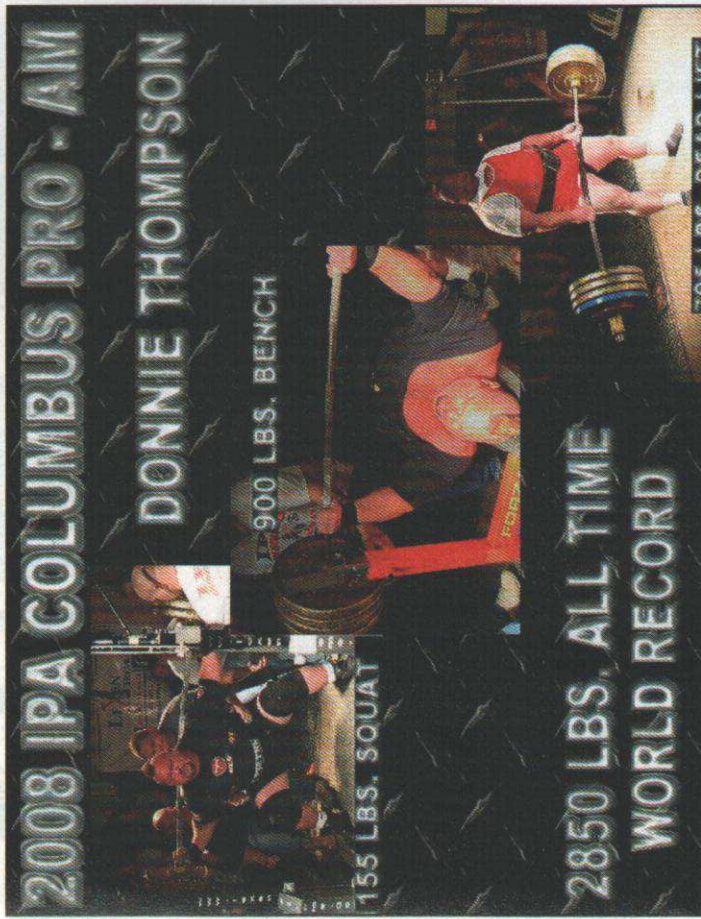


INTERVIEW

Donnie Thompson interviewed by Chris Mason



Donnie setting the ALL-TIME record total of 2,850 lbs. at the IPA Columbus Open!!!

Donnie Thompson is arguably one of the world's strongest men. A lofty claim, yes, but eminently true if one considers lifting the heaviest load for a single repetition through a full range of motion while minimizing the skill component to be the true test of strength. By this definition, **powerlifting as a sport is the only true competitive test of strength.** Ergo, the strongest powerlifter is the competition-proven strongest man or woman on the planet in his or her respective weight class.

Donnie set the all-time highest powerlifting total January the 20th at the LexenXtreme IPA Columbus Pro-Am in Columbus, Ohio. His lifts and total:

Squat: 1,155 lbs
Bench: 900 lbs
Deadlift: 795 lbs
Total: 2,850 lbs!!!

The following is a brief Q&A session I had with Donnie following his record setting performance:

CM: Donnie, how does it feel to be the strongest powerlifter on the planet?

DT: Thank you for the compliment, but I don't feel I am the strongest, just one of the strongest. Today's top lifters are pushing the bar to the freaking limit! There are a number of us capable of upping the record at any given meet. It seems now that the top lifter whose body holds up best through training and meets is the one who sets the new record. These guys all have one thing in common, no fear of weights and no limitations!

CM: You had narrowly missed setting the record in recent meets. To what do you attribute your recent assault on the record books?

DT: I attribute it somewhat to luck. The strength has been there for some time, I just

provides an ergogenic benefit. Bottom line, I really like the stuff and when I ran out over the holidays my training stamina was way off and I felt like I was on a diet!

