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Other TEAM MHP Athletes: **VLAD ALHAZOV** – World Record Squat: 1,250 lbs. @ SHW. **RYAN KENNELLY** – Greatest Bench Ever: WR 1,075 lbs. @ 308 lbs. **BRIAN SIDERS** – IPF World Record Total: 2,601 lbs. @ SHW, USAPL Record Total: 2,650 lbs. @ SHW. **BRIAN SCHWAB** – World Record Total: 2,045 lbs. @ 165 lbs. **JOE CEKLOVSKY** – World Record Bench: 600 lbs. @ 147.6 lbs. **AL DAVIS** – Raw Unity Record "Raw" Bench: 633 lbs. @ 265 lbs. **BRANDON CASS** – World Record Deadlift: 810 lbs. @ 220 lbs.

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SQUAT

VLAD ALHAZOV – World Record Squat: 1,250 lbs. @ SHW

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Only the Good Die Young

Rick Hussey passed away too young, but not before he left behind an outstanding legacy. Hussey helped build some of the greatest lifters we have ever seen. Big Iron Gym has been home of some of the strongest lifters of all-time for the last decade – including the strongest male lifter (by formula) and female lifter of all-time.

Thousand-pound squats and 800-lb. bench presses are the norm at Big Iron, all while having nearly every lifter under 275 lbs. I didn't get a chance to know Rick the way the Big Iron guys did, but I met him several times. I saw a guy who was an amazing coach and person to be around. His lifters executed with excellence, and it was odd to see a Big Iron lifter miss a lot of lifts or bomb out. Rick was able to size up the lifter mentally and physically, and he knew just how to push and squeeze every bit out of each person to get the greatest result.

One of the greatest examples of this was at the Pro Am, where Al Caslow ended up bombing out of the meet. Al was a defeated man. He sat there wearing the day's results on his face, slumped over in his chair. Rick came over with his chest up, saying, "What the fuck do we do now?" Al looked seriously upset and kind of shrugged his shoulders. "We have a losers meet in two weeks! It would be perfect for you," Rick shouted. Al started to look kind of pissed off. I felt like I was watching a family fight go down. I didn't know if Al was going to slug him or not. Rick didn't care. He continued to dig, "You fucked your first one, then from there you were scared," he said. "Let's make some corrections and get back at it at that meet." After taking the harsh spoonful of reality, Al got up and said, "Let's do it, Rick."

Rick had a big smile on his face, knowing that he just through some wood on the fire that burns inside world record holder Al Caslow. Rick, as usual, was right. Al went on to pull his first 700-lb. deadlift and break the all-time world record squat at 165. Rick was a throwback to the old days, a guy who seemed rough and tumble – but he really did love and care about people.

In this issue of Power, Brian Carroll teaches us how to overcome obstacles. While we all hate to admit it, life can mess with our numbers. Brian, in my opinion, is one of the best lifters in the world, regardless of weight class. Keep your eye on Brian. I believe he is closing in on breaking the all-time 275 and or 242 world record. As some of you know, Dave Hoff is closing in on getting 2,800-plus at 275, as well. Hoff has had the upper hand as of late, but Carroll is determined to slug it out with him in an upcoming pro contest.

American Bad-Ass Strongman competitor Derek Poundstone polices the cover of Power. Derek doesn't wear that uni for private parties, ladies. He's a real cop and he's about to get married, so don't get any ideas. Derek is one of the premiere talents in Strongman today. The competition often dwarfs Derek, but trying to beat his will or beat him at a show is a tall order. He overcomes his lack of height by out-working many in the field. Derek does something I have never heard another athlete talk about: He trains his pain tolerance. Does that sound nutty? Well, that's because it is. Derek is so well conditioned, he chews up the pain and spits it back out as positive energy to help him gut through the brutality that is involved in Strongman. Derek is a 300-lb. slab of muscle. The guy is a machine. I saw him do a 765-lb. deadlift with no straps, in strict powerlifting form, for three reps! He looked like he could have done five.

Derek teaches us how to use Poundstone Power to improve our training. He teaches how to dig deep and train like a champion. You see, folks, Derek is the select few of the select few who is gifted physically, but also willing to do whatever it takes to win. He will drink his now-famous chicken shake (that's chicken breast and water in a blender), he will compete hurt, injured, maimed or broken. His game plan is to prepare for the pain, turn his muscles on high voltage and shut his head off. He is ready and willing to do whatever it takes. In short, Derek Poundstone is one of the best strength athletes in the world – and one bad mo fo.

Take a look at some outstanding information from CrossFit icon, 100 miles and running, BMack. He gives us some insight into how endurance work can help everyone, including strength athletes.

Paul Southern gives us part two of the Kelly Starrett mobility interview. Being more mobile can make us more efficient, being more efficient can help us keep a stronger posture during a lift, and that results in a better chance to make the lift.

If you don't know about Kerry Self, you will after reading this magazine. Some people say hot chicks in powerlifting are like unicorns: they don't really exist. Kerry Self proves that theory wrong.

Making the world a better place to lift,

Mark Bell

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BENCH

RYAN KENNELLY – World Record Bench: 1,075 lbs. @ 308 lbs.

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SHAWN FRANKL - World Record Total: 2,715 lbs. @ 220 lbs.

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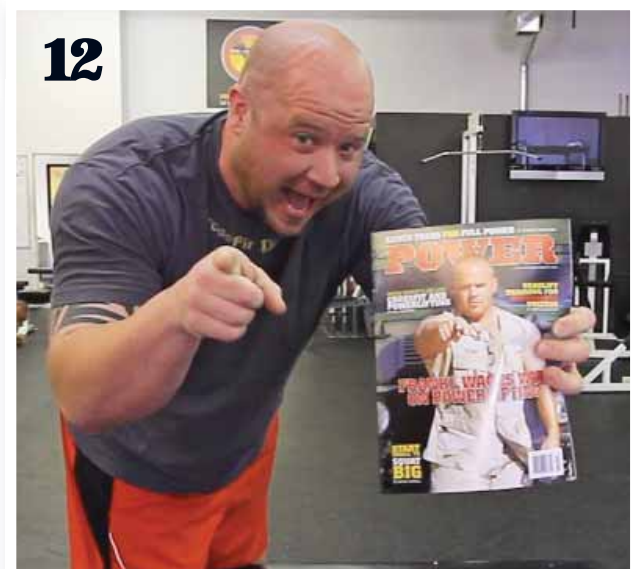
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MAIL BAG



To the Editor-at-Xtra-Large:

I picked up a copy of *Power* today and I'm impressed. Great stories and a clean, appealing layout. I especially enjoyed the interviews with Louie Simmons and Kelly Starrett. Keep up the good work!

*Kim Goss, M.S., editor in chief
Bigger Faster Stronger magazine*



To the Editor-at-Xtra-Large:

This is one of the few magazines I read cover to cover, and this issue was no exception. Louie Simmons made a super cover subject and inside article, and I have always respected and admired Jon Anderson.

Mark, was great to see your gym article and Get To Know page. About time! And Andee, that was a very nice photo of you and Mark. I was glad to see a photo of Stan Efferding, who is an incredible and multi-layered athlete. His win at Masters Nationals

was totally deserved. It was Stan and everyone else.

This is one of the most entertaining and informative publications out there. I wish you continued success.

Gerry, via email

To the Editor-at-Xtra-Large:

I've gotta tell you that I love the magazine. I was stunned to see the steroid article in the last month. Sure, drugs are in the sport, but what was the purpose of that article?

Todd, via email



The Editor-at-Xtra-Large replies: Power reports on all aspects of powerlifting. We want to offer factual information about the subject — no judgment, just information.

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OUT AND ABOUT



Chris Bell working the Power/Super Training booth



Becca Swanson and April Shoemaker



Mark Bell with the first online buyer of the Sling Shot!



Future World Champion benchers



Team Super Training
with Strongman
Mark Felix



Mike Womack getting ready to bench



The Bell family at
Super Training



Mark making the
"Poundstone Chicken Shake"

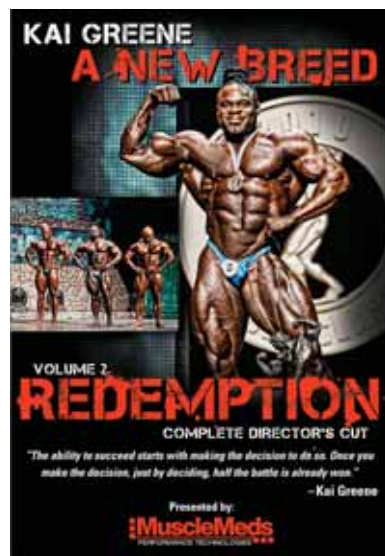


Jesse Burdick showing off
his favorite magazine

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THIS CHICK CAN KICK YOUR ASS, AND YOU MAY LIKE IT!

KERRY SELF

BY MICHELE ATKINSON

The world needs more chicks like Kerry Self. She's got all the bases covered, from her super-girly looks and super-strong lifts to her super-mom skills. I bet you didn't know that Self deadlifts almost 300 lbs. raw at 123 lbs., loves steak and looks great in a bikini. Like I said, the world needs more chicks like her.

Who is Kerry Self, in 10 words or less? Energetic, fun, caring, a hard worker, perfectionist and Christian (saved by Jesus).

How old are you? Tell a little about yourself. I am 37. I've been married for almost 20 years to my high school sweetheart, John Self. We have a two-year-old son (little John) and three dogs, so there is definitely no downtime in our house.

How and when did you start powerlifting? I started lifting hardcore in 2004, and my first competition was a USAPL meet. My husband was lifting and a friend backed out, so he convinced me to do my first competition. I was hooked from there. I took two years off with my baby, so I'm just getting back into training and competing on a regular basis again.

What is the typical reaction when people find out you are a powerlifter? Honestly, I don't think people really understand the extent of the weight I lift unless they see me working out at the gym or at a meet, and then they are really shocked or freak out. It happens more at the gym because sometimes I lift more than the guys there.





Do you get hit on a lot at meets? Not so much at meets, since my husband also competes. But at the gym? Yes. At meets I get a lot of questions on my training.

Where do you train? I was sponsored for years by Gold's Gym in Leesburg, Va., but it closed so now I'm trying out different gyms.

What is your favorite lift and why? My favorite lifts are definitely benching and deadlifts.

Do you think you get extra attention because you are a girl? Uhhhhh yeah! I would have to say that definitely is true.

On a scale of 1 to 10, how girly are you? I'd say a 10 when it comes to being feminine and wanting to look pretty, but I am certainly not a girly or sissy girl who's afraid of getting my hands dirty. My hobbies are a lot different than most women's. I used to do full-contact tae kwon do tournaments and would love to do some form of martial arts again. Other than powerlifting, I also enjoy racing BMX, drag racing cars and outdoor activities.

What meets are you preparing for? I've got three meets coming up over the next couple of months. I am a raw and drug-free powerlifter. I've been lifting in the 100% RAW Federation, and that's where my records are, but I am planning on also lifting in USAPL this year.

Do you train with other female powerlifters?

Unfortunately, not currently. There are not many women I know who lift at the level I do. My husband is my training partner. He keeps me motivated and disciplined. I really try to educate woman so they are not intimidated lifting heavy weights, because a lot of them think they will look manly if they do.

Do you have advice for other girls who want to get into powerlifting? Just do it, and don't be afraid of lifting heavy weights. Find yourself a motivating workout partner and hit the weight room. I am not saying to jump right in with heavy weights. Start low and continuously keep pushing yourself each week to add a little more weight. It's great to have someone who motivates you to better yourself, and who spots, as well. Remember to change up your workouts and only do a weight that you can only get four to six reps. Once I get six reps of a weight, I go always go up. I'm very cautious about form, so when I workout I am 100-percent focused on what I am doing to prevent injuries.

What is your favorite food? I love food! I'm a big steak and potato gal, and I can't forget the desserts to top it off.

What supplements do you take? I take the basics, like protein, creatine, pre/post workout drinks, multivitamin, fish oils and CoQ10. Some supplements I get from Primordial Performance and others from VPX Sports. I really like VPX's pre- and post-workout drinks.



What do you do for work? I own my own business, Leesburg Title & Escrow, LLC.

What outfit makes you feel the hottest? When I put that singlet on I feel so darn sexy ... not! That is the one thing I don't like about this sport: wearing those not-so-flattering singlets.

How do you balance your training schedule with being a mom? I'm still working on that one. The biggest challenge for me is getting a good night's sleep. It definitely has been a lifestyle change for me. When my little boy came, it was a big adjustment for me between not working 24/7 and getting back into my competing again. I've definitely learned to delegate more over the last two years to free up my time in the evenings so I can have quality time with my son and husband. God and my family are first, then all else comes after. I try to make it to the gym at least two days during the week, and on Saturdays while my son naps. When I am at the gym, I make all my workouts count since I have a tight schedule.

What powerlifting records do you hold? I've gone back and forth over the years between the 123- and 132-lb. weight classes. Currently I hold State, National and World records in the 100% RAW Federation. My best competition bench is 180 lbs. and deadlift is 275 lbs.

Who is your favorite lifter? I respect and admire all who are in this sport. There are a lot great women out there, but one in particular who comes to mind would be Jennifer Thompson, who is crazy-strong.

How has powerlifting helped you? I know this is not the answer you would expect, but honestly since I do lift heavy I can pretty much eat what I want. This is a big plus for me because I love food. It's also a great stress reliever for me, and it just makes

me feel so much more energetic when I work out consistently. As a woman, I feel better knowing I've got strength to back me when defending myself, should I ever need to.

Do you intimidate a lot of dudes? Guys would never admit to it, but I say yes, for sure. It's uncomfortable sometimes at the gym when I lift more than some of them and their buddies make fun of them in front of me.

What are your powerlifting goals? My goal has always been to better my own personal lifts and goals. I'm hoping to set some new records in 2011. I took two years off with my baby, so I am starting over again. I've been training really hard and am looking forward to stepping up the number of meets I do this year. To date, my best competition bench is 180 lbs., and I would love to hit 190 lbs. at a competition this year. As most know, it's totally different lifting at a competition — with one rep, paused weight, an adrenaline rush and nerves going — than at a gym, where you are relaxed, comfortable and can use momentum to rep out. I get very nervous at meets, which works against me a lot of times.

What is something unique about you? I am myself and don't try to be someone I am not, or act a certain way to impress others.

Do you have any sponsors you would like to thank? Several sponsors sponsor me and also my team, "RAW DOGS," for both powerlifting and BMX: Five Ten Shoes, Primordial Performance, House of Pain, J&R Bicycles, Bicycle Outfitters and BMF Design.

Anything else you would like to add? I would like to thank God first and foremost, as he is my strength. "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13) Thanks to my amazing husband, who is such an awesome trainer and pushes me to be the best at whatever I do. And thanks to John Shifflett for all the great meets and support over the years. Thank you for the opportunity to be featured in Power. I want to be able to encourage other woman out there to get into the sport. You can be feminine and be a powerlifter!

For more information about Self, visit her website at www.kerryself.com.

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BENCH HEAVY WITH LESS PAIN



“ In April I benched a personal best of 550 lbs. raw, then I trained with Mark Bell and the Sling Shot and 5 months later I benched 606 lbs raw! Tendonitis was preventing me from training heavy. Mark had me use the Sling Shot for my bench press and I was able to train pain free and increase my bench at the same time. ”

- 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

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POUNDSTONE

Poundstone Power is more than just being strong. It's more than just the name of my radio show on Sirius/XM satellite radio. It's about having your mind work in unison with your body to allow you to live a high-performance lifestyle, to be the best you can be in your job, in your family and in the gym.

