

Riddle me this: It is possible to lose weight and still get stronger? The truth may surprise you. In fact, for powerlifter extraordinaire Shawn Frankl, dropping 22 lbs. to make weight added up to a whopping increase of 91 lbs. in his total! Dramatic weight loss is just one of the lifting strategies that helped make Frankl the heaviest lifter ever to squat 5x his bodyweight and total over 13x his bodyweight. Welcome to Shawn's secrets for incredible pound-for-pound strength!

MAKING WEIGHT

When first targeting the Powerstation Pro meet to attack the 198 record, Shawn opted to keep his weight under control in off-season. He already owned the world's best total at 220 lbs. (2539 lbs.), so he was aiming to lift heavier than ever, but at a lighter body weight. Before this meet he cleared a little bit so he could up the calories once he was hitting the heavy weights. Starting his training cycle at 202 lbs. ensured that even with increased caloric intake, he wouldn't weigh more than 212 at any time. Obviously, making weight at 198 was critical.

"I relied on MHP's Dark Rage before each workout, and Dark Matter afterward for recovery," Shawn says. "Dark Rage gets me pumped for my sessions and Dark Matter pushes whey, creatine and waxy maize into my body. I was eating several times a day, to keep my metabolism up. I kept my bodyweight at 210-212 the whole cycle, so I felt strong the entire time."

Of course, that was good over the course of his nine-week training cycle, but it was the last two days leading up to the meet when things got really interesting. The Powerstation Pro featured a 24-hour weigh-in window, so Shawn's goal was to be as light as possible on Friday when he stepped on the scale

POWER PROFILE

SHAWN FRANKL WORLD RECORD STRATEGIES REVEALED! as told to Powerlifting USA by Steve Downs, C.S.C.S.



Shawn Frankl en route to a historic total at the Powerstation meet

so he made weight. He stalled the week by drinking two gallons of water a day on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. The goal was to "trick" his body into dumping more water than usual, because he was imbibing more fluid than normal.

"On Thursday, I didn't drink much that day, but kept going to the bathroom most of the day," he recalls. "That helped me cut an extra 3-4 lbs. just by peeing a lot. I only ate a few eggs and salad on Thursday. I took MHP's Xpel natural diuretic first thing in the morning and then a few more doses during the day—every three hours or so, so I could monitor my body. Because of the extra potassium and electrolytes in Xpel, I didn't have any cramping."

Weighing in at 202 just before bedtime on Thursday, Shawn was forced to cut almost four pounds on Saturday. He sat in the sauna and steam room the next morning and dropped down to 199, still a ways to go.

"I felt miserable to be honest," he explains. "It is harder to lose weight when you are that lean and hard to begin with. I wasn't bloated at all. I peed once more and actually puked at one point. When I stepped on the scale officially, I made the weight. I made the weight, but it's the last time I go 198!"

After this water-stripping process, Shawn had 24 hours to refill his muscles and return to a body weight where he felt strong and powerful. Immediately after weighing, he went to his hotel room and mixed three packets of MHP's post-workout drink Dark Matter with Pedia Light. He downed this and immediately felt better. "The Dark Matter helped drive fluid, electrolytes and nutrients right back into my muscles," he says. "If you've

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SHAWN FRANKL WINS INZER OLYMPIA POWERLIFTING SUPERSHOW

October 1, 2009—Team MHP superstar Shawn Frankl—who recently set the 198 lb. World Record total of 2630 lbs.—won the Lightweight class in the Inzer Olympia Powerlifting SuperShow Bench Press Contest in Las Vegas on Saturday, September 26. The Powerlifting SuperShow was held as part of the 2009 Olympia Weekend at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

The event featured only two weight classes: 210 & Under and Over 220 lbs. Each lifter in the Lightweight group had to bench press 600 lbs. for as many reps as possible, then finish with one set of max reps at 500 lbs.

Frankl was the surprise performer of the show after winning both the 600 and 500 sets in the 220 lb. lightweight class. He hammered out 6 reps off his first set at 600 lbs., then because there was a three-way tie, he came back to equal that number on his second set (winning the 600 bench-off). When the weight was dropped to 500 lbs., Shawn won the 6-man class with 11 monster reps.

Powerlifting SuperShow director Nick Busick and his team's efforts resulted in the largest audience of any power show in Olympia history. Inzer Bench Sports was the lead sponsor.

Other team MHP athletes who fared well in the contest included Joe Mazza and Jason Fry. Mazza hit 3 reps at 600 and 8 reps at 500, despite giving up almost 50 lbs. in bodyweight to Frankl. Also competing as a lightweight, Fry blew out 3 reps at 600 and 6 at 500.

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gone through this weight loss, you don't want to hold water and feel bloated. You want it driven into your muscles. The waxy maize and creatine in Dark Matter helped to fill me out right."

This latter point is especially important to Shawn. He says that if his muscles aren't fully filled out, his lifting gear doesn't fit right, especially in the legs. He continued to eat small meals, drink Gatorade and he had some jerky to be sure his sodium levels were up. His strategy allowed him to pump his weight back up to almost 215 lbs. before Saturday's starting lifts. He did some light squats and benches after weighing in, then spent most of his time in his room filling back out. On Saturday it was time to destroy the world record!

IN THE GYM

Creating the strength base to hoist gut-busting amounts of iron is no easy task. A powerlifter relies longevity almost as much as world record numbers. After all, nobody wants to be a one-shot wonder on the platform. For Frank, he's only gotten stronger as the years have passed. His training strategy is hard-core. He doesn't shy from the heavy weights. Yet his lifting style is not for the weak of heart.

Shawn does his heavy lifting on Monday, Wednesday and Saturdays at Big Iron Gym in Omaha, Nebraska, which is a 90 minute drive from where he lives in Sioux City, Iowa. He has been a member there for six years now. He pretty much goes very heavy every week, with "real weights." Other powerlifting teams use strategies with chains and bands for resistance, with less real weight. For instance, a lifter might train with 500 lbs. of weight on the barbell and another 300 lbs. in chains. In this case, the "real weight" is only at the top end, the bottom is lighter. But Shawn relies on iron that's as heavy as possible, so it's more like what he has to handle at a meet.

"My opener squat was 960," the 5'6" powerhouse explains. "I started training cycle nine weeks out and felt 960 on my back every week. The closer I got to the meet, the higher I worked up."

The guys at Big Iron Gym use a reverse bands technique so they're able to load even heavier weight while squatting. This involves using bands from the Monolith so that the heaviest load is when you're standing. As you start to descend, the bands take some of the resistance off your back.

So if I'm squatting 1000 lbs., I can actually put 1150 at the top," Shawn continues. "This works

the stabilizer muscles and allows my body to get accustomed to the weight. I'll use it at the meet. I overload the weight, so that from the heaviest standing position it gets familiar during the squat. I'm really lifting with how it feels because I train heavy every week. My down week would be going to my opener weight. I do that and heavier every single week. So when I open at the meet, it will be no problem."

The 32-year-old's lifting regimen involves lots of single attempts. A sample squat day would have him start with 900 at his first heavy set, then 960, then reverse band set of 1070, then 980 or 1000. He will hit 4-5 sets over 900 lbs. He says he wants to get stronger with straps down, so when he puts the straps up he'll add 50 lbs. "I squatted 1000 in training, then hit 1055 in meet," he says. "I've done 1100 in training with real weight. I wasn't worried about weight in this training cycle as much as technique, so I would stay in the groove."

Frank also bucks the trend of many lifters in that he trains in his gear the whole lifting cycle. The first couple weeks he's just in briefs for squats. Then he puts on the suit with straps down for a few more. Finally, for the last 2-3 weeks he'll pull straps up for squats.

On the bench press, he uses bench shirts every single week. He actually trains like this almost year-round. He will go up to a certain weight every week going raw, but then puts on the shirt. He also employs boards in his bench workouts to handle the heaviest poundages possible. For instance, 800 is the lightest weight Shawn will do off a 1.5-inch board. He even went up to 900 so he feels heavy weight right off the bat. He reports that his bench weight will go down as poundages on the squat go up, so the increasing thickness boards help him hoist heavier weight than if he were going full range of motion.

"I build my endurance to heavy weight," Shawn states. "I'll hit 135, 225, 315, 405, 500 and then 600 with a small board. Then I'll bench 700, 800, 825, 855 and 880. I handled 900 twice with a 2-inch board and once with 1-1/2 board. I do lots of volume, but only 4-5 working sets. I go consistently feeling heavy, heavy, heavy. People say you should go light one week before a meet, that you'll feel better. But I've been training up to 1100 lbs., so 960 is light for me!"

For deadlifts the multiple world record holder tried something different for the Powerstation Pro meet—he employed lots of volume in higher rep ranges. While singles worked well on squats and bench, his deads weren't moving with this

arms. On Friday, he takes the day off, followed by squats, legs and abs on Saturday. Sunday is another day off from the weights.

EATING TO WIN

"My diet is pretty straightforward," Shawn relates. "In the morning I have six hardboiled eggs and natural peanut butter on toast. Then I'll munch on trail mix with nuts. It seems like I'm always eating something! For lunch, I'll have chicken breast or steak. I still eat a lot of rice or a baked potato and broccoli. Before my workout I'll down some oatmeal and eggs. Then immediately pre-training I'll drink MHP's Dark Rage. Immediately afterward, to pump creatine, nitric oxide and way make into my system for ana-bolic-recovery, I always drink a Dark Matter shake."

"For supper it's steak or chicken, plus some veggies," he continues. "I'll finish each day with a Protein-SR protein shake right before bed and then start over the next morning. On the weekends after a big squat workout I typically eat a cheat meal because I've worked out so long. My body is dying so I eat whatever I want!"

FINAL THOUGHTS

"I started weight lifting when I was 12 years old," Frank recalls. "My bench press goal was 315 before my freshman year in high school. (He weighed only 135 lbs.

at the time!) I always lifted weights even when playing sports. I did a lot of bench-only comps when I was young. My first full power meet was in 2001 and didn't even know what I was doing. I did one meet with USAPL and it qualified me for Nationals! I didn't have a clue what I was doing. I later hooked up at Big Iron and they taught me correct technique. My numbers really jumped from there."

Shawn works as a Sales Manager for TruGreen ChemLawn. He is married to Melissa and has a two-year-old daughter, Hailee, and 12-year-old son, Austin.

"I don't know how my wife puts up with me," Shawn laughs. "I thank her for letting me keep doing this! Thank you also to MHP for all the help with terrific supplements, to Big Iron Gym owner Rick Caslow, Brian Carroll and all the guys I train with there. Also thanks to my equipment sponsor, Inzer Advanced Designs, for their gear. Most importantly, I'd like to give thanks to God for giving me the opportunity to do this."

Perhaps most of all, Shawn is thankful he'll now be back lifting in the 220 class for the foreseeable future!

Editor's Note: To find out more about MHP supplements, visit MHPstrong.com. Shawn can be reached via e-mail at sfrankl@cbionet.net.



Shawn Frank pulls for a record breaking total (c. Scott DePanfilis)

technique, so he started doing lots of sets of 2-3 reps. He went as high as 19 working reps in some sets. It revved up his core strength and helped him battle fatigue, so at the meet he'd be more fresh by the time the deadlift came around.

"I worked with 650-675 lbs. for doubles triples and lots of sets," he explains. "But I pulled 750 up the first time I attempted single, so this system worked very good for me. In the past meet I was only trying to muscle the weight up, and wasn't working hard enough through fatigue. With volume training, I was able to lift best when fatigued. I changed my form and it really helped me a lot. I now keep the bar close to the body and arch my back. I put my head back and look up high as my hips come in. The bar is under me

better—not out in front of me. "My assistance work is pretty standard. On bigger lifting days, I push it to the limit, while on the other days I go high reps like body-builders do. This helps keep the blood in my muscles to help them heal. I do lots of weighted ab exercises to maintain the front half of my body so my core is strong. I'll do decline sit-ups with 100 lb. plates or the pull-down machine for heavy reverse crunches. But I still use high volume—10-15 reps, a short rest, then another set. I do 4-5 sets like this, then switch to go lighter and go 15-20 reps with a minute between sets, doing 6-7 sets more."

Overall, Frank's schedule looks like this: Monday - bench; Tuesday - shoulders; Wednesday - deadlifts, upper back and abs; Thursday -

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