

INTERVIEW WITH STAN "RHINO" EFFERDING

BY MARK BELL

PHOTO CREDIT: PAVEL YTHJALL AND
SOCALPHOTOGRAPHER

A nut swinger's disclaimer: My name is Mark Anthony Bell and I can sometimes be found swinging off of Stan Efferding's fun bag. There, I said it — now get in line so you can swing next.

Stan Efferding, aka Rhino, has a fitting nickname, as this beast seems to be made out of something different than the rest of us. He's perhaps the most well rounded raw powerlifter ever. Efferding's best are a 854-lb. squat, 606-lb. bench and 793-lb. pull.

I remember the first time I saw him deadlift. I thought to myself, There is something different about this dude, even aside from all the strange breathing and noises he makes. Bellowing through the gym, I hear, "Haaaaaaiighhhh upppp! Shooooowssshhhh!" I said, "Um, Stan, you made all that noise for only 315 lbs.!" He said, "I did? I don't know. I'm old. I make that noise just sitting down sometimes."

Before Efferding ever came to Super Training I told my team that no one would ever come in there and impress me. I trained in dungeon gyms from the time I was 12 or 13. I saw Shawn Sarles curl 225 lbs. for reps; I saw Mike Pizzanno squat 765 for a triple in a cheap belt, jeans and work boots at Mid-Hudson Bodybuilding; I saw Joe Garlip punt my New York Jets football into the woods ... mother f*cker! Oh, whoops, I got off track.

As I got older I trained at Gold's Gym in Venice, Calif., and I saw some high-level bodybuilders doing all kinds of crazy stuff. I trained at Westside Barbell and I saw Chuck V., John Stafford, J.L. Holdsworth, Dave Tate and Joe Bayles crush huge weights. I saw world-record lifts smashed right in the gym. I saw Chuck V. pull and squat with such precision and strength that it didn't matter what weight was on the bar!







had a hard time remembering 'Efferding,' and his other nicknames weren't fit to print!

MARK: Most people don't like to talk publicly about finances, but most people are also broke as a joke. I had the chance to crash at your hizzy and it's something straight out of MTV cribs – complete with a Bentley, Rolls-Royce, hyperberic chamber, hot tub, jet skis and a crazy view of the American Lake. Not to mention a theater room – not a TV room, but a movie theater with 10 leather recliners! So, what the hell is your deal? Do you import cocaine? Or were you born with a silver spoon in your mouth and mommy and daddy bought you that house?

RHINO: Ha! I wish it were that easy. It's been a long time coming. For my 12th birthday my mom got me a job at 7-11 and I've been busting my ass ever since. I've delivered newspapers, flipped pizzas, worked at a bakery, loaded trucks for UPS, managed apartments and worked heavy construction to put myself through college.

After college I worked for 12 years doing maintenance (plunging toilets) and managing progressively larger multi-family properties. After that I spent a few years as vice president of a telecommunications company. Using my hard work ethic and the intellectual property I earned from my business experience, I finally ventured out and started my own telephone company. I sold my house, cashed in my 401K, ran up \$120,000 in credit card debt and spent a year eat-

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But when Efferding walked into Super Training for the first time, I must admit I was impressed. He squats like he's winding up a crank. The descent takes a good six-Mississippis, and it looks like he's squatting in four layers of powerlifting equipment but he's just wearing a belt. Then all the sudden some crazy explosive power comes from within and he lets out this loud battle cry (or mating call?): "Haaaashaaauppppp!" He then reverses the weight like he's going to jump out of the gym. The scary thing about Efferding, other than his face, is that he prepares for a power meet in a six- or seven-week time frame. His 2,226-lb. raw total with just a belt and some chalk is not too bad for a guy who's a part-time powerlifter.

Before we get rolling, Efferding's No. 1 fan – his mother – wrote in to Power. "When Stan was 14, he went to school, played soccer, held down three jobs, kept his room clean and balanced the books for one of his employers who just couldn't seem to do it," writes Connie Efferding. "Stan was able to handle all of that and more. How? Did you ever try to hold a rhino back? You didn't hear any of this from me."