Too often, the pursuit of strength comes at the expense of speed, agility and general athletic ability. I see regular gym-goers training every day using max-effort weights and I wonder if they are training with a long-term goal in mind or if they're simply trying to achieve a testosterone-fueled ego boost. To me, it's more important to build your body

rather than being the guy in the gym who can throw the most weight up. If you were to walk into my gym to watch me train, you might expect to see me lifting amazing amounts of weight. And you'd be disappointed. I spend most of my time in the gym working on speed and conditioning and doing sets of 100 reps or more. I realize that those words may sound blasphemous in the powerlifting community, but let me explain.

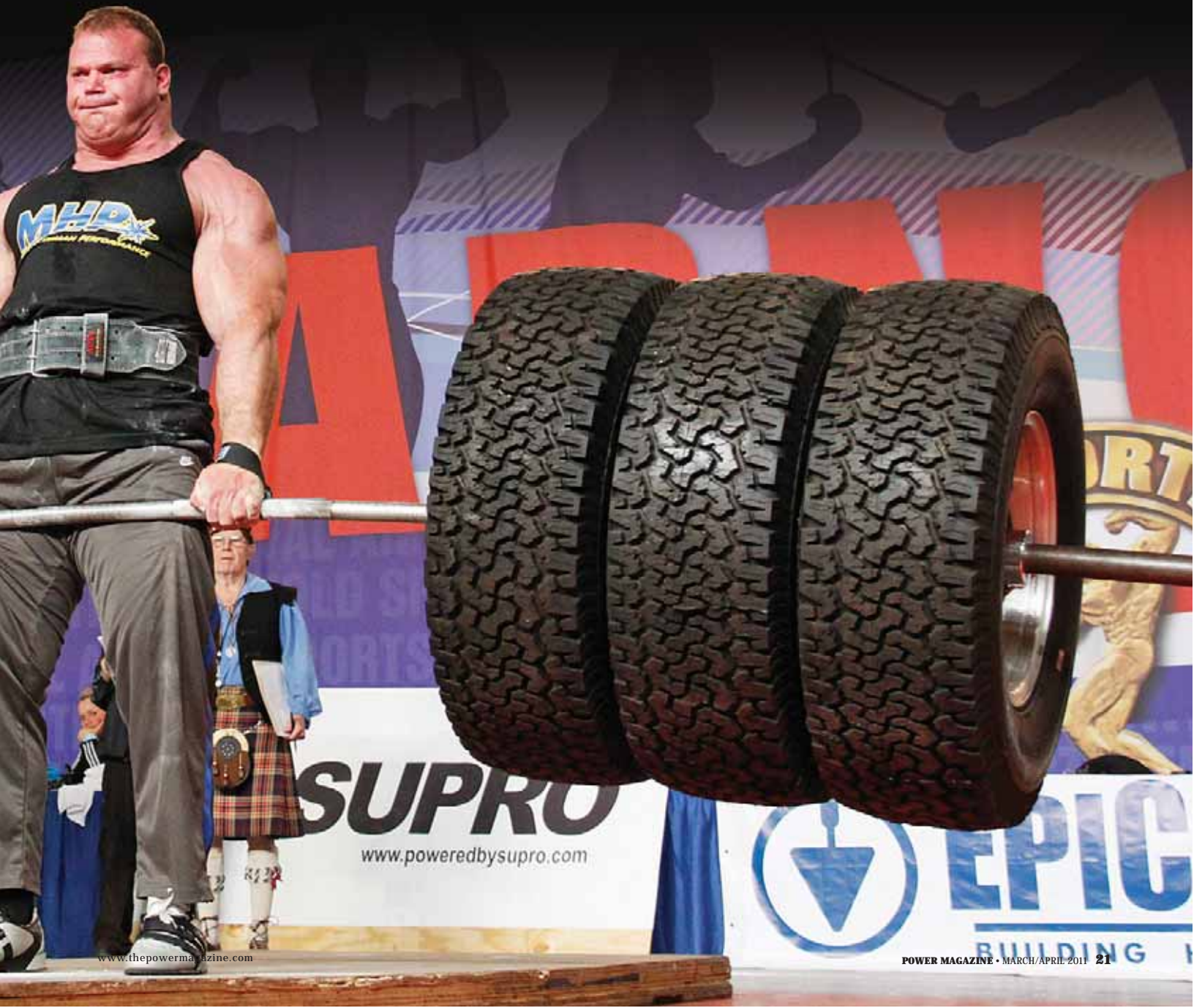
PAIN-TOLERANCE TRAINING

When you first start weight training, any stimulus you give your body results in massive gains in strength and size. Over time, though, your body becomes resistant to the standard routine and the common sets-and-reps schemes that gave us such good results in the beginning. When that happened to me, I had to make an extreme shift in my thinking and the way I executed lifts. As a professional strongman, I was lifting weights to become a better strength athlete. I realized that most of my lifts in the sport were sub-max, done for time or distance and requiring a great deal of pain tolerance. I first set out by modifying the way I lifted everything, from overhead pressing a log, block or dumbbell, to how I deadlifted and squatted.



STONE POWER

BY DEREK POUNDSTONE



For example, I looked at one of my worst events, truck pulling. In most of our competitions, I'm one of the lightest and shortest athletes so I don't generate as much torque. Toward the end of the pull, I would start hitting failure. I figured out that by generating torque on my feet by pulling on the rope harder, using more biceps for a longer period, I could improve my times and generate more speed. But this is asking a lot from a relatively small muscle group.

My experiment started as I set out to improve my biceps endurance. For the next few months I worked on curling an empty Olympic bar until failure for three sets. With such a light weight, I was never reaching true muscle failure; I was reaching the point of an overwhelming pain in my arms that forced me to drop the weight, similar to what was happening in a truck pull. I realized that this wasn't muscle failure, it was pain-induced failure. I learned to teach my mind to tell my body that it could handle the pain. Thus, my "pain-tolerance training" was born and by the end of 12 weeks, I was able to curl an empty 45-lb. Olympic barbell for a 3-minute long set of 150 reps, after initially failing after 60 rushed reps. I incorporate this pain tolerance training into each body part in some way, shape or form. The sets might not be to the extreme as 150 repetitions, but I will find a way to force my body to continue until the muscle truly fails.

MAKE IT HAPPEN

To properly implement this philosophy into your training, you will need to start on one body part and slowly lower the weight each week from your current level, each time improving upon the reps until you start to notice you are having a hard time getting past the pain threshold. You'll know you're doing it right when your shoulders, in addition to your biceps, are searing in agony during a set of curls, or your traps are on fire while doing laterals raises. The surrounding muscles will be forced to adapt, as well, which will increase your overall strength.

After you've found a comfortable weight that might force you to fail at around 60 reps, stop here for a few weeks and work up until you can achieve 100 reps. After achieving your goal, start increasing the weight slightly each week, as you find that your reps have improved on the heavier weight. To finish, spend a few weeks curl-

ing a weight you used to do for maybe 10 reps; you'll find you've doubled your reps over the course of a few months.

CONSUME FOR RECOVERY

Simply training is not enough. You must put as much energy into your diet as you do your workout. In order for your body to withstand this type of training, focus must be spent to consume enough protein to fuel muscle growth and recovery. Over the years, soy has been one of my main protein sources due to its higher content of glutamine which contributes to immune system function and also Arginine, which helps increase blood flow to the muscles during the high rep onslaught. Also, soy has been shown in studies to lower cholesterol so it's a heart-healthy source of protein. In my sport, it's important that I eat high-quality, healthy foods.

PUMP UP THE VOLUME

There is something to be said about volume. You simply cannot do the volume of training you did prior to this lesson in Poundstone Power. I would start out by doing three sets of two exercises for each body part and having your first set of each exercise be your highest rep set — after warming up, of course. The following sets would be a little heavier and for fewer reps, but still in the same range you are trying to stay within that week for the body part in question. Once you start approaching the 100-rep mark, three sets of a single exercise is adequate do to the workload

for smaller muscles like biceps and triceps. For larger muscles, two exercises is still fine, just perform two sets of each exercise. Regarding volume changes, 100 reps with a 45-lb. barbell is 4,500 lbs. of effort — 135 lbs. for 10 reps is 1,350 lbs.!

It's also not advisable to start multiple muscle groups at the same time; this will surely lead to overtraining. Instead, you might want to start with arms or shoulders, smaller muscle groups. Then, after you've reached the high rep mark and are increasing the weight, move on to larger

muscle groups. Furthermore, each body part has its sweet spot as far as reps, and the larger the muscle, the lower the sweet spot. For arms I seldom venture above the 100-rep mark. For shoulders and traps I find 40 to 50 reps is the limit. I need to take much longer breaks between the sets of delts. For some reason mine get very



“After you’ve found a comfortable weight that might force you to fail at around 60 reps, stop here for a few weeks and work up until you can achieve 100 reps”

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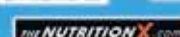
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pumped and uncomfortable if I do the sets too close together. Upper back and chest I limit to 40 reps, and lower back and legs are tricky; if I perform more than 30 reps, I'm just doing cardio and the recovery time just takes too long. I'd be sore for days.

Training in this manner has resulted in the lean physique people associate with me and also has the added benefit of adding a few more pounds of muscle. This sample routine, with the sets and rep scheme laid out for shoulders, spells it out. Use the methods I use to incorporate this into your routine and rotate a different muscle each cycle. During the shoulder cycle, I would start arms at week seven. After you've hit the high rep mark for arms and are bringing the reps back down, you'd start lower back, etc.

Monday - Shoulders and Traps

WEEK 1: Regular shoulder training

WEEK 2: Seated shoulder press - 3 sets 20, 16, and 15 reps using a weight you can barely get 20 reps with for the first set. Get as many reps as possible with all sets with the same weight; I just added arbitrary numbers. If you can get 20 reps for all the sets, great, but you might be holding back on the first set or two.

Side lateral hold - Using a weight you can usually get for 15 reps, hold the weight in each hand, arms parallel to the floor with a slight bend in the elbows for maximum time.

Dumbbell shrugs - Using a weight you think you can achieve 20 reps with, perform three sets of shrugs trying to achieve at least 20 reps. As with all sets, if you can get more reps, go ahead, just make note of this so you know where to go the following week.

WEEK 3: All exercises are the same, but increase the reps up to 30 based upon the first week's weights. Make note that the first set should have a few more reps than the subsequent sets because you're fresh. Perform all side lateral holds for maximum time. If you

are going over a minute, then up the weight; if you're under 30 seconds, it's too heavy.

WEEK 4: Same exercises, this time 40 reps for all. Side lateral holds should be around a minute now.

WEEK 5-6: The magic number is 40, so either make the weight heavier or lighter until your performing your first set of 40 reps. If you couldn't hit 40 reps last week, you should that number now. If you have hit 40, try upping the weight. You should be adapting to the weight, so I would expect an improvement. For the side lateral holds, using a slightly heavier weight, do maximum holds followed by as many reps as you can perform once you fail on the lateral holds. I notice my side delts get quite strong from these and I'm always surprised how many reps I can perform of the laterals after failing on the holds.

WEEK 7: Increase the weight on all the lifts, shooting for 30 reps - but keep in mind that you should be stronger then the first time you performed 30 reps. The

first set will be the highest rep set, but all sets will be to failure. As far as laterals, now do lateral raises, not holds, using weight you can perform 12 reps with.

WEEK 8: Down to 20 reps on all exercises. As far as side laterals, use the same weight but try to improve the reps.

WEEK 9: The next time you perform the cycle, remember what you have learned. Don't jump into a heavy or light week without having some transition so you can get the most out of your training. Also for shoulders, you can now start doing a front lateral, as well for front delts, but during the cycle you must keep the exercises to a minimum.

Tuesday - Arms

Wednesday - Off

Thursday - Legs and deadlift

Friday - Chest and back

Saturday - I train Strongman events such as yoke and stones.

You can take the weekend off or take Saturday off and train Sunday using the Monday workout, so you are doing a six-day training week. I take Sunday off and start every Monday for a seven-day training week. **PM**

In addition to being the most successful American Strongman in decades, Derek Poundstone is also a full-time police officer in Naugatuck, Connecticut. He is currently the defending champion of the Arnold Classic (2x) and America's Strongest Man (3x). He hosts "Poundstone Power Radio" on Sirius/XM satellite radio, a show dedicated to diet, exercise and time management. He is also a columnist for Muscle & Fitness magazine and www.muscleandfitness.com. He was recently appointed as a global ambassador for Special Olympics, joining the likes of Muhammad Ali, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Bono. In addition to being a motivational speaker and time-management expert, Poundstone, the "World's Strongest Cop", travels the globe promoting the benefits of soy protein on behalf of Solae, LLC. Poundstone is engaged to Kristin Nelson and will be married in the summer of 2011. To learn more about Derek Poundstone, please visit his website www.poundstonepower.com or follow him on Twitter @derekpoundstone.

“It's also not advisable to start multiple muscle groups at the same time; this will surely lead to overtraining. Instead, you might want to start with arms or shoulders, smaller muscle groups”

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USING THE WESTSIDE METHOD TO IMPROVE THE RAW SQUAT

BY ROBERT WILKERSON

This article is not for beginning raw lifters. It is for advanced lifters who are ready to take their raw power to the next level.

Most raw lifters (or geared lifters who switched to raw training) do not believe the Westside method is for raw training. I say, talk to Travis Bell, Donnie Thompson, Vincent Dizenzo or all the Westside lifters. Raw lifters become impatient because they expect huge gains and aren't focusing on PRs each week. The other problem a raw lifter can run into is defining the purpose of box squats, chains, bands and reverse bands in raw training. Here is a simple eight-week raw squat program my crew and I use to help improve our raw numbers.



LEARN TO LOVE THE BOX SQUAT

The cornerstone of the Westside method is the box squat. It helps promote longevity and proper technique. Raw lifters do not understand how this helps your raw lift; they believe most raw squats are missed at the bottom. This is untrue. Most raw lifts are missed because the lifter has tight hips, which causes them to cut their squats. Another reason for missing is the inability to explode through the transition from glutes and hamstrings to the quads, which results in missing at the midway point of the squat.

This is where box height comes into play. Setting the box 1 or 3 inches below parallel will loosen the hips and guarantee the lifter is right below, or at parallel. Sit back and relax your hips the first few sets to loosen the hips during warm up sets. Raw lifters need to use the “touch and explode” method for their max effort sets, which develops the explosion needed to squat heavy raw.

BANDS

Box squats with bands in raw training are tricky because some lifters don't understand how much tension is needed for the proper amount of carryover. Bands are for developing speed needed to drive through sticking points. The mistake raw lifters often make is looking at the tension at the top and thinking that is how much they actually squat. Bands are used to develop speed and power needed blow through the sticking point at top of the lift. We use this guideline: if the lifter can squat 650-plus lbs., they should use between 150 and 300 lbs. of band tension. Lifters who squat between 600 and 450 lbs. should use between 100 and 200 lbs. of band tension. The key is to put enough real weight on the bar so lifters become explosive with real weight. Bands are to be used once every four to six weeks. Write down what you hit and try to go higher the next time.



“SETTING THE BOX 1 OR 3 INCHES BELOW PARALLEL WILL LOOSEN THE HIPS AND GUARANTEE THE LIFTER IS RIGHT BELOW, OR AT PARALLEL.”

CHAINS

Box squats with chains are my favorite in my squat training. There is a huge difference between chains and bands because of the purpose they serve: Bands develop speed, whereas chains develop power. Lifters can truly gauge their strength gains with chains because of the feeling of straight weight, which bands do not give. For example, I have squatted 800 lbs. with blue bands but have dumped 800 lbs. with 200 lbs. of chains because I was not prepared for the pressure it put on my body. Chains make a lifter work throughout the entire lift. Just like with bands, raw lifters should not get carried with a crazy amount of chains. Chains are to be used just like bands: once every four to six weeks. Again, write down what you hit and try to get better each time.

REVERSE BANDS

Reverse bands with or without a box adds variety into training. This week allows raw lifters the ability to overload 100 to 200 lbs. more than their actual max. The best bands to use are doubled monster minis or looped green bands. I recommend doing this a week before your max-out to give your quads and hips a little bit of a break. Finally, have fun and load the bar till you cannot go anymore!

Implementing the Westside method into your raw squat training is not difficult. First learn how to box squat properly, then learn how to use bands to build explosion throughout your entire lift. Use chains to build the power needed to gut out a real heavy squat and, finally, introduce reverse bands into your training for variety and overloading the body without overly taxing the body. **PM**

THE TRUTH ABOUT STRENGTH

BY CHAD AICHS

I have lifted weights for most of my life and powerlifting for more than 10 years. In my pursuit to become one of the best powerlifters in the world and to get everything I can out of my body, I have learned enormous amounts of information about training and strength. Being the kind of person I am, I do not try to hoard this information. In fact, I try to get this information out to other lifters obsessed with strength, like I am. I sympathize with their plight and want to help them avoid the mistakes I made, which have been plentiful over the years.

IT AIN'T MAGIC

One of these mistakes is that powerlifters look for a “magic” training program. I used to look for one set program that would give me huge gains, and continue to give me huge gains over years of training. So many lifters look for this one program that will give them all the answers, in black and white. Not only that, but it seems that the more complex and complicated a program is, the more lifters think it works. They are blinded by percentages, waves, sets, reps and week after week of rigid numbers.

The simple fact is that strength training is not very complicated in principle. You break your muscles down in the gym and they recover when you're away from the gym. Hence, you get weaker in the gym and get stronger outside the gym. Yes, there are some other principles involved, but that's the basic truth to strength training. Yet even though the basic concepts of strength training are simple, lifters keep turning to the more complicated programs. Over time I learned to cut away all the crap and get down to the basic truths of strength, which in turn simplified my programs. This simplifying happened gradually, but as my programs got simpler, I got stronger.

ONE SIZE DOESN'T FIT ALL

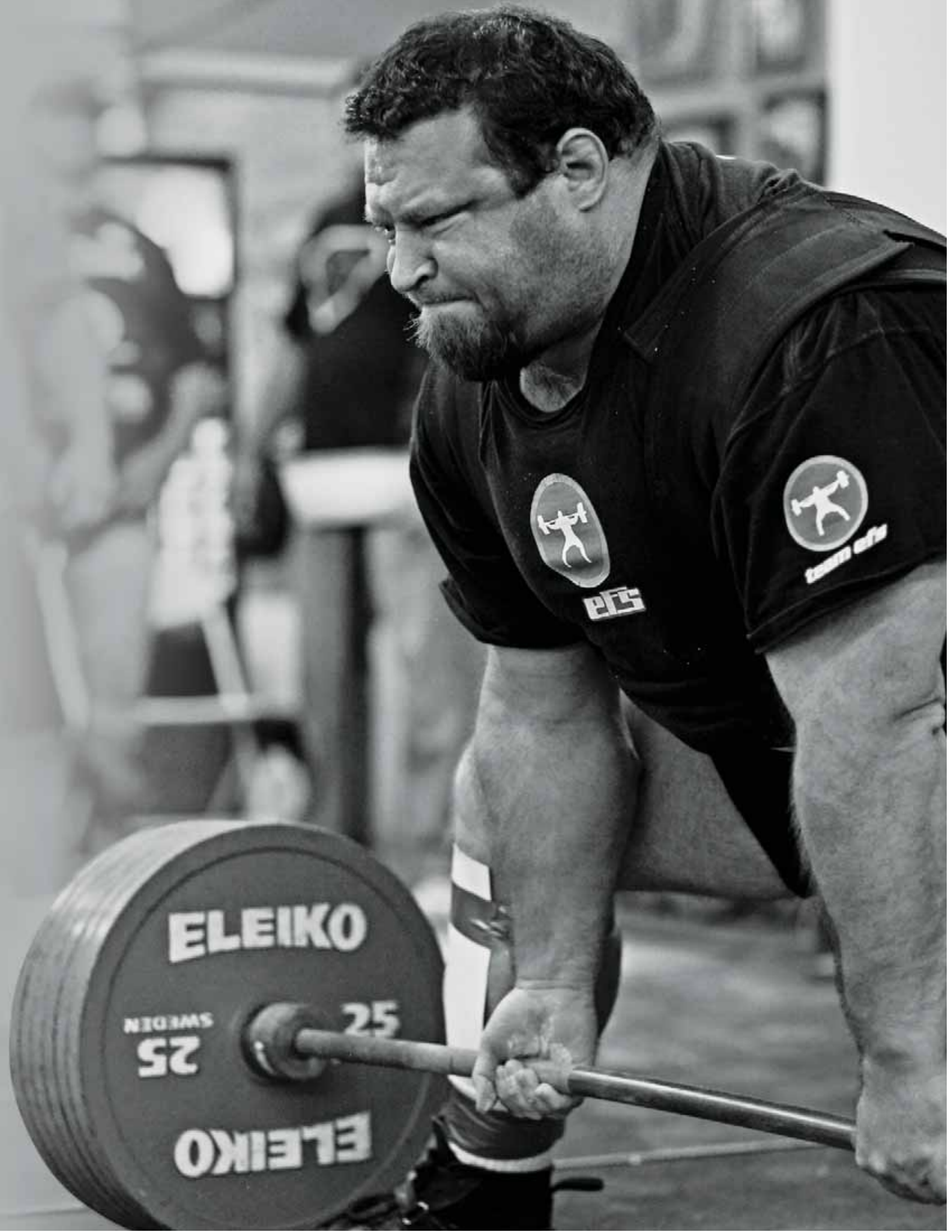
Another truth about strength is that everyone is different. This is a pretty simple and unarguable theory, but people don't always

accept it. We all have different recovery rates, metabolisms, weak points, fast twitch-to-slow twitch muscle ratios and mentalities, and respond differently to differing work loads. All these facts lead me to the conclusion that there is no complete set program for everyone. How can there be? Sure, some strict programs may work for a lot of people, but not everyone. People are just too different physiologically for one strict program to work for everyone. Just because Joe Blow does a certain program doesn't mean it will work for you. As yourself if the program you are about to dedicate a lot of time and work toward will actually work for you.

ORIGINS MATTER

Another truth about strength training programs has to do with where they come from. I get so sick of people trying these complex eastern bloc or Russian programs, like the Sheiko program. Powerlifters don't think about where these programs come from and for whom they were designed! Most of these complex programs were designed for athletes who were hand-picked as little children to compete in strength sports. They were the true cream of the crop—genetically gifted athletes. They showed the best physiological potential in a human that these countries could find. I would guess that most of the people out there trying these programs are not the genetic freaks these programs were designed for. What makes Joe Blow think he can keep up?

Then there are the skinny guys who say they've dedicated their



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lives to strength and have designed a great training program. My first thought is always, Why would someone who wants to dedicate their life to strength want to live it weak? Not the guy I want to listen to! On top of that, these guys do research for years and come up with a modified eastern bloc program. Then they do studies on people who have never worked out and claim they came up with the best new strength program ever when, in fact, these people would grow from doing just about anything.

Next we have all the top athletes running around writing strength programs. Well, most of them are the also genetic freaks telling Joe Blow that he needs to do the same workout they do! It's the same old story, and it doesn't work in the majority of the cases.

I do think average Joes can achieve great things, and even compete with genetic freaks. The difference is that Joe Blow needs to take his own path to get there. He will not be able to follow the program of the genetic freak. In most cases I actually think the genetic freak would get to the top no matter what workout he did. Joe Blow has to be smarter about his training, but he can make it to the top. I am living proof of that! If I can take my average genetics along with all my sleep and compartment syndrome problems to become a world-class lifter, then so can almost anyone.

LISTEN AND LEARN

Taking your own path leads to one of the greatest truths to strength training and one of the things that rarely gets talked about. That is learning to listen to your own body and to trust what it's telling you. This is an insanely hard thing to master, but will give you some of the greatest gains. It took me awhile to learn to be confident in what my body would tell me and then act on it — but the better I got at it, the stronger I got. Too many strength programs list strict reps, sets, percentages and training schedules with no concern for the lifter listening to his own body. There is no leeway for lifters to change the program to meet their individual needs. This is an enormous mistake.

Although it gets little mention, even the eastern bloc programs would do this, in a way. They had the money to run continuous test on the athlete and the coaches had full control. When athletes were worn-down or over-trained, they were held back from training or their program was adjusted. Most people think these athletes stuck to those full programs. The average Joe doesn't have that advantage. They have to learn to read their body. When they are overtraining, when to pick up the pace, when to take off, when to de-load, what to eat, how much to eat, what exercises work the best, what are your weak points, and all that stuff. Listening to your own body is quite simply one of the hardest and most productive things you can do to gain huge strength.

BE FLEXIBLE

Another truth is the fact that most of us live in the real world. Real life is chaotic, and your program has to be able to adjust to that. We are not professional athletes. Getting stronger is not our full life and job. We have families, bills, jobs (most of which are very physical or even stressful), and lots of other responsibilities. We try to set schedules and can maintain them most of the time, but shit happens. The car breaks down, the kids get sick, you have to do overtime, you get sick, and on and on. So if you're on this super rigid program with percentage waves and you miss a workout,



what do you do with the next workout? Do you jump up to the next percentage or do you stay there, and then you're behind a week? How do you deal with that — especially if you're trying to peak for a competition? A good program should be adaptable for the average Joe that lives in the real world. You need to be able to change the program to fit in with a hectic life.

A SIMPLE EQUATION

I have also found some great truths in the principles of force training. Very simply said, they are: $\text{force} = \text{mass} \times \text{acceleration}$. You need to train maximal strength and dynamic strength. These are principles made famous by Louie Simmons of Westside Barbell, and he has put out tons of top strength athletes to back them up. They are very simple but true principles, and very easy to add to a program. I have used them for many years and have seen great gains in myself, as well as in many partners and friends.

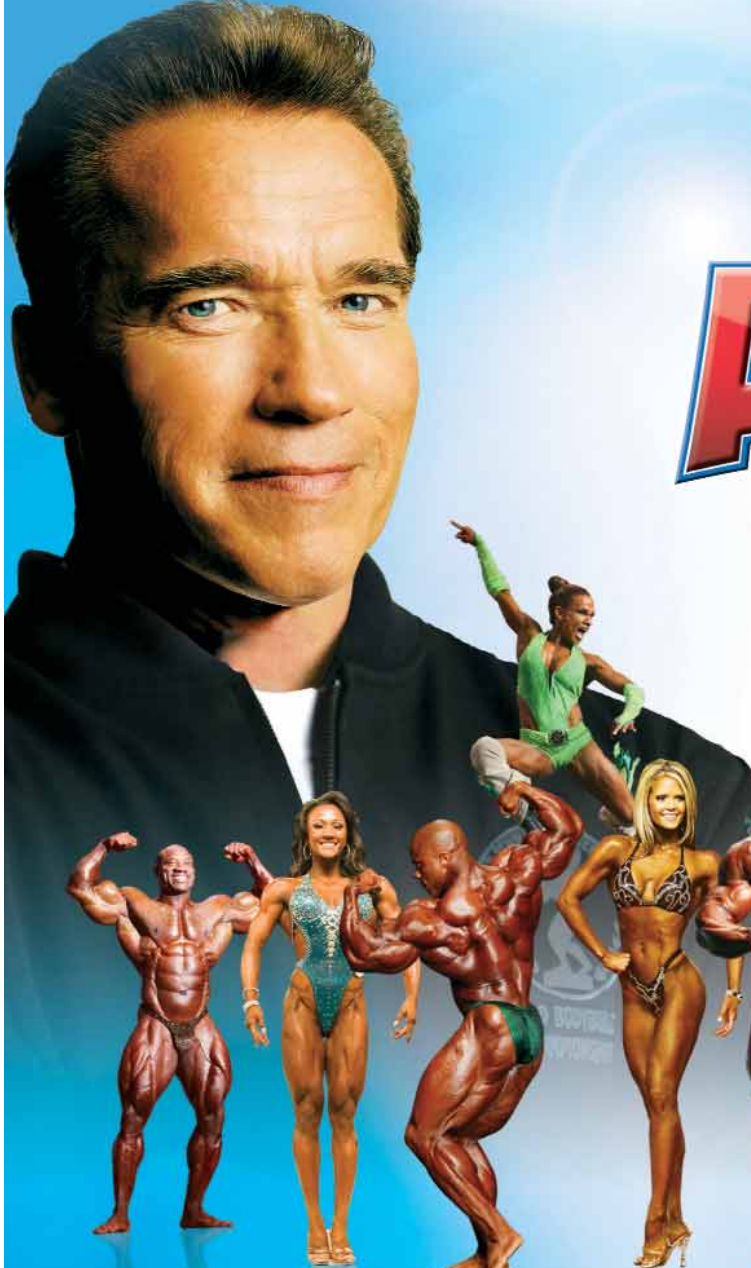
SHARE THE WEALTH

These are just some of the simple truths about strength and strength programs that have allowed me to achieve high levels of strength. I trained for years to make small gains, and it wasn't until I started realizing some of these truths that I started making real gains along with putting up some big numbers. I was lucky to meet and learn from some of the best and smartest guys around. These were the guys who had done the big numbers and learned by paying their dues. I learned from them and then modified a program that is really more of an outline, so that I could bend it. This allowed me to have a program that I could always change depending on my strength levels, weaknesses and the pitfalls of real life. It also allowed me to work with a diversity of training partners so everyone got what they needed. I have also spent a lot of time trying to learn my own body and to be able to trust what it was telling me. This was a long and ongoing process, but has been one of the best things I could have ever done. I know if people would start seeing some of these truths and think more about where the program they are doing came from, then they too would be able to make amazing strength gains and probably exceed their highest goals! **PM**

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THE **POWER** WARM-UP

BY JIM SMITH, CSCS, RKC

FACE PULLS



I remember when my typical warm-up at the gym would consist of hitting the bar for 10 reps, then throwing a plate on for another set of 10, adding another 25-lb. plate and so on. Sound familiar?

I didn't have time to warm up; I had stuff to do. I had to get in, hit the workout and get out. It wasn't until I got over 35 years old that something happened. I started getting injured more and more. I'd wake up in the morning and walk like Frankenstein's monster for the first 30 minutes. I felt sore for days after a heavy workout, and that soreness never really left.

It wasn't until I started researching mobility, flexibility, activation and warming up that I understood that I was doing a lot of harm not only to my body, but my potential for more strength and longevity in the gym.

Strength training and working out actually makes you weaker and less mobile. Microtrauma, primarily the resultant of heavy eccentric loading, weakens your muscles and other soft-tissues. The soft-tissues shorten as they recover and repair themselves, which leads to



DISLOCATES



ROTATOR



STRIDERS



POWER WARM-UP ROUTINE*

JUMPING JACKS, 1X25
 FACE PULLS, 1X20 REPS
 JUMP STRETCH BAND DISLOCATES, 1X10 REPS
 ROTATOR CUFF "Y", 1X12-15 REPS
 WALL SQUATS, 1X10 REPS
 SQUAT TO STAND, 1X10 REPS
 STRIDERS, 1X10 EACH SIDE REPS

** If you still are not warmed up, run through the circuit again with half the repetitions of the first run. Sometimes it takes a little extra to get moving, especially if you're in between max effort workouts.*

FACE PULLS, 1X20 REPS

1. FacePulls-1
2. FacePulls-2

JUMP STRETCH BAND DISLOCATES, 1X10 REPS

3. Dislocates-1
4. Dislocates-2

ROTATOR CUFF "Y", 1X12-15 REPS

5. Rotator-Y-1
6. Rotator-Y-2

WALL SQUATS, 1X10 REPS

7. WallSquats-1
8. WallSquats-2

SQUAT TO STAND, 1X10 REPS

9. SquattoStand-1
10. SquattoStand-2

STRIDERS, 1X10 REPS EACH SIDE

11. Striders-1
12. Striders-2

WALL SQUATS



“If you are smart and utilize a comprehensive, thorough warm-up, your body will begin to repair itself back to a level greater than your previous baseline, i.e. the law of supercompensation.”

immobility and flexibility issues and inhibition of muscle contractions. And depending upon the loads and volume (intensity) you use during the workout, your current state of recovery, your nutrition choices and the methods of restoration you incorporate will determine how long this weakness lasts and how quickly you recover.

If you are smart and utilize a comprehensive, thorough warm-up, your body will begin to repair itself back to a level greater than your previous baseline, i.e. the law of supercompensation. The pre-work-

out warm-up is also the key to charging your CNS, increasing your core temperature and having an amazing session.

Not only that, if you incorporate the same exercises you used for the warm-up at the other end of the day (AM: training, PM: recovery session) for a recovery session or on an “off” day as an extra workout, you’ll start feeling amazing every day. Another key point to note is that your warm-up and even some of your strength training can be performed barefoot. Training barefoot is amazing for “awakening”

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SQUAT & STAND



the feet, improving their reactivity and increasing the mobility and strength of the ankles.

If you take anything from this article, please realize that the warm-up is not an after-thought. It is not something you only do when you have time. It is a very important component of the overall program. Do not skip it. When you start incorporating a

good warm-up on a regular basis, everything will improve, including your strength. **PM**

AUTHOR BIO

Jim Smith, CSCS, is a strength coach with dieselcrew.com. He co-authored the renowned AMPED Warm-up System with Joe DeFranco at www.ampedwarmup.com.

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A COACH REMEMBERED

Tribute to
RICK HUSSEY



COMPILED BY MICHELE COGGER ATKINSON

A legend in powerlifting, Rick Hussey is best known for creating dozens of world-record holding athletes under his leadership and coaching at Big Iron Gym and Rick Hussey's Big Iron in Omaha, Neb. Arguably, Hussey was considered by many to be the best powerlifting coach in the country, if not the world. But to those who knew him personally, he was more than a phenomenal coach. He was a generous mentor and caring friend. He impacted so many lives through his coaching, his sense of humor and his generosity. Anyone who had the pleasure of knowing him will never forget him.

Hussey gave his entire life to his lifters and his gym. He was there coaching day after day, even during cancer treatments, surgeries and illnesses. He gave everything he had to his team, and all he asked for in return was for them to train hard and help out their teammates.

With the growing list of health struggles Hussey experienced, it was starting to seem like he was superhuman, that he could overcome anything. A punctured lung didn't stop him from being in the gym the next day, nor did knee surgery or a staph infection. So when the shocking news was delivered on Dec. 30, 2010, that he had passed away, no one wanted to believe that it was really true.

To simply say that Hussey had a huge impact on everyone who met him doesn't come close to describing the lasting truth to the statement. It can only be described through the hundreds, if not thousands of stories told by those who have known Hussey throughout his life. The first powerlifting article I ever wrote was an interview with him. Since then we collaborated on numerous articles, always working together to put his ideas in writing to share with the powerlifting community. I never imagined that I would be writing an article about his death. Compiling the following stories was very difficult. I don't want it to be true. I don't want to say goodbye. So I hope that with all of these stories, and those that continue to be shared, Rick will live on in our memories. We love you, Rick. Rest in peace.

"As I walked into the gym, it was a regular day. The New Year was approaching and the smell of new members' newly found motivation was in the air. I woke up early to train, like I would any other day, but this day was different. At 6:10 a.m. I strolled into the gym and wave at one of my good friends, Dan Gross. He looks at me and mouths something I couldn't quite understand. I asked him what he said, and I could tell something was wrong when I saw tears in his eyes. Dan looked at me and said, "Rick Hussey passed away this morning." I felt my stomach and heart drop. "Rick? Not Rick? Not our Rick?!" My whole relationship with him flashed before my eyes. Through my eyes he was a coach, a mentor, a brother, a friend.

"The thing I remember most about Rick his love for powerlifting. I have known him for years, since 1991, when I moved here from Texas. It wasn't until 2003 that I came to love him. 'You should come join the team,' he told me. 'I'll have you benching over 500 lbs. in four weeks.' I took him up on that offer and joined the next day. I've been blessed and have never looked back. Joining the powerlifting team was the first time I met Rick Hussey, the coach.

"As my training progressed I was very successful. He took me to heights that I didn't know I could reach. It seemed like he

knew me better than I knew myself when it came to moving the iron. Even though it didn't seem like it all the time, I knew he had my best interest in mind. Some workouts were tough, but knowing Rick was on my team gave me comfort. As the years moved forward and our relationship blossomed I discovered Rick Hussey, the mentor.

"Anyone who trained at Big Iron Gym walked out with stories and memories that will last a lifetime. Each person who is on Rick's team has plenty to share for the years to come. They might not all be the same, but what is the same is one simple fact: Rick Hussey loved us. Some of us will never understand the depths of his feelings for us, but we never will have to question the fact that it was there. He was strong in so many ways. We all know he could knock out Mike Tyson if he had to, lift tons of weight when called upon, call us out when we were out of line and crack an inappropriate joke at the exact right moment, but his strongest characteristic was his passion. Nothing could shake him from his 'sweet spot.' That sweet spot was his love for the sport and his athletes. It wasn't only about winning, losing or making our numbers increase. He made us stronger inside and out. When you walked into his gym you left a different person. The soreness was short-lived but the values and beliefs we had within ourselves will last forever. He looked after us like an older sibling. This is when I discovered Rick Hussey, the brother.

"Perhaps the most profound memory was the time he had an emergency operation on his knee on a Friday. Most people would have taken time off from the gym to get well. Well, Rick isn't most people. Saturday morning rolled around and there he was. He was with the team as if nothing was wrong. The team moved the couch to the bench area for him to be right in the action. I thought to myself, This is a real fucking man. This is one crazy S.O.B. He was on painkillers calling out numbers to both squatters and benchers. He gave us support you can only get from your best friends. We've all had our good and bad days with Rick, but to focus on the bad days would be dishonoring him. That day is when it hit me. I was training with Rick Hussey, the friend.

"He wanted us to be the best. If you want to be the best, you have to train with the best. There is no doubt in my mind or my fellow teammates that he made us the powerlifters we are today. He made us laugh and he made us cry, but more than anything he made us champions. Every one of you will have a memory of Rick, but don't think that he is only in your minds. He is also in your hearts. I still feel like I can sometimes hear him calling out to us. 'Straps up! Straps down! One board! Two boards! Big belly! Below parallel!'

"We may never get to say it again, but we all want you to know we love you very much, Rick. As long as we live, we will



No one was safe from Rick's thumb



Al Caslow often drove 3 hours to train with Rick in Omaha.

speak of the legacy you brought powerlifters around the world. I know you'll be watching over us as we move forward without you, our leader. We'll all look in our hearts for guidance to become not only the athlete you want us to be, but also the man you would want us to be. This is truly a day where I can say through my eyes I was made aware of Rick Hussey, the legend." — **DAVE DICKEY**

"On December 30, I woke up to one of the toughest phone calls I have answered. I thought it was Rick Hussey, but instead when I answered it was his girlfriend, Kerri. Before she could say anything, I knew, and all I could muster out was 'No, please.' As she started to cry, I had no words.

"For those who knew Rick Hussey, you were lucky. 'One of the unique characters of this world,' said my friend, Craig Christopher. I broke down after reading that. I knew we lost someone we will never or could ever replace.

"He was significant in all he did. Nothing was ever just casual, or without the proper attention. The simplest things were done right — not just done, but right. He was a dedicated man, not just to himself, but to his world. If you were a part of it, there was so much you heard, saw, experienced and learned.

"To me he wasn't just a coach, he was family. Someone you trust and love, someone I wanted my wife and kids to know, someone you want to be a part of your life always. When you sit and think about how great it was being around him, it makes it that much harder to swallow. Tough to accept, it's like a bad joke that's gone on for too long. When you come to terms with it, you can't help but just salt your veins and hurt. You still miss him, and cannot tolerate the fact that it's forever. — **AL CASLOW**

"Rick, I can't believe you're gone. You had no idea how much you were looked up to, or how many lives you affected. You had a hard exterior, but those who knew you, knew that deep down you were sort of a sweetheart. No matter who was lifting, they were the center of attention at that moment. It didn't matter if they were the best or the worst, you put in as much effort with them as you did your superstars. These are the things that set you apart from other coaches and what helped produce some of the best lifters the world has seen.

"Rick, it still hasn't hit me that when I walk into BIG, you're never going to be there again. I'll never get to see you eating your food with two fingers instead your whole hand because of your bicep tears, and only being able to open your mouth half way to get the food in because of cancer treatments. I'm going to miss watching the sweat drip down your face when you ate a Frosty because it tasted so good. I'm going to miss the half smirk that was your smile. I'm going to miss the fact that you knew the weight that was just enough to make you work, but wasn't so much that it would crush you. I loved that when you were trying to figure out that number, you would count in your head and use your fingers to figure the jumps you were looking to get

later in the workout. I loved that when I first joined you made me feel like I had been there as long as anyone else; if I needed a wrap you would do it, if I need my straps pulled up you would do it.

"I remember a specific time, one of the only times I heard you specifically compliment me — or anyone, for that matter. It was the second time I had 900 lbs. on my back. I was getting set and I heard you say, 'It deloads down there, chest up, big air, do everything smooth and clean. You're a great squatter. Let's go!' Anyone who watched the squat knew it was the biggest grinder of my life, and I know I wouldn't have been able to do it if you hadn't said that. It truly touched my heart. I'm going to miss the way you pushed me to lift weights that I didn't think were humanly possible, with my skinny body.

"You knew what I was capable of long before I did, and I can't thank you enough for that. It helped me in the lifting world, as well as real life. If I'm presented with a problem or something I don't think I can handle, I always think to myself, if I can squat over 800 lbs. I can do anything. None of that would've been possible without you believing in me first.

"I think the thing I'll miss the most is knowing that you were always there for me. If I had problem with anything, you were always willing to talk about it. I think it was your favorite thing about the gym, being able to talk to all your friends. They knew they would always get your honest opinion on the matter, even if they didn't want it.

"You're one of the only people I truly respected who wasn't a part of my family, which is a very rare thing in my book. As I write this, the tears keep rolling, but I know you were in way more pain than any of us who are missing you can even come close to knowing. The stress you had to deal with between banks, lawyers, the gym, cancer, medical bills and I'm sure tons of things most of us didn't know about, would have put most of us over the edge long ago. You were probably the strongest person I've ever known, in and out of the gym. I know you're in a better place. You will be in my heart forever." — **MICK MANLEY**

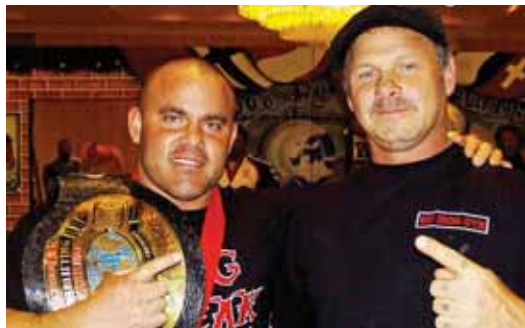
"I was sad, shocked and surprised when I got the news that Rick passed. Ria woke me up and said, 'Rick Hussey died last night.' I jumped out of bed and didn't know what to say or do. I was shocked. After I collected myself, I thought, Shit. I wish I had gone to his meet to see him one last time.

"Rick was such a dedicated coach. I could go on and on about how great of a person he was. He would help anyone, even if you were competing against his guys. He once helped me come back from a missed bench due to technical reasons at the 2006 WPO/WPC Worlds to make it on a third, which helped tie Shawn Frankl. Not only was that extremely gracious of him, but he also had me out to Big Iron a month before the Worlds to help me with my bench. He didn't have to do this, especially since I was about to go head to head with one of his guys.

"This is just one of thousands of things Rick has done for people.



With two of his former lifters, Shannon Harnett and Becca Swanson.



Number 1 lifter, Number 1 coach.



Friends for decades, Rick and Kurt.

Others have put it very well: Rick would help anyone. He was unique and can never be replaced — nor will he be forgotten by those he has helped, touched, coached, guided and influenced. Furthermore, the powerlifting world will never be the same in so many ways. He will forever be known as one of the most incredible characters and coaches to have ever been around the sport of powerlifting.

“We have truly lost one of the greats, and one of the toughest and baddest SOB’s to walk the planet. His legacy will forever remain. No more suffering or pain.” — **BRIAN CARROLL**

“Call it original, call it cheesy, but know it is true: Rick Hussey was one of a kind. Ask any of his lifters what their goals are for their next meet and they’ll respond with, ‘Whatever Rick says.’ Ask any of his lifters what they are going to lift that day and they’ll respond with, ‘Whatever Rick says.’ He had a way about him that truly brought the best out of each and every lifter.

“I was the new guy and definitely at the bottom of the pecking order on the Turd Team, as he called it. Every single day I lifted under Rick’s guidance, I was breaking a personal record. He called the numbers and you lifted the weight — no ifs, ands or buts. You just did it. I drove 110 miles round trip, three times per week to lift with the Big Iron team. Expensive? Yes. Necessary? No. Would I trade the miles logged or the money spent for anything? Absolutely not. The time spent with Rick was unbelievable. He had me lifting weights I never dreamed were possible. He hardly knew my background as a lifter, yet he helped me break down my mental barriers and lift weights beyond my previous capacity.

“Most friends of Rick say that if he makes fun of you, he likes you. Well, then I feel blessed to be a friend of Rick, because he did just that. It was always in good fun, and never hurtful. I will forever remember the countless number of times he called me Cat-Boy. Before he died, Rick was looking pretty run down in the gym and could hardly speak, but he was still lifting weights. With his head hung low as I entered the gym, I yelled across the room. Rick lifted his head, gave me his all-too-familiar smirk and a wink. That memory will forever be with me. Rest peacefully, coach. You are irreplaceable.” — **MARC “CAT-BOY” JERGOVIC**

“I remember when I first came up to Omaha. I was from small town Kansas looking to find a good powerlifting gym. When I first walked in I was highly intimidated. Rick, the coach, was making fun of people almost constantly. I didn’t understand why at the time. I kept coming in, day in and day out, hoping to make the team. When I was finally added into the mix I started to understand Mr. Hussey. If he wasn’t making fun of you to your face, chances were he probably didn’t like you at all.

