

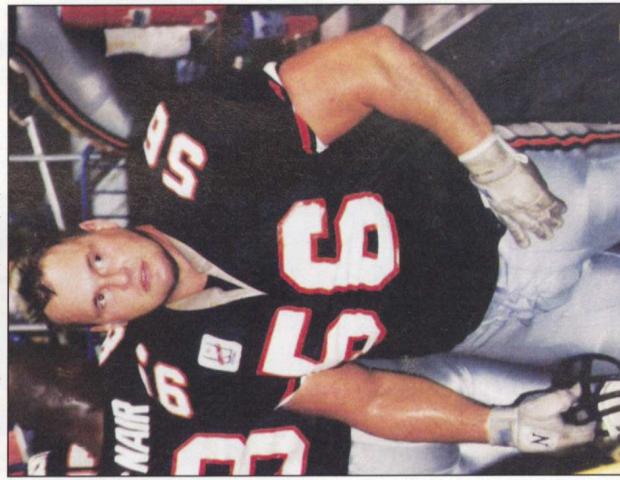
# INTERVIEW

## DONNIE THOMPSON Ready To Hang Up His Wraps After Breaking All Time World Record Powerlifting Total

interviewed by Ben Tatar of CriticalBench.com



(Above) Donnie Thompson getting ready to pull a big 760. (Below) Donnie during his football days (he played for the NFL and AFL)



Donnie Thompson recently recorded the highest total in the history of powerlifting. Donnie performed a 2,905 pound total at the IPA Senior Nationals which were held November 22-23 in York, Pennsylvania. Thompson squatted 1,235 pounds, benched 910, and deadlifted 760 pounds for the highest total in the history of powerlifting.

**Critical Bench:** Donnie, before I ask you about setting the all-time world record in the history of powerlifting, humor us by introducing yourself to the Powerlifting USA readers.

**Donnie Thompson:** There is not much that other powerlifters do not know about me. I am difficult to get along with. I live in a place I built called the compound. It is an apartment on one side and a training facility on the other. I have a baby on the way and she should be born by the publication of this article. The mother and I are still friends, but are not together. We plan to do what is best for her. Her name will be Bridget. Hopefully, she will look like her mother. She is the reason I am quitting Powerlifting.

There is always drama in my life and that is something that will always be. I am not proud of it, but when you are very intense about a mission you are on, drama surrounds you. That is my life and I will not apologize for it.

**CB:** Donnie, you have just totaled 2905 lbs. and set the biggest total in the history of powerlifting! How did it feel to set the biggest total of all time?

**DE:** I was happy but not elated. It was kind of depressing. Whenever you leave room for more poundage on the platform, it is hard to celebrate. The real hell starts when you get home and play different scenarios over and over in your head of what might have been if you only got this weight or that. Then, when I got home on Tuesday, my celebration was greeted with my landlord telling me my rent check bounced, my Yukon was reposed and my girlfriend quit talking to me! Great welcome home. I really haven't even thought about the meet since I have been home. Too much else going on.

**CB:** You said drama follows you, you were right. Donnie, what are your best lifts?

**DE:** My Best Lifts: 1235 squat, 910 bench, and 832 Deadlift.

**CB:** What are your future powerlifting goals?

**DE:** I do not have any. I met them all and I am quitting now. I will do no more meets. I am done.

**CB:** You'll be remembered forever! Donnie, people talk about you being the best squatter in the world today. Many athletes we have interviewed before mention your name as one of the greats. How does that make you feel to be called one of the best by your peers? Do you like being compared to other top notch lifters in the game?

**DE:** I do not like being compared. We are all different. Also, I know everyone who can squat what I can, near what I can, or more than I can. I met them, have their phone or email, and pick their brain. And they do mine. I know I am the best squatter now. If I trained for one or two more meets in my gear, I would really master it and squat the WR highest ever. I am very happy I did not pass up Vladimir my last meet. That sits well with me, because I could keep going. Vladimir is going to have a hard time overcoming his injury, so he may never break his old record. I am proud to say that I did not break it either.

**CB:** Donnie, before you attempt a 1235 lb. squat, what is going through your mind?

**DE:** I try to calm myself. If I get too emotional, I try to laugh. I did this when I squatted 1235. Thinking of my weak points and remembering to execute helps me a lot. Sometimes I flash through all the people I feel have wronged me. This helps too. I can kill them in my mind and not get arrested.

**CB:** Remind me not to pass you off. Donnie, you were a free agent with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and then you were signed by the Arena Football League. Did you enjoy football more or powerlifting?

**DE:** I enjoyed them both equally. When I was a football player playing center, I was the best. I could be. Powerlifting I did the very best I could. So they are equal.

**CB:** How would you compare and contrast people in the NFL to the people in powerlifting?

**DE:** In football, the lesser player can hide in the midst of his teammates and ride. He will be found out eventually. In powerlifting, it is only you on the platform and you can't fake it. I have seen some lifters coast on the training of their superior lifting partners, but that is short lived. In the end, the cream will rise to the top. The training is very similar for both. The football

(continued on page 88)



Jeremy Hoornstra - Team MHP Member  
World Record "RAW" Bench  
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Donnie at the 2008 IPA Sr. National Championships

with this. If you squat badly for years, it is nearly impossible to re-learn. You will always revert back to your old style when you get heavy and lose your emotions. Incorporate the box squats into your routine, but not exclusively. Keep changing things up. Then build all the muscle groups up that work the squat. Glutes, hamstrings, inner thighs abs and lower/upper back. As you can see, there is plenty to do after your last set of squats.