THE INTERVIEW

MARK BELL: How did you get that nickname "Rhino?"

RHINO: I was training with Flex Wheeler in San Jose, Calif., in summer 2009. Flex was preparing me for the Masters Nationals and he nicknamed me the 'White Rhino' because I was pushing a lot of weight around during training. I think it's more likely because he

ing dollar meals at McDonalds before I finally turned a profit. Eventually it became a very successful venture with 100 employees serving customers in 25 states.

I invested my earnings in real estate for a number of years. I purchased, operated and sold multi-family properties, invested in commercial real estate and built single-family subdivisions.

You and I met after the real estate market crashed. Investments had dried up and nothing was selling, so I had a lot of free time on my hands. I spent this time training and returned to competitive bodybuilding and powerlifting, which I had put on hold back in 1997 to pursue my career. I get bored easily, so I also started a company in Dallas and opened a gym in Washington to keep my mind occupied while I was training.

So, no cocaine, no silver spoons, no overnight successes, just three decades of blood, sweat and tears.

MARK: Tell us about your gym. I heard that you sell raw milk there. Is the milk raw because you drink it and you lift raw? Or is the milk from cows that have never been in a squat suit?

RHINO: After training with you at Super Training Gym, I realized the benefit of having the right equipment and the right atmosphere to help improve my powerlifting. I tried driving an hour or more to train with powerlifters in my state, but it was hit-or-miss and the facilities weren't complete or were only open certain hours, so I just opened my own gym. I filled it with all the hardcore pow-



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erlifting and bodybuilding equipment I needed, such as a Monolift, Forza presses, boxes, chains, bands, dumbbells up to 200 lbs., bodybuilding equipment, cardio, circuit training, Crossfit, specialty bars and Olympic bumper plates. Then I put in an automated access system so it's open 24 hours.

Flex Wheeler and I collaborated on the business plan and used his name to help promote the gym. We now franchise the concept for other gym owners. Readers can check it out online at www.FlexWheelerFitness.Com.

As for the raw milk, I drink it because it still has all of the vitamins, minerals and digestive enzymes, which are otherwise destroyed in the pasteurization process. I buy it from a local dairy and keep it my cooler at the gym for myself and members.

MARK: Why are you such a jerk? You're 275 lbs. with 5 percent body fat, you're the strongest bodybuilder ever and one of the strongest raw powerlifters of all time, and you're loaded. I mean, seriously? You might have best combo of being the most ripped, jacked and richest person in the world. What drives you to be the best?

RHINO: I've never looked at it that way. I only see the shortcomings and those goals that still remain unrealized. I didn't grow up big, strong or rich, so it's not part of my identity.

I was the 98-lb. weakling, for real. I wrestled at 98 lbs. in high school and didn't have to diet. I was 140 lbs. when I got to college and couldn't bench my own bodyweight. I was on a soccer scholar-

ship and my coach told me to hit the gym and pack on some mass. I spent the summer lifting and was hooked. I quit soccer and started training. But I did everything wrong, and after three years of training I was still only 160 lbs. *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* — that's who I see when I look in the mirror, not the Rhino.

That perception has been only further engrained in me, as I've never been the biggest or the strongest guy in all the years I've been training. Not even in my own gym. I began my training with IFBB pro bodybuilder Aaron Maddron when we were teenagers, and he was massive even then. When he moved I began training with 300-plus-lb. collegiate and professional football players. I've always been the smallest. It's funny because I've never seen myself as strong since I always trained with guys that were bigger and stronger than me, and I was just trying to lift as much as them.

After 10 years of "bodybuilding" I totaled 2,000 lbs. in the first three-lift meet I ever entered — and was surprised I won. I had no idea if that total was good or bad. I was just lifting what we tried to lift in the gym. I wasn't training with powerlifters, didn't have a powerlifting coach and had never been to a powerlifting meet.