“Every time I was down and out, Rick was always there to help out. He gave me various items for my apartment: a bed, kitchen utensils and food, including an ice cream bucket full of spaghetti and a pan full of

Famous Dave’s ribs. He also gave me clothes he didn’t wear anymore. He gave me my first 500-lb. bench press and my first 2,000-lb. total, and I will forever be grateful. The man was constantly giving with no intention of ever being repaid. If you showed dedication, he would do anything for you to make sure you got to where you wanted to be. He was truly one of those individuals you only meet once in your lifetime, and he will forever be missed.” — **MATT SAHLFELD**

“I never had the chance to meet or train with Rick, but we have used his training guidance for the last six months at Ocean State Gym in Rhode Island. He has helped propel my bench press to levels I never thought I would reach. My training partner, Chuck Scherza, had been in contact with him and transferred his instructions to the rest of us. I have used Rick’s guidance to help others reach PR after PR in their own training. Rick has helped many more people than he would ever know. We feel blessed to have been able to receive his help and guidance, and will continue to use and pass on his ideals and training philosophies for many years to come. Rick will be missed by many. He will continue to have an impact on the powerlifting community, even after his passing. Godspeed, Rick. I’ll get my chance to train with you in the Lord’s gym. My condolences to all of his family and friends.” — **BRIAN SHAW**

“I was visiting Iowa from Texas and heard about Big Iron Gym. I called Rick and asked if I could come and get help in bench shirt. He said no problem. Within two hours, I had learned more about benching than I had in the previous two years. It was a great experience I’ll never forget.” — **JEREMEY KING**

“Rick was an amazing guy. He taught me how to squat. I was a pure newbie in the sport, and he kept pushing me and kept telling me I can be one of the greats. I live in New York; he is in Nebraska. I had started to train for my first real Nationals. A bunch of us were in Chicago for the first Bench America. Rick and Becca shared a room with me. That was a riot in itself. Rick had a hysterical and quirky sense of humor.

“We had a full day before Bench America was going to start, so Becca, Rick and I took a ride out to Quads Gym. It was July in Chicago. The air was so thick and humid — instant sweat box. We get to Quads and the place has no air. All of the lifting is upstairs. There was one small fan barely blowing. Ed Coan was there, some strongman guys and us. Rick wants to see how I am doing with my form, etc.

“So I get under the bar. Rick tells me to take my shoes off and start doing some reps. No problem. He is correcting me as I am starting to get into my groove. I did about 20 reps, then we start adding weight. He wants me to do eight sets, eight to 10 reps. I’m still thinking. No problem. Yeah, right! We put on a plate, then 195, then 235. All of a sudden I start to feel nauseous. My face is flushed, I can’t breathe, I’m sweating. I look over at Rick he says, ‘Rack it.’ I step away from the



A typical day in the gym, joking around with Mandy "Roundhead" Bennett



Celebrating a team victory at the Pro/Am.



With his beautiful girlfriend Kerri after putting her through a workout.

bar. He yells, 'Watch out! She's gonna blow!'

"Well, what do you know, I did. Ed ran over with a small waste paper basket and I threw up. Rick says, 'That was a job well done. Now get back under that bar, we have work to do.' A few years later, with his help, I squatted 660 lbs. Thank you, Rick, for the great memory that I will never forget. Good times!" — **SHAWNA MENDELSON**

"When I first entered BIG it was 2005. Jay Limas forgot to tell me two very important rules: 1) Don't pet the dog, and 2) Don't bend over in front of the owner. Well, I got bit and Rick touched me in a way that shocked me. But it was funny as hell.

"I only knew Rick for five years but, like he did for many, he took us from lifters to national competitors. He gave us the courage to do what we thought was impossible. When I went back to Big Iron with my arm brace on, he apologized for my triceps tearing. That blew me away. When I left Sioux Falls in December for Texas, I stopped in Omaha. When it was time for me to hit the road, I looked into his eyes and said 'I will see you on the other side.' He smiled, put his hand on my shoulder and didn't say a word. This was my last memory. R.I.P. Rick, you will always be loved. Good-bye, my friend." — **SCOTT BARNES**

"I have so many memories of Rick, but my favorite was from the night after Senior Nationals in 2009. At the meet, he gave me a third deadlift attempt weight that was heavier than I had ever attempted. I ended up missing the attempt; I was trying so hard to fight the weight that I fell over on the platform. When I stood up, the first thing I saw was Rick in a fit of laughter. Later that night, he told me, with his signature smirk, that he knew I wasn't strong enough to lift that weight. He wanted me to try anyway and see what happened. Then he said he was proud of me for not giving up. That sums up how I want to remember Rick: a joker on the surface, but also a father figure. Deep down, all of his lifters are driven by the desire to make him proud.

"I always admired the way Rick trained his lifters. He knew exactly what it took to motivate each one. Some he encouraged, some he teased and some he broke down. But it was always because he was doing exactly what it took to get that person to achieve greatness. It was his strategy. He helped us all accomplish things we never dreamed possible, and giving someone that feeling is the kind of gift that is rare, and unforgettable. I had always enjoyed watching the lifters at Big Iron, but there is no way I would have done it myself had it not been for Rick. His coaching was addictive. He made you want to be great. He made you a part of something. And he made you wake up every day feeling like you had a purpose and a sense of belonging. I only knew Rick for a few years, but he is someone that I will tell stories about for the rest of my life. I have been so blessed to know him, and I miss him so much." — **MICHELE ATKINSON**

"Rick was an amazing coach. He was always fun to be around. I remember what he said to me the first time I walked into Big Iron: 'Who are you, you skinny little queer?' I was confused until I caught on that it was just how he operated. He was a great man, and will be sorely missed." — **KALEB HALL**

"There is no way to put into words who Rick Hussey was. For as stubborn as he was, I have never known someone with a bigger heart. He gave and cared more than most people knew. He will truly be missed by many, myself included. I consider myself privileged to have known such a great man. Love and miss you, Rick. You will live on in all of our memories." — **BOBBY FRANKL**

"One of my memorable conversations was when Rick asked me, 'If I hit you with a stick, would marshmallows fall out?' He had a very unique way to get you motivated. I always knew that when I'd work out, I would leave laughing and hurting. He will truly be missed." — **DIANE HERNANDEZ**

"I first went to Big Iron and met Rick when I was 18. I was just out of high school, weighed about 120 lbs. and couldn't even bench two plates. Rick helped me learn how to train, and train hard. He taught me a lot, and I will never forget it. I was there lifting five days a week, and after the first year I put on about 60 lbs. and my bench went up to about 300 lbs. I will always remember him kicking my ass at pool after a hard workout. Thank you, Rick. You will be missed." — **JON RAMIREZ**

"I was friends with Rick Hussey for more than 15 years. I have more stories about him that I could ever share. I started powerlifting in 1997 on the very first Big Iron Gym Team. Rick and I were in the gym one day and he said, 'Why don't you try powerlifting? Because you suck as a bodybuilder. Who knows — you might even squat 700 lbs. someday.' That was the start of my evolution as a powerlifter. I totaled 1,747 lbs. my first meet in the 275-lb. weight class. With Rick's guidance, coaching and harassment, I have totaled more than 2,600 lbs. multiple times.

"I have had a rough couple of years. Injuries and life have not led to much success lately. Before Rick died, we had a talk about my powerlifting future. He told me that he believed in me and he thought that I still had what it took to total big. He said, 'There is always another weight class or another division record to go after.' I asked if that means I can start competing as a master. 'You can start competing as a master when you start sucking as a powerlifter,' he answered. Always the motivator!

"Rick, you turned me into a champion powerlifter and showed me how to be a better man. You believed I could do things I never dreamed of doing. RIP, Rick. You were my friend, my coach and

my hero. I love you and will miss you. Thank you for your life's work!" — **JIM GRANDICK**

"The first time I came to BIG, Rick told me I couldn't lift on the team. I asked him why and he responded, 'I don't want the team to look bad!' The second time I went to BIG, I petted the dog and he bit me. Rick walked up and gave me the 'thumb.' I asked, 'What the hell was that for?' He said, 'See? Now you forgot about Josh biting you.'

"Rick took his shirt off and gave it to me, due to the fact he just tore the crap out of my shirt. But that's how he was willing to give and help anyone. I finally manned up and de-pantsed Rick one day, but he simply pulled them back up and said he would get me back; not that day, but soon, and it will be far worse. Well, dude, you got me back good.

"I'm going to miss all the de-pantsing, the thumbing and the nick-names. 'It's not about where you start, it's where you finish.' Handsome Rick Hussey!" — **MATT GOTTSCH**

"Rick, I started going to your gym when I was 16. You started teaching me powerlifting. A few years later, you took me into your home and started teaching me life. It's been more than 10 years since I started leaning. Now I'm a grown man learning about losing a beloved teacher, mentor and coach. But most of all, I've lost a beloved friend who at times was like a father to me. I will greatly love and miss you." — **JEREMY HAUGER**

"Rick played such an instrumental part in so many lives, mine included. He came across as such a hardhead, but his heart was soft and pure gold. He was a great powerlifting coach who loved this sport and dedicated his life to it. All of us who were a part of Big Iron for so

many years have lost a great coach and a great person. I will forever be indebted to Rick, as he made me grow in many ways. RIP, Rick. I love you, but know you are now without pain and in a happy place. Till we meet again." — **DEB WIDDIS**

"I first met Rick while, believe it or not, I was competing at a USAPL meet in Omaha back in 2002. Rick was helping spot and load. I was three red lights away from bombing and he let me know about it. I had no clue who he was, and he didn't know me from the man on the moon. He approached me as I was wrapping my wrists and told me what I needed to do to get a lift in. I took his advice and got three white lights. After the meet was over I thanked him and he made fun of me for lifting in the USAPL. I still didn't know who the hell this guy was, but I liked him.

"Two years went by and I met Rick for the second time. This time we were in a multi-ply federation meet and he had his team with him. I remember being in awe of Big Iron Gym. After Aaron Wilson handed me my ass, Rick came up to me and welcomed me to the big leagues. Then he gave me shit for using a single-ply shirt. I was still new to the sport and really didn't know a lot about the guy. He was helpful toward lifters regardless if they were on his team or not. The way he rode his team members was unreal. Whether they made or missed a lift, they still got grief.

"The more meets I did around Rick, the more I got to know him. He took me in and it didn't matter where we were competing or who I was competing against, he always had words of encouragement for me. They weren't always nice, but that was Rick. If he didn't like you, he wouldn't waste his time messing with you.

"On the outside, Rick was a hardcore warrior. But the more I got to know him, the more I realized that the man had a big heart. He would

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Preparing Krystal Cary for a world-record bench at APF Senior Nationals



Wrapping Mandy Bennett's knees for Saturday squat training.



Long time friend of Rick's and former bencher Aaron Wilson getting wrapped for his first full power meet

go out of his way to help anyone. My first time at the Arnold Classic, Rick asked me to get into his team picture and told me I was “almost BIG.” For me that was, and still is, an honor to know I earned such a great man’s respect.

“I know all the guys and gals he molded in the gym are all kids at heart, but I got to see a side of Rick that made me admire him even more at the 2010 APF Seniors. I brought my six-year-old son, Hunter, with me. It was his first time meeting Rick. He treated Hunter like one of the guys, and Hunter really thought that was cool. During dinner, Hunter told me he wanted a Big Iron T-shirt. I told him he needed to talk to Rick. Hunter got up, went over to him and asked for a shirt. Rick asked him what color he wanted, and Hunter told him he wanted all the colors. Rick told Hunter he would get him a shirt and give it to me next time we crossed paths. When I showed up at the gym for Rick’s next meet, he tossed me two Big Iron shirts and said, ‘These are for Hunter.’ He wears them proudly.

“Rick was a mentor, coach, friend and family member. Granted, he changed my name to Lorenzo, but still a part of the family. I will forever remember Rick and treasure the memories I shared with him. I want to thank Coach Hussey for all he has done for me over the years and thank him for the memories. Till we meet again, I love you!” — **ROB LUYANDO**

“I can’t believe a legend and friend is gone. I trained at Big Iron under Rick and Becca for the better part of three years. I’ll never forget the first time I witnessed the Big Iron Team. It was my first powerlifting meet ever, and there were these grown men slapping and screaming at this guy getting ready to bench. Mike slapped the guy clean across his face and left a mark. I thought, this is definitely not for me! But the adrenaline rush of that meet stuck with me, and my trainer took me to Big Iron for Saturday squats. I was hooked! Rick trained me from then on.

“Being the smallest lifter (132 lbs.), he had patience and never grumbled about having to unload that bar for the ‘weak one.’ He always found a way to show up and train me when I could not make the regular training times. Rick was the most giving man. He trained each and every lifter like we were equal. And he never asked for much in return — just our dedication, which we freely gave. He made us want to give it your all for him and the team. He just had that way about him. He was a wonderful inspiration. I will never forget the friendships and family I found at Big Iron Gym. I am saddened that I did not get over to Big Iron one last time to say, real bright, ‘Good morning, Rick!’ He hated that and told me I was way too cheery and loud for the morning, but I always said it, without fail. So, good morning, Rick! You will be missed.” — **HEIDI BURKE**

“Rick went with me to my second powerlifting meet. It was just at a small YMCA meet, and there was only one other Big Iron lifter. I remember thinking how cool it was to have Rick help me out. Rick

was training champions and I felt very lucky to have him there. I was honored to have him train me during the weeks leading up to the meet and then calling my numbers, treating me just like the big dogs. I remember missing my third-attempt deadlift and Rick saying that even though I missed it, he was impressed with how long I kept trying, and that a lot of his stronger lifters would have given up and dropped it. It made me proud to receive a compliment from him, one of the few actual compliments I ever heard him give out. As the years went by, I would train a lot by myself, but somehow he always knew when I hit a PR in a meet and would give me that grin and thumbs up. I was never any good at powerlifting, but Rick made me feel like I could constantly improve. With his help and guidance, I got stronger than I ever thought I could have been.

“Rick always cracked me up. He was constantly talking trash and keeping people humble. I remember training with Jerry Bokel and he called us the D team. He said, ‘The best guys are on the A team, then everyone else is on the B team. You’re on the D team.’ I said, ‘What about the C team? Shouldn’t we be on that?’ He said, ‘Oh, there is no C team. You’re so bad we had to skip C and go to D.’

“I feel lucky and honored to have known Rick as my coach and friend. I will miss him. The world is a dimmer place without him.” — **JIM BURNETT**

“I remember the first day going down to Big Iron Gym in 2008. I was with Scott Barnes (aka Lunchbox) and he brought me down to show me what a real gym was and how elite lifters trained. After only taking a few steps into BIG, I was astonished. It was packed with people starting to squat and bench, and it didn’t take me long to realize that everyone was there to help each other, regardless if they were squatting or benching. It didn’t take long for me to also realize that the ringleader was Rick Hussey.

“I was amazed how organized the chaos in the gym was and how Rick could keep track of the lifters squatting and benching. He was on top of everything, loading weight calling numbers, spotting. You name it, he did it. After that day I was sold on getting into powerlifting. I started coming down to Big Iron weekly from Sioux Falls to bench with John McClaren until I finally started benching with the team. I learned a lot from Rick and he helped me get my bench over the 500-lb. mark. One of my best memories was getting the nickname the ‘Chinaman’ for the first time. I felt honored to know that I had earned a place in the Big Iron family. Rick was a great mentor and coach, and I enjoyed every moment I was with him. It was an honor being able to be trained by and to be a part of such a great family.” — **JASON “THE CHINAMAN” NGUYEN**

“I don’t think words will ever sum up what Rick did and what he meant to me. When I first walked into Big Iron in 2003, Rick was the first person I met. I asked Rick for a tour. He replied, “Do you think this is some type of sissy club where I’m gonna walk you around and hold

your hand?" I laughed, walked myself around then signed up for a year. Over the next few months, I trained by myself making little to no gains and being very inconsistent. I had heard guys talking about a power meet on November 15, my birthday, so I asked Rick if I could do it. He told me I'd better wait until the next one, in March.

