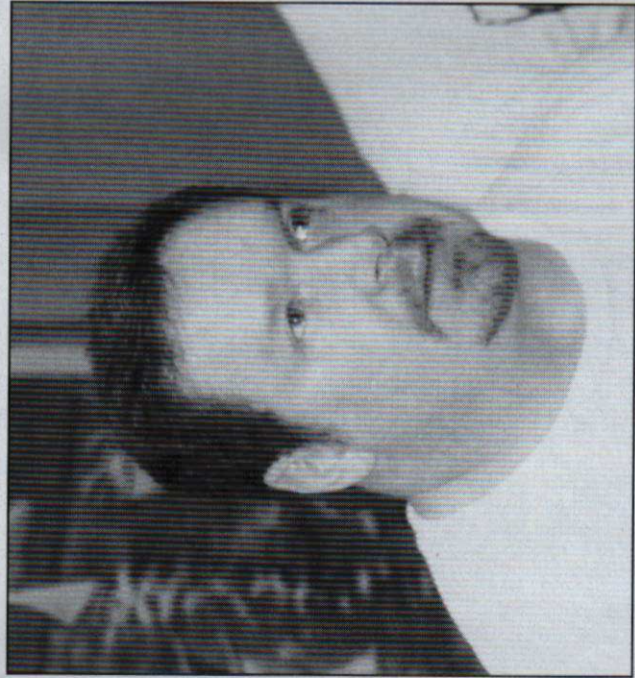


# INTERVIEW

Personal dialogue between  
PL USA Magazine and the  
Sport's Greatest Names.

## ED COAN SPEAKS - We Quiz the King - by Marty Gallagher



**ED COAN ...** thick as a brick, and in fierce pursuit of a 2500 lb. total.

Edward Ignatius Coan needs no introduction to anyone even vaguely interested in the sport of powerlifting. Articles on Michael Jordan rarely rehash his accomplishments, as it is assumed the reader is familiar with both the man and his achievements and, so, we too shall assume that any self-respecting powerlifter knows of Coan and his seemingly never-ending string of power exploits. His is quite simply the greatest powerlifter to ever walk the face of the planet and he sets new standards in longevity and performance with each passing year. Incredibly, at age 37, his best days lie ahead of him, not behind, as like a fine scotch he gets better with age. Ed won his first IPF world championship as a 181 pound lifter in 1984. In 1998 he totaled 2463 at 242, more than any other lifter in the history of powerlifting. Today, seventeen years after winning his first world title, Eddy rolls over and he's still unstoppable force of nature. Each time he hits the 2400 mark he sets a new record for the most 2400 pound plus totals ever, five and counting. Watching Ed lift makes you realize that you are watching something very special. As long as powerlifting exists in any way shape or form, powerlifters will re-tell tales of Coan and his legendary feats. We asked the Champ to reminisce and ramble, expand and expand, elaborate and extemporize on a variety of questions. He was more than willing so we took advantage of the situation and grilled him good, talking about every topic under the sun.

**MG:** When is the next competition and what's the goal?  
**EC:** I am feeling good and plan on stepping back onto the platform in late June at Nick Busick's Mountaineer Cup. In addition, I plan on lifting at the WPO Huge Iron meet (now re-set for August 12th) in Orlando. I also plan to head back to Orlando on November 17th of 2001 for the WPO World Professional Powerlifting Championships. I am pretty excited about lifting in the WPO as they seem to be staging some innovative contests. I am already sold on Nick Busick and his approach to powerlifting. I look forward to lifting three times in the coming year. The prospect excites me.

**MG:** Any predictions?

**EC:** Well, at this stage of my

changed my approach in the bench press a bit. I had been experimenting with deadstop bench pressing for the past few cycles, but felt that my explosiveness was suffering and I had developed some slow habits. I went back to touch-and-go bench pressing and think that this is going to reap some big dividends. I pause my close-grip bench presses and all my incline exercises much?

**MG:** Are you still using single ply equipment?

**EC:** Yes, I use a single ply Inzer bench shirt and a single ply squat suit. No second bench shirt or second squat suit. My knee wraps are standard length. I'm old fashioned, I guess.

**MG:** Well you're certainly leaving some pounds on the platform. There is no doubt that the new equipment adds pounds to your lifts. They're not wearing the stuff cause it looks nice.

**EC:** No doubt about it.

**MG:** How about your assistance work, any new wrinkles?

**EC:** I've really gotten some good results doing close-stance high-bar pause squats. I do these after my regular squats and they really force the quadriceps to work and grow. I love this exercise; my training partner will give me the "up!" after I've sat down with the weight for a full second or two.

**MG:** How narrow is narrow?

**EC:** My stance is 12 inches between my heels. I go rock bottom on every rep. It teaches you to explode and builds up the quads. I don't wear any gear when I do these.

**MG:** Do you still do rep chins with 100 pounds strapped around your waist?

**EC:** No, not anymore, I have a little bit of bicep tendonitis and chins aggravate this so I don't do weighted chins anymore. I still do my heavy barbell rowing and did 529x4 last cycle, not letting the bar touch the floor between reps and without using a belt. I also like to do stiff leg deadlifts off a 4-inch block without a belt. This is a real tough exercise that really strengthens the erectors and hamstrings. I concentrate on exercises like narrow stance hi-bar pause squats and stiff-leg deadlifts off a block in the off-season and then I switch into regular squats and deadlifts when the competitive season rolls around. I'm a big believer in working hard on my weak points in the off-season.