Even now, when I travel to train with Flex or to Gold's Venice to train with Charles Glass — or training with you and your team at Super Training in Sacramento or with Eddie Coan at Quads Gym in Chicago — I'm constantly humbled by the level of talent. Hell, I've even trained with that damned teenage phenom Eric Lilliebridge, who squats and deadlifts more than me! I need to find a gym with weak people.

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“I EAT AT LEAST SIX TIMES A DAY AND CONSUME APPROXIMATELY 2G PROTEIN PER POUND OF BODYWEIGHT. I EAT ALL ANIMAL PROTEINS, SUCH AS EGGS, STEAK, CHICKEN AND FISH. I EAT PLENTY OF COMPLEX CARBS, LIKE OATMEAL, RICE, POTATOES AND YAMS.”

You get the point. I've just always tried to do the best I can with what I've been given. I try to learn as much as I can and to be as disciplined as possible in order to continue to improve. Always being the smallest meant that I've had to work harder and be smarter to keep up with everyone else. Every meal, every workout and every hour of sleep became a necessity, not a luxury.

MARK: Okay, let's try and figure this out right now. People really want to be big, strong and ripped like Rhino. So how can our readers grow a horn and become "Rhino-like"?

RHINO: It's 90 percent nutrition. Training is the fun part. It's the eating that takes all the discipline. Sure, I spent years training hard and heavy, but that only broke down the muscle tissue and created the stimulus for growth. It's the recovery phase, eating and sleeping, where all the growth occurs.

I eat at least six times a day and consume approximately 2g protein per pound of bodyweight. I eat all animal proteins, such as

eggs, steak, chicken and fish. I eat plenty of complex carbs, like oatmeal, rice, potatoes and yams. I also take in plenty of fats, mostly mono-unsaturated and poly-unsaturated. I use coconut oils, macadamia nut oil, olive oil and peanut butter.

When I need to lean out I'll actually add a meal and reduce my overall carbs. It sounds counter-intuitive, but as much as 80 percent of your daily calories are burned by your metabolism, not from cardio or training, so I stimulate the metabolism with more meals and let my body do the work for me. When dieting for a bodybuilding show I work up to nine or 10 meals a day around the clock, and the fat melts away while I preserve muscle tissue. Cardio will just strip away muscle and make you smaller and weaker. When I reduce carbs, I eat them only for breakfast and post-workout so they are used to replace muscle glycogen and not stored as fat. I never drastically reduce mono- and poly-fats, never miss meals and never completely cut out carbs. That's a quick way to get weak!

To gain weight, I reduce the number of hours I spend in the gym, sleep more and add more fats to my diet. Remember, muscle is protein, but the muscle cell that manufactures muscle is made up of protein and fat. The mono- and poly-fats penetrate the fatty muscle cell membrane much easier than saturated fats, so it's important to understand that not all calories will yield the same benefits for your body. I also avoid lengthy cardio sessions and only use brief sessions on the bike to stimulate blood flow and clean out lactic acid as a recovery aid the day or two following leg training. Maybe two 10-minute sessions daily, as needed, after leg day for a few days.

At my age, 43, I'm careful to get enough rest and sleep. I also incorporate massage therapy to help with recovery and I ice post-workout even when I don't have pain, so I can stay ahead of repeti-

tive strain injuries and/or tendinitis. I ice religiously, strapping ice pads to my elbows, hip or knees as needed for a few hours post-workout and at night, 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off. It's the No. 1 therapy recommended by surgeons and sports medicine doctors, but it's the least-used by athletes because they think popping a Tylenol will do the trick and icing is a pain in the ass. A few years ago I couldn't even do a leg extension because my knees were so bad with tendinitis. It taught me to be more disciplined with warming up, icing and resting. I went from thinking I could never compete again to squatting 800 for doubles with no knee wraps, and no pain. I won't use Cortisone shots at all or NSAIDs for any extended period of time because cortisone weakens the joint and NSAIDs prevent the joint from rebuilding itself. I had great results using Pentosan Equine, which both reduces inflammation and rebuilds cartilage and helps repair joints.

I won't do exercises that cause joint pain, opting instead to

Stan deadlifting 793 lbs. without a belt.



choose exercises that don't hurt. Holding the bar while squatting puts tremendous strain on my elbow tendons, so I only squat with a straight bar every other week and use a safety squat bar for the other workouts to let my elbows recover. Squatting also puts a lot of stress on my hip, which has a bad calcium deposit, so I use a squat box most of the time to prevent hip pain. I even do my warm ups at a meet off a box to save my hip for the platform when I need it.

It's the same with heavy benching — lots of strain on the shoulders and elbows — so every other workout I use bands and a two-board to keep myself from going too deep, which places most of the strain on the joints. On heavy days I always use elbow wraps or the Sling Shot in all my warm-up sets, and might only do a couple raw sets for my max raw doubles and triples to minimize repetitive strain. I do the same at a meet. You'll always see me in elbow wraps for my warm-ups. I save everything for the platform. There's a big difference between tendon strength and repetitive strain. Rep after rep on a naked elbow doesn't improve tendon strength. Stressing it with a few heavy doubles and letting it recover will build tendon strength. Repetitive strain is just strain. Endless sets and reps won't build muscle or joint strength.

Coming from a bodybuilding background, I've always trained all of my muscle groups from a variety of different angles. I didn't know it at the time, but the main reason I'm strong is because I have balanced strength and no weaknesses. It's important to use ancillary exercises when powerlifting. In Eddie Coan's book, he

talks about how he would start with his basic powerlifting movement and then move on to supporting exercises with a variety of rep ranges to build strength, mass and to balance out his physique so he didn't have any weaknesses.

I don't have a crazy squat like Malanichev or an insane deadlift like Konstantinovs, but I'm sufficiently strong and balanced at all three movements, which helps me achieve a big total.

With my diet, I train my metabolism slowly over a couple months to handle more food, much the same way you train your muscles to handle more weight — progressively. If you only bench 200 and want to bench 400, you can't go into the gym tomorrow and load 400 on the bar and ask for a lift-off. Trying to stuff yourself full of 7,000 calories won't work, either. I train my metabolism by starting with a certain volume of food I can handle, then bump it up each week or every other week as I become hungry and can handle more food. I might start with four eggs and a half-cup of oatmeal for breakfast and gradually work up to six or eight eggs, a cup of oatmeal and a banana by slowly and incrementally adding more food. I might start with an 8-oz steak and a half-cup of rice, then increase that slowly to 10 oz then 12 oz and my half-cup of rice will build to three-quarter-cup and then a full cup as I can handle more food. It takes discipline to measure each meal and eat all five meals, then add a sixth and keep increasing the volume. Sometimes I have to wake up at 6 a.m. and get my first meal in, then go back to sleep and wake up at 8 a.m. for meal No. 2. By starting early, I can get more meals in. Sometimes I'll



also eat my last meal before bed at 10 p.m. and have a protein shake and some peanut butter sitting on my nightstand so I can get up at 1 or 2 a.m. to slam it down and go back to sleep. That's how I get stronger and stay lean at the same time.

As for supplements, I'm a big believer in food first and only using supplements to augment a meal, never in place of a meal. I like to eat all my food, not drink it. Even when I travel and can't take all my meals, I sometimes stop and grab a grilled chicken breast sandwich at Subway or a fast food place (always without cheese or mayo, of course) and it's times like these when I have a protein shake and aminos to help augment that meal to get enough quality protein. I'll also drink a protein shake post-workout to get lots of pre-digested whey to the muscles quickly (75g) — but I'll eat carbs, usually white rice, so my body has something to chew on.

I take ZMA (zinc and magnesium) every night. I take a multivitamin daily and add some extra vitamin D since I live in the mostly overcast northwest and don't get much sun. I drink glutamine during my workouts and I take glucosamine and chondroitin for my joints. I take omega 3s and, although I do add fruits and vegetables to a number of my meals, I also supplement a small amount of fiber to reach my 30 to 35g a day. I can handle a small amount of creatine, 5g daily, but more than that will cause me to cramp no matter how much water I take in. When I'm "dieting" for a bodybuilding show, I eat less red meat (two meals with steak a day, down from five) and take in more chicken and fish, so I'll add some free-form aminos to those meals. Chicken only yields about 9g of protein an hour while it's digesting, so I like to hit myself with another 10 or

20g of aminos, which my body will utilize quickly while the chicken digests. I take a non-stimulant energy formula that has a host of great ingredients that help with energy and fat mobilization, such as CoQ10, L-Carnitine, B12, chromium, etc. I don't take stimulants to train because they increase cortisol release, which everyone knows is bad! I also don't want to attenuate to stimulants, such as caffeine, in case I need them at a powerlifting meet when I want my body to respond to them.

I get blood tests at least quarterly for a good look at where I'm low or high on many different important markers. If you don't know what your body needs, then how do you know where to supplement? I go online to www.privatemdlabs.com and order the "male ultimate aging profile," which has four pages of tests that include proteins, blood sugars, cholesterol, kidney and liver enzymes, cardiac risk, prostate specific antigen, iron levels, c-reactive protein, hormone levels, etc. It's an invaluable tool you can use to optimize performance.

In summary, I've used all of the tools available to me with incredible consistency and discipline over many months and years in order to achieve my goals. I constantly evaluate my performance and when I'm not making progress it's always because I'm not doing everything I'm suppose to. It's never someone or something else, and there's no one to blame but me. That's what I love about both sports. The more you put into it both mentally and physically, the more you get out of it.

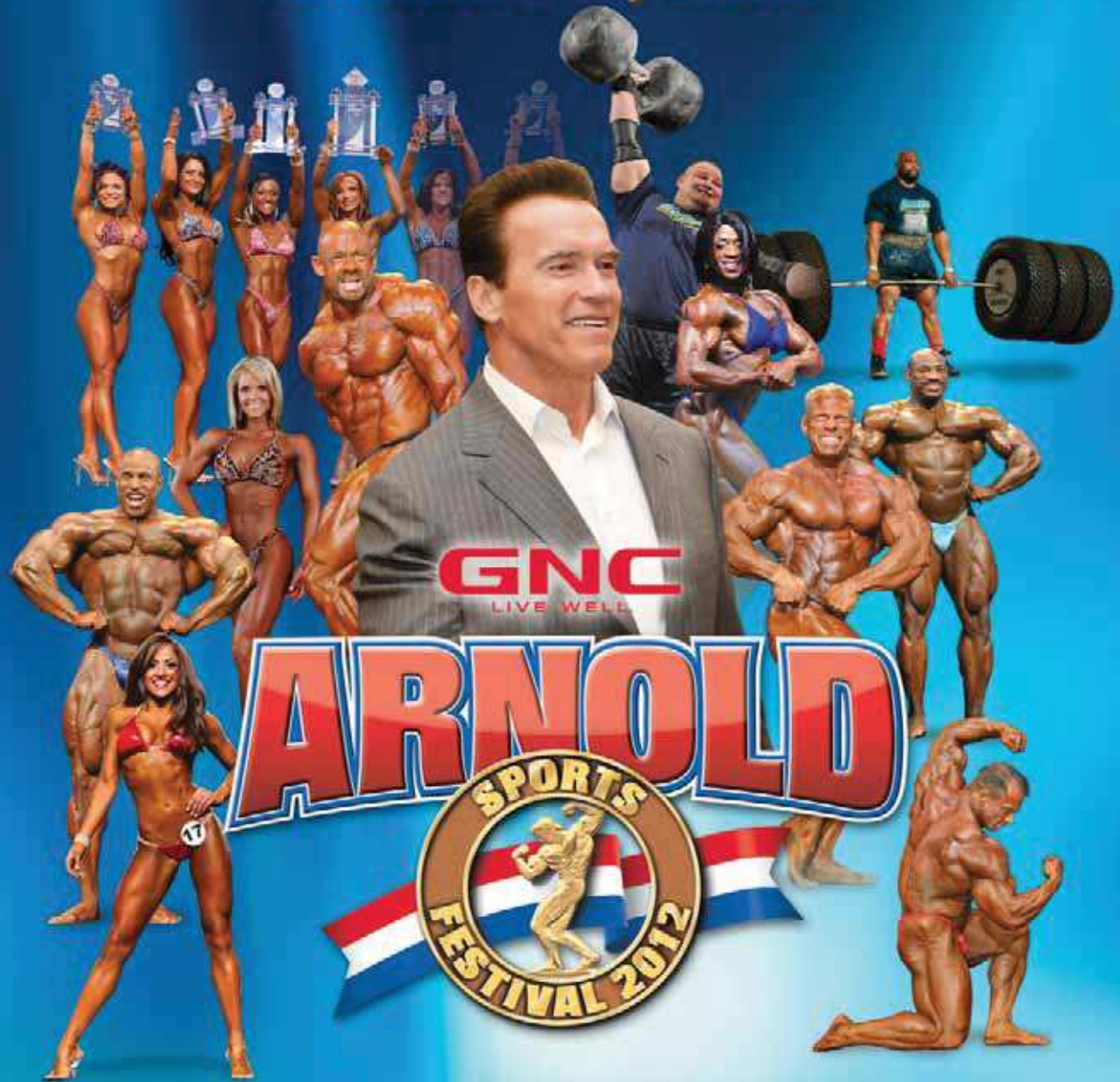
MARK: Wait a minute! I watch Oprah all the time and I never heard her speak such nonsense as this, "As much as 80 percent of your daily calories are burned by your metabolism, not from cardio or training. I stimulate the metabolism with more meals and let my body do the work for me." This can't be true for people who really want to drop body fat, right? I mean, I thought models and actors just didn't eat at all? You eat more often and burn more calories, and don't need cardio? Are you trying to make everyone fat?

RHINO: We all love Oprah, but she's perfect testimony to the failure of dieting and cardio and she's acknowledged it many times on her show with her roller-coaster weight problems. Weight Watchers and jogging strip off as much muscle as fat. The body becomes less efficient at burning calories and eventually they will gain all the weight back, and more, as soon as people stop starving themselves.

By feeding your muscles, your metabolism will drastically increase and your body will burn more calories while at rest. The muscles are the engine that burns the fuel. The more muscle you have, the more fuel you will burn.

Cardio is the least effective tool you have at your disposal to burn body fat. I can't tell you how many women have come to our gym frustrated with their body fat and tell me they jog 5 miles and eat twice a day. It's not rocket science. It's simple and it's 100 percent effective. Eat at least five meals a day. Consume 50 percent of your calories from quality lean animal protein sources included in each meal. Then 20 percent of your calories come from complex carbohydrate sources eaten at breakfast and post-workout meals only. The remaining 30 percent of the calories are primarily from mono- and poly-unsaturated fats. Do a brief, intense cardio session upon waking on an empty stomach and do heavy resistance training at least three days a week. It's simple and 100-percent effective. Hey, I thought

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Six months after that total and with two months of intense daily coaching with you at Super Training Gym, I increased my raw total by more than 150 lbs. to 2,221 lbs. And I had already been training and competing at a very high level for more than 20 years! It's all documented on numerous YouTube videos. Both meets: the 2,070-lb. raw total in March 2009 and the 2,221-lb. raw total in September 2009, along with much of the preparation training we did in July and August.

We just proved it wasn't a fluke when I took off the knee wraps and beat my wrapped raw total with a new PR and world record 2,226 lbs.

You drastically changed both my bench and squat form, tweaked the deadlift and used strength training techniques I had never used before, such as boxes, chains, bands, partials, lockouts, floor presses, etc. Up until that point I was really just a strong bodybuilder. You made me into a world record powerlifter.

I think readers will get more detailed information about workouts from checking out your site and training videos at www.SuperTraining.TV.

I will, however, add my own experience regarding recovery time. At 43 years old, my body won't recover from two squat workouts and two bench workouts a week. I had to listen to my body and either sit out or shorten some of the training sessions while at Super Training. It was hard for me because I'm a competitor and I wanted to challenge everybody for every set and every rep. Ultimately, I had to focus on what would make me strongest for the meet so I could only squat once a week and only deadlift every other week. For benching, I could train one heavy day and one speed day. That's it. I train less than four hours a week for optimum strength. The rest is eating and resting to recover and grow.

MARK: Wow, you sound like a big baby: eating, sleeping, eating, napping, eating, pooping your pants and crying. Growing up my favorite athlete was Bo Jackson. He could hit a home run one day and score a touchdown the next. I admired that this guy was a top-level, two-sport athlete. Now, let's be honest, what Bo did and what you're currently doing are quite different. However, you are basically a two-sport pro athlete. Tell us some of the differences that make it tough and tell us some of things that crossover into both sports.

RHINO: It's physically challenging to compete in any sport at an elite level. I've read many studies in many countries that demon-

this was Power magazine. How did we get to Oprah?

What powerlifters need to know, Mark, is that you went from 320 lbs. to 275 lbs. and got stronger utilizing the same nutrition methods.

As a matter of fact, I just got a call from powerlifter Bryan Hall, who has worked extensively with Josh Bryant and Ryan Kennelly, and we were discussing the very same methods which he used to get down from 320 lbs. at 25 percent body fat to 290 lbs. at 15 percent body fat and brought his waist down from 48 to 39 inches. It works for everyone, whether you're a housewife trying to fit in a bathing suit for the summer or a fat-head powerlifter who reads Power magazine.

MARK: Let's talk more about your training. Give us some ideas/principals Rhino follows along with a sample workout or two.

RHINO: At the end of the day, you have to train extremely heavy and hard for many years if you want to be freakishly big and strong. I push myself to the limit in the gym. It's not entertainment or a social hour for me. I'm there for one reason and one reason only: to get better. Sure, I have fun. Everyone who's ever trained with me knows I love it, but it's only because I'm busting my ass and getting results. That's what makes it fun for me.

Having said that, it's not all physical. To compete at a professional level you have to train smart. I've already shared a great deal of information about my diet, training and recovery, but it's very important for me to add that there's no substitute for great coaching. My best raw PL total was 2,070 lbs. before I had any coaching.

strate that more athletes fail mentally than physically. They might not end up in the looney bin, but they become crippled with self-doubt and are unable to emotionally manage the highs and lows of training and competing. They burn out.

Flex constantly used visualization techniques with me and helped me to understand that “where the mind goes, the body will follow.” I think competing in both sports is actually an advantage for me because when I get mentally exhausted from bodybuilding (dieting, posing, daily doubles, etc.), I look forward to training heavy and getting strong again. When my body gets tired of heavy-ass powerlifting sessions, my CNS gets overloaded and I’m exhausted from the added bodyweight, I can look forward to trimming down and chasing pumps in the gym again for my next bodybuilding prep.

It does hurt me a bit because heavy squatting and deadlifting creates a thick muscular core, detracting from the ideal bodybuilding physique, which rewards a smaller waist. Also, for me, my legs don’t respond to low reps (doubles and triples) so powerlifting restricts my leg development. For size, my legs respond to more repetitions and I should ideally spend a full year or 18

almost an hour of warm-ups to build up to squatting an 800-lb. double, but an hour is a general rule. I need to get out, eat and recover!

MARK: Give us an example of how you train to be a fat, bloated-faced, strong-as-an-ox powerlifter vs. how you train to be a skinny, tan, vascular, ripped bodybuilder.

RHINO: I’ve covered some of this, but powerlifting is more fats, larger meals, more sleep, fewer training sessions, fewer reps (two to five), heavier weights.