"Over the next five years I think I spent more time with Rick than any other person in my life. He gave me a lot of guidance in areas my parents didn't: motivation with all of his stories, and confidence. I have always been extremely introverted; I remember shaking in his office when I asked him if I could do that first meet. He taught me I didn't have to be scared of heavy weights and how to stand up to my fears of crowds and people, and how never to be scared of failure and its okay as long as you get right up.

"Rick showed me the secret formula to success, which I believe you can apply to anything and you will as come out on top. Self-discipline + no excuses = success. It's the only way possible he took a fourth string running back to be an open national champ at 21 years old.

"I love him with all my heart. He truly was like the father I never had. I just want to share how truly grateful I am for everything he has done for me. I love you, Rick, and thank you for all the help. I will truly miss you." — **RICHE BRIGGS**

"Rick Hussey should have been born in the 1800s. He said it all the time. A six shooter at his side and cowboy boots to go with that horseshoe-style mustache he'd had since he was 15. Once we took an old-time picture. Man, he loved it.

"The guy lived hard. He used to speak of family feuds in east Omaha, a place so rough it no longer exists. Heck, many might be surprised he lived past the age of 30. Rick was shot twice; shrapnel was always pes-

tering him about 1 inch from his lower spine. He partied hard and ended up in many car accident,s some at 70 mph. He walked away from them all. Well, sometimes ran, 'cause the cops were coming.

"John Jones was the man who started Rick competing in powerlifting. Rick was the powerlifter of his time in Nebraska. He spoke of times where he drank and partied all night, got zero sleep and then learned Jones had entered him in a powerlifting meet that morning. He wouldn't miss it. Or he'd tell of the time he got shot in the calf a few days before Nationals. He still he lifted.

"Early in his career, Rick was bitter at all the other lifters where he trained. No one would ever help him out, so he had to learn on his own. Rick said he never planned on being a coach. He is magnetic, though, and people would gather around him to train. One day, a guy called him coach. Rick turned around to see who was talking to. Lucky for hundreds of us, he was talking to Rick. And so a legend was born.

"When we started to travel around the world and the national circuit, it was hard for others not to notice Rick. He would get all fired up when a bad call was made on his lifter. People thought he was an asshole and, well, I call it passion. He had so much passion for the success of his lifters; he just wanted things fair. And from the inside looking out, Rick would often be under-appreciated. He'd think, One day, I hope all these lifters look back and say, 'You know, the only person who ever really gave a shit about me was Rick Hussey.'

"Sometimes others would try to take credit for techniques Rick used or phone conversations where they picked Rick's brain. Rick traveled the world, studied other lifters and listened to regimens. He was a wealth of information. He was a genius, matched by no coach I have ever met. Rick was present for all his lifters: short or tall, skinny or fat, strong or

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Powerlifting's legendary coaches, Louie Simmons and Rick Hussey



Rick always joked that he liked animals more than people

weak, beginner or advanced. He was present at every single practice, with his eyes on the lifter. He knew every lifter's numbers: shirt, no shirt, suit, no suit, straps up, straps down, board presses raw, board presses with a shirt, with bands or without and on and on for singles, doubles, triples ... you name it, he knew it. And he knew how much to push. Positive acknowledgement was rare outside of meets, but you knew by his quirky grin if you had done well.

"Rick had us all running like well-oiled machines. Just look at his team. They look like bodybuilders. At meets, he would call their numbers tight; not usually more than a 15-kilo jump between each attempt. We were truly trained athletes; anything we had done in a meet, we had felt in the gym or within 5 kilos. We didn't even have to know the next lift. Rick would call it and we'd trust him. We trusted him with calling weights, how hard we trained, which meets to do and what I like to call "the mystery plunger," another aspect of his genius. Enough said.

"Rick was an Aries. Arians lead the way, break new ground, establish new traditions and forge new paths. Sounds like him, doesn't it? I wish all of you could have seen him in action at the gym. He would have everyone laughing so hard, day after day. All of his jokes were new material specific to the person he was mocking. Rick was a bit psychic, too. When he said he thought you might do something stupid, you had better listen. It was eerie at times.

"At home, Rick would sit down with a piece of paper and write out a few of his lifters' numbers. He would study and add and scratch his head. And when he was done, he would crinkle the paper up and throw it in the trash. Rick would sit at the dinner table and talk about his lifters as if they were his kids. Someone was always in the doghouse, and on the flip side, he was always pleased with some lifter's progress. Lifting consumed a lot of his time, but there was life outside the gym.

"Aries are also loners who attract lots and lots of friends. That also describes him. Though, he did love the days when a bunch of lifters would pile into his RV and he would drive them seven hours to a meet. It would not have been surprising if one day he took off in that RV and never returned. His peace was with himself. Rick spent hours in his yard, mowing, digging stairs into the side of a hill, weed-eating, landscaping with rocks, lying in his hammocks. His smile was never so big as it was on his riding lawn mower. I'll bet you didn't know that Rick could have been an interior decorator; he had taste. He would often pick gifts for friends that would fit the décor of their house.

"Rick had a soft spot for innocent things, like animals, kids and the elderly. Sunday was special, a time for ice cream, long drives in his '58 Chevy Apache or a visit his grandma, when she was still with us. He would always pause the weekend movie for a 'Scooby snack,' then go racing to the kitchen for vanilla ice cream or Hostess cupcakes. The dogs were his 'little buddies' and his cats were his cuddlers. And kids just loved him.

"In his 49 years, Rick really did live. And the impression he made on powerlifting worldwide is legendary. His emotions, both

positive and negative, ran very deep. His closest friends, who knew him inside and out, might say he is in a better place. For as much as he was high strung or frustrated with things, he sure did care. He cared a lot. Rick, you are loved by many and will never be forgotten." — **BECCA SWANSON**

"What is our purpose for living? When we pass what will we leave behind? Will I ever see you again? These are all questions we might ask ourselves sometime in our lifetime. Well, for my best friend and coach, Rick Hussey, his purpose was huge! Rick affected so many people in his lifetime and is still affecting them to this day with the things he taught: How to set goals and work hard to get them, how to never give up on yourself or other people. He taught us to think of others before ourselves. Rick gave his time and energy teaching people how to better themselves in so many ways. He cared about people more than they will ever know. He did have a funny way of showing it at times. If he liked you he probably would make fun of you a lot, and you would end up with a nickname of some sort. Rick knew how to break you and build you up stronger.

"Rick adopted orphans. He took people in that didn't fit in anywhere else, and he made them feel like a part of a family — a crazy family, for sure. You might get a thumb in the butt regularly, or depantsed occasionally, and there was never a dull moment. I hope someday, when I pass, I will have made an impact on many lives, as Rick has. He left me with so many great memories. He has made so many of my dreams come true. I am a blessed man for getting to be a part of Rick's life.

"Rick was so faithful. He would never miss coaching us, even if he was in the hospital. He would tell the nurses he's leaving, regardless of what they thought. I think they thought he was crazy. He's trained us right after knee surgery, when he couldn't walk and we had to move him over by the monolift so he could call numbers. He trained me over the phone while I was overseas for a year. This man was there by your side whenever you need him. Rick never missed a workout of his own, either. He worked out even on the day he passed. He was one of a kind. He would never ask for anything in return, nor did he expect anything back. The only thing he ever asked was that you gave 100 percent at whatever you did.

"I've been so blessed to have gotten to travel all over the world with Rick to so many different powerlifting meets. We spent a lot of time together. Rick liked to go out to eat and share stories. He would have you laughing so hard your abs would be cramping. He once told me that, when he was growing up he had a neighbor who was such a dirty kid that a little baby corn cob grew out of his ear. Really, Rick? He knew how to spice up the stories.

"Because of Rick I have had a great powerlifting career. It was a great feeling winning a lot of these top-level competitions and all, but it was a better feeling and honor to stand on the platform representing Rick Hussey. I didn't just lift to win, I lifted to make Rick proud, and that meant more to me than anything.

"I have so many great memories with Rick, but the one that meant the most to me was the day he called me and asked me if I would take him to church so he could meet the pastor. Rick wasn't doing well and knew he couldn't control the cancer, and it was too much to bear. He knew it was too big for him to handle. The pastor asked Rick if he would pray with him. Rick said, 'I don't know how to pray.' The pastor said, 'Well, I do. I'll help you through it.' Rick repeated a prayer giving his life to God that night. Because he did that, I know Rick is in heaven. No more pain, no more suffering. And because he gave his life to God, I know I will see him again." — **SHAWN FRANKL**



DETOURS

BY BRIAN CARROLL

Shit happens. Sometimes everything is going perfect. Training and form is dead-on, focus is better than ever, strength is through the roof, diet is perfect, recovery has been on point, you're sleeping well – up until when it counts. Meet day. When you drop the proverbial B52 Bomber. I've had my share of bombs (eight in eight years, which is way too many) but, unfortunately, it's part of the game. Sometimes they are totally preventable and sometimes there isn't a damn thing you could have done about it.

Also, if you are a competitive and taking powerlifting seriously, no matter what level you currently are, you also have a 100-percent chance of incurring some type injury. It will happen; I've had plenty. I've also had some serious bad luck and some bad life situations, which are (gasp) sometimes more important than some big-time meet at a bowling alley. But, the bottom line is, what do you do when these things occur? And are you better for it when you come out on the other side?

BE READY FOR SETBACKS

If you have not experienced any major setbacks, be ready, because they are coming. My first one was like somebody kicked me in the taint. It was 2005, two years into my powerlifting career, at the Detroit – APF seniors in 2005. I had high hopes. The year before I had finished as runner-up at the same meet and since then had improved all of my lifts drastically. My total was up from 1,951 to 2,135 lbs., and I was looking at 2,200 lbs. And at the time, only a few guys were even capable of that number in the 220-lb. class. One month before, in just my fifth meet, I narrowly missed the 2,200-lb. mark on my last deadlift, so I was sure that it would come at this meet. Well, it didn't. I didn't hit depth on my first two squats and the last one crushed me. I was very disappointed. I had high hopes of winning nationals and breaking 2,200 lbs. Since it was my first bomb, it was pretty devastating. Once I was done licking my wounds, I picked out my next meet, which was six months away. I took some downtime, made some adjustments to my squat depth, brought my bench up to a respectable number and my deadlift to a solid lift (733 at 220) and hit 2,200 at this meet with room to spare (2,221).

LIFT HAPPENS

Life happens sometimes. It's just the way it is. If you have a job, significant other and/or are a decent person and care about your family – more than lifting – your training/meet cycle will suffer, eventually. People do make excuses and blame things for their failures, but sometimes more important things will take precedent and can end up legitimately affecting training and or a meet.

I was fortunate enough to marry the most awesome lady on the planet. We had a fantastic time – beach wedding, awesome friends, perfect weather, three days of partying at a mansion – and we couldn't have asked for more. The PRO-AM was about five weeks away from our wedding, and I was not going to miss this meet. My training was very limited for about three weeks and my diet and supplementation was haphazard, at best. My head was too occupied with making sure my wife had the best possible wedding, and that we that we did it all correctly and not half-assed. What was half-assed was my training. Even though I still squatted the morning of my wedding, I didn't heed to signs that my arch sucked, my bench form escaped me and my squats were not dialed in. I was as stiff as a board and should have never tried to go to this





meet, never mind have high expectations. I went to Ohio anyway and somehow managed to squat 1,100 lbs., but I wasn't even in the vicinity of making a bench in the meet.

STUPID CHOICES

Yes, we have made them. Whether we realize it or not, we make them all of the time while getting under the bar. Most of the time we just happen to get away with stupid choices without meaningful and damaging consequences. The problem is this: We are stubborn by nature and don't learn when we skate by without issue.

We don't seem to learn

well from things that don't really fuck us up. Well, many times in the past, my ADD and impatience would get the best of me. I would hurry through warm-ups and not take the proper time to prepare to take a big lift. Just three weeks before the big iron meet in March 2009, I was feeling great on the bench. I took

all my weights to 425 and it felt like a feather. My best raw bench at the time was about 525, so I knew I could better that by a bunch. Since I was impatient and stupid, instead of taking 500 and then 550, I jumped straight to 550 lbs. Needless to say, it crushed me and tweaked my pec and shoulder, including some small tears. I

still did the big iron meet anyway – stupid – and ended up really injuring my shoulder and pec and tore my right labrum. I'm still recovering from this and trying to get back to where I once was, all because I was a dumbass and wanted to skip some warm-ups to take a lift that meant absolutely nothing in any way toward the meet I was preparing for.

BAD LUCK

Bad luck will find you. If it hasn't yet, just wait – or stay in bed. Sometimes things happen out of nowhere. At the PRO-AM in 2008,

I was leading the heavy-weight division going into the dead and had the lightest bodyweight. Warm-ups for dead felt nice and snappy. I was confident. I went out to my opener of 735 lbs. and it flew up. But just as I was locking it out, I felt a big pop in my left (overhand) forearm/bicep tie in. Luckily I was able to hold on to it long enough to get

the down call, but I was finished. Greg Panora went on to win. I managed to hang on to second place overall in the heavyweight division. This took a long time for me to get over. Not the injury – it was just a strain and healed in six weeks – but losing the meet, when it was mine to win, sucked. I knew that due to my body-

“Life happens sometimes. It's just the way it is. If you have a job, significant other and/or are a decent person and care about your family – more than lifting – your training/meet cycle will suffer, eventually.”



weight, all I needed to pull was 775 and it would have most likely gone smoothly, for the win.

INJURIES

The getting strong part is easy. Staying 85- to 90-percent healthy is the trick. People are really surprised when I tell them that Frankl benched as much as he did at the past PRO-AM (875 lbs.) two years ago at a lighter bodyweight. He was dealing with some really bad shoulder problems in late 2008-2009, and just now is healthy and has his bench starting to climb again. He only (sarcasm dripping) benched 825 at 98 in 2009, when his bench has been 50 lbs. more just one year earlier. It just didn't reflect how strong he really was, due to his injuries. Josh Mcmillan, who is also a very good friend, tore both of his quads completely in 2005. He was squatting at a meet and the spotters decided not to catch him on a missed squat, so he ended up on the floor with 800 lbs. on top of him. He had a very long road back. He is now getting to be capable of a 1,000-lb. squat, and I'm doing my best to help him get there. He is plenty strong, but after an injury like this, it takes time to heal.

LEARNING AND MATURING

It all comes down to this: Have you been mature enough to learn from your experiences, both good and bad? At times, I was not. This cost me some big meet totals and time spent rehabbing instead of training to get stronger. I seem to learn the hard way: by crashing and burning. If I narrowly escape, I don't seem to learn as well as I do from an utter and absolute failure. Many times I wanted to quit.

Make no mistake, this article isn't to be taken as "Brian's excus-

HERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT I DEEM IMPORTANT, NOW MORE THAN EVER:

- Be ready for things to go well, but be prepared with backup plan (i.e. opening lighter).
- Avoid trying to compete at big meets when you know things are coming up right in the middle of a training cycle. If you do compete, don't expect to have the meet of your life.
- Enjoy the times where everything falls into place. Remember and keep track (via a training log) of what exactly you did to put you in that position. Do the same with the cycles where it all falls apart. This will help you avoid the same mistakes.
- Never plan on having a nine-for-nine day. Always try to have the perfect day, but understand that, realistically, they don't happen very often. Look at accomplishing your goal total with seven lifts. This is something Frankl taught me.
- Stretch. Make sure to always take the time for a good warm-up prior to training. This sounds so simple, but many people ignore it or don't take it seriously. Proper stretching will lead to greater flexibility, which is very important to keep proper form. Proper form leads to maximum performance and can also help prevent injuries.
- Do not take time off if you have a terrible outing unless you are physically injured or beat-up. This will not help your confidence in your down time. Try to find another meet soon. Go, compete and accomplish your goals.
- Consult with someone about your training and nutrition protocol. It's always a good idea to have someone you trust who has knowledge in the area to keep you accountable and give you feedback — not "yes men."
- It's okay to have your training base (if it works for you) and not want to stray from it. But do not be close-minded to suggestions or input. There is no perfect training program. Every meet cycle is different and calls for tweaks and changes as you go. Sometimes we are incapable of making the right choice for the better of training and meet prep.
- Hindsight is 20/20, so learn from it.

es for his bombs," nor should it be taken as a whiny therapy session. These are simply some of the things that others and I have dealt with, and some of them happen when you push your body to the limit and want to be the best at something.