**MG:** How much time do you allow between sets?

**EC:** As much time as it takes for me to totally recuperate between

sets. On the minor exercises that could be two or three minutes and on the big exercises I could take ten full minutes before I hit the next set. It's a feel thing, not a time thing.

**MG:** Do you change your assistance exercises much?

**EC:** I like to keep it fresh and challenging. I will do two light sets of curls each week and do a few forearm exercises designed to improve my grip. I still do the press-behind-the-neck, though not as heavy as in years gone by. I would regularly hit 400-

pounds in this exercise a few years back, but now-a-days I'm content to rep out in the mid-300 pound range. I also do front presses for variety and usually alternate behind-the-neck presses and front presses on a weekly basis, one week PBN the next week front presses.

**MG:** Do you still break these out and do them on a separate day from the big three lifts?

**EC:** Yes, I squat, bench press and deadlift on separate days and break shoulder work out and perform that on a fourth day. I only go to the gym four days.

**Monday:** pause squats (no gear), leg curls, seated calf raises (no gear), leg curls, seated calf raises (no gear), leg curls, seated calf raises  
**Tuesday:** off  
**Wednesday:** bench press, super-wide grip bench press (paused), dumbbell incline presses (paused), iso-lateral incline bench press, Triceps-lying dumbbell French press, pushdowns  
**Thursday:** off  
**Friday:** conventional deadlift (no gear) off a 4-inch block and paused on the floor, stiff-leg deadlift off block also paused. Bent-over barbell rows (overhand grip) Hammer front pull-down, wide-grip chins without weight, bent-over lateral raise 3x15  
**Saturday:** close grip bench press raised, standing one arm lateral raise, standing press-behind-the-neck, curls, forearm work  
**Sunday:** off

**MG:** So you hit the gym four times a week?

**EC:** Yes, I went to the gym five

you posted in your career?

**EC:** I've posted 2,400 pounds or better on five different occasions.

**MG:** What is the strongest you've ever felt in a competition?

**EC:** Oh, that's an impossible question to answer. How do you compare a good day weighing 181 with a good day weighing 240 or 220? They're all good days. Let me re-phrase the question a bit: at 198 I really felt good in Chicago when I hit 2204 and likewise when I cracked my first 2400 pound total at 220 - topped off with my 900 pound deadlift. I never felt stronger in the squat than when I hit 1,019 and totaled 2,463 at 242. Plus, this mark fulfilled a lifetime goal of posting the highest total ever, regardless of bodyweight. The target is ever shifting, so it seems. There is not a "better or best", just different.

**MG:** How come you can't do sumo style anymore?

**EC:** I tore my right hamstring and left abductor in 1994 finishing the second rep of an 870 pound dead-stop double in the sumo-style dead-lift. I twisted slightly at the top locking the weight out. I have never felt right since. Every time since that I've tried the sumo I have this nagging feeling that I am risking major, career-ending injury. It messes with my mind and the easiest way to deal with this is to just lift using the conventional style deadlift and not get caught up in these mind games.

**MG:** Who is the best lifter you ever saw in action?

**EC:** Names that jump into my mind immediately are Inaba and lately Siuokon.  
**MG:** How about Kaz?

**EC:** When I saw Kaz lift it was after his chest injury and he was not at his best. Doug was the prettiest squatter I ever saw. It was also pretty amazing that he pulled an 826 deadlift. Doug had allergic reactions to chalk and hardly ever did deadlifts. Add a 600 pound bench press and you had a complete, balanced lifter. He could have totaled a whole lot more if he hadn't quit at the peak of his powerlifting career to become a professional wrestler.

**MG:** Thanks, champ!

**EC:** You're welcome, old man!



**A Superstar who wraps his own knees.** (Mojden photos)

days a week for years, but I've altered the pattern in conjunction with the some other changes. My exercise sequence and basic workout template has stayed pretty much the same for twenty years.

**MG:** What are some of your best training lifts - like best rep set for 5 in the squat - best deadlift double with-out a belt, chin for reps with weight, incline for reps, bench double with-out a shirt, best PBN, tri pushdown for reps? That kind of stuff.

**EC:** Oh, let's see. I never really max out in my training lifts, but some of my best weight for reps? Let's see. I've done 900x5 in the squat, and bench pressed 555x2 without wearing a bench shirt. A few years back I rowed with 550x3 in the bent over row. That was without a belt and the bar did not touch the ground between reps. I pressed behind-the-neck with 375x3 seated, each rep coming below the ear. I have deadlifted 855x2 conventional and sumo-pulled 900x2 at 220 two weeks before I pulled 902 in Dallas and missed 920.

**MG:** How long do you see yourself competing?

**EC:** I feel good. I feel great occasionally, but not as many times as I feel good. I want to compete for a couple more years. Who can predict the future? I want to hit a 2,500+ total and then I'll re-assess my options.

**MG:** How many 2,400 totals have