

POWER PROFILE

JOE LADNIER the Young Hercules by Ron Fernando, Training Editor



The "LAD" as he performed in the recent Hawaii Invitational, Joe has moved to Florida and associated himself with Dick Armatout's fast rising Suncoast Gym team, which should make them a major contender nationally.

approach to the art of powerlifting. He was able to relax his body and mind so much that it seemed unordinary. I remember at my second Senior Nationals, I decided to relax a bit before my squats. I was awoken by Larry Plumlee who stated, "What the hell are you doing sleeping at that weight on the platform was 677 and I hadn't even warmed up yet, but you still managed a 857 squat at 220 lbs." His first Senior (1982) was born, a disappointment and a 677 deadlift. Joe, as he bombed on a 677 deadlift, but he did hook up with Larry Plumlee. I remember a dejected Joe having him at the Seniors and for the quality of the meet. Larry's reply? "You are going to be the next Mike Bridges, my friend." Joe soon moved to Dayton, Ohio where the outlook altered. Instead of exhibiting the frenetic braggadocio of the new-dramatic gains in bodyweight and strength. The 1983 Seniors saw a

Ancient greek mythology was filled with tales of bravery and derring do from a veritable pantheon of figures. The mighty figures of Apollo, Zeus, Neptune and Vulcan were lauded for their astonishing abilities and physical prowess. The Greeks, ever admirers of physical strength and stature, had another hero who, from the time he was a youngster, astounded the world with his almost magical strength. The story of Hercules has been one of the most renowned fables of Greek lore, having spawned the film careers of a number of weightlmen, notably Steve Reeves and Lou Ferrigno. The word "Hercules" has even been linguistically transformed to describe anyone who possesses supreme, almost supernatural, strength. Naturally, the powerlifting world has seen strength champions come and go throughout the passage of time: Casey, Frenn, Williams, Reinhardt, Kazmaier, and so the accolade "Herculean" may be a bit overused, but even veteran powerlifting aficionados and athletes alike are awed when the name of Joe Ladnier is brought up. In the last eighteen months, Young Joe has accomplished feats which, by comparison, make the Labors of Heracles seem like a Sunday school picnic. He makes no bones about his ultimate goal: that of eclipsing the "immortal" total record of Bill Kazmaier. Ridiculous, you say for a mere lad of 20 to lift that kind of poundage (2425) and at a comparatively light (242) pound/bodyweight? After reading this article, you, the readers of PL USA, will feel as I do - his strength is almost limitless...

Joe was, by admission, a gifted athlete, in virtually every sport he attempted, but he felt more comfortable in individual sports such as gymnastics, where he excelled in both the parallel bars and floor exercises. His soon blossoming natural strength caught the eye of the high school football coaches and, voila, he was a gridiron star. Seems simple doesn't it; but wait, it gets much more interesting. As most amateur football coaches do, Joe's headmaster encouraged his boys to push a little from now and then. Joe, with his gymnastic background serving him well, concentrated on the bench press. On the spur of the moment he entered his first contest in 1979 and did a very creditable 350-290-430, especially noteworthy since he had never before performed squats or deadlifts, and I do mean never! By the way, our "young Hercules" did not weigh anywhere near his present poundage in his competition debut, but tipped the scales at a rather average 160 lbs. This marked the beginning of his long association with Larry Plumlee, who was a judge at this meet. Two weeks later Joe entered a bench press meet, and with no warmups (I do believe that he did

nerstone of his squat training. His light workout on Wednesday utilizes the "Muscle Memory" Principle (i.e. the muscle doesn't need weight per se, but needs to be reminded of the groove it should be in for optimum strength gains). For example, he would do a series consisting of 135x8, 225x6, 315x4, 405x1 and his leg training with 3 sets of 10 reps with the old standards, leg curls and extensions with moderate weights. Additionally, during the season Joe will do 3x10 vertical jumps onto his special box. Despite his strenuous development, Joe has the gymnastic ability to perform a full straddle split even!

On the bench (Thursday and Sunday) he utilizes the same physiological principles: inverted Pyramid long pauses, light "muscle memory" workouts and ample assistance exercises. A recent workout went like this: 135x10, 225x8, 315x6, 363x3, 407x1, 518x2, 3, 407x3 for three second pauses with the bar placed high on the chest. His "muscle memory" workout is done on Thursday where he does but three sets 135x10, 225x8, 315x1, 3. His assistance exercises are as follows: he prefers to isolate his chest area the day of bench pressing with inclined cambered bar presses (250x3x8) & flies (70x3x8) and performs a series of biceps/triceps Z bar curls, pushdowns, dumbbell superset fashion working antagonistic muscle groups for 4 sets of 6-10 reps. Of particular note is his ability in the lying tricep press- 305x6 is his current poundage, done with a thumbless grip and lowered to the bottom of the chin. (I hope he has good dental insurance for that one!)

Joe's nemesis has historically been the deadlift. As stated before he bombed in the 1982 Seniors on a gut-busting 744 at the 1983 Worlds that cost him the title. Yet, persistence is starting to pay off as he is predicting an 804 pull at the Seniors this year. He credits his improvement on the deadlift to Buddy Duke, himself Numero Uno in the PL USA Top 100 198 lb. rankings. Joe does his pulls on Wednesday and again uses the inverted pyramid scheme to maximize his time. Another recent weight hoisted. Another recent workout went as follows: 250x8, 340x6, 518x1, 628x1, 730x3 reps (all done with no straps, incidentally). He credits his latest improvements to the addition of heavy block deadlifts, done one inch below the knee cap. His best is a whopping 832x3 and climbing. Two key assistance exercises are the shrug (3x10-12 with 100 lbs.) and the hyperextension (3x10 with 100 lbs.).

Additionally, Joe performs shoulder and lat work twice per week. This is from his association with Larry Plumlee ("A most remarkable gentleman") who stressed the importance of the latissimus dorsi in improving powerlifting leverages. His main exercises are wide grip chins (3x8), heavy one

handed dumbbell rows (done with the opposite knee supported on a bench) with 150 lbs for 3x8, cable rows with (ouch!) 400 lbs for 3x8. His shoulder work, in comparison is a bit more subdued, but still would make any bodybuilder sweat: seated presses (2 sets in front, 2 in back) with 135-225 for 3x8 (Joe is very leery about going too heavy on this movement as he feels that this can be the cause of serious rotator cuff injuries. This is immediately followed by a tri-set of frontal, side and bent-over dumbbell raises to attack all three of the deltoid heads (for 2,3 sets). Abs are done every night and all three of the deltoid heads (for 2,3 sets). He eats nearly everything in that makes Hercules look like Don Knotts. He eats regularly to keep a totally fat free appearance. Upon seeing him at the Seniors, one of my friends mentioned that if an engineer were to design the Ultimate Powerlifter, it would be Joe Ladnier.

Champions like Joe Ladnier are constantly facing new challenges, whether self imposed or by competitors. Joe Ladnier's "Labors" resemble that of a specific tale of Heracles, that of the confrontation with the many-headed Hydra, a monstrous winged serpent. Every time Hercules would strike off one of the Hydra's heads, persistence more grew in its place. Again, persistence paid off when trained 3 heavy days a week to as the mythical hero finally vanquished the horror facing him. Like Hercules, Joe Ladnier has met and vanquished all of his opponents - all done on the Seniors this year at 242 lbs. will make a storm on Mount Olympus seem like a gentle breeze...ill next time.

1984 U.S.P.F. Club Registration (supplemental list)

- Arizona: Arizona Sports Fitness Center, 392; Thorbecke's Gym, 86.
- California: Magnum Power Team, 308; Pittsburg Wrecks, 228; Traffic Control Service Team, 169; Univer-sal Power Team, 177.
- Georgia: Cagle's Gym, 106; Coach Moore's Barbell Club, 399; Coffee's Gym, 158; Elite Power, 398.
- Iowa: Ames Athletic Club, 18.
- Kentucky: Don's Health Club, 390; Husted Power Pack, 326.
- New York: Leinster Power Team, 264; Syracuse YMCA Powerlifting Team, 78.
- Ohio: Bellian's Southside Gym, 287; Miller's Gym, 398; Uni-Body Fitness Center, 396.
- Pennsylvania: Twin Valley Power Team, 393.
- South Carolina: Lancaster Power Club, 304.
- Tennessee: F. C. I. Memphis Powerlifters, 391.
- Texas: Long Horn Powerlifting Team, 389.
- Virginia: W. W. Houston Boys Club, 394.
- Washington: Magruder's Power Team, 394.
- West Virginia: Bluefield YMCA Powerlifting Club, 115; Herb's Gym, 114.

WORKOUT of the Month

A NEW concept in weight training instruction. A workout by workout, set by set, rep by rep workout plan, with exact training poundages specified over the entire span of strength training cycle, laid out for you by a top Powerlifting Champion. Each month, a different lift is analyzed. For those at different strength levels than the starting poundage specified, simply increase or decrease the training weights in direct proportion. For example, if your lift if 400, and the starting lift for the program is 500, multiply the training poundages by .8 (400 divided by 500); if your lift is 600 multiply poundages specified by 1.2 (600 divided by 500).

JOE LADNIER'S Bench Press Routine

- First of all, I'd like to say that like most lifters, the bench press is my favorite lift. Being my favorite, I've tried everything to excel in the lift. When I started lifting I was in the 165 lb. class. At that time, I was benching 3 times a week. I've noticed that as I've moved up the weight classes I need more time to recuperate. I soon went from 3 heavy days a week to only bench heavy once a week. The only bench heavy once a week, I light day is a muscle memory session for groove and explosion, whereas the heavy day is muscle memory for strength.
- Warmups are basically the same all the way through this cycle. Each week your last warmup set is approximately 40 lbs. lighter than your heavy set(s). This program in written up for a lifter with a maximum capacity coming into the routine of 365 pounds and it should be good for around 350 pounds of improvement.
- The first seven weeks are touch and go, no bounce.
- HEAVY LIGHT

wk	HEAVY	LIGHT
1	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x255 2x8x305	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x270 2x7x310
2	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x255	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x310
3	1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x275 2x6x315	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x315
4	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225
5	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x285 1x1x325	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x320 1x3x340
6	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x290 3x4x330	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x300 2x4x340
7	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x300 2x4x340	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x320 1x3x310
8	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x310 3x3x350	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x320 1x3x310
9	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x325 2x3x365	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x320 1x3x310
10	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x330 1x2x385	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x320 1x3x310
11	1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x275 2x6x315	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x315
12	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x280 2x5x320	2x10x135 1x8x185 1x6x205 1x4x225 1x1x280 2x5x320

Content: Opening attempt - 363; 2nd attempt - 385; 3rd attempt - 402.