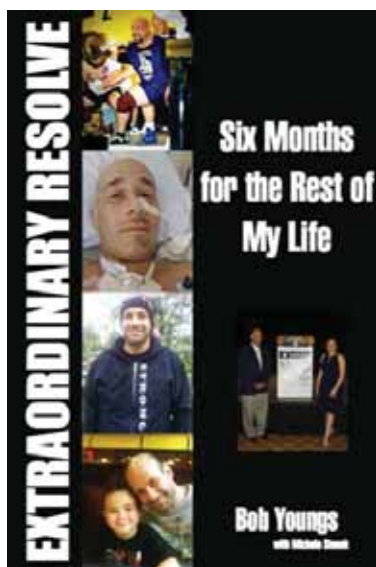
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### EXTRAORDINARY RESOLVE SIX MONTHS FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE, BY BOB YOUNGS

[www.elitefts.com](http://www.elitefts.com)

While on a cruise with his fiancée and friends to celebrate his 39th birthday, Bob Youngs came down with severe stomach pain. Although he made it through the remainder of the cruise, his fiancée urged him to see a doctor after returning home. On the day Youngs visited the doctor, he was found to be bleeding internally and was rushed to the emergency room. That night marked the beginning of a battle Youngs never saw coming. This book is the story of his six-month fight with leukemia, based on the daily blog his fiancée wrote to keep family and friends updated on his condition. This is a story about a man who was read his last rites, who looked into the eyes of death and lived to tell about it. It's a story of vulnerability, raw emotion and brutal honesty. Most of all, it's a story of extraordinary resolve.



# MMA POWER TRAINING

BY ZACH EVAN-ESCH

There are many misconceptions when it comes to training to be a bad-ass MMA Fighter, or any type of combat athlete. Let me tell it to your straight, no bullshit.

As a combat athlete, you need to have strength and power endurance, high-octane conditioning and the mental toughness of a warring gladiator. Workouts are a hybrid of powerlifting, odd objects/Strongman training, calisthenics/gymnastics-based training, band training and more.

Make sure your workouts help you become a better fighter, rather than beat you up so badly you

can't train optimally within your skills. The MMA Fighters and competitive BJJ athletes we work with train once, sometimes twice a week with us. On their own, they do five or six workouts a week focusing on their skills.

Below are two samples of what we call hybrid training, wherein various training tools and methods are combined to develop strength and speed endurance, stamina and overall work capacity.

## HYBRID TRAINING

Warm-up: Various calisthenics, bodyweight animal crawls, light sled/prowler work, Indian club drills and soft tissue work.

Always finish each workout with soft tissue work and follow up with more recovery methods at home: massage, contrast showers, meditation, Eischens Yoga, etc.

### WORKOUT 1

**1.** Thick bar deadlift: 6 x 2 reps (The first three sets are traditional style, the last three are sumo style). Rest for 30 to 45 seconds between sets.

**2.** 7 minutes x max rounds, no rest between sets.

**2a.** Handstand push-ups x 5 reps

**2b.** Rope climb x 10 ft. (alternate between single and double rope)

**3.** 7 minutes x max Rounds, no rest between sets

**3a.** Sled drag or prowler push x 150 ft.

**3b.** Sledgehammer strikes x 20 reps

**3c.** Battling ropes x 30 reps





## WORKOUT 2

1. 10 minutes x max rounds/density training

1a. Sandbag or Kettlebell clean and press x 5 reps

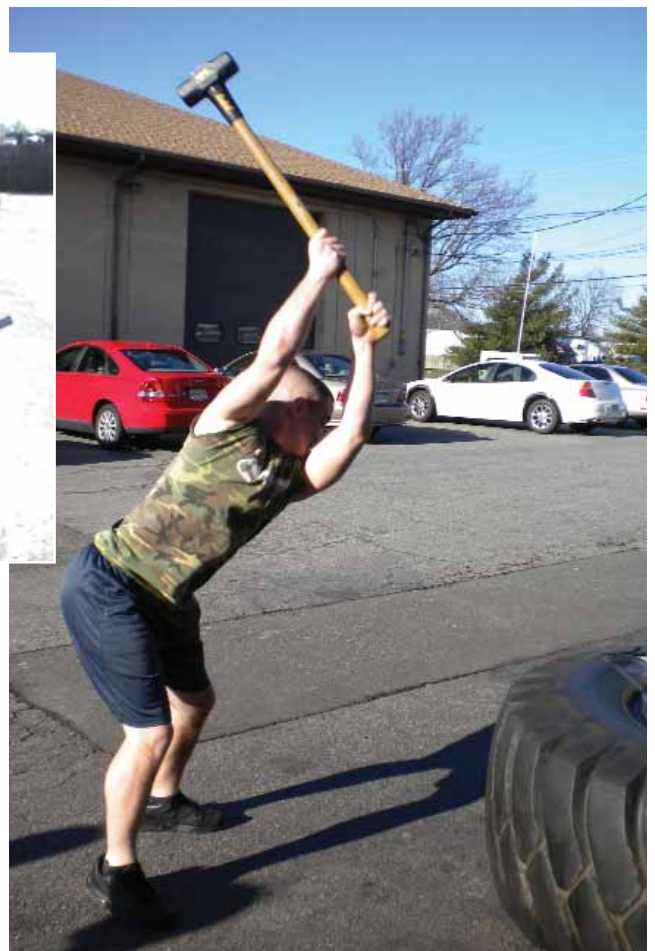
1b. Mixed-bodyweight pulling movements x 5 reps

2. 10 minutes x max rounds/density training

2a. Kettlebell/dumbbell seesaw floor press x 6 reps

2b. Hand-over-hand rope pull (attached to sled) x 50 ft.

3. Prowler suicide sprints (sprint down and back), 4 x 25 ft, 50 ft, 75 ft.



These are only two sample workouts. They are not the end-all, be-all methods for developing dominant strength, speed and conditioning as a combat athlete. The intensity of each workout is adjusted with intensity according to how the fighter feels that day and what upcoming fight or tournament is approaching.

The key isn't focusing solely on conditioning or solely on strength. Instead, blend the most critical physical traits you need together and push the pace. Your technical training must be the priority and should also be trained with focus and intensity. Blend your skill work with proper combat training and you will become a more deadly fighter, guaranteed. **PM**

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# DARILYN DODDY



**POWER MAGAZINE:** How old are you, where are you from and what are you wearing?

**DARILYN DODDY:** I just turned 20, I'm from Bay City, Mich., and I'm wearing a smile.

**PM:** Where do you train?

**DD:** I train in Howell, Mich., at the Howell fitness center with the Triple X powerlifting group.

**PM:** Are you in school? Do you have a job?

**DD:** I graduated from the National Personal Training Institute and now I'm a certified personal trainer.

**PM:** How did you get involved in powerlifting?

**DD:** In the gym one day, for fun, I was benching 115 lbs. for reps. A guy came up and informed me that was more than the average 17-year-old girl could lift, and that I should try powerlifting. He introduced me to a local powerlifter and from then on I was hooked. The rest is history.

**PM:** What do your "normal" friends think of how much you can lift?

**DD:** They think it's awesome and make sure everyone knows I'm the strongest teen bencher in the world. I'm also the one they call when they need help moving.



**“Powerlifting has made my way life more exciting. I have met so many awesome people and it has given me proof that you can achieve anything once you set your mind to it.”**

**PM: How many sports bras do you need to wear speed squats?**

**DD:** Depends on the speed of the squat.

**PM: When you go to a powerlifting meet with a room full of men with massive levels of testosterone, do you feel like the center of attention?**

**DD:** Sure, sometimes I do, especially after a big lift. But most of the time everyone is focused on themselves and their own lifts.

**PM: Do you have a boyfriend?**

**DD:** Nope.

**PM: Do you remember the first time you out-lifted a boy? How did it make you feel?**

**DD:** Yes, I remember. It was in my high school strength class. I laughed and pointed it out to one of my friends.

**PM: Do you wear make up to the gym?**

**DD:** I don't leave the house without it.

**PM: What do you have to say to women who don't lift weights because they think they'll get too big?**

**DD:** Quit being ridiculous and get under a bar. It's almost impossible for a girl to get big. They're the ones missing out on all the fun.

**PM: What is your favorite lift?**

**DD:** The bench press, for sure!



**PM: How has powerlifting helped you?**

**DD:** Powerlifting has made my way life more exciting. I have met so many awesome people and it has given me proof that you can achieve anything once you set your mind to it.

**PM: Tell me about your current best lifts.**

**DD:** My best competition lifts to date are a 402-lb. squat, 385-lb. bench and 385-lb. deadlift.

**PM: What are some of your powerlifting goals?**

**DD:** I'm training for the WPCs in Finland this year and I plan to hit more than 400 lbs. for my bench. Also, for my next full meet I want to hit 400 lbs. in all three lifts.

**PM: Anything else you'd like to add?**

**DD:** Yes. Powerlifting is a great sport and I love it. Thanks for the interview. It's been great!



# WAR ON

BY MICHELE ATKINSON

**A**fter nearly 16 months stationed with the Army in Kandahar, Afghanistan, Shawn Frankl was finally on his way home. It was June 2005 and the same weekend of APF Senior Nationals in Detroit. He was dead-set on being flown to Detroit instead of home so he could compete, even though he hadn't worn any gear except a pair of old power pants the whole time he had been in the desert.

He felt strong. In Afghanistan, Frankl was stationed at the only place with a gym at the time, which he considered a blessing from God. He had made friends with a few strong guys and they started training together. Even without the specialized powerlifting equipment and monolifts, Frankl was still squatting 805 lbs. for three reps in power pants.

But when it came time for Senior Nationals, he wasn't able to get approval from his officers to go to Detroit. Instead, he went home. And right after the ceremony Frankl was on his way to Omaha to train at Big Iron.

At Senior Nationals in 2005, the 220-lb. class winner totaled 2,182.5 lbs. The super heavyweight winner, Garry Frank, totaled 2,634.5 lbs. If you would have asked anyone that day if a 220-lb. lifter would ever total 2,700 lbs., they would have said it was impossible.

## 2,700 GOES DOWN IN HISTORY

Fast forward to August 2010. Frankl is headed to Ohio, for the SPF Powerstation Pro-Am with his coach, Rick Hussey, and teammates from Big Iron. For the last year, 2,700 lbs. has been in his sight but slipped away at his previous two meets. It took years to reach this point, but just one day to smash through it. This is how Frankl became the first and only lightweight lifter in history to total 2,700 lbs.

Frankl took 1,005 lbs. on his opening squat and smoked it, so he jumped straight to 1,060 lbs. on his next attempt. This gave him a

5-lb. PR above his 198-lb. record and allowed him to pass on his third squat. According to Hussey, "I thought he might get 10 to 15 lbs. more on a third, but it would have taken 20 to 25 lbs. off his bench and deadlift. It was better to skip it to reserve strength." The goal that day was one thing: the total. Both Frankl and Hussey kept their eyes on that number as they planned every single attempt.



PHOTOS BY SCOTT DEPANFILIS



On bench he sailed through his opener of 825 lbs., then 855 and 875 on his third. Hussey and Frankl agreed that he was good for 900 lbs. that day, so they left a bit of weight on the platform.

His numbers so far had allowed him to reach his goal total on deadlift. Never known as an excellent deadlifter, this was the biggest challenge he faced. Hussey gave him an easy 725 lbs. as an opener, then jumped to the magic number on his second attempt: 765. This would give him an even 2,700 total, with room to go higher. After smashing 765 lbs., he went up to 780 on this third. Something that had been difficult just a few months earlier now felt easy to Frankl. He pulled a clean third attempt

and, with a finger pointed to the sky, became the first lightweight lifter in history to total 2,715 lbs.

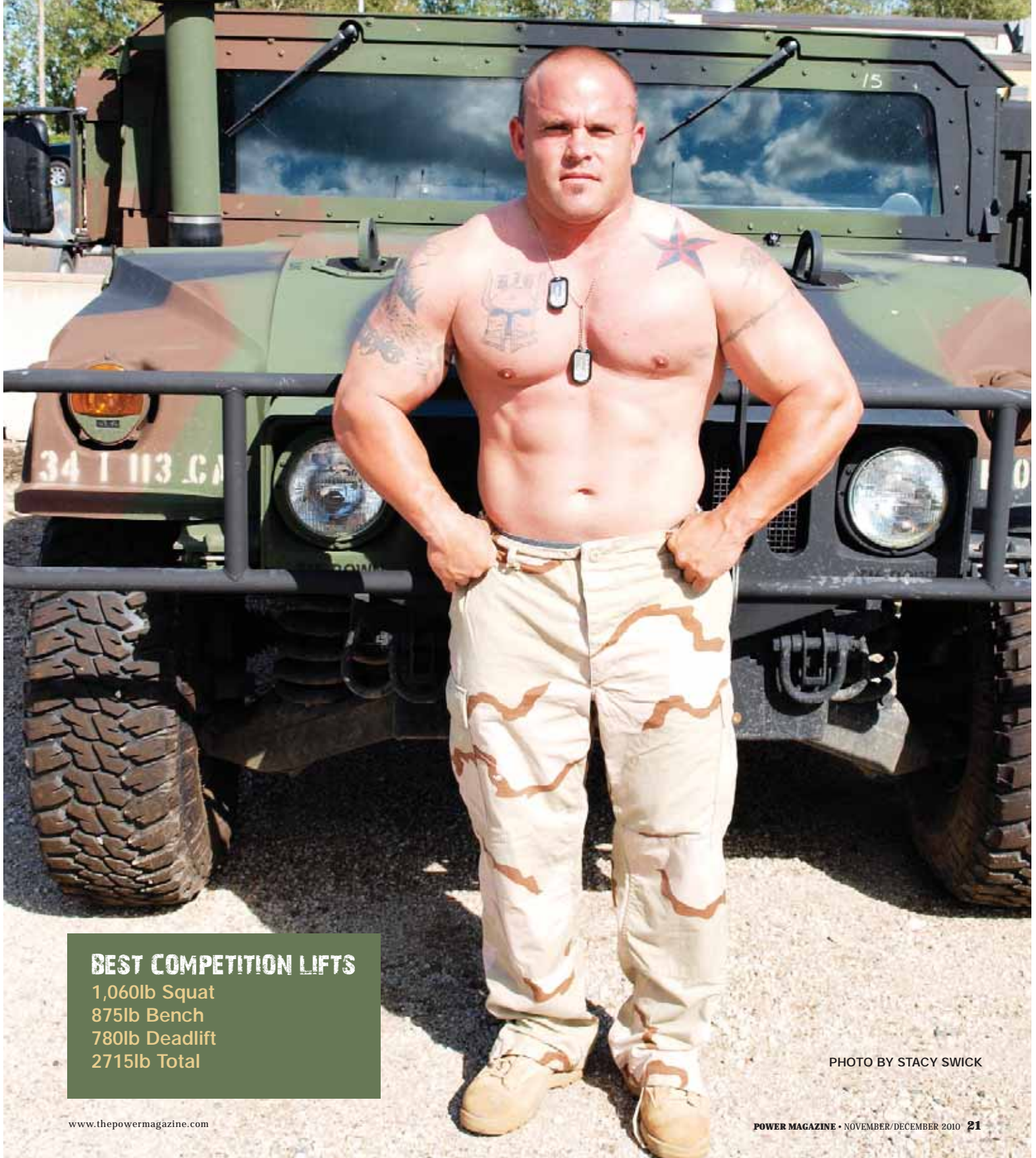
Frankl took home the prize money for best bench, deadlift and lightweight lifter, earning him a nice paycheck of \$10,500 for a hard day's work and a job well done.