**CB:** Donnie, give us your squat routine.

**DT:** I squat heavy on Mondays and light on Fridays. I incorporate gear into the heavy day now. I spend time on assistance work and never shirk it off. I do not miss the extras. Even if I have to do them the next day. That is why I am walking away from Powerlifting and not limping away.

**CB:** How should the beginner or intermediate squatter squat differently than you do?

**DT:** I think they should use a progressive overload system to build a lot of muscle. Most of these guys do not know muscle's address. You can't tell them apart from the audience. Also, pull the sled a lot. Build the back of the body or develop it as much as possible. Don't rely on the lifting gear like the advanced guys do. They are developed and the beginner and intermediate is not. The tendons and ligaments in the joints need to be very strong over time so use full range and lock out your lifts. Do not cut them short ala bodybuilding style.

**CB:** Good tips, thanks. Tell us about your eating plan for powerlifting. What supplements do you take?

**DT:** I eat three meals a day like everyone else. Just a little larger than some people. Then I try to drink shakes in between. I use Maximus from atlagenatrition. I sought them out based on references from athletes and other lift-

ers. not 'cause I could get it for free.

**CB:** Will you share your powerlifting routine in detail?

**DT:** No I will not. It sounds ridiculous when people read it and they are only looking through a keyhole of what I have been doing for 28 years. My routines are mine that I have learned and put to the test over many years. I have finally learned to incorporate gear in training. I lift heavy squats of some kind on Monday's. Wednesdays is my heavy bench day. Friday is my light lower body day. Sunday is my light upper body day. Tuesdays and Thursdays are my rehab and recovery days. That is it. As far as specifics, it would do more harm than good to disclose my training information!

**CB:** Fair enough. How does your family feel about your powerlifting success and the fact that you are the best in the world right now?

**DT:** My family could care less about my Powerlifting. I have never fit in society and even in my own family. The only family member that ever understood me was my mean grandmother, Grandma V! She died eleven years ago so my family Powerlifting 'feelings' went to the grave with her. My parents have helped with money in the past, but always wanted me to quit.

**CB:** What other adversaries have you had to overcome?

**DT:** I really enjoy rehab work and the strength end of it. However, I could see myself being a strength

coach at the University level. That is where I would have the biggest impact as far as job stimulation and affecting people's lives. I will never be broke again. I plan on being a millionaire in eight years.

**CB:** Awesome. Donnie, tell Powerlifting USA a secret about yourself that people don't know.

**DT:** My life is really out in the open and always has been. It is filled with drama. However, everyone is already trying to be gracious to the top lifters in each division. Once the venues pick back up, television contracts will come and the public will see more than just a weight being lifted, they will see the person who is lifting. Right now there is zero respect for the lifter who accomplishes great things. I think it is a lack of understanding. Most lifters are just gym bums. They could not possibly comprehend the training it takes to be a national and world champ.

**CB:** What is the best and worst advice you were ever told before?

**DT:** The best advice was the advice Louie Simmons gave me in 1998 about training properly. I researched it out and put it to the test. I was patient and believed in it. It worked. Changed my whole philosophy on training.

**CB:** The worst advice I ever had was my friends not stopping me from getting married. I blame them because one of them could have

knocked me upside the head and told me not to do it. I blame them for me marrying such a scumbag!

**CB:** What makes Donnie different from everyone else?

**DT:** My determination does hands down. I suffer from lack of confidence at times, depression and anxiety. I overcome them all in time. It takes me a little longer to develop than my competitors, but I am steady and never ever quit! I admire and patterned myself after: Garry Frank, Paul Childress, Matt Smith, John Stafford, Andy Bolton, Brian Siders, Ed Coan, Shaun Frankl, Louie Simmons, Beau Moore, Gene Rycklack, Chad Alchs, Clay Brandenburg, Ryan Celli, John Manly, Chuck Vogelphi, and many others I can't remember, just this minute.

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**Personal:** Jessica Fulmer, Mandy Stafford and her Mama, Tim Fogle, Mark Challet, Nicole Dominick, April Stroud, Neil Fox, Tom Frederick, Billy Maas, Tom Korbbini, and many others who were there for me.

competitions will cease to exist. Everyone that is a federation loyalist, tell me what benefit that is to Powerlifting. The rules are the same across the board for Powerlifting. We have open, raw, equipped and drug free. Pick one and do it. The Internet should be used to post results. Websites can offer lifters advice. In ten years, things will fall into place. Promoters are already trying to be gracious to the top lifters in each division. Once the venues pick back up, television contracts will come and the public will see more than just a weight being lifted, they will see the person who is lifting. Right now there is zero respect for the lifter who accomplishes great things. I think it is a lack of understanding. Most lifters are just gym bums. They could not possibly comprehend the training it takes to be a national and world champ.

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Donnie perfecting his bench press technique in "the compound"

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Donnie Thompson - there's only one! (Powerlifting photos courtesy of Chuck Venturella)