CM: Yep, consuming sufficient calories to fuel increased size and strength can be a real problem. There are a lot of young men out there who think they are "hard gainers" when they are really under-eaters. Drinking a high calorie MAXIMUS™ shake packed with quality protein and carbs as well as the ergogenic ingredients you mentioned can really be the ticket to new growth and success in the gym.

Donnie, let's switch gears and move back to training. You demonstrate your prodigious strength both equipped and raw. What are your feelings on each form of training and competing? Do you feel one helps the other?

DT: I think my longevity in the sport gives me a unique perspective on geared vs. raw training. I have been training since 1979 and never even knew what gear was until 1998. To clarify, raw to me is training with just a belt. Single ply lifting is not raw.

I feel gear helps raw lifting tremendously. I think that is a misunderstood fact. If I squat over 1,150 lbs with gear, how in the world would squatting 900 pounds raw scare me? The overloads afforded by geared lifting make raw lifting seem easier psychologically and aid physically. Much like training with partials,

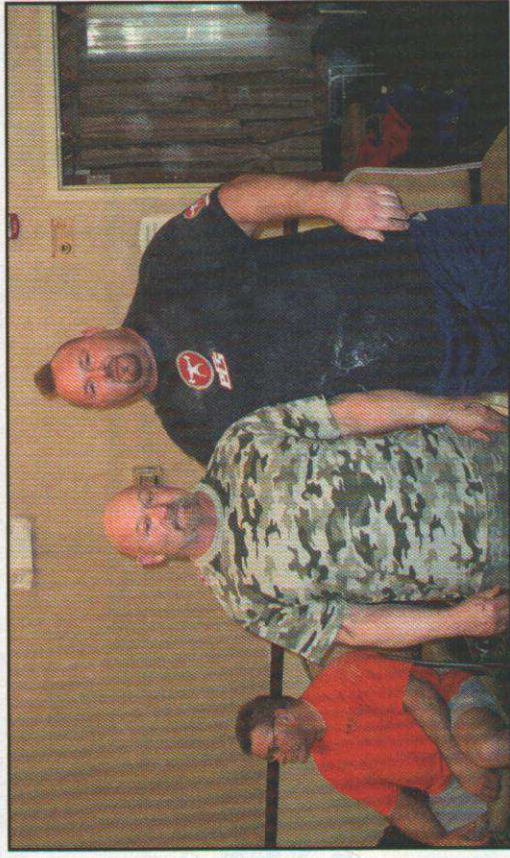
I said this was a brief Q&A so let's wrap it up with a little look into the future. What is your next goal in powerlifting? How much longer do you plan to compete?

DT: I feel that I am in my prime, and I don't have any definitive plans relative to my retirement from the sport as of now. I can tell you that my career thus far has been very satisfying. I have met or exceeded every goal I have ever set in the sport. I think very few people in any discipline can say that.

When I do retire, I want to be remembered for my will and determination. I truly don't feel I am an all-time or even a current great. I hope that people will (and do) respect my work ethic and the fact I was willing to go to almost any length to realize and maximize my strength potential. Powerlifting for me is more than a sport or hobby; it is my life and my obsession.

I live and work in a training facility. Some people find Jesus in a wooden church. I find him in a steel weight room. I do a lot of praying when I am about to get crushed by 1,000+ lbs. There are no atheists in a foxhole as the saying goes. That is what separates me and people like me from the rest of the pack!

CM: Donnie, I appreciate your humility, but I think you don't give yourself enough credit. I truly believe you are one of the all-time greats and that has and will continue to be proven out in the years to come. Thanks for taking the time to chat!



Donnie Thompson and powerlifting and strength coaching legend Louie Simmons

the massive loads from geared training strengthens your body in such a way as to carry over to raw lifting. Geared lifting is also a form of conjugate variation in that it has a whole different feel to it.

An interesting fact about me is that I only wear gear for the squat and bench. I ALWAYS do one doing that in multi-ply meets.

CM: I agree completely that gear aids raw lifting. I have never used a squat suit or bench shirt, but when I was younger I used a belt and knee wraps for squatting. I can remember that my squat really jumped with or without the knee wraps once I started incorporating them regularly into my training. The knee wraps helped me in the hole when squatting and allowed me to use much heavier loads which then translated to a big increase in my squat even without the wraps.

INTERVIEW

Vince Anello interviewed by Chris Mason



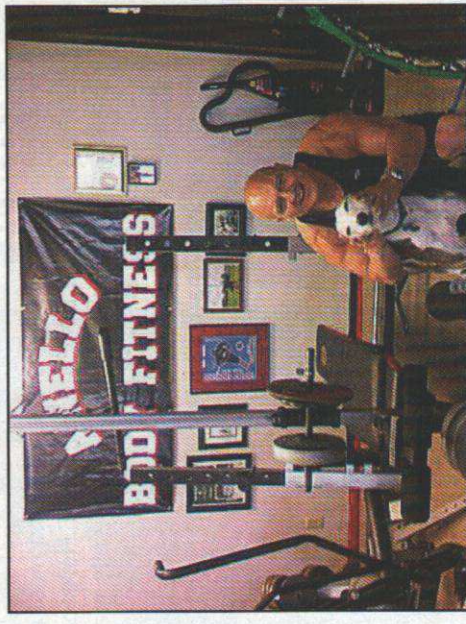
Vince Anello is a living powerlifting legend. He was the first man in history to pull over 800 lbs at a bodyweight of less than 200 lbs! Vince competed over the course of 3 decades during what might be considered a golden age in the sport when mastodons like Casey, Reinholdt, Kuc, Williams, Cole and many others ruled the platform. A tremendous all-around lifter, Vince's legacy as one of the all-time great deadlifters is etched in the annals of powerlifting history.

CM: Vince, first, I want to thank you for agreeing to this interview. From the first time I read about you in Fred Hatfield's **The Complete Guide to Power Training** I have always been in awe of your deadlifting prowess. My goal with this interview is to pay homage to your tremendous accomplishments in the sport of powerlifting and to deadlifting in particular. I want to introduce you to a whole new generation of powerlifters and to remind those who know of you just how great you were.

To that end I would like to start this interview with you providing a brief highlight of your powerlifting career to include some of your amazing accomplishments.

VA: Thank you Chris. My competitive powerlifting career spanned 3 decades. Below is a list of some of the highlights (in reverse order): 1998 Inducted into the Strength Hall of Fame (York, Pa.) 1988 Drug Free N.A.S.A. National Champion, Open Division 1987 National and World Champion, Masters Division 1980 Senior National Champion and World Champion

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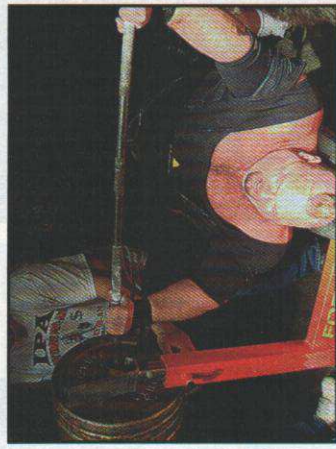


You can contact Vince at www.americanstrengthlegends.com

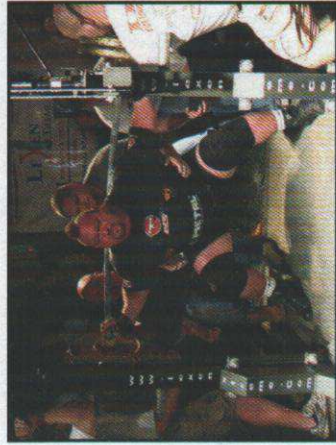
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375 lb. Donnie pulling 795 to set the record



Donnie benching a rare full-meet 900 lbs!!! (Advertisement)



Donnie squatting a massive 1,155 lbs!!!