Bodybuilding is less fats, smaller more frequent meals, daily training splits (large bodypart in the morning for 40 minutes, small body part in the evening for 20 minutes) for more reps (six to 12).

Of course, when bodybuilding you have to mow your back (man-groom) so there isn’t a big jungle bush hanging out of your Speedos, tan so the lights don’t reflect off of your pasty polar bear skin when on stage, drop water to be shredded and have some other dude in a Speedo rub oil all over your body before you go out on stage. It would sound pretty gay until someone sees you and the fat fruit-cakes on your powerlifting team putting each other’s lifting gear on. Now that’s gay.

“AT THE END OF THE DAY, YOU HAVE TO TRAIN EXTREMELY HEAVY AND HARD FOR MANY YEARS IF YOU WANT TO BE FREAKISHLY BIG AND STRONG.”

months building more volume in my legs if I want to improve my placing in bodybuilding.

Occasionally, some couch potato will chime in claiming I could do better if I’d just choose one sport or the other. I’m not sure how much better I could do. I earned an IFBB Pro Card and set a couple powerlifting world records, so I must be doing something right.

At the end of the day, I do what I feel like doing, what I enjoy doing and I do it for myself and nobody else. All the rest is gravy!

MARK: Tell the people of Power how you train. Give us some bullet point tips that we can take to the gym with us.

RHINO: On average, I’ll train each body part once a week. I’ll train a heavy basic movement first and select a rep range based on what I’m preparing for. It’s two to 5 reps for powerlifting or five to 12 reps for bodybuilding. Except for bodybuilding leg training, where I shoot for 20 reps. Still heavy, but more reps. For instance, I might squat 500 for 10 reps then immediately jump on the leg press and knock out another 10 to 20 reps with 10 to 14 plates on a side. After a heavy basic I will select another exercise and do two heavy, hard “growth” sets. I don’t warm up again and I don’t pyramid the weights and reps. I just grab the heaviest weight I can handle for six reps then my spotter helps me with two more, then I do a negative or two. You don’t have to do a lot of volume if you’re using maximum intensity. It looks a lot like Dorian Yates program and Mike Mentzer before him. I’ve been training for more than 25 years, so I’ve seen and tried it all. This method is most effective for me. I have light days where I don’t push myself as hard, but it’s based on how my body feels.

I try to train for less than an hour, maybe three or four times a week at most. Powerlifting sessions take longer because it takes me

MARK: Can you give us three tips for bodybuilders to gain size and three easy things powerlifters can do to shed some body fat?

RHINO: To gain size bodybuilders need to eat more, train less and use heavy, basic movements.

To shed fat, powerlifters need to increase protein intake, increase meal frequency and time their carbs so they are utilized as muscle glycogen and not fat (breakfast, post-workout).

MARK: In closing, what’s next for Rhino? Marriage? More world records? Chase down the all time raw total regardless of bodyweight?

RHINO: For the first time in three years, I don’t have a firm plan. Between powerlifting and bodybuilding, I’ve competed about every 90 days for the last three years. I’m just enjoying training for the time being. I had planned to defend my World’s Strongest Bodybuilder title at the Mr. Olympia this year, but nobody stepped up to challenge me so it’s not going to happen. I’ll have a booth at the Olympia (booth #228) with you and Flex Wheeler, which should be fun.

I have my eye on a number of things. I placed ninth at the IFBB Flex Pro this year and I’d like to improve on my performance and take a top-five placing in an IFBB show in 2012.

I took KK’s 275-lb. raw world record this year and I’d like to take his 308-lb. raw world record, as well. And, of course, I always have my eye on John Cole’s 2,250 raw total set in 1974.

So much to do, so little time to do it. I turn 44 this year. My window of opportunity closed years ago, but somehow I keep making improvements. So long as I keep getting better, I’ll keep competing. It’s like I keep saying, “I’m one good injury away from retiring.” Wish me luck! **PM**