## NOTHING WILL STAND IN HIS WAY

With numbers like these, it's easy to assume that this 216-lb. "Freakshow" must be completely healthy and injury-free, having the luxury of spending his days doing nothing but lifting, eating and resting. The reality is that Frankl's life is quite the opposite.

He suffered a serious injury to his shoulder at his last meet in Kansas City in February 2010. "To be honest, when I hurt my shoulder, I didn't know if I'd ever be back," says Frankl. "It took a long

# POWERLIFTING



## BEST COMPETITION LIFTS

1,060lb Squat  
875lb Bench  
780lb Deadlift  
2715lb Total

PHOTO BY STACY SWICK

# OVERHEARD...

**AL CASLOW:** "His work ethic is what separates Shawn—he never slows down and his dedication is second to none. I have been helping Shawn with his deadlift, and sometimes you just want to torture him after hearing so often that his day's work was easy, when you know very well it was hard. But that's who he is, when things are hard it's fine and that's good, he doesn't expect or want anything to be easy. That is the character of a champion, and who Shawn is."

**MICHAEL CARTINIAN:** "I first got to know Shawn in the warm-up room at the 2006 WPO Finals at the Arnold Classic, before we became teammates in 2008. Although we were both competing at 198, then he was always giving me advice on my technique and training. Not very often do you meet a person that wants you to do the very best you can while competing against them. That's Shawn. He wants to see you succeed and try to beat you at your best. Training with Shawn is amazing. Watching him hit ridiculous numbers week after week is very inspiring. He's an intense training partner who is always pushing, yet he's always willing to help or give advice."

**BRIAN CARROLL:** "I met Shawn in 2006, and my first thought was, 'Wow, how does a guy this small bench that much?' and then, 'man, this guy is handsome and he is also nice!' We kept in contact and he actually invited me out to Omaha to help me with my bench right before the Worlds. He was gracious enough to help me (along with Rick) even though we were about to go head to head at Worlds. We have been great friends ever since; he is a great lifter and even better person. Something that most people wouldn't know about Shawn is that he has been wearing the same gear that he totaled 2200 in as he just did 2700 in. Leviathan, Rage and Maxdler/Fusion. He achieved this all while not gaining more than 10lbs. Incredible."

**ED COAN:** "Shawn is the best multi-ply lifter of modern times. A great person on top of all that! His character is even greater than his lifting."

**ROB LUYANDO:** "I first met him at a meet in Chicago right after he came home from the service. He was a supportive lifter to everyone at the meet. If I remember correctly he bombed, but his attitude was inspiring. During the past 7 years we have become close, I consider him more like a brother than a friend. His work ethic is second to none. Shawn sets his mind to a goal and then puts in the work to achieve that goal. If you asked me to picture a true champion and dominant lifter in this sport two people come to mind: Ed Coan and Shawn Frankl. Shawn is just an all-around good guy to be around in and out of the gym. He is a true friend and cares about seeing others succeed just as he has."

**AJ ROBERTS:** "Shawn is by far the greatest powerlifter of this era. What I witnessed at the Pro-Am was the greatest display of strength I've ever seen. The crazy thing is I know there is more to come"

**DONNIE THOMPSON:** "Power and force have found a home....it is in the form of a nuclear reactor named Shawn Frankl."

time. I had to take 10 weeks off from squatting because I couldn't put the bar on my back. Every time it felt like I was starting over. Then it hurt to put weight on. Scapula, collarbone, pec minor, everything strains your back with weight on it. Something inside says 'Keep going and give it 100 percent.' It came back, but it wasn't easy. I didn't really talk about it at the gym. Every week I trained a little heavier and it would re-injure my shoulder all over again. But I just had to build it up."

In addition to his ongoing shoulder problems, at the very end of the training cycle he injured his rib. He still doesn't know how he did it.

When summer rolls around, work gets busy for Frankl. He spent the whole training cycle working outside every day in the heat and humidity, making it hard to keep weight on and recover from training. "You feel beat up from training, then drained on top of it from being outside all day," he says. "It's like being beat up in a different way."

Training was always a priority in his schedule, but so were his son's baseball games and church. Frankl spent a lot of time every week working with a youth group, which meant he often wouldn't start training until 9:30 p.m. Top that all off, he moved into a new house in the middle of the training cycle. But he never missed a workout.

## TRAINING STRATEGY

Hussey picked Frankl's openers the first week in briefs (10 weeks out) and never changed them. He had him do the openers every week in training so that by the meet they felt like a warm-up. Also, this time around, Hussey had his lifters compete at a higher weight class, not allowing them to cut weight. He explains that, "it keeps your strength down and you get more injuries when you try to stay light."

Since the Pro-Am prize money was based on coefficients, there was no reason to cut weight and sacrifice strength. Hussey's plan was to bring Frankl in as a light 220 lbs., with Michael Cartinian taking the 198-lb. spot and Al Caslow at 181 lbs. for the first, second and third place awards. Which they did, just as he'd planned.

**SQUAT.** Hussey held Frankl back on squats this time around, only giving him up to 1,035 lbs. of real weight the whole training cycle. "We did his opener every week, doing sets with 900 to 1,005 lbs. with real weights, then 1,080 to 1,100 lbs. with bands," says Hussey.

**BENCH.** Due to his nagging injuries, Frankl took a long break from using his bench shirt and spent three months training raw. During that time he ended up doing 625 lbs. off the two-board, so his raw strength definitely increased. The first day back in a bench shirt he

was already doing 900 lbs. off the three-board, so he didn't lose any strength and may have even gotten stronger. "I know it doesn't work that way for everyone," says Frankl, "but I feel so comfortable in a shirt because we wear it all the time. So for me it was easy."

He used the shirt for only the last eight weeks of training, starting off with low boards right away because he hadn't touched his chest in a shirt in nearly a year due to all of his injuries. He went up to 920 lbs. off the one-board as the heaviest and lowest press in training, but mostly trained with doubles. Every week he did his opener for a double off the one- and two-boards, working up to 900 lbs. off the two-board. Each week was varied; some weeks he didn't go quite as heavy.

**DEADLIFT.** Frankl had been working for an entire year on his deadlift, since this was his biggest challenge in getting his goal total. Caslow, his friend and teammate, helped create a deadlift program that mixed up his usual routine and helped him push through barriers.

This time around, he did a lot of doubles and triples, implementing a variety of techniques to improve his strength throughout the movement. These included lifting from blocks for middle and top end strength and using reverse bands in a cage. In the same workout, Frankl would do 3x3 from the floor, then another 3x3 with heavier weight from blocks, then 3x3 with reverse bands in the cage.

He started with four weeks of raw training, then three weeks in



Coach Rick Hussey and Frankl

briefs using the blocks and bands. Frankl wore his deadlift suit for three weeks at the very end. His training was brutal, but it paid off. "The day of the meet, I was thinking about all of that hard work when I went for my deadlift," he remembers.

## FROM ONE GOAL TO THE NEXT

When it comes to what is next for "Freakshow" Frankl, it all depends on who you ask. Hussey says he might do the Big Iron meet Nov. 20 as a light 242 lbs. to take out some new records. "We are trying to better the lifts this time just a little bit, not trying to put any pressure on anybody," he says. "Anything over 2,630 lbs. at 242 will get him American records, and then we can get him on the All-Time records so he can get ranked at 242 lbs., weighed in at 221 lbs." In the long term, he wants to go after 2,800 at 220 lbs. "Get him up to 225 lbs. body weight then cut to 220, and he will be unstoppable," says Hussey.

But, in Frankl's words, his goal is to "show up and have fun. Whatever happens, happens. I don't want to talk numbers, I just want to take it for what it is and have fun. I used to stress about the records that I wanted to hit, but it got stressful that it made the sport not fun. And when I decided to have fun, that's when things took off. It wasn't about just hitting big records, but I also got to meet more people and get to help them. It became more than just about yourself but about a lot of things." **PM**

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# BENCHPRESSING FOR THE POWERLIFTER

**J**eremy Hoornstra is the strongest bench I have ever seen. He's got the formula for getting the best raw bench out there. We can all follow his advice, especially raw lifters, for a more powerful bench. He is not overly massed like yours truly, and that rules out mass leverage.

If you are banged up like an ex-football player, chances are your raw bench is limited to how you handle pain and your ability to recover. Add to that shoulder surgeries, lower back herniations, upper thoracic nerve damage and a few pec tears, chances are you will not be out lifting Hoornstra anytime soon. This article is for those who squat first and deadlift last.

Most powerlifters will never realize their bench potential. However, there are some benching strategies that may help you squeeze out the maximum poundage to help your total aggregate.

First of all, countless heavy squats beat your shoulders up. Unracking extremely heavy weights, especially those that are banded heavy, is shoulder abuse. You don't even realize it because you are so used to the feeling of beat-up shoulders that you think it's normal.

After you tax your central nervous system with heavy squat night, the bench gets what's left over. And for some strong squatters, it ain't much. Add to that the stress your elbows are under, plus the bicep tendon. It is a wonder we even make it to the bench.

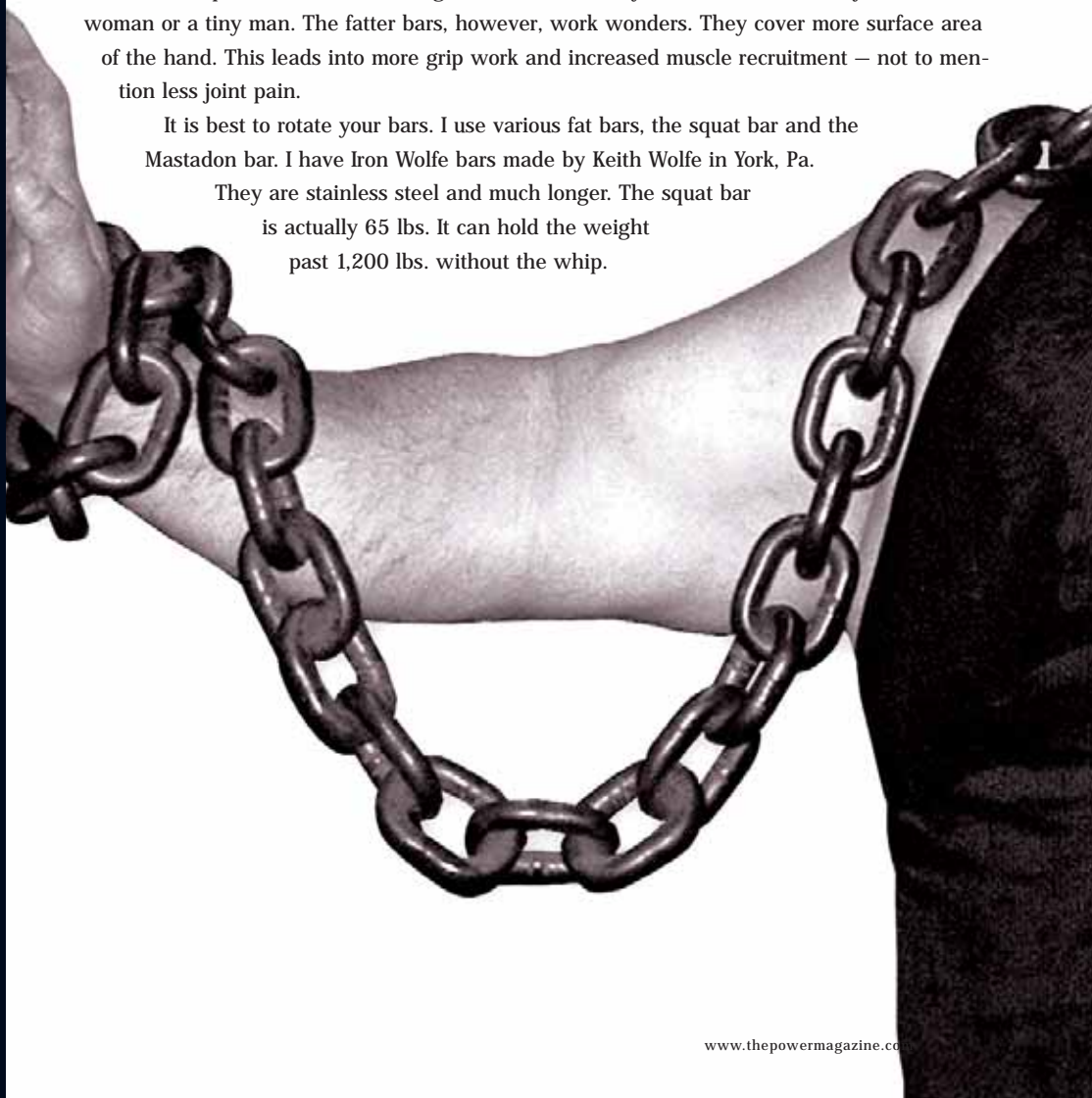
Powerlifting is three lifts. Try to concentrate on moving up as much poundage as you are capable of per event. It may be less than superstar benchers, but much more is needed from your body for three events than one. One thing I like about bench-only lifters is that they push the envelope in training. We can all learn from them. All of their techniques, like practicing with the shirt and boards, have been very helpful.

## THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT FOR THE JOB

At The Compound, I never use a regular bench bar. They are worthless unless you are a woman or a tiny man. The fatter bars, however, work wonders. They cover more surface area of the hand. This leads into more grip work and increased muscle recruitment — not to mention less joint pain.

It is best to rotate your bars. I use various fat bars, the squat bar and the Mastadon bar. I have Iron Wolfe bars made by Keith Wolfe in York, Pa.

They are stainless steel and much longer. The squat bar is actually 65 lbs. It can hold the weight past 1,200 lbs. without the whip.





No 1-inch standard fitness bars should touch your hands. The only exception to this is the deadlift bar. All my attachments for my pull-down machine and seated rows are fat-handled. The vertical grip bar, straight bar, triceps bar and V handle are all fat.

It is very important to have a fat pad for the bench. It should measure 14½ inches across. The pad should be thick. Gone are the days of the 10- to 12-inch wide benches. They cover a larger area of the back and control the shearing forces much better when lowering and pressing the weight. If you are interested in a custom-made fat pad, call Anita at Custom Designs 803-669-0269.

You should have a rack with a minimum 7-foot height. This is good for reverse-band pressing and banding the bar from around the base. Stand-alone benches that have the band attachment bar running vertical on the bottom are fancy but nice to have also. If you have the money, try the self-spotting bench from Richard Sorin. The bar is directly over your upper abs and lower chest area. The j-

hooks go back to post when the bar is lifted out, using the same concept as the mono-lift. I still think this bench will be the bench of the future. Go to

[www.sorinex.com](http://www.sorinex.com) for a look.

Weight releasers are great. We use them for the bench quite a bit. You will have to get them fortified by a welder because they are built cheaply. Of course, you need all the bands and chains you can afford.

If you have nothing but a bench, you can afford these two items.

Side note: I don't feel one bit sorry if you have to buy equipment with your own money. All powerlifters who are serious should invest \$10,000 to \$20,000 in a hole-in-the-wall facility. Every good powerlifter owns his own gym. Remember that. It is easy to whine and complain and leave a place when you have nothing invested in it.

## SPEED DAY

Louie always said, "speed reigns king." If you are not fast, you can forget benching big. In most training cycles, my maximal effort (ME) bench training may be down. Squats contribute to this by destroying the shoulders. However, if you can increase your speed on your upper body light day or dynamic effort (DE) bench, you will PR bench at the meet.

Let's focus on speed day. Most of the time it precedes my heavy squat day. I may stick with the same stimulus for about three weeks. But I suggest rotating your lift every week for best results. For instance, banded fat-bar benching. You can use a myriad of bands for this. Jumpstretch bands have micro-minis up to average bands for this.

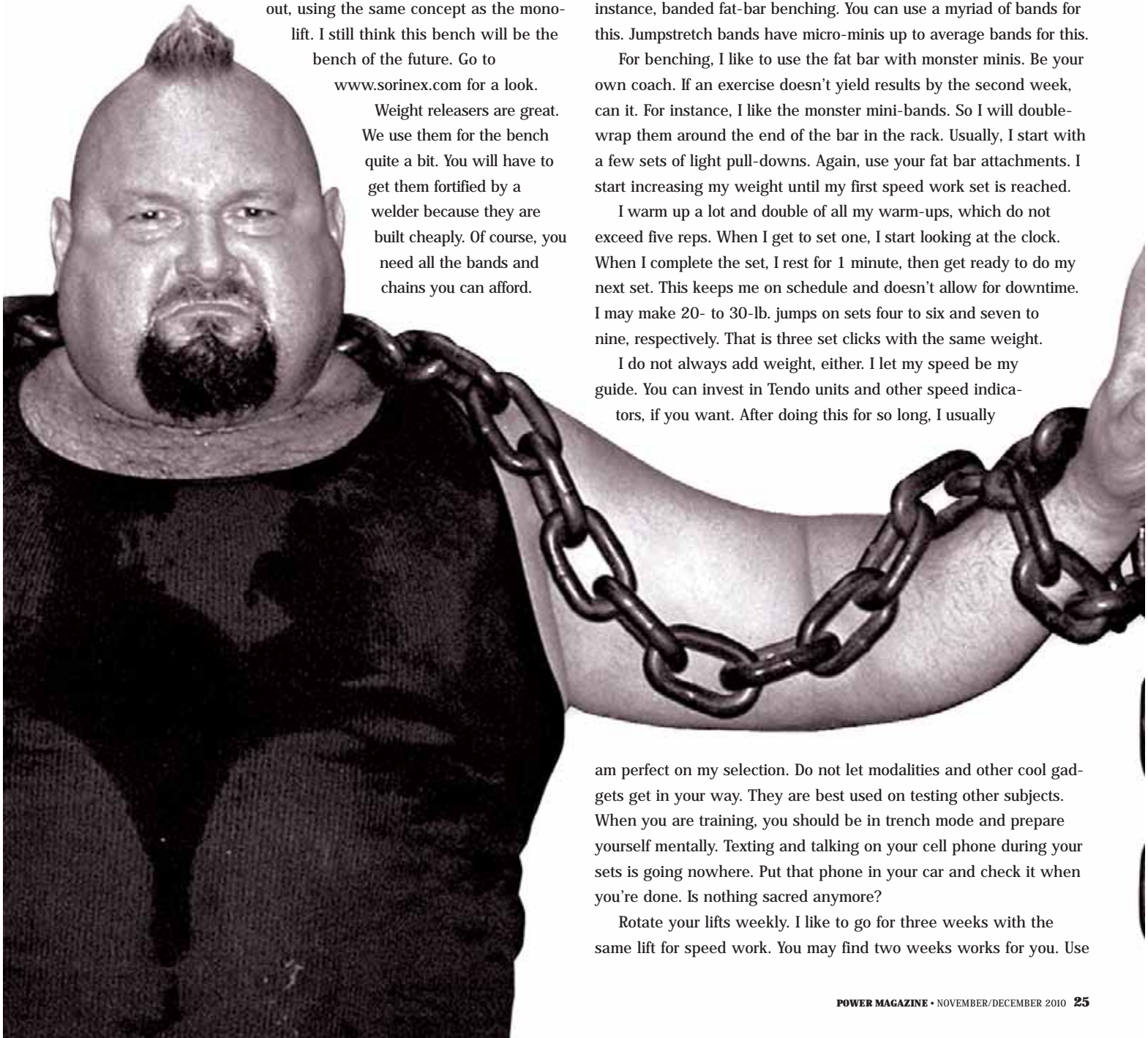
For benching, I like to use the fat bar with monster minis. Be your own coach. If an exercise doesn't yield results by the second week, can it. For instance, I like the monster mini-bands. So I will double-wrap them around the end of the bar in the rack. Usually, I start with a few sets of light pull-downs. Again, use your fat bar attachments. I start increasing my weight until my first speed work set is reached.

I warm up a lot and double of all my warm-ups, which do not exceed five reps. When I get to set one, I start looking at the clock. When I complete the set, I rest for 1 minute, then get ready to do my next set. This keeps me on schedule and doesn't allow for downtime. I may make 20- to 30-lb. jumps on sets four to six and seven to nine, respectively. That is three set clicks with the same weight.

I do not always add weight, either. I let my speed be my guide. You can invest in Tendo units and other speed indicators, if you want. After doing this for so long, I usually

am perfect on my selection. Do not let modalities and other cool gadgets get in your way. They are best used on testing other subjects. When you are training, you should be in trench mode and prepare yourself mentally. Texting and talking on your cell phone during your sets is going nowhere. Put that phone in your car and check it when you're done. Is nothing sacred anymore?

Rotate your lifts weekly. I like to go for three weeks with the same lift for speed work. You may find two weeks works for you. Use





warm-up. Stick with a range of 90 to 120 lbs. for the total weight releaser weight, 40 to 80 lbs. for lighter benchers. Hammer out eight sets of three reps. You may use a one board for this if you are in some pain.

## ASSISTANCE WORK: TRICEPS

Close-grip benching. Using the boards is wise on this one. Years ago we were ripping our

the bands and chains. Find the rotation that works for you. Do not over-weight your loads on DE day. You can lift all the weights in the gym you want on ME day. Don't let your ego hold you back.

### EXAMPLE SPEED WORK ON DE DAY:

#### WEEK 1

Fat bar with chains. If you are strong and benching 400 to 500 lbs. raw, use double- to triple-chains. Make sure you are hanging the chain properly on the ends of the bar. Some of the 5/8-inch logging chain should still be on the floor at lockout. The crab hook holding the chain should still be upright, with tension at the bottom of the lift when the bar is on your chest. Your bar weight is heavier the lighter the chain you use. Bar weight will range from 40 to 50 percent of your 1RM of that setup. This is not a shirted bench! Nine sets of three reps are standard. Throw in a single at the end if you're feeling frisky.

#### WEEK 2

Floor presses. Use a mastadon bar with chains. Place chains over the bar or use the crab hook. Use about 2 inches of cushion under your upper body to allow scapula movement. Never perform this lift on a hard floor or you will be injured at some point. Using the cushions, work up to your set weight and get nine sets of three reps. Between 40 and 50 percent is used again for your 1RM floor press. Take a 1-minute rest between each set.

#### WEEK 3

Banded bench with fat bar and bands. Stronger guys use the monster mini-bands and up. Lighter benchers use the mini-bands. Ladies use the bench bar and micro-minis. Doesn't matter what size fat bar you use, just remember what weight you used with it. When using bands, unrack the bar and hold at lockout for 3 seconds and 35 to 45 percent of that 1RM. After your three reps are done, hold it again for another 3 seconds.

#### WEEK 4

Bench with bands and chains. Set up the bench in the rack again. Double the monster mini-bands around the bar. Warm up with it for a few sets, then put a 2½-lb. plate against the band. Put your chain set-up on next. Start with one chain. Maybe add another. This is a lot of tension. Get to your set weights and hammer nine sets of three reps. This is one of my favorites. The small divider plate keeps the band from being chewed up. Use 30 to 40 percent of your 1RM.

#### WEEK 5

Benching with weight releasers. Use a bar that is not a bench bar. Go to 45 to 50 percent of your shirted max. Put the weight releasers on your last

shoulders up trying to come down to the chest. Jesse Kellum introduced us to the board press, and the rest is history. If you have short arms, stay with the three-board. You real long-armed dudes can do the five- and six-board. Bring your grip one of your hand widths in from your bench grip. That's it. Your elbows will thank you, and you will get strong. The close-grip gives too much torque on the joints; something will hurt or snap one day. Try different rep schemes here. Five reps do well. Keep escalating up in weight until you fail. Get a good 15 to 20 hard reps in overall. Clicks of three to five reps are good. I usually go straight weight on these.

Extensions with bar. If you need a break from close-grips, try these. Use the same grip as the close-grip. Lower the bar to your face while lifting the elbows slightly. I use chains for this one. Do not let your elbows drop. This will de-stress the triceps tendon and muscle. The bar will travel linear. You may use DBs, too, but they're not as effective.

Banded pushdowns. Get creative with these. I have bands hooked up on both side of the rack about 7 feet high. I grab opposite and extend down with the bands crossing. Some use just one band. You can use an old band that you cut and do pushdowns with that. High reps are good. I do three clicks to failure. My reps go 23 to 25 in the first set. The second set is around 17 reps and the last is around 15. Toast after that.

Assistance work: back, shoulders and arms

Follow the triceps with some upper back work, then some shoulder work and biceps last.

Back. One-arm DB rows are wonderful. Do not go crazy-heavy on these. Moderate to heavy is fine. Let the bodybuilders use straps and heave ho the 200s. You have a total to worry about. A chest-supported row may substitute. Use chains on this for added horror.

Shoulders. I like the double-KB overhead military press. Get about four sets of 10 to 12 reps. Start with the 24k and go up from there. Use DBs if you want. Either way, go for volume work with

weight that is a hassle. Side DB laterals and shrugs may be substituted for the military press.

Biceps. Be a man and curl the fat bar. It is hard, and a very angry bar that wants to roll out of your hands. Get around four sets of eight to 10 reps. Substitute the heavy DB hammer curls for the regular bar curl. Reps are always 10. You do not have to use strict form because this lift is not for a peak in your biceps.

This is just a sample training regimen. There is so much more to choose from, but the blueprint is here in this article. **PM**



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# TRAINING FOR FIREFIGHTERS

BY MATT R. WENNING, M.S.

**F**irefighters risk their lives on a daily basis. Whether dragging people out of a building on fire, cutting them out of cars or helping them to the hospital, this career needs certain types of physical training in order to perform the job safely and effectively.

Traditional firefighter conditioning has revolved around cardiovascular training, jogging, treadmills, etc. But the real world dictates that firefighters must have cardiovascular function with nearly 100 lbs. of gear on the body. This changes the equation drastically when it comes to being in shape. Ever climbed 10 flights of stairs? Now imagine you have an air bottle, tools and fire suit on, you can't breathe naturally and you still have to move just as fast.

This means maximal strength and anaerobic endurance of the highest level must be obtained. To some extent, maximal strength can dictate how much endurance firefighters have. If their max effort deadlift is 200 lbs. and they're asked to carry a 200-lb. person, I guarantee they won't be moving that person very far. On the other side, if their deadlift is 600 lbs., then a 200-lb. person can be moved with relative ease because it only requires 33 percent of their maximal strength.

We also need to look at statistics. Most firemen's physical injury occurrences involve the lower back, knees and shoulders. This is where strength training takes a specific route to bring up strength and decrease injury.

## **LOWER BACK**

Lower back injuries in firefighters usually come from lifting heavy or above average-weight patients. People weighing 300- to 400-lb. are populations with a high risk of heart and other medical issues. It only makes sense to have firemen strong enough for that type of duty.

Injuries occur due to weak lower back muscles, insufficient hamstring strength and improper technique. The first issue is to bring up



the lagging muscle groups, then re-teach form in order to be mechanically sound. Exercises to build these muscles include:

**GLUTE HAM RAISES.** Strengthens hamstrings, glutes, lower back and calves. This exercise teaches the posterior chain muscles to work together as they do when a firefighter is on duty.

**REVERSE HYPER EXTENSIONS.** Builds important lower erectors and glutes, while tractioning the lower back.

## KNEES

Knee issues with firemen can be more complicated, but usually firemen beat their knees up by having weak hips and hamstrings. When jumping, jogging and carrying equipment at a fast pace, the hips and hamstrings must take their share of the work. If these muscles lack strength, the extensors of the knee attempt to complete the work in their place. Overuse of the knee takes a toll over time. Pain and injury occur due to weak hamstrings, hips, vastus medialis muscles and improper form. Once the hamstrings get stronger, knee pain and injury decreases. Exercises to build these muscles include:

**GLUTE HAM RAISES.** Builds hamstring strength.

**STRAIGHT LEG DEADLIFTS.** Builds hamstring strength.

## SHOULDERS

Shoulder pain, tendonitis and injury usually start with a weak upper back. The upper back, which includes the lats, rear delts, rhomboids and sub-scapular muscles, needs to be strong in order to hold the shoulder joint in place under strain, and to maintain correct posture while performing various tasks. Exercises to build these muscles include:

**REAR DELT ROW.** Directly builds the rear delt and sub scapular muscles.

**BENT-OVER ROW.** Builds lats, and also the rhomboids and traps.

**LAT PULLDOWN.** Builds lats, rear delts and most minor muscles groups of the back.

## CARDIOVASCULAR ENDURANCE/ANAEROBIC ENDURANCE

Working on cardiovascular endurance is important in maintaining firefighters' overall health and aids in recovery. Most firemen are in the profession well into their 50s, and some in to their 60s. High impact over time will increase injury and wear on the knees, back and hips. Therefore, it is important to gain endurance with the least amount of negative impact on the skeletal system.



Exercises to build these muscles include:

**SLED DRAGGING.** This is one of the best overall tools to develop conditioning while building muscle in important areas. There is virtually no joint impact and, with the proper weight, can be just as intense as running on the heart, lungs and lactic acid tolerance. This is very similar when dragging backward, much like dragging people out of buildings.

**KETTLEBELL SWINGS.** These make up a very tough cardiovascular drill, and also work very quickly to raise the conditioning level of firemen. I have seen U.S. Army Rangers buckle to the floor with 60 lbs. in less than five minutes while doing swings, while it was no biggie for these guys to run 10-plus miles. A strong lower back and abdominal base must be built before using this exercises with anything over 25 lbs. The positive side is that there is no joint impact, and not only does the cardiovascular system get a great workout, so does much of the entire muscular system.

## TRAINING ON THE JOB

It is important to understand that, when training firemen on duty or those who may be on duty within the next 24 hours, training should be of optimal volume and intensity. Firemen must still be able to perform their job at any moment while on their shift. Totally wrecking the crew will not be optimal for a possible fire or other emergency. This is why training must be individualized for each person.

The issues addressed above are 90 percent of the problems I have seen in the two years of working with a large fire department. The larger fire departments are usually composed of a variety of ages and body types, which means training them will require different starting points and constant revision to keep progress at an individual level. **PM**

# START SMALL TO SQUAT BIG

BY BRIAN CARROLL

**T**he squat can be an easy lift to make gains with, especially with advances in lifting gear that allow some to squat 50 to 200 lbs. above their raw squat. For some lifters, improvement comes much slower — they can't adjust and make the changes necessary to get the most out of their gear, or they can't get past the idea that if they really want to squat big numbers, they can.

I have competed in full meets for seven years. It took me three-and-a-half years to go from a 705-lb. squat at 220 lbs. to a 1,030-lb. squat at 220 lbs. I have 20 official squats above 1,000 lbs. in three weight classes in the last three-and-a-half years. Now I'm focusing on a 1,150-lb. squat at 275 lbs. There are many important ingredients to squatting big, and I'm willing to share.

## TEAM SAMSON

The most important ingredient to squatting to your potential is to have a strong support system with solid, honest and dependable training partners. I have trained with Team Samson for the almost seven years. With their help, I pushed my best official squat from 705 lbs. to 854 lbs. in one year and set the WPC Junior World Record at the 2004 WPC Worlds in Fresno, Calif., by finishing second in the 220-lb. open class.







Good training partners will not only push you to meet your potential, but they will keep you safe and give you honest feedback, advice and encouragement. This is next to impossible to achieve while in a commercial gym with sub-par squat racks, no Monolift and nobody to get you fired up, spot you correctly and get your head right.

## TEAM SAMSON GYM

As important as the dependable training partners is having a safe and sufficient place to train – preferably with a competition squat stand or Monolift, squat bar, safety straps, platform etc. You need good equipment with as close to meet conditions as possible.

## ASSISTANCE WORK

Some people like to do a ton of assistance work after they put in a full and hard training session. Personally, I like to finish off with a few exercises that will help me become a bigger and better squatter, not run me into the ground and have me not walking correctly for days. Below are some ideas.

**LEG PRESS** (quads, hams, glutes): In my experience, the most important supplemental movement for the squat is leg press. It allows me to hit my quads efficiently without killing my lower back or putting a ton of pressure on my knees (knee extension does this to me), and it provides me with finishing power on the squat.

**GOOD MORNINGS** (back, hams, glutes, calves): I believe these can really help when a squat goes bad – you get out of form and you somehow “muscle it up.” When I do these, I use a competition stance. But, unlike most lifters today, I don’t go very heavy and

instead focus on form.

**STANDING CRUNCHES** (abs, lower back): I set these up simply by using an implement attached to the lat tower and crunch facing away from it. I use moderate weight and don’t jerk into the movement; I squeeze and activate the abdominals.

**REVERSE HYPER:** My squat was stuck under 1,100 lbs. and had been for some time. The very next meet after adding reverse hypers, I went above 1,100 lbs. for the first time. I mainly use these to traction the vertebrae and work the lower back and glutes.

**CALF WORK:** These have helped with my stability, both out of the rack and in the bottom. Unlike the other assistance work, I usually use a rep range of 15 to 25. I typically do calf work on the leg press and use different toe positions and angles.

## VARIOUS METHODS

I’m not going to bash anyone’s training methods or philosophies. Everyone has their way of doing it, and most methods seem to get results. Take some of the best squatters around: Al Caslow, Sam Byrd, Michael Cartinean, Shawn Frankl and Stan Efferding. They all have different stances, techniques and training methods (except Toon and Freak). One thing in common is that their technique, training and form is solid, and they consistently squat huge numbers.

## SMART CHANGES

When I was making the jump from the 700s to the 800s, box squats and bands were my staple. I would only go suited once

# “I’m a believer in doing low-volume and high-intensity work. That means I never do multiple or repetitive top sets in my squat training.”

per month to hit a number. Once I got to the low 800s, I felt like I needed more weight on my back (less band tension) and I wanted to get away from having to feel for a box. I also kicked the bands and decided to only use them every once in a while. I incorporated chains every other week, and this took me from 800 to 925 in about 14 months. From there, I started to go suited more and more, but would throw in a de-load week (as stated) every third week to keep my momentum moving forward. In less than four years, my squat went from 705 to 1,030 lbs. (a world record at the time). From there I have stayed with the same philosophy and, hopefully, by the time this article runs I will have PRed again at the 2010 Pro-Am.

## SQUAT TRAINING CYCLE SET-UP

I’m a believer in doing low-volume and high-intensity work. That means I never do multiple or repetitive top sets in my squat training (or in any of my training). I hit what I plan to do that day for a top set, then move on to something else. That’s not to say I won’t do multiple sets while going up in attempts, but I will do one set at 90 percent and move on to the assistance work, or whatever else I planned for that day.

I always try to avoid is going heavy (above 90 percent) more than two weeks in a row. I tend to get beat-up and stale, so I de-load on the third week.

## MINI SQUAT TRAINING CYCLE

(Percent of best meet squat)

**Week 1:** Top set of 80% x 3 – full gear, straps down

**Week 2:** Top set of 85% x 2 – full gear, straps down

**Week 3:** (De-load) Top set of 50% x 3 – best squat, plus 200 lbs. of chain (in briefs only)

**Week 4:** Top set of 90% x 2 – full gear, straps up

**Week 5:** Top set of 95% x 1 – full gear, straps up (search for opener day)

**Week 6:** (De-load) Top set of 55% x 2 – best squat, plus 200 lbs. of chain (in briefs only)

**Week 7:** Opener, then follow with between a second and third attempt

**Week 8:** (Last warm-up) Dial it all in around 87% of best and shut it down

**Week 9:** Meet time!



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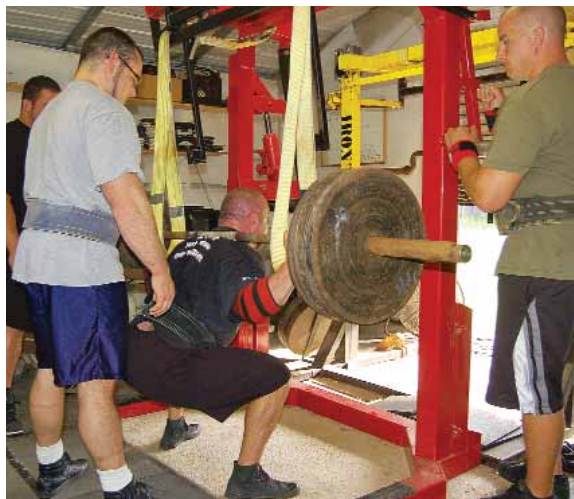
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**“It’s important to come into the meet confident and fresh. You need to have an idea of what you want to squat and what you are capable of on a bad, good or great day.”**

## GEAR

I have worn about every possible combination of gear. My gear of choice is Ace suit/brief combo with EliteFTS black-and-white knee wraps. I like the briefs to be snug and the suit to be loose. I like to have my straps snug on opener and then crank them tighter as I go up in weight. This is only my preference, and it suits my squatting style and my build. I highly recommend the Ace-on-Ace combo and believe that it’s the best in the market.



to handle you and take care of the things you shouldn’t have to be bothered with, like order, wraps, adjusting belts, who is before you, etc. Always be thankful and courteous to your handlers — take care of them, buy them dinner and pay for their trips (when possible) —because you wouldn’t have a chance without help. A bad handler can ruin a great chance at a huge PR, and that’s why we do this.

In that vein, I want to thank all of my sponsors for their help — Dave

Tate and EliteFTS.com, Westy at CriticalBench.com, Alex at ProteinFactory.com, Spud at Spudinc., Kiefer at DangerouslyHardcore.com, my awesome training partners—Adam Driggers, Clint Smith, Tony Garland, Nathan McCarty and Mark Graham. And, without the support of my wife, Ria, and my Lord and Savior, none of this would be possible. I’m truly grateful for all of you in my life. **PM**

## MAKING IT HAPPEN IN A MEET

It’s important to come into the meet confident and fresh. You need to have an idea of what you want to squat and what you are capable of on a bad, good or great day. Sometimes shit happens and you have to 86 a good game plan and go into survival mode. Those days suck, but it’s part of the game.

It’s always important to make sure to have a good team around



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# HOW TO OVERCOME FAILURE

BY ROB LUYANDO



**I** have been competing for 18 years now. During this time period I have taken a few layoffs, but always find myself coming back to the sport. After each layoff I usually find that I am more pissed off about the lay-off and train harder than I did before the previous layoff.

Personal records (PRs) are what it's all about for me. Chasing numbers is one thing, but it's how you get to those numbers that makes the difference. I track my training and keep track of my PRs whether they're for an assistance exercise or an actual competition PR.

I try to keep my training fresh so I change things up often — so that just means more PRs to keep track of. As a rule, I shoot for a 5-lb. PR on all my assistance movements every week. I usually run a 12-week training cycle, so my overall training goal is a 60-lb. PR on all my main assistance movements.

That seems like a big jump, but it's doable if you set your sights

on something and stick with it. Failure doesn't sit well with me, so I always try to set realistic goals.

## **BOMBING BIG AND BOUNCING BACK**

My last three meets have resulted in bombs that all came after a long layoff. My strength is stronger than ever on all my movements. I was concentrating too much on my strength goals and too little on my technique. I also changed my surroundings and trained with a new crew. So how am I fixing my technique to make sure it grows with my strength?

First, I got myself back on track with a sensible nutrition plan to maintain my body weight and quit jumping around. A few pounds can make a huge difference on how your gear fits and how hard you have to work to make your gear work.

Second, I now kick back on my assistance training days and am

more consistent — going back to basics.

Third, I keep changing my training phases to keep my body guessing.

Fourth, I'm concentrating on myself and my geared technique. My training partners will all have to fend for themselves. I know it sounds selfish, but know one else is going to put my time in and do my work.

I will also be filming more of my training sessions so I can critique my form. That way a few of the guys who help me train via Internet and text messaging can also tell me what sucks and what needs to be focused on. I will throw in a lot more raw volume, as well.

Once things start to turn around in the right direction, I will pick a meet and take to the platform with a vengeance to shut a lot of people up. Those who doubt me can kiss my ass. I will be back on top of my game and feel sorry for anyone that gets in my way.

Shut up and train! **PM**



**“Personal records (PRs) are what it’s all about for me. Chasing numbers is one thing, but it’s how you get to those numbers that makes the difference. I track my training and keep track of my PRs whether they’re for an assistance exercise or an actual competition PR.”**

# RAW ASSISTANCE DAY

## CLOSE-GRIP BENCH

(ONE HAND WIDTH IN FROM COMPETITION GRIP):

Bar x 12 x 2  
135 lbs. x 10 x 2  
225 lbs. x 5, add 4 boards  
315 lbs. x 5, 4 boards  
405 lbs. x 5, 4 boards  
455 lbs. x 3, 4 boards  
505 lbs. x 3, 4 boards  
550 lbs. x 3, 4 boards  
585 lbs. x 3, 4 boards  
610 lbs. x 3, add 5 boards

## SPEED BENCH WITH DOUBLED MINIS AND TWO BOARDS:

405 lbs. x 5 x 5  
KEY PRESS: 120 lbs. x 10 x 4  
PUSHDOWNS:  
200 lbs. x 12  
225 lbs. x 12  
250 lbs. x 12  
275 lbs. x 12  
300 lbs. x 12

## DECLINE BENCH CLOSE GRIP WITH SLING SHOT

405 lbs. x 10  
455 lbs. x 10  
525 lbs. x 10  
SHIRT DAY: Raw warm-ups  
Bar x 12 x 2  
135 lbs. x 10  
225 lbs. x 8  
315 lbs. x 5  
405 lbs. x 2  
455 lbs. x 1  
525 lbs. x 1  
625 lbs. x 2, add shirt and 3 boards  
675 lbs. x 2, 3 boards  
725 lbs. x 2, 2 boards  
75 lbs. x 2, 2 boards  
825 lbs. x 2, 2 boards  
875 lbs. x 1, 1 board  
925 lbs. x 1, 1 board  
975 lbs. x 1, 1 board  
1,015 lbs. x 1, 2 boards  
1,030 lbs. x 1, 1½ boards

## LOSE SHIRT, ADD SLING SHOT AND 2 BOARDS:

425 lbs. x 10  
475 lbs. x 10  
525 lbs. x 10  
550 lbs. x 6  
PECK DECK:  
120 lbs. x 12  
150 lbs. x 12  
180 lbs. x 12

# WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE: CROSSETT & POWERLIFTING

BY PAUL SOUTHERN

**S**o there I was with Mark Bell, eating Crepes at the Squat & Gobble restaurant in San Francisco. He had jokingly told me that he wanted to have a romantic breakfast of crepes in the city, and I had jokingly taken him to exactly have that.

Bell is a knuckle-dragging, Neanderthal powerlifter with a swollen, bald head. I am a larger-than-average, and remarkably handsome CrossFitter. We found ourselves at a little table for two that looked like a 1970s TV tray on his big legs. I ate breakfast like I was still in boot camp with a 15-minute time limit, while Bell (in case you have not had the pleasure to eat with him) nibbles on food like a supermodel. It is a mystery to me how a man that big can get to be 300 pounds eating that slow. Needless to say, the locals didn't know what to make of us.

I asked Bell what would happen if you put a CrossFitter in the same room with a powerlifter. "Brokeback Mountain?" he suggested, nibbling on his elderberry crepe and dabbing his mouth with a cloth napkin. "I don't know. I think the skinny one would get eaten."

"The fat one would collapse, blue-faced in a wheezing pile, and become the fit gal's bitch," I said.

We went back and forth like a couple of schoolyard kids telling yo mama jokes until I figured out he eats even more slowly when he's talking.

It didn't take long for me to see that, although we approach our food consumption differently and we look different, we have a lot in common. The truth is, powerlifters and CrossFitters are more alike than they think.

Powerlifting gyms and CrossFit gyms look similar. What you need to get fit and strong is there; the fluff is not. The intensity and coaching are there. The rows of useless machines to work shin-bones and shoulder blades are not. Most of all, there exists a tribe of likeminded people helping each other achieve fitness and/or strength.



## CHECK OUT MY BOX

From my experience, putting CrossFitters and powerlifters in the same box has been an odd marriage, like Chuck and Larry. Opposites attract. I house both CrossFit Pleasanton and Prevail Powerlifting within my gym in Pleasanton. Both communities, which are intimidating from the outside, contain a core group of the nicest and most helpful coaches and athletes you will ever meet.

I first met the infamous powerlifter Bell when he came down to my gym several weeks ago to help Jesse Burdick run the Bay Area "3 in 1" SPF powerlifting meet. He hauled down an extra monolift and all the calibrated weights for the meet without asking for anything in return.

Although Burdick's Prevail Powerlifting team trains in my gym, this is the first time many of the other powerlifters had ever been to a CrossFit gym. They all said they felt at home, and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. One thing that both CrossFitters and powerlifters have in common (aside from squatting and deadlifting regularly) is their collective distaste for "Globo Gyms." Both communities want to train intensely in a real gym. Both know that a room full of crap equipment and hamster wheels is going to do little for true strength or real fitness.

## DIFFERENT, BUT THE SAME

Powerlifting is very specific to lifting a lot of weight. CrossFit is, by definition, is broad, general and inclusive. Our specialty is not specializ-



**“Powerlifting is very specific to lifting a lot of weight. CrossFit is, by definition, broad, general and inclusive.”**

ing. Some within the powerlifting community might have been surprised to find out the father of powerlifting, Louie Simmons, hosts powerlifting certifications for CrossFit at Westside. CrossFitters have always sought out the best coaches and information from each discipline. After all, CrossFit is a mix of powerlifting, Olympic lifting and gymnastics. Coach Rippetoe, author of Starting Strength, is a huge contributor to the CrossFit community. CrossFit follows accomplished Olympic lifting coach Mike Burgener's protocol for Oly Lift training. And

as Olympic lifting popularity has exploded as a derivative of CrossFit's meteoric rise, so has powerlifting becoming more palatable to the soccer moms that train at real gyms. We had several of our fittest female CrossFitters PR for raw lifts at the meet we hosted.

In a CrossFit box, we do the same thing the Soviets did to prepare their young athletes. In a learn-by-doing atmosphere, we throw constantly varied functional training at our athletes. We put more tools in their toolbox to make them

better athletes. Our coaches will notice that one athlete has a strength bias, while another might have an endurance bias. One athlete will ditch out on the max-effort squat day but shows up for the 5K run, and vice versa.

At CrossFit Pleasanton, athletes that show a strength bias are ripe for being picked up by the plus-size powerlifting coaches. This is how Jessica Gray and Carolyn Commerford found themselves under the squat bar in unflattering singlets at the last powerlifting meet we hosted. In the CrossFit workouts, these gals were much stronger than the average woman. Whether through nature or nurture, they find themselves on the strong side of the strength and power bell curve. Will they be as strong as the strongest ladies powerlifting? Only if they devote all of their resources to a strength and power bias and neglect other areas of their fitness. Can they be really freaking strong for their size and still kick ass in other athletic endeavors? Most definitely. As long as they remain smoking hot, they could focus on shuffle board as far as I'm concerned.

## THE POWER TO CHANGE

CrossFit has the power to change the present gym scene as we know it. People are catching on that "Globo Gyms" suck and real fitness happens in real gyms with real coaches, chalk and weights. Most of the equipment in a "Globo Gym" is there to make the equipment manufacturer money and allow the operator a way to profit without educating the

members on how to move properly. CrossFit is a large-scale assault on this way of thinking. In less than five years, more than 2,000 CrossFit affiliates have popped up in commercial buildings and garages. And we are teaching powerlifts and making them popular on a scale that has not been seen before, along with Olympic lifts and gymnastics for adults. That's because these are the most effective means for creating a really fit athlete. Whether 10 years old or 73, in our gym, everyone is an athlete.

How many powerlifting gyms are there in the U.S.? Not many. There is a huge opportunity for great coaches in the powerlifting arena to affiliate with CrossFit and offer a broader spectrum of services in a real gym. There is an economically viable way to create a kick-ass gym full of real people and do what you love. As a strength coach for the past 12 years, I thought I knew a lot about strength and conditioning. When I became affiliated with CrossFit and tapped into its massive resources, my business (and mind) expanded. The better the program you can run for your gym and athletes, the more success you will have. Your financial success as a coach and a gym owner is directly proportionate to how good of a coach you are and how good of a leader you are.

## OFF TO SEE THE WIZARD

By this point you might have asked yourself, "Why were Mark and this guy eating Crepes in San Francisco?"

Bell was curious about successful CrossFit gyms in the area



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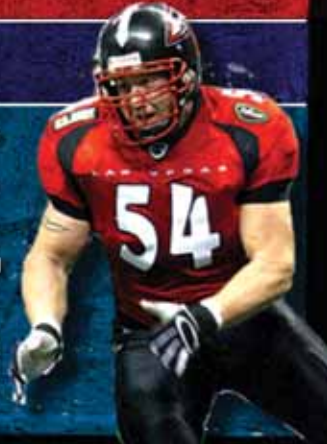


**Pro Powerlifter Mike Schwanke of Tampa Barbell**  
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"Using Jacked Up I experience increased workout intensity. I like that its natural ingredients boost testosterone instead of shutting it down."

"I work real hard in the off-season to build my strength levels and Jacked Up helps me maintain the strength and power I built during the season."

**Pro Arena Football Player - Steve Konopka**





# “There is a huge opportunity for great coaches in the powerlifting arena to affiliate with CrossFit and offer a broader spectrum of services in a real gym.”

that also did powerlifts. He was also had suffering aches and pains since his wife bitch-slapped him down a flight of stairs. Or maybe he said the aches and pains were from lifting heavy. Either way, I was taking Bell to see one of the best physical therapists on the planet. Kelly Starrett has a doctorate in physical therapy and owns San Francisco CrossFit, voted best gym in San Francisco 2010 by the San Francisco Chronicle. World-class athletes and Olympians find Starrett's place underneath the Golden Gate Bridge. Gyms don't get any more real than this place. It consists of a white canopy over some rubber horse mats and two containers of gear beside the loading dock of the Sport's Basement in the Presidio. Hundreds of athletes come and go every day.

Health care doesn't get any more real than Starrett's thriving physical therapy business, which he runs out of a 10-by-10-foot mobile "pain box" next to his pristine port-a-potties. He's booked weeks in advance and doesn't mess with insurance. Within an hour's time with Starrett, Bell was pain-free and moving like a cougar.

On the way back from the city I noticed that my gas tank was on empty. We coasted into the Oakland hood. I pumped gas while watching prostitutes and drug dealers manage their business. Bell wanted me to hold him and tell him that everything would be okay. I figured that comfort food was in order. World-famous Fenton's ice cream parlor was right up the street. Giant fudge sundaes aren't exactly Paleo, but they do make it into my powerlifters' meal plans.

It was a good day. **PM**

*Paul Southern has suffered several major concussions since he was a child. Despite that fact, he has been able to gather together a large following of fitness enthusiasts under the CrossFit Pleasanton banner and build a successful real gym (Re-Active Gym) in the San Francisco Bay area. Southern found a love of general physical preparation when he served five years as a Fleet Marine Force Corpsman. Since then he has been a coach and entrepreneur. When he is not in the gym, he spends time with his kids and ball-and-chain.*

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# ON MORALITY, UNITY AND SQUAT DEPTH

BY MIKE TUCHSCHERER

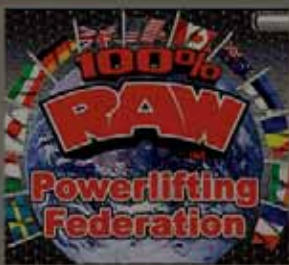
**T**he squat is certainly not my best lift, but it's my favorite. I've joked that if I had the use of my legs for only one more day, I'd go squat. There's just something about that lift that is a lot of fun for me.

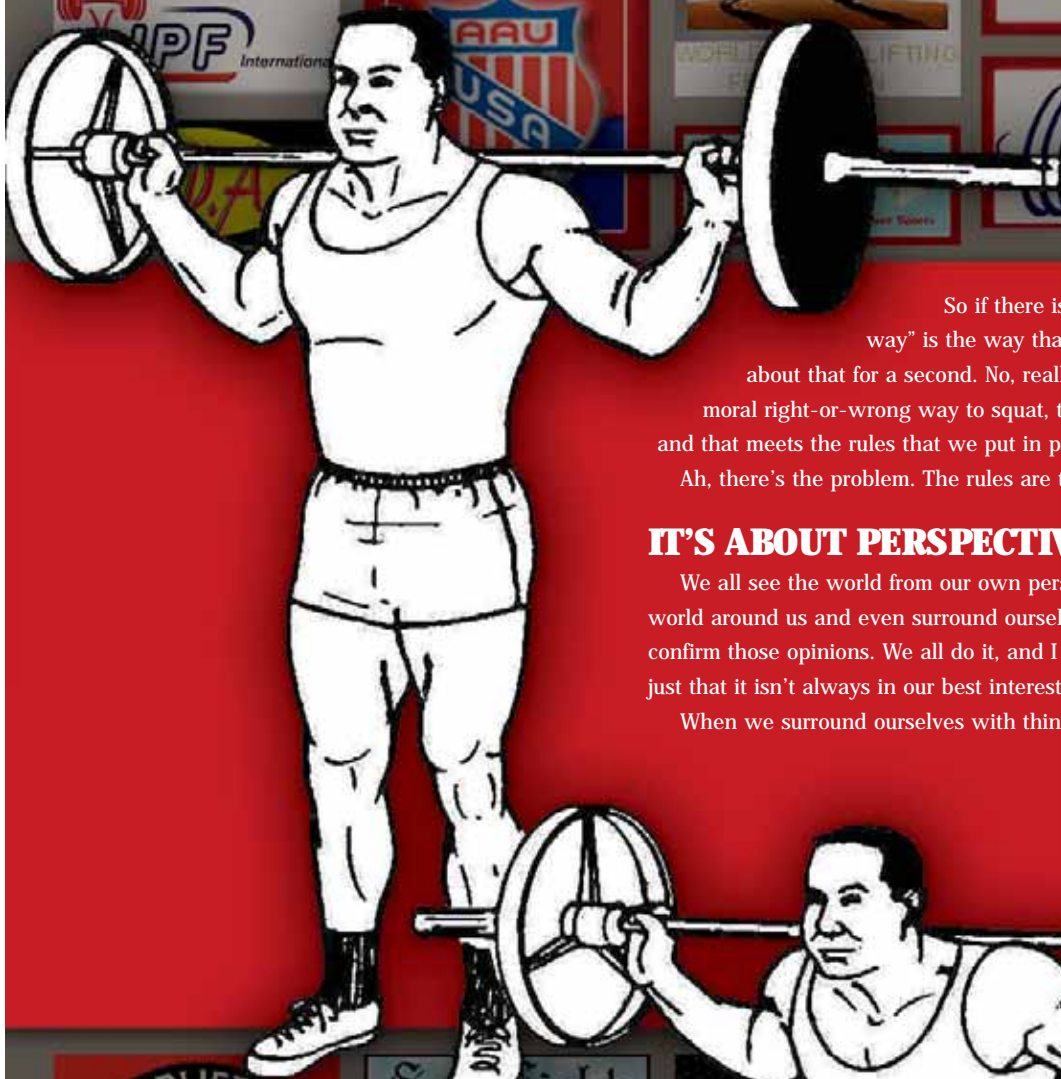
Unfortunately, it's also the lift that is criticized the most. When a lifter puts up a big squat, there's always someone who thinks it wasn't deep enough. Even IPF lifters, who most would agree are required to squat the deepest to get white lights, are subject to such talk. You can often hear comments like, "IPF depth isn't what it used to be," and so on.

Squatting produces more controversy in the sport than bench

pressing or deadlifting. And it is clear that the depth required to get white lights does vary from federation to federation.

But I'd like to pause here and frame things a little differently. There is no morality to squat depth. If you squat "butt-to-calves," it doesn't make you a better person, nor does it mean you are a weakling. And if you half-squat, it doesn't necessarily mean you're stronger than everyone else, nor does it mean you're a cheater. This is fundamental to all of us moving forward with the sport. We need to put our ego in check and not base our entire identity on being the strongest person on the planet. That's not to say you can't strive for that goal – just that it doesn't make up the totality of who you are.





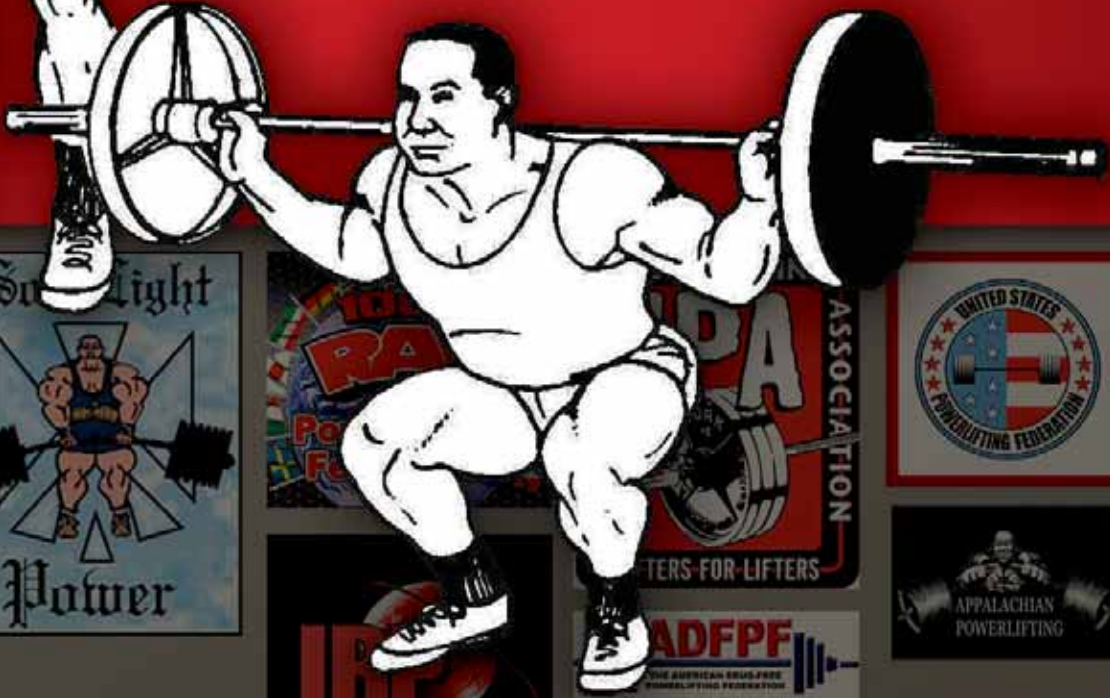
So if there is no morality to squat depth, then the “right way” is the way that we collectively decide to do it. Think about that for a second. No, really. Stop reading. Think about it. If there is no moral right-or-wrong way to squat, then the “right way” is a way that is safe and that meets the rules that we put in place.

Ah, there’s the problem. The rules are the same, but the enforcement is different.

**IT’S ABOUT PERSPECTIVE**

We all see the world from our own perspectives. We form our opinions about the world around us and even surround ourselves with people and things that tend to confirm those opinions. We all do it, and I can’t say it’s necessarily wrong to do so — just that it isn’t always in our best interests.

When we surround ourselves with things that confirm our opinions, it’s easier to



# “Moving the sport forward has to happen from the lifters in the sport. Powerlifting has always been a blue-collar sport that rewards hard and diligent work.”

consider things existing outside this worldview to simply be wrong. Applied to the current discussion, if you come from a multi-ply background, then you will likely consider IPF depth to be overkill. Conversely, a person brought up in an IPF style will likely consider most multi-ply squats to be high.

How is this possible when everybody's rulebook says the same thing? It's because judging squat depth, at least as it is done now, is a subjective assessment. We apply our judgment criteria against what we see and then decide whether it's good or bad based on the result. So we can't help but bring our “baggage,” meaning our upbringing and perceptions, with us.

Still don't buy it? Think realistically for a second. Think about other powerlifters you've met at contests. Most of them were decent folks, right? And it's also a fact that our rulebooks all say pretty much the same thing. Do you really believe other powerlifters and judges that you've met are trying to subvert their own rulebooks? Or is it more likely that they simply have a different background and different perceptions than you?

So if there's no morality in squat depth and it's simply a matter of perception, how do we get to the point where it's at least consistent? I think the key there is broadening our perceptions. To do that, we need to interact with people from wide and varied backgrounds. And it's important to not just explain why we are right and everyone else is wrong. Make a genuine attempt to understand the other person's point of view. You don't have to agree with them — just understand them.

## A FRACTURED CULTURE

Here's the thing: Since this is a matter of perception, squat depth is an inherent part of powerlifting's culture. And it's no secret that, in the United States, powerlifting is fractured. It should be no surprise that fractured organization leads to a fractured culture which leads to fractured judging standards.

These are significant problems, but the road to getting consistent judging standards is the same as the road to unity in powerlifting. Unity in powerlifting, at least for the U.S., might not look the way we thought it would. It's safe to say that multiple federations aren't going away. It's also safe to say that most lifters compete in organizations that are active in their region. Sure, many lifters will travel for a meet or two each year, but most of their activity is near home, and this is not likely to change. However, high-level lifters travel more frequently and most will make it a point to make the trip to national- and world-level contests.

So, perhaps one level of unity is multi-sanctioned events. Imagine if five or 10 organizations sanctioned one event as an “American

Open” meet. And imagine that this meet held championships for raw, single and multi-ply lifting. Not only would you have top-level lifters of all backgrounds all competing together under one roof (sounds pretty united to me), but you'd also have judges from many organizations interacting with one another. Perceptions would mingle, and possibly even change. After the meet is over, they might even take those experiences back with them to the local level and influence other judges.

## GETTING THERE

Getting there has to happen gradually. A large, multi-sanctioned event doesn't just happen overnight. And we ordinary lifters can't just wait idly for someone else to do it. It has to be a collective effort from all of us. And, believe me, there is plenty for all of us to do.

If you're a meet director, try to seek a dual sanction for your contest. The more common they become, the easier they will be to get. If you're a regular lifter, try to become an official. If you're already an official, try to become an official in more than one federation. If you can't get involved in that way, do your best to support meet directors who get dual sanctions for their contests. If none of that is possible, try to have a reasonable conversation with someone who has different perceptions than you. And here's the hard part — don't try to convince anyone of anything. Explain your point of view, but more importantly, make a bona fide attempt to understand the other person's perspective.

Moving the sport forward has to happen from the lifters in the sport. Powerlifting has always been a blue-collar sport that rewards hard and diligent work. That's going to be the same thing that moves it forward in the coming years. It won't be easy, but neither is squatting a PR. The thing is we can all get involved if we simply look for the right place.

It seems like powerlifting is never far from controversy and argument. Before long, the lifters in the sport will find something to complain about. Sure, fans in many sports complain. But in a sport like powerlifting, where the fans are also the athletes, we can't afford to just complain. If we care about this sport, we will take action in a constructive manner.

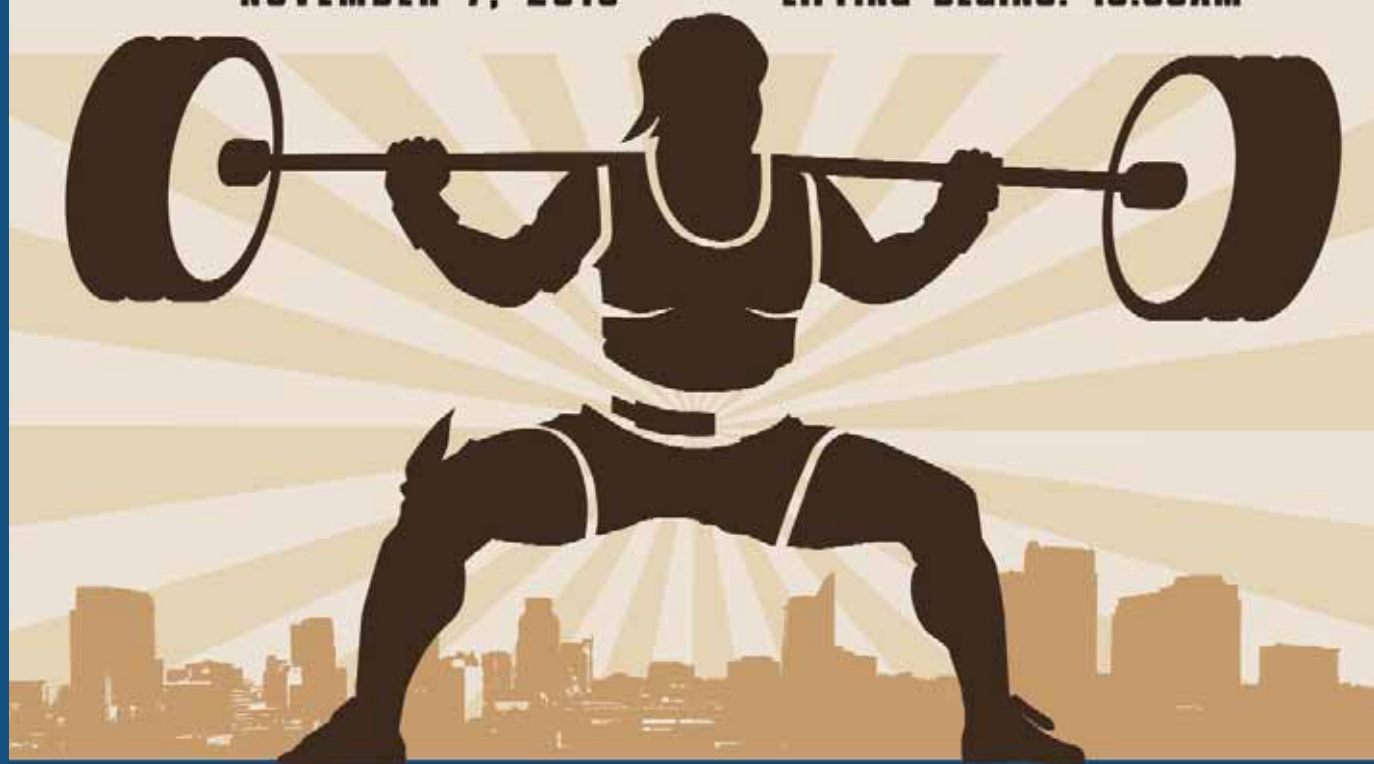
In the end, when it's sink or swim, the lifters will decide the future of the sport by how we get involved. It won't get delegated down from any federation's governing body, executive committee or anything else. It will be how the lifters collectively choose to move the sport forward that determines the future of powerlifting. Moving forward will stem from all of us “doing our part.” So, how will you shape your sport? **PM**

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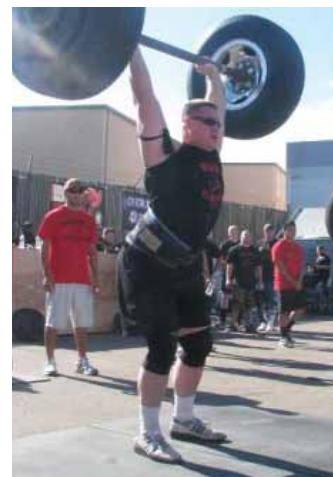
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# FIGHTING THROUGH HEARTBREAK: ONE STRONGMAN'S JOURNEY

BY "HE-MAN" DAN HARRISON



**T**here I was, in complete misery and heartbreak from a messy breakup with my fiancé. It was August 2004 and I had just turned 23. I was in shock and miserable from all the crap I was going through, and I didn't know what to do with myself. In hindsight we can often see that things happen for a reason, but I just couldn't see the light at the end of the tunnel this time. At least, not just yet.

About this time I was talking with the leader of a local Strongman group and managed to get an invite to come try out some events. I showed up, all 215 lbs. of me, and met everyone. Nobody thought much of me; besides having a 600-lb. dead lift, I didn't have much else going for me. I did okay at the Conan's Wheel, where you hold the bar in the crook of your arms and carry a heavy weight in circles as far as you can go. But the worst was stones. I think I did two stones in about six minutes, which resulted in lots of laughter. One 240-lb. and one 260-lb. stone just about killed me.

I sucked and everyone knew it. I also knew that, by the structure of their training, the best way I could get better and train the way I wanted was to build or buy my own Strongman implements. I bought a bunch of scrap metal, drew some plans and had a local welder build me a yoke, a sled and a pair of farmer's walk handles. I also went by a Fitness Warehouse and bought about 1,000 lbs. of plates (including four 100-lb. plates that I love to this very day).

Shortly afterward I began training with Odd Haugen. He mentored me in every way and was very supportive in my training, and my life. I was finally putting on weight and had broken the 230-lb. bodyweight barrier. I decided to sign up for my first Strongman show.

## THE ROAD TO NATIONALS

It was "Stronger Than All" in New Haven Connecticut. I placed third and qualified for the 2005 NAS Strongman Amateur Nationals, or thought I did. A week after the show I learned I had actually gotten fourth place. That was disappointing because I had a big trophy and thought I was going to Nationals.

My next show was in Northern California and, again, I failed to qualify for Nationals. I ended up in fifth place, three slots shy of quali-

fying. After that, I signed up for a pro qualifier in Minnesota because ... well, why not? I ended up third to last.

I went to another pro qualifier the next month in Utah, where I blew my chances at top-three overall by bombing the log. That was less than awesome. In Minnesota the max log was first, but in Utah, they put the log right after a very hard medley. I learned that

my max log isn't the same in a first event as it is after a puke-inducing medley from hell. I also sprained my ankle loading the fourth Atlas stone and could barely walk afterward, so all in all it was a really memorable competition. At this point, I still hadn't qualified for Nationals.

Never one to quit, I signed up for New York's Strongest Man in August 2005 and won the show. I finally had my Nationals qualification.

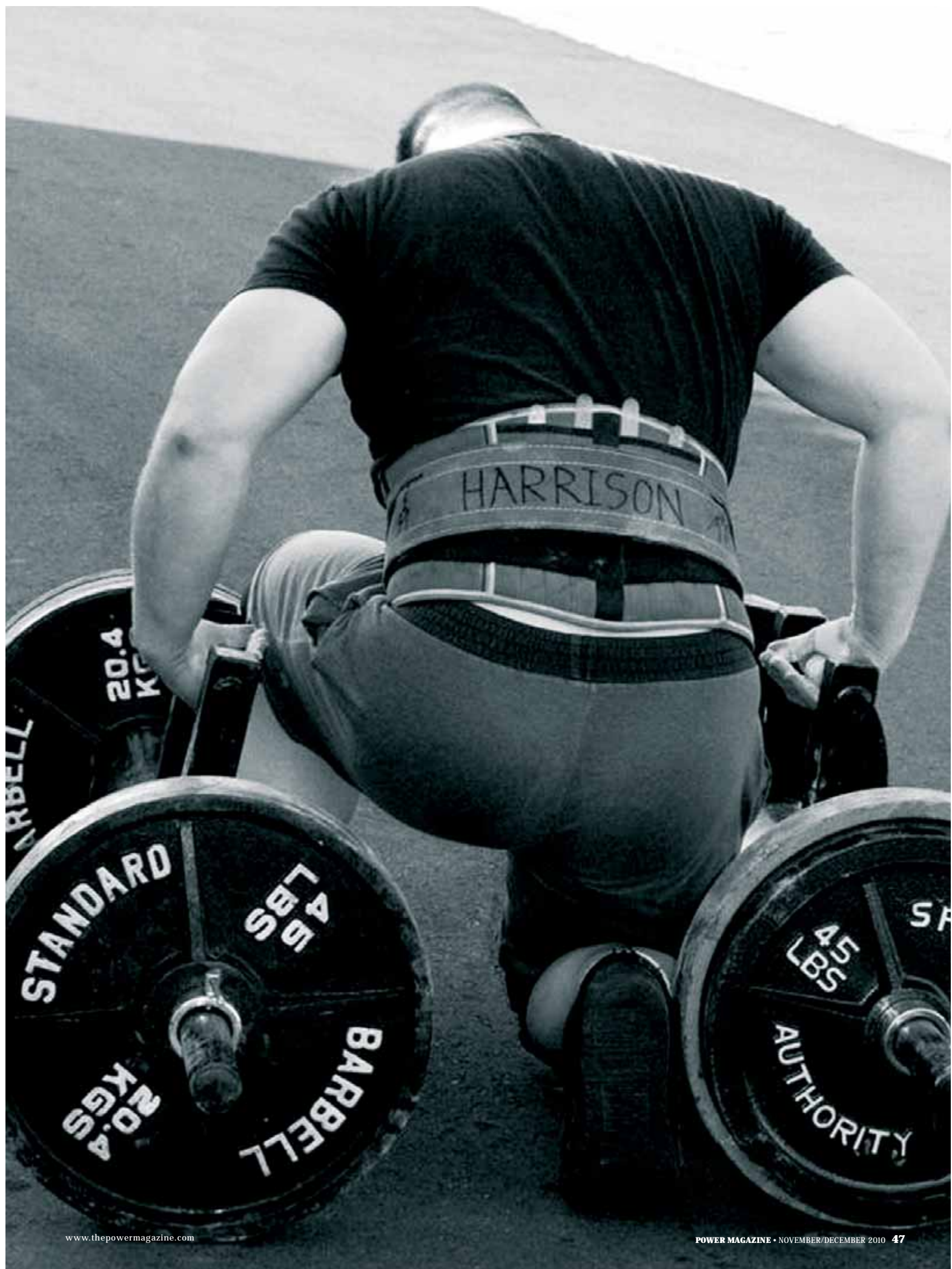
## TO NATIONALS AND BEYOND

I went to Nationals and sucked pretty bad. At a pro qualifier in Florida in December 2005, I finally had a great show and placed third, which was a great feeling. The year 2006 was better for me, by far. I had gotten my bodyweight to a more competitive 275 lbs. In summer 2006, I came within 0.5 points of my pro card at the Central USA show in Indiana, which was a great feeling on one hand, but also tremendously frustrating. Early in the show I bombed the 330-lb. log and basically given up — until my dad told me that I had better damn well give the rest of the events everything I had; it's not over until it's over. I took his advice and fought my way through the rest of the events. I ended up in second in the Amateurs overall. It wasn't a pro card, but it was a hell of a comeback from where I was earlier in the day.

A back injury ruined the rest of 2006 for me. At Nationals that year, the only event I did really well at was the deadlift. Strange, since my back was absolutely killing me, but that's why God made tight lifting belts.

Since my back was still killing me and didn't seem like it was getting better, I finally took the advice of my friend, Mike Corlett, and bought a reverse hyper machine. I started using that near the end of 2006 and, by April 2007, I competed in another pro qualifi-







523-705 in single-ply gear.

Next up was a local show in Huntington Beach, Calif., in March 2009. People were saying that I should watch out for Erik Peterson, but since I had easily beaten him at the last show, I didn't take the Huntington Beach Show seriously. Erik and I went ballistic on all the events, but he beat me at

er and was able to beat all the best American pros at a very heavy car deadlift event. This was a huge step in the right direction. I went to Nationals that year in Las Vegas and ended up ninth out of about 60. It sucked, but was definitely better than the previous two years.

## FOCUSING ON STRONGMAN

In 2008, my friend, Clay Edgin, and I rented a room at Haugen's house and turned the place into a 24-7 Strongman training facility. We had a great time training and hanging out, and we made a lot of progress in our training. Unfortunately, I completely screwed up my back again and could barely function. I had trouble walking, using the restroom or sitting for more than 30 seconds. I had Hawaii's Strongest Man coming up, so I was not sure what I was going to do. My amazing chiropractor, Don Goodwin, had me come in three or four times a week for the few weeks before the show. Although the treatment was extremely painful, I was able to compete in Hawaii pain-free. I had dropped to about 260 lbs. and lost a lot of my endurance from sitting around doing nothing. I couldn't finish the yoke or tire flip and failed the last stone, but I did eight reps with a 300-lb. axle press, did great at the truck pull and did surprisingly well at the dreaded farmers walk.

The major turning point for me was Iowa's Strongest Man in summer 2008. I trained hard and thought my strength was great. I ended up failing the last part of the overhead medley (a 330-lb. log), doing terrible at the 18-inch silver dollar dead lift, terrible at the farmers walk, pretty good at the yoke, and failed the fifth stone. I was so angry at myself that I decided to leave Strongman until I was actually strong.

## I'M BACK

I had my Strongman comeback show in December 2008 and won California's Strongest Man. That was a great feeling, and it also was my way of saying, "I'm back!" Then I had a powerlifting meet at Mark Bell's Super Training Gym. Steve Denison, USPF California state chair, had helped me tremendously when I started doing meets, but he really helped me at this particular meet. I ended up having a great meet and setting some personal records, ending up with 705-

every one and I ended up at second place under him at the show. I was hardly able to sleep for the next few months because of how pissed off I was to lose that show, but I had one coming up in the summer that was lined up perfectly for me. Erik would be there too, and my training partners ruined my life for three months telling me how I had better watch out for him. I was ready to strangle them, but it helped fuel my training with even more boiling rage. In hindsight, I probably should have just strangled them and not worried so much about it.

I had grown to a bodyweight of 330 lbs. and increased my lifts by leaps and bounds. I really believed I could win this big pro qualifier. Even more cool was that it was in San Diego, where I went to high school, so I had lots of friends and family watching. The first event was a 315-lb. axle press, and I completely blew it. It was satisfying to do well at the rest of the events, but I could not recover from that bad first event. Another frustrating contest. Back to the drawing board.

## REDEMPTION

I had the USPF Nationals the next weekend, where I was determined to redeem myself. I blew it on the deadlift thanks to a crappy grip, but ended up going 705-401-661 raw. Nothing amazing, but the squat and bench were raw personal records.

I went to Nationals in 2009 and got third place. This was a great showing because I was only trying to get top 15 to qualify for the 2010 Arnold Amateur Worlds, but I went crazy on every event and had a great day. My powerlifting was going awesome, as well, having went 804-451-728 at a raw meet a month before Nationals.

The Arnold Amateur show was a great opportunity. I did very well at the log press, the atlas stones and the yoke/sandbag medley, but I tore my hand open during the farmers walk and placed so poorly in that event that it brought me down to 15th place after the first day. I didn't qualify for the second day. Another heartbreak. I decided not to compete until late in the year at the NAS Amateur Nationals in November 2010.

A few weeks after the Arnold disaster, I was looking over the events for a pro qualifier in Connecticut scheduled for July 2010. I had just gotten my deadlift to 903 lbs. in a gym lift with straps and belt, so I wanted to try out my new strength. I signed up on a whim and booked my flight to Connecticut. Things were going so amazing in my life. My strength was flying up. I was in love with a great girl, Olivia, and was generally having a good time with life.

## WINNING FOR OLIVIA

Then, four weeks before the show, I lost Olivia in a car accident while she was on a road trip. It was the worst thing that has ever happened in my life, but I knew that this time, I had to win the show. Not for myself, but for Olivia.

### SAMPLE WORKOUT SPLIT:

When my deadlift went from 800 to 900 lbs. in three months, here was my basic split:

#### MONDAY: MAX LOWER

- Max effort deadlift variation, alternating a sumo style with conventional every week
- Leg curls or GHR, four sets
- Pulldown abs, three sets

#### WEDNESDAY: UPPER

- Alternate weekly between a max-effort press and speed bench
- Dumbbell bench, flat incline or military, two hard work sets
- Tricep work, four to six sets
- Pullups or chest-supported rows, three to five sets
- Rear delt/trap work (usually bent dumbbell laterals), four sets
- Some form of biceps curl, three to four sets

#### FRIDAY: SPEED LOWER

- Speed box squats with heavy band tension, eight to 12 sets of two reps
- Lunges or GM, two hard work sets
- Reverse hypers, two hard work sets



**“I had done my first show as an amateur in Connecticut and I never thought I would end up winning my pro card there five years later. It’s funny how life works out. All the times I failed to win a pro qualifier simply prepared me for the future.”**

Training through the tears was very difficult, but I didn’t lose any bodyweight and I kept lifting heavy, doing my sled drags and eating well. To do anything less would be to dishonor her, so I put my heart into this show more than ever before.

Still completely heartbroken, I hit this show like a battering ram. There was no way I was letting this one slip out of my hands. I tied for first on the log press and ended up fifth on the Husefell stone carry. I had thought I was in first by myself after day one, but when I arrived on day two, I was furious to see that I was actually tied for first with someone else. A chill up my spine told me I had better not let up, or I could still lose this show.

I tied for second on the giant dumbbell press and won the dead lift — then came the disaster. The event was a 925-lb. yoke for 60 feet and a 750-lb. frame carry for 50 feet back. The frame is just like the farmers walk except it is in one solid piece. I finished the yoke very well but, as I grabbed the frame, my hand ripped and started to bleed. I dropped it after 5 feet, and since we were allowed only one drop, I had one more chance. I got a better grip the second time but still could only carry it another 15 feet. This won me a horrendous 12th place in the event, but there was still one event left.

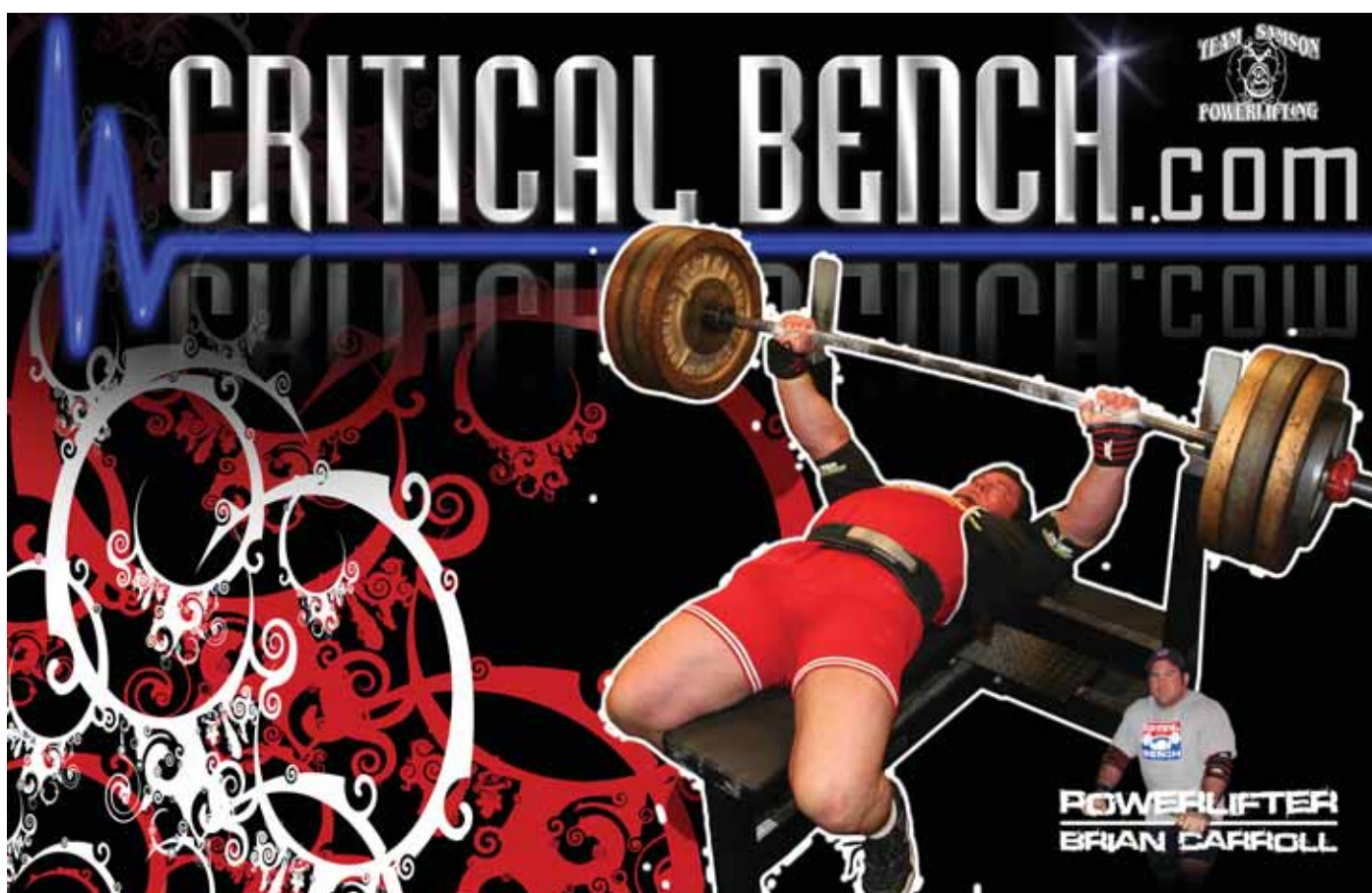
Going into the stones, I was still in first place overall with 50 points, but my biggest competition, the mighty Dave Bourgeois, was in second with 48.5 points. There was little room for error, and as I

was going last on the stones, all eyes would be upon me as I fought for my pro card. I blew through the first four stones and was unable to get the fifth stone (approximately 480 lbs.) into my lap. This didn’t hurt me — nobody else had loaded that stone, either — so it was a race for four. I ended up being beaten only by Dave Bourgeois on the stones but, in the overall score, I was in first place by 0.5 points. I was the new pro.

## LOOKING BACK

I had done my first show as an amateur in Connecticut and I never thought I would end up winning my pro card there five years later. It’s funny how life works out. All the times I failed to win a pro qualifier simply prepared me for the future. I wasn’t ready to be a pro then, anyway. I was much too weak. With a 330-lb. log press max, 370-lb. bench press, 700-lb. deadlift and 640-lb. squat, I was just not cutting it in the top amateur ranks and was far below where I needed to be to do well at pro shows.

Coming into Connecticut this year I had a 400-lb. log press, 475-lb. bench press, 900-lb. deadlift and 820-lb. raw squat. I figured I would get so strong that I couldn’t help but win eventually. You can have all the technique and endurance in the world, but if you can’t pull a big deadlift or press a heavy log, you should re-evaluate your training. **PM**



# INCORPORATING DEADLIFT TRAINING INTO STRONGMAN SUCCESS

BY KARL GILLINGHAM

**T**he most important physical element of a successful Strongman is a strong back. A key element in obtaining a strong back is the deadlift. Almost all Strongman events require enormous back strength. As a result, many of the top deadlifters in the world are professional Strongmen. At the 2010 World Strongest Man contest, more than 10 percent of the field had deadlifted 850-plus lbs., and 25 percent of the competitors had deadlifted 900-plus lbs. with a regular bar and straps. That is an unbelievable degree of strength in the deadlift for a field of athletes in one contest.

## **STRONGMAN DEADLIFT TRAINING DISADVANTAGES**

On the surface it seems strange that a sport where singular focus cannot be placed on the deadlift results in such high achievement. One obstacle facing modern Strongmen is the inability to plan out long workout programs without interruption. In addition, the modern Strongman has more than 20 events to train for, plus hundreds of variations considering weight use, event time allotment and event length. There is also the problem of the inevitable injuries that accompany doing so many different event challenges. Workout programs requiring 12 weeks of work to complete are almost impossible to do without interruption for a Strongman who competes eight to 15 times per year. Most Strongmen utilize shorter cycles to get stronger in the deadlift, and many train entirely by feel. Others start a deadlift cycle, do the meet and just pick up where they left off after the meet. With this in mind, how do the top Strongmen possess such a good deadlift?

## **STRONGMAN DEADLIFT TRAINING ADVANTAGES**

Much of the advantage that strongmen have in developing a strong back is the nature of the events done in training. Farmers walks, stones, log cleans, tire flips and loading medleys are just some of the many Strongman events that continue to break down the back to make it stronger. Strongman events become the perfect form of assistance exercises to create a big deadlift.







In order to develop the back to its fullest, however, deadlifts still are the No. 1 exercise. Deadlifts will help in all events and overall body strength. Deadlifts, or variations of them, are usually done in almost all Strongman contests, such as car, wheel, side handle and standard bar deadlifts. They cannot be neglected if you want to reach your true potential as a Strongman.

## TRAINING EXAMPLE

My training partner, Dave Ostlund, utilized a hybrid Coan-Philippi deadlift program for the 2010 World Strongest Man contest. This is the program Mark Philippi created for Ed Coan to change up his routine. Ostlund followed it as closely as possible and only made adjustments in cycle length due to training requirements for World's. He is a tremendously hard worker and one of the most intelligent competitors I have ever met.

Ostlund's deadlift progressed from 550 lbs. to just short of 900 lbs. over a 10-year timeframe. For the 2010 World Strongest Man, he did seven workouts over a five-day per-week program that included two days of double-split training. As a result, he didn't have much — if any — rest between body parts worked the previous session.

Having done the Coan-Philippi program myself, I strongly suggested that the volume and intensity would require a dedicated day just for the program. Event work was minimal on this dedicated day. Luckily, he was able to dedicate every Wednesday for seven weeks just on his hybrid Coan-Philippi program.

Ostlund believes in Brad Gillingham's "Jackal's Gym" theory of deadlift training without a belt until the final weeks of a program. The first six weeks were done without any gear except straps and knee sleeves. He used straps to maintain double overhand position to protect his surgically repaired bicep. When straps are not allowed, he uses a double overhand hook grip. Ostlund was very pleased with the results and hit his goals for the program. Here are his workouts over a nine-week span:

### WEEK ONE

**DEADLIFT (75%):** 1x2 x 650 lbs.

**SPEED DEADLIFTS:** 8x3 x 520 lbs. (90 sec rest b/w sets)

**Three circuits of the following (rest for 90 seconds between exercises, 2 to 3 minutes between circuits):**

**STIFF-LEG DEADLIFT:** 8 reps x 315 lbs.

**BENT-OVER ROW:** 8 reps x 275 lbs.

**UNDERHAND (REVERSE) GRIP LAT PULLDOWN:** 8 reps x stack

**ARCHED-BACK GOOD-MORNING:** 8 reps x 275 lbs. safety squat bar

**NOTES:** Deadlift and speed pulls went easy. This was the first time Ostlund focused on speed pulls in his training. He used a wider

grip and foot placement on his speed pulls to focus on leg drive and hips. No suit, no belt. Rehband knee sleeves and straps were the only equipment he used.

### WEEK TWO

**DEADLIFT (80%):** 1x2 x 690 lbs.

**SPEED DEADLIFT (65%):** 8x3 x 560 lbs. (rest for 90 seconds between sets)

**Three circuits of the following (rest for 90 seconds between exercises, 2 to 3 minutes between circuits):**

**STIFF-LEG DEADLIFT:** 8 reps x 365 lbs.

**BENT-OVER ROW:** 8 reps x 295 lbs.

**UNDERHAND (reverse) GRIP LAT PULLDOWN:** 8 reps x full stack

**ARCHED-BACK GOOD-MORNING:** 8 reps x 275 lbs. cambered squat bar

**NOTES:** The cambered bar worked much better than safety bar due to a more comfortable bar position for the good-mornings. No suit, no belt. Rehband knee sleeves and straps were the only equipment he used.

### WEEK THREE

**DEADLIFT (85%):** 1x2 x 735 lbs.

**SPEED DEADLIFT (70%):** 6x3 x 605 lbs. (rest for 90 to 120 seconds between sets)

**Three circuits of the following (rest for 90 seconds between exercises, 2 to 3 minutes between circuits):**

**STIFF-LEG DEADLIFT:** 8 reps x 405 lbs.

**BENT-OVER ROW:** 8 reps x 315 lbs.

**UNDERHAND (reverse) GRIP LAT PULLDOWN:** 8 reps x stack

**ARCHED-BACK GOOD-MORNING:** 8 reps x 315 lbs.

**NOTES:** Circuits were easier due to the six sets of three vs. eight. The 735-lb. double was tough; he was nervous about the following week's weight. Still no belt used. Rehband shorts, straps and knee sleeves only.

### WEEK FOUR

**DEADLIFT (90%):** 1x2 x 780 lbs.

**SPEED DEADLIFT (75%):** 5x3 x 650 lbs. (rest for 90 to 120 seconds between sets)

**Three circuits of the following (rest for 90 seconds between exercises, 2 to 3 minutes between circuits):**

**STIFF-LEG DEADLIFT:** 8 reps x 425 lbs.

**BENT-OVER ROW:** 8 reps x 335 lbs.

**UNDERHAND (reverse) GRIP LAT PULLDOWN:** 8 reps x stack + paused reps on bottom

**ARCHED-BACK GOOD-MORNING:** 8 reps x 315 lbs.

**NOTES:** Speed work was much harder, but Ostlund still focused on doing reps as fast as possible. Deadlifting 780 lbs. x 2 was new PR with Rehband sleeves, straps and no belt.

### WEEK FIVE

**DEADLIFT (80%):** 3x3 x 690 lbs.

**SPEED DEADLIFT (65%):** 3x3 x 560 lbs. (rest for 120 seconds between sets)

**POWER SHRUGS (60% of current):** 3x5 x 495 lbs.

**STIFF-LEG DEADLIFT:** 3x5 x 495 lbs.

**BENT-OVER ROW:** 3x5 x 405 lbs.

**UNDERHAND (reverse) GRIP LAT PULLDOWN:** 3x5 x stack + purple bands

**ARCHED-BACK GOOD-MORNING:** 3x5 x 365 lbs.

**NOTES:** Shrugs were very easy. Stiff-legs were surprisingly easy and bent rows were very solid. Rehband shorts, straps and knee sleeves only.



## WEEK SIX

**DEADLIFT (85%):** 1x2 x 735 lbs.

**SPEED DEADLIFT (70%):** 3x3 x 605 lbs. (rest for 120 seconds between sets)

**POWER SHRUGS (65% of current):** 3x5 x 535 lbs.

**BENT-OVER ROW:** 3x5 x 405 lbs.

**UNDERHAND (reverse) GRIP LAT PULLDOWN:** 3x5 x stack + green band

**NOTES:** Ostlund was run-down and had no energy, but got through core work. He skipped good-mornings and stiff-legs, as he was shooting for new record the next week. Rehband shorts, straps and knee sleeves only.

## WEEK SEVEN

**MAX-OUT WEEK:**

**WARM UP:** Bwt squats

**DEADLIFT:** 2 x 225 lbs. x5, 405 lbs. x 3, 495 lbs. x 1, 585 lbs. x 1, 675 lbs. x 1, 765 lbs. x 1 with Power belt and Rehband sleeves, 855 lbs. x 1 with Power belt, Rehband shorts, straps and sleeves.

**NOTES:** Attempt: 905 lbs. Put on suit, fast off the floor but stalled at knees. Next time!

## WEEK EIGHT

Pulled 800 lbs. x 3 (Preparing for World's Strongest Man car deadlift for reps with 750 to 770 lbs. of actual weight in hand.) 650 lbs. x 8 as rep out set.

Full squats with full gear

Sandbag medley

**NOTES:** He was exhausted and dehydrated after this workout. His intensity level was very high; he had just received the event schedule for World's Strongest Man.

## WEEK NINE

Deadlift machine deadlifts up to a max triple. (Deadlift training was in this fashion for next two weeks, up to World's Strongest Man.)

*This was an example of the kind of deadlift training a top competitor utilizes to be an elite Strongman. Hopefully trainers of all levels will find items they can utilize in their deadlift training. Rehband support gear is available at [www.jackalsgym.com](http://www.jackalsgym.com). Train hard and smart! **PM***

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**October 23, 2010** Eliz. Tenn Night of The Living Dead  
**"Televising the Stars and Future Stars of Powerlifting"**  
**November 5 & 6 2010** Tampa Fl. Raw United Federation  
**"To Be The Best You Have To Beat The Best"**  
**January 22 & 23 2011** XPTV EXPO Tampa Fl.  
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# MIKE TUCHSCHERER

**What superhero power would you most like to possess?** Super strength. Duh.

**What is your idea of perfect happiness?** Being with someone you love.

**What is the trait you most deplore in yourself?** I try not to wallow in self-hate.

**What is the trait you most deplore in others?** Some are pretty bad, but I try not to dwell on them long enough to pick a "worst."

**What is your greatest extravagance?** My wife. I like being extravagant in my affection for her.

**What is your current state of mind?** I'm just happy to be here.

**On what occasion do you lie?** The same as anybody else, I suppose. Whenever I'm too much a coward for the truth.

**What do you most dislike about your appearance?** I'm pretty pale.

**What do you most value in your friends?** Friendship. It sounds obvious, but it's more profound than one might think. There's a lot that goes into being a good friend and it's a valuable thing.

**What or who is the greatest love of your life?** Honestly, my wife. She's pretty fantastic!

**When and where were you happiest?** I've been blessed enough that it's hard to pick one, but I guess I'd say my most recent vacation to the Dominican Republic.

**What do you consider your greatest achievement?** Graduating from the Air Force Academy in 2007.

**What is your most marked characteristic?** Probably that I'm a big guy. Now, I'm just barely big by powerlifting standards, but according to normal people, I'm Big Mike.

**Who is your favorite hero of fiction?** I don't know if I'd say "favorite," but Odd Thomas is a pretty cool character.

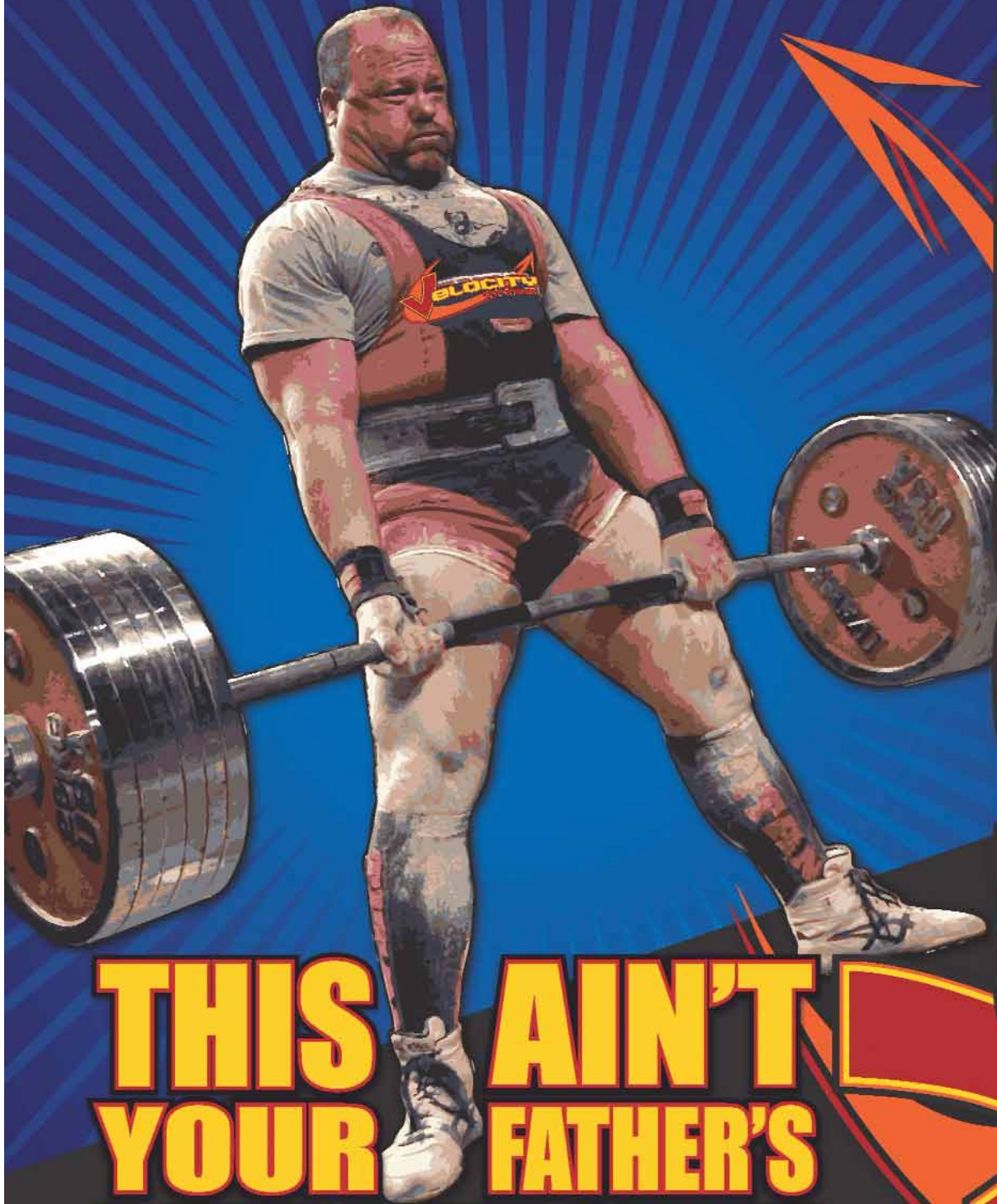
**Who is your favorite lifter?** Brian Siders. He's a friend and I admire his strength, work ethic and attitude. He's crazy strong, but also a good person.

**What do you prefer: single-ply, multi-ply or raw?** I have competed in raw and single-ply. I like the simplicity and pure strength required for raw, but I also like some of the competitive aspects of single-ply. It's a tough call, but I guess my personal preference is for raw. I'd like to do a multi-ply meet at some point just to see what it's all about.

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

**Who would you like to see on the next cover of Power?** I'd like to make it myself. If you notice, the guys on the cover have done some amazing stuff in the sport. So if I were to make the next cover, that must mean I did something pretty amazing, too. **PM**





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