So, what are you going to do when that nicely paved road becomes tumultuous and chucks you into the weeds? How will you respond? Will you be better for it, improve as a lifter (and as a person), gain knowledge from the experience, avoid stupid choices and dodge injuries? Or will you take the easy way out and let some small obstacles (which may seem big at the time, but really aren't) keep you from being the best lifter you can be. **PM**

IGNORE THE YELLERS

Plan a Training Cycle that Works for You

BY MIKE TUCHSCHERER

Everybody plans their training cycles differently. Some put tons of effort into it, studying research material to find the best method of periodization before carefully building their plan. Then you have people on the opposite end of the spectrum. They don't plan training cycles. They just lift "instinctively," and when the meet is a few weeks away, they make some final preparations and compete.

It's hard to know where to turn for information and expertise. There are so many people out there screaming that they're right and everybody else is wrong, and they often have some evidence to back it up. Well, not everybody can be right. So what can we make of the evidence they present? I take a moderate stance on a lot of training issues. So, to me, it comes down to context.

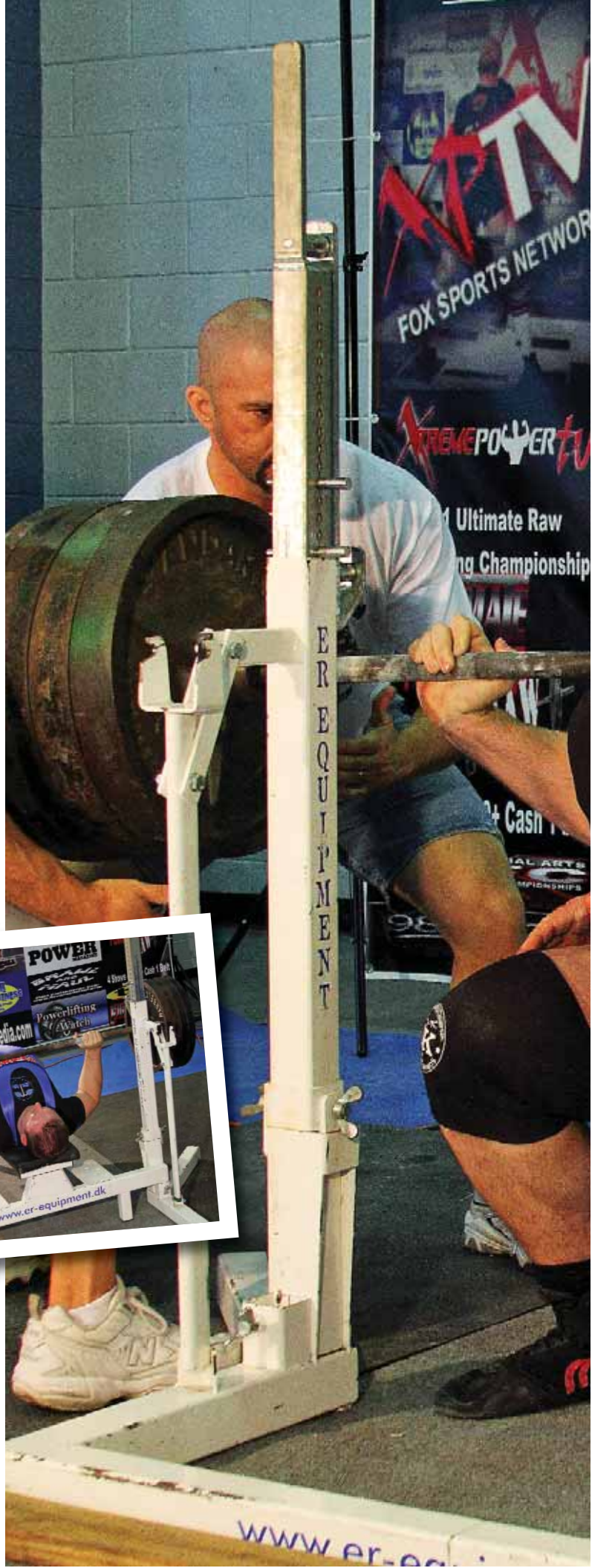
What's the best method of periodization? The best exercise for this lift or that one? My answer almost always starts with, "It depends." There are many variables that influence training choices. If you ignore the variable, then you get the loud, opinionated positions. Recognize the variables and you see the merits in various methods of training.

PLANNING YOUR TRAINING CYCLE

Both extremes — over- and under-planning training cycles — have drawbacks. But they have their good points, as well. If you can blend those two positions, you can get the good of both methods without the bad of either. You have to start by understanding the strengths and weaknesses of each method.

If you plan every facet of training from beginning to end, you may be losing a bit of your efficiency by over-planning. The lack of flexibility in these types of programs is not really news. But often people can't apply what they have learned. It's not that they are stupid. Far from it. It's just that there is plenty of research detailing what works and what doesn't. Usually, it's more information than can be packed in one training cycle, so there is a temptation to cram too much into one period of training.

And then there is the problem of application. If you can decipher what some of these researchers are saying is effective, most of the time it doesn't apply to your specific demographic. And if it does, it's





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then difficult to figure out how to apply it in concert with what other research claims to be effective. So it's easy to end up with a mess.

The other extreme – the “instinctual” trainers who go in the gym and do what feels right – don't gain much efficiency, either. If you're the type of person who works off of a so-called “template,” then I'm talking to you, too. Just because Monday is max effort day doesn't mean you have adequate mid- and long-term planning. In fact, I consider this the modern day equivalent to “instinctive training.” Your body had no interest in developing to be freakishly strong. You don't have finely honed “instincts” on what you need to develop above your normal bounds. This kind of training is inefficient in many different ways.

So how do you plan your training in the mid-term? You don't want to under-plan or you are destined to stay around your normal physiological bounds for strength. But if you over-plan, you lose all the flexibility you need to have a truly powerful training cycle. So how do you get to “just right?”

LEARN SOMETHING

If you are writing your own training, you are a coach. Even if you are just coaching yourself, being a great coach is something you develop into. Great coaches are made, not born. So pick up a



book and read. Educate yourself on what other people do to achieve success, but don't copy it blindly. Learn about it, understand it and put it away for later use.

FIND YOUR TIMEFRAME

When you work out your training, know how much time you're working with. While you can develop annual plans and even multi-year plans, these tend to be so vague that they aren't really useful. I typically plan training for my athletes in the window of six to 16 weeks, but I use whatever time we have until their next competition. That's what I recommend you start with. Find out how much time is left until your next contest, because that's what you've got to work with.

DETERMINE WHAT YOU NEED TO WORK ON

Many lifters think of what they want to do and build their training to accommodate it. The thing is, it's easy to justify this. You might think, Doing a heavy chain cycle sounds like fun. And besides, it should be a good stimulus for my nervous system. And it's true – it might be a good stimulus for your nervous system. But is that what you need?

I prefer to start the other way. Figure out what you need, then find the simplest way to address that need in your training. This relies very much on how much you know and it's a lot harder to write training this way, but the difference it can make can be surprising. We

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often talk about addressing weaknesses in training, but contrary to popular belief, weaknesses usually aren't muscle groups like triceps or hamstrings. They are usually portions of movement patterns, energy systems, technique, combinations of muscle groups, strength skills, etc. But the application is the same. Find what is weak and train it to be stronger. Just be aware that it usually isn't as simple as a muscle group.

USE THE BEST TOOL FOR THE JOB

If you know what your problems are, then addressing them is usually not all that difficult. However, there is a saying: "If the only tool you have is a hammer, then every problem you have looks like a nail." So make sure that you have a well-rounded knowledge base to apply to your particular training issues.

HAVE A BEST-CASE PLAN

As you start fleshing out your training plan, write down what you intend to do in each training session. You don't have to be married to the plan; it's just a best-case scenario for when you get to the gym. If things aren't going well, you can and should dial it down. But if you don't have a plan to begin with, you end up wasting a lot of time and typically end up under-worked.

GET A MENTOR

I've heard it preached for years that if you want to rise to the



top, you have to have good training partners. I don't believe that. If you want to rise to the top, you will find a way to make it work. Training partners, coaches, etc., can help. In fact, they can be a fantastic influence. But they aren't central to achievement in the sport of powerlifting.

Many people don't live in an area with lots of other powerlifters, or their schedules prevent them from getting to the gym with other groups of lifters. But that doesn't mean you can't have the benefit of other knowledgeable lifters in the sport. Especially with technology, being connected with other powerlifters is easy, and most are willing to help other lifters.

One way I do this with my athletes is via training logs and video. My guys keep training logs on my website and post video, as well. This way they can get feedback on many aspects of their training, as well as advice on how to tweak their training in the future. From a planning standpoint, I help other lifters build training plans through the use of the forum on my website. There are other lifters out there, and many are open to helping other lifters. There is really no harm in asking for a little help planning your training.

If you can follow these tips for planning your training, you should see training cycles that produce more consistent results. And if we are honest with ourselves, consistent improvement leads to huge improvement after a short time. **PM**

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POWER & RUNNING

A PERFECT COMBINATION

BY BRIAN "BMAC" MACKENZIE

It will come to no surprise to the powerlifting community that power is an essential part of any athletic endeavor. It just so happens that power is the key component of this community. As strange as it may seem for a guy who has run 30-plus ultra-marathons, including The Western States 100 and the Angeles Crest 100, to be writing something in Power magazine, you may change your mind by the end of this article.

ROOTED IN STRENGTH

My roots are as a swimming short-course sprinter. I was powerlifting back in the early to mid-90s in my old man's garage gym and recognized the benefits of lifting heavy back then. I was actually in Vegas when Ed Coan broke the world record for squatting more than 1,000 lbs. at 244 lbs. (or close to it). I was young, but intrigued. I was training friends every week, showing them all the new cool shit that was out there — like the 20-rep squat set with the lifter's 10-lb. max. My buddies would have to catch me when I'd literally pass out, but we loved every minute of it.

Somehow I got roped into doing a triathlon and my love for a new type of suffering began. I must of done 20 or 30 triathlons, humility leading the way at each one —I got my ass kicked every time. Needless to say, I ran into a guy who was teaching running as a skill, and a lot of people hated him. I thought, "killer," and I was in. Dr. Romanov teaches the POSE method of running and he mentored me for quite a while. In fact, he led a lot of my education on mechanics and physiology. Two things that stick out most in his methods are mechanics and strength training. I was competing in triathlons and had stopped any real strength and conditioning long before; nobody wants to get too big or slow down because of weight training. Romanov convinced me otherwise, and so began my paradigm shift.



I created CrossFit Endurance, a program that identified known but mostly ignored weaknesses. With a huge reduction in volume (most of our athletes train one-third the volume of traditional programs) and a huge increase in strength and conditioning, we are showing how our athletes can be within 90 percent year-round and not in jeopardy of overtraining.

I look at endurance in the same way a lot of the powerlifting community has viewed its own training. Periodized programs are quickly becoming something of the past because they imply something that simply isn't true. I believe a lot of these same principles can be abstracted from what we are doing to getting you closer to that next big lift. And no, we aren't going to run 5ks.

feet land underneath hips, for 30 seconds. Now, for the next 30 seconds, tighten up. Although it may make it harder on the midline, you will notice less bounce.

There are other ways to sprint, as well, such as with the prowler or sled. If you have a rower, that will quickly change your perspective on rowing and power. You can also use a bike if you have one. Let's touch on the sled. Sled drags can be done in different ways, and mechanics still play an essential roll. If you aren't leaning like a tree, utilizing gravity, you will work much harder to get that weight to move. Think of your bodyweight as a tool; wherever it goes, your muscles work to service this action. Midline stability is a must and tight position is applicable under

“I believe a lot of these same principles can be abstracted from what we are doing to getting you closer to that next big lift. And no, we aren't going to run 5ks.”

FOCUS ON THE MIDLINE

Sprinting, in my opinion, should be part of any program, regardless of sport. Running is probably one of the most primal movements. We needed to hunt, so we ran. We were being chased, so we ran. We were chasing, so we ran.

And there is much to be said for the Westside Barbell system and what Louie Simmons has done (ironically, Simmons and Romanov both have systems with deep ties to Russian training). They have other similar traits, as well. The first is midline stabilization. The ability to stabilize an 800-lb. squat requires about as much stability on the spine as one would ever need. Interestingly enough, a lot of research is being done on how some runners' vertical oscillation is making them slower than those who have relatively no bounce. Vertical oscillation is an indication of pushing off, something that has been taught for eons in the running and track and field communities. Fen, in 1930, showed that runners with less vertical oscillation were faster than those with higher bounces. Needless to say, this stuff has been in front of us for years and we have not paid attention to it. Instead, much like everything else in the fitness world, media, money and products have dictated what is taught.

A quick way to get a feel for what I'm talking about is to do one of two things: Run in place and keep your posture and belly loose, then try to run on a single line directly beneath you for at least one minute. Now, mark lines directly below where your feet are planted naturally facing straight forward. Now run in place on those lines and tighten up as if you've got 800 lbs. on your back, and keep good posture. If you do this correctly, you will notice that you stop bouncing as high in the second position, and it was actually easier to do. You can also jump rope with a weak midline and posture,



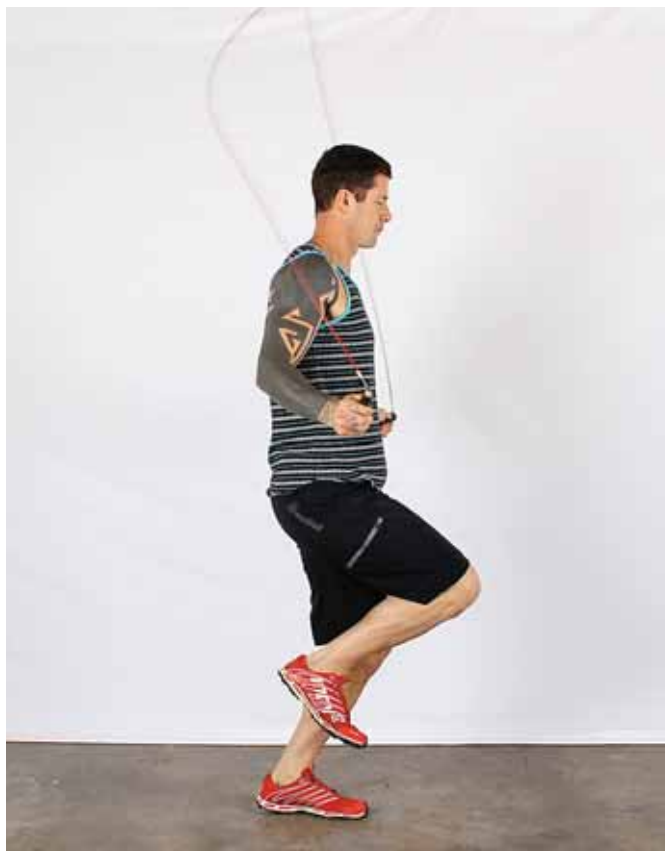
all circumstances. If you lose your stabilization, that's a good time to stop that interval or drop some weight.

It's like a dog playing fetch. If you have ever seen a dog play fetch, then you've seen how the dog will tighten up before you throw the ball. When you put the ball down, the dog relaxes. The same is true for squatting, deadlifting or pressing.

Let's call it the 80:20 rule. When running or sprinting, think of being 80 percent engaged with the midline. The faster and

harder you go, the more engaged. When just hanging out, let's call it 20 percent engaged. Kelly Starrett, DPT, some of his coaches out of www.SanFranciscoCrossFit.com and I have noticed that most folks are over extended most of the time. By over extended I'm referring to the pelvis being in an anterior pelvic tilt and the lumbar spine compensating for that by over-extending and, hence, making people look as though their ass is sticking out. The glutes should be semi-active (20 percent), keeping the pelvis neutral and the lumbar spine flat with very little curve. The belly button is drawn in so the abs are firing at about 20 percent, as well, and breath is drawn in through the diaphragm. The scary thing is most people are teaching movement with folks in this over-extended state, and we are seeing shitty movement everywhere – from simple push-ups, pull-ups and bodyweight squats to running, cycling, heavy squats and deads.

Another option here is the sled or prowler work. If you're using a sled and you have the harness around your waist, the first thing you should be doing (as indicated above) is getting tight. The second is leaning forward without breaking. Breaking would be like drawing the hip back in a deadlift during the lowering phase. This is not what you want to do: fighting the law of gravity and working harder than needed.



So, using these simple cues, let's not complicate it further with writing out more mechanical stuff to think about. Let's just get to the bread and butter of training.

TRAINING

We have seen the added benefits in our programs with repeated or clustered intervals with sprinting. Whether done on a track, on a street, on hills, with sleds or prowlers, we can utilize other energy systems and muscles through interval training. I have yet to find a study that proves anaerobic training is outweighed by aerobic training. Sure, there are benefits to aerobic training, but fact is, it is widely the most over-trained energy system that gives the least results. You can actually build an aerobic base with anaerobic training. And if you totally neglect this system, you will probably find it really hard to climb stairs, or find that running anything outside of 40 yards leaves you destroyed. I know, I know ... most powerlifters don't care about aerobic training if it means they may lose power. Well, I say you won't lose power. In fact, I say you can get stronger by tapping into these other systems.

CrossFit is taking the world by storm, and yes, I CrossFit. I also lift. I run, swim, bike, row, BMX, skateboard and just about anything else I want when I want. This training is based on creating the fittest person possible, and it works. To be the fittest person possible you need to be proficient in all energy systems. To be a great lifter you need to be excellent in the first two anaerobic pathways, maybe a little in the third, and aerobic pathways for recovery. Your phosphagen system is a form of anaerobic metabolism. It uses creatine phosphate to generate ATP (adenosine triphosphate is a chemical that provides energy for all body processes). It lasts about 10 seconds before it goes kaput. Your glycolytic system is where ATP is

manufactured from the breakdown of glucose to pyruvic acid. The acid is then converted to lactic acid, your third energy system. High-intensity activities lasting up to about two or three minutes use this energy system, during which the reduction of nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide (NAD) is coupled with two ATP molecules for each glucose molecule metabolized. The final system has no anaerobic activity, and if you are just walking around eating or shopping, then you are in it. Your aerobic system is a process that produces ATP by way of oxygen. So, the bottom line is all these systems really reflect one thing: ATP. As a powerlifter, it would behoove you to have the most efficient ATP turnover as possible. Maximizing the benefit out of each of these systems can aide in all of it.

BACK TO BASICS

Basics, or fundamentals, start short and precise, so let's implement running right at about 20 to 40 yards and repeat a good effort without blowing apart at the seams. See if you can hold a good speed for 10 to 15 repeats, keeping that speed within 1 or 2 seconds of each other. You could start by adding this after a speed session or non-max effort stuff. Start with once a week and ramp it up to twice a week with varying distances or times. Remember that more is not better. Let your body adapt to this stuff or you will fall apart and ruin yourself and training.

Once you've progressed for a few weeks, start adding in some random interval cycles of distance and/or times. Example of distances: 10, 20, 40, 50, 80, 100 or 200 meters. Obviously, the longer you go the more recovery, and fewer you would do. Examples of times: 5, 10, 15, 20, 30 or 45 seconds, 1 minute or 90 seconds. The same applies for the longer times. Now try mixing things up. **PM**

Brian MacKenzie is a managing partner at UnScared Inc. and created CrossFit Endurance, which incorporates a strength and conditioning program into an endurance program. He is a competitive swimmer, ultra-marathoner and coach. He has written many articles, workshops and training courses, and was featured in Triathlete Magazine, Men's Journal and Riviera. Find him online at www.CrossFitEndurance.com and www.IamUnscared.com.

EXAMPLES OF BASIC PROGRESSIONS:

WEEK 1: 10-20 x 20 meters with 1 minute to 90 seconds rest

WEEK 2: 10-20 x 40 meters with 1 minute to 90 seconds rest

WEEK 3: Day 1: 15-20 x 40 meters with 1 minute to 90 seconds rest. Day 2: 6-8 x 100 meters with 90 seconds to 3 meters rest

WEEK 4: Day 1: 20 x 20 meters with 1 minute rest. Day 2: 8-10 x 100 meters with 90 seconds to 3 minutes rest

WEEK 5: Progress Day 1 again, and at Day 2 implement a varied distance or time workout like below. Be creative, but don't be stupid.

EXAMPLE: 5 seconds on, 30 off; 10 seconds on, 30 off; 20 seconds on, 30 off; 30 seconds on, 30 off; 20 seconds on, 30 off; 5 seconds on, 30 off.

EXAMPLE: 30 seconds on, 90 off; 100 meters on, walk 100 meters back. Repeat either for three then rest 3 minutes before repeating that process a total of three times.



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MOBILITY

POWERLIFTER'S SECRET WEAPON (PART 2)

AN INTERVIEW WITH KELLY STARRETT BY PAUL SOUTHERN

In part one of “Mobility: A Powerlifter’s Secret Weapon,” doctor of physical therapy Kelly Starrett talked about athletes playing Gas’o Brake’o with their own bodies. Athletes are going from 0 to 100 mph and then back down to 0 repeatedly, without releasing the e-brake. It’s a familiar refrain: “My warm-up is my first two sets.”

Let’s get back to where we left off. Many athletes are not reaching their full potential because their movements are compromised.



SOUTHERN: How do you break down what needs to be done for an athlete?

STARRETT: Walk around and look at these guys. They are so tight. It's no wonder they can't get into good positions. It's no wonder they are making these movement compromises. They can't externally rotate the shoulders effectively. They can't generate a lot of torque on the set-up for the squat, the deadlift or the press. These are issues that are easily dealt with.

What I encourage my athletes to do (especially those obsessed with lifting, poundages, wattage or reps) is systematically look at the tissues that are limiting this piece. And I ask, what do I need to get in there? It's not just stretching. It's not just foam rolling. It's not just capsular. It has to be a system wide approach.

SO THE QUESTIONS ARE:

1. **Is it a sliding surface problem?**
 - a. That is why we see ART guys. That's why we do rolling (foam roller), and that's why we unglue ourselves with lacrosse balls and massage.
2. **Is it a joint capsule problem?**
 - a. The joint capsule can be mobilized by the athlete.
3. **Is this a muscle length problem?**
 - a. Rarely is the muscle length the issue, although it certainly can be.
 - b. Usually it is a complex interaction of all these things.
4. **Is it that I'm not in a good position and can't recruit the right musculature because I am positionally inhibited?**
5. **Or, is this a motor control problem?**
 - a. Athletes are making very fundamental movement errors based on:
 - i. overextension
 - ii. They are rounded when they pull because they are missing hip flexion.

It could be any of these things. Once you start to systematically deal with this, then suddenly mobility is about how you get into that good position and then where does that lead? What I am a big fan of is working on mobility a little bit every day. If you try to mobilize, or stretch, or treat the whole body every day, it is impossible. But if you have three movements that you are going to do one day, then you can systematically think about what tissues are restricted, what movements you are going to be doing in your workout. And then you

can just do that 10-minute piece. Suddenly you have a conversation with your body that is dynamic and sophisticated.

SOUTHERN: How do you sell mobility to people who don't want to take the time to do it?

STARRETT: It's easy. We get athletes thinking about these details, and it is not overwhelming. We change behavior because we tie that behavior into issues of performance. So if I am a strength coach and I help my athletes perform more affectively, then they are more likely to manage their business again (mobility). Most of us stopped stretching and mobilizing because we didn't see the benefit. And selling mobility based on what may or may not happen 20 years from now, that's just crap. No one gives a crap about that. Neither do I — even though I see all the herniated discs, tractionees and torn labrums. That's the problem. We live for today, not tomorrow. We need to get athletes to change their behavior and look at tissue health.

We have a concept called no days off. And if you are really trying to find out the limits of human performance, there is no such thing as a day off. There is no such thing as a non-training day. Your non-training day is recovery. It's some sled dragging. It's turning the ship around. It's getting ready. It's cultivating position. If you sit at a computer all day long, hunched over in a chair, why are you surprised that you are having a difficult time jerking 350? If you are sitting down all the time in a flexed position with a rounded back, why are you surprised that you round your back all the time when you squat or deadlift? What we are saying with this no-day-off concept is that you're always mobilizing and cultivating position and tissue health so that you are always ready to go when it is time to fire your guns. If we can make these ideas about performance, then we are going to capture the imagination and the interest of the athlete.

I tell all the people I work with, "Sell injury prevention to the coach." But it is all about performance to the athlete, and it should be for the coach too. And it is very simple to stick a lacrosse ball into your ass and open up your hip capsule. Unglue your posterior chain. Lo and behold, you're pulling heavier weights. Why is that confusing?

SOUTHERN: What part does nutrition play in tissue health and recovery?

STARRETT: If I'm walking around chronically inflamed and not seeing the correlation between my ability to recover from a difficult workout and the foods that I eat and the quality of the nutrition that I eat, then that is one of those very simple things that is easy to



“Human beings are wired for movement, we’re not wired for musculature. You need to understand that squatting is flexion, abduction and external rotation.”

turn around quickly. And if I can’t correlate my chronic dehydration and my junky torn meniscus with the fact that I am chronically inflamed and I look like a doughboy, then that is a real problem. If you are serious about seeing where you can go and what is possible, then food is the most powerful drug on the planet.

You should be eating like a human being: more of a paleolithic model or a model that at least controls insulin. It’s still huge amounts of meat. Huge amounts of vegetables. High-quality fats. If you really need to add the calories, a shot glass full of olive oil will do it for you. You don’t need to eat the pizza, you need to eat a steak and a shot of olive oil. Eat three avocados and 12 eggs and tell me you’re still hungry.

SOUTHERN: Are you saying I’m allowed to mobilize my own hips without a license?

STARRETT: Human beings are wired for movement, we’re not wired for musculature. You don’t need to have a year of gross anatomy. You need to understand that squatting is flexion, abduction and external rotation. We should be able to take a crack at it. We should have basic ways to solve our mechanical problems, and that is the mandate of the athlete. Although, sometimes it is nice to have a physical therapist who can squat 500 lbs. there to dig into your hips. That helps. But you should know where to start to be able to maintain yourself and get into a good position. And that is a conversation that we have lost because we don’t take a holistic view. It’s not enough to go get on a treadmill for 5 minutes and then go lift heavy weights. We really need to think about positioning and mechanics. What is preventing me from getting into a good position? We see athletes that cannot express how strong they are all the time because their mechanics suck.

SOUTHERN: With the mobility WOD, you take these complex ideas and break them down into single-serving nuggets that are easily digestible. I like the fact that this allows someone to manage their soft tissue business without needing a degree in physical therapy.

STARRETT: Concerning the mobility WOD, it gives athletes a

place to start. You can’t train the whole body in one day. Let’s just take one piece at a time and work on all of the issues.

In 80 days we have had more than 600,000 visits. I’m getting emails from Iraq. I’m getting emails from the Texas Rangers. Special Forces. Guys and gals are using this and seeing a difference in their position. As a coach, it takes care of so many things that you see come up in your gym. If you are doing a good job with strength and conditioning, you should be finding all of the holes in your athletes. That is the definition.

The goal in any good strength and conditioning system is to exceed the previous efforts of my athletes every single day: and to find out where they have holes so that they don’t fail – in life, sport, game or mission. When we find those problems, what do we do about them?

BEFORE AND AFTER

That was awesome. Life before this interview: “Dude, that squat looked ugly. You should be ashamed of yourself!” But Starrett told me all the things I needed to say to coerce my athletes into managing their business. Now instead of screaming, “Get your back flat!” at the top of my lungs, I can actually take the athlete aside and free up the hip restriction that inhibits that movement, instantly. Easy money. Every coach and athlete that cares about improving performance and longevity should check out www.mobilitywod.com

Note: Starrett will be at CrossFit Pleasanton on March 27 for a mobility seminar. Go to www.crossfitpleasanton.com/events to sign up. PM

About the Author: Paul Southern has gathered a large following of fitness enthusiasts together under the CrossFit Pleasanton banner and built a successful real gym (Re-Active Gym) in the San Francisco bay area in California. 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 the ball-n-chain.

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DAVE PALUMBO



Dave Palumbo earned a bachelor's in biology/anthropology from Franklin and Marshall College in 1990 and attended three years of medical school at New York Medical College in Valhalla, NY (1990-1993). While competing as a nationally ranked NPC bodybuilder for nearly 15 years, he earned the nickname "Jumbo" because of the enormous 300-plus ripped pounds of muscle he displayed on a routine basis. Nowadays, Palumbo preps physique athletes for competition, owns his own supplement company, SPECIES: Evolutionary Nutrition, and runs the popular bodybuilding, fitness and strength sport media site RxMuscle.com.

What superhero power would you most like to possess? *To be able to fly.*

What is your idea of perfect happiness? *Getting paid to be a creative being.*

What is your greatest fear? *We all fear rejection; however, I stopped believing in fear a few years ago.*

What is the trait you most deplore in yourself? *I can be emotionally closed at the wrong times.*

What is the trait you most deplore in others? *Lying.*

What is your greatest extravagance? *My Mercedes E63.*

What is your current state of mind? *Loving.*

On what occasion do you lie? *When I think people might not want to hear the truth.*

What do you most dislike about your appearance? *Losing my hair.*

What do you most value in your friends? *Loyalty and respect.*

What or who is the greatest love of your life? *My family.*

When and where were you happiest? *Right now, here.*

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be? *Be more patient.*

What do you consider your greatest achievement? *Paying off my med school loans.*

What is your most treasured possession? *My two Maltese dogs.*

What is your most marked characteristic? *A muscular body.*

Which historical figure do you most identify with? *Galileo.*

What is your greatest regret? *Not seeing my mom before she died.*

Which talent would you most like to have? *A photographic memory.*

What is your motto? *To thineself be true.*

Which living person do you most admire? *My dad.*

Who is your favorite hero of fiction? *Rocky.*

If you were to die and come back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be? *A rock star.*

What is your favorite movie? *Rocky.*

Who is your favorite lifter? *Ronnie Coleman was the greatest.*

What do you prefer: single-ply, multi-ply or raw? *No ply.*

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

Other than yourself, who would you like to see on the next cover of Power? *Bill Kazmaier.*



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