



Lots of Stuff...

Well, to get everyone up to date: the Juan Diego Catholic High School football team went 14-0 and won the State Championship. As I have noted in all of my workshops, if would have lost the state game...or any games...there would be a hue and call to fire me. As anybody in S and C will tell you: it's our fault when we lose. When we win? Well, anonymous is a French translation to a Greek phrase that means "who are you again?"

As I noted at the Q and A site over at Dave Draper's forum, I was also rejected last week to donate one of my kidneys. It's odd to say this, but it really bothers me. I was very happy to do this, but it turns out my Blood Pressure goes up when I coach my athletes.

Like when I discovered how much pressure it takes to break and unbreakable plate in my wrist (less than you think!), I am now blessing science with my latest discovery: coaching weights raises the blood pressure.

My brother, Gary, a frequent contributor here at Get Up, was a confidant on this decision. He thought, and I quote, that I am an "idiot." Actually, that isn't technically true, my

IQ is nearly 100. However, I think he understood it well. It has been a banner year on paper, but there is something that is driving me crazy.

After winning the Masters Nationals on my last throw (see it a <http://danjohn.org/tv>), I had the rare opportunity to read on the web that I really didn't deserve to win as the fact that so many people were not there and many that were there were hurt. A month later, after the Pleasanton Highland Games, I read the same thing. It's funny, but even after going 14-0, someone in the blogs for a local paper noted that "JDCHS still hadn't beaten Blank HS." When I was told about a man's need for a kidney here in our community, it honestly seemed like something that would offer me a chance to do what I tell my wife every morning: "To make the world a better place."

So, I can't donate my kidney. But, I will continue to try to make the world a better place. Some of it is simply continuing to bring out this little newsletter and shovel the neighbor's walk. I found out yesterday that one of my neighbors has MS, so that little bit of help, shoveling the walk, probably means more than I first realized.

It's also the Holiday Season. I have always encouraged people to

READ "A Christmas Carol," simply for this section:

"Forgive me if I am not justified in what I ask," said Scrooge, looking intently at the Spirit's robe, ' but I see something strange, and not belonging to yourself, protruding from your skirts. Is it a foot or a claw.'

'It might be a claw, for the flesh there is upon it,' was the Spirit's sorrowful reply. 'Look here.'

From the foldings of its robe, it brought two children; wretched, abject, frightful, hideous, miserable. They knelt down at its feet, and clung upon the outside of its garment.

'Oh, Man. look here. Look, look, down here.' exclaimed the Ghost.

They were a boy and a girl. Yellow, meagre, ragged, scowling, wolfish; but prostrate, too, in their humility. Where graceful youth should have filled their features out, and touched them with its freshest tints, a stale and shrivelled hand, like that of age, had pinched, and twisted them, and pulled them into shreds. Where angels might have sat enthroned, devils lurked, and glared out menacing. No change, no degradation, no perversion of humanity, in any grade, through all the mysteries of wonderful creation, has monsters half so horrible and dread.

Scrooge started back, appalled. Having them shown to him in this way, he tried to say they were fine children, but the words choked themselves, rather than be parties to a lie of such enormous magnitude.

'Spirit. are they yours.' Scrooge could say no more.

'They are Man's,' said the Spirit, looking down upon them. 'And they cling to me, appealing from their fathers.

This boy is Ignorance. This girl is Want. Beware them both, and all of their degree, but most of all beware this boy,

for on his brow I see that written which is Doom, unless the writing be erased. Deny it.' cried the Spirit, stretching out its hand towards the city. 'Slander those who tell it ye.

Admit it for your factious purposes, and make it worse. And abide the end.'

'Have they no refuge or resource.' cried Scrooge.

'Are there no prisons.' said the Spirit, turning on him for the last time with his own words. 'Are there no workhouses.'"

A Christmas Carol, Stave 3: The Second of the Three Spirits

The Best of the Blessing of this Season Upon All of You!

Daniel John, Editor and Chief Muggiewump

Let's remember the mission here:

Our mission? To teach everyone:

1. The Body is One Piece
2. There are three kinds of strength training:
 - Putting weight overhead
 - Picking it off the ground
 - Carrying it for time or distance
3. All training is *complementary*.

**The Seven Lessons of a
Rookie Season
Matt Vargochik**

This is Matt's third article with us and like many of our writers, he is discovering the benefits of "putting it out there." Another great piece of work...and insight.

One year ago I competed in the Scottish Highland Games for the first time. I had great time and became hopelessly addicted. I even wrote two articles for Get-Up!, which Dan John was kind enough to publish. I wanted to write many more, but until now I felt that I did not have much to contribute. With my first full year of throwing now complete, I think I have something worth sharing.

Prologue:

To see how far I have come, feel free to check out my previous articles:

<http://danjohn.org/tempe.pdf>

<http://danjohn.org/thx.pdf>

Lesson 1 – Anderson (March) – The first games of the season were marked by hail, rain, and arctic blasts. But the athletes competed. The winners were the ones who were mentally strong, and could focus on throwing while the rest of us shivered. *What I learned:* Conditions on game day will never be perfect, so don't put off training until later. Train at

a disadvantage and your contest will seem easy in comparison.

Lesson 2 – Loch Norman (April) – It was a foggy and serene morning at Rural Hill Farm. I was ready to build on the momentum I developed in March. My train was almost derailed when I learned that I was going to be placed in the A Division. I immediately resigned myself to the attitude that I was going to be crushed by some genuine Heavies. But I was not crushed. I had fun, I watched, and I learned. When it was all over, I wound up 10th of 16 athletes. *What I learned:* You have to leave the nest sometime. You will not get better unless you take on better competition. And training with better athletes will provide you with motivation and knowledge you might never find otherwise.

Lesson 3 – Triad (May) – Okay, sometimes the weather *is* perfect. But I was not. I started the day by setting a PR in the sheaf. I tweaked my back in the process. My focus increased tenfold and I put my full concentration into each throw thereafter. The result? Even though I only placed in one event, I finished in the top 3 for the first time. *What I learned:* You have to be consistent. Take a fresh approach to each event on game day, and fix your weak events in training.

Lesson 4 – Clover (June) – Could someone please bring back the rain? Clover would be a broiler, but what I remember most was that morning. Everyone was amped up and ready to go for the first event – the sheaf. Nearly the whole field made it through 18' and 20'. At 22', the pack began to thin. It took me until my third try to clear 24', which tied my PR. Only a handful remained when

the bar was raised to 26'. After the field failed on the first round, I knew I had an opportunity, and proved it was possible on my second throw. Blake Eidson, a thrower from the Charleston Southern U team, was up the challenge and matched me. We moved the bar to 27', and although I was heartbreakingly close, I couldn't make the bag crawl over. Still, I got my first event win ever after the count back, and a 2-foot PR. *What I learned:* You have to have the will to win. You have to want it badly and be willing to seize it with both hands.

Lesson 5 – Sorinex HQ (August) – Okay, not a meet, just training. But what training it was! I was invited down by the guys and jumped on the opportunity. Got to spend a couple hours throwing with Highland Game pro's Bert Sorin and Eric Frasure, as well as Sorinex web guru Jeff Goergen, who was also a B competitor at the time. What an experience! And all I had to do was show up. Good guys, no egos, big throws. *What I learned:* Learn from the best. Travel. Hang out with other competitors. Dan John has been preaching this for a while, and he's exactly right.

Lesson 6 – Green Hill (September) – A new game outside Roanoke, VA. Would be the first Game ever for a good friend of mine. I had been looking forward to it for a year. My training was in high gear until three weeks out, when I got careless and injured my back again. I was devastated. Three months of training since Clover, all thrown away foolishly. Quitting, however, was not something I was willing to contemplate. I would rest, heal, and come Game day, I would give it everything I had. I clung to the belief that I could win, and

competed as hard as I could on that rainy day. When it was over I placed in four events and won the B Division. *What I learned:* Believe in yourself, always. Bring a positive attitude with you, no matter what.

Lesson 7 – Waxhaw (October) – Back to where it all began. Rain passed through that morning (see the pattern here?), and I was as healthy as I had been all season. Was up against some of the strongest competitors – literally – that I had met all season. I got pushed into fourth overall on the event count back. My performance was marked by what could have been. On my third attempts at both weights, the stone, and hammer, I fired myself up only to wind up with a miserable result. *What I learned:* Relax! Have fun, be cool and stay calm. These events do not lend themselves to adrenaline, especially for beginners. Let your competitors waste their energy on histrionics.

And there it is - one year of learning in a nutshell. I thank all the friends, competitors, judges, AD's and families that I have had the pleasure of meeting. I cannot wait until 2009.

Bone Headed Mistakes **Tony Wirth**

Tony and I have talked on the T-Nation site a few times and we are very happy to have his first article with us in this edition. Like many of our readers, Tony's journey is filled with great and funny stories that gleam some insights into our shared vision of success...

Two years ago I made a commitment to loose my fat and get in shape but I didn't know how to begin. This article highlights the biggest boneheaded mistakes I've made along the way.

Boneheaded Mistake #1: Procrastination.

The voices in my head, it seems, can seldom agree on anything and for years fitness wasn't even discussed. I stayed busy smoking and drinking, or watching television while time kept marching on. I've since found that those voices are much happier when I pursue fitness. Coincidentally, those voices think they live on Mount Olympus.

Boneheaded Mistake #2: Over estimating my abilities.

My first fitness program was P90X and I pulled something during the pre-test. I worked around that injury for 60 days but I wasn't in good enough shape to complete the last 30-day cycle. Whatever I pulled continued to nag me for the next several months.

Boneheaded Mistake #3: No plan or clear goals.

I still didn't know which direction to go, so I went in all directions at once. I went on a spree buying books, magazines, DVDs, and gym equipment. For workouts, I randomly alternated between bodybuilding routines, yoga sessions or aerobics. I didn't have a plan.

Boneheaded Mistake #4: Using bad form.

I couldn't accept the puny weights that I was capable of lifting and had to throw more weight on the bar than I could handle. I hurt my back because of bad form while doing bent over barbell rows, and, as a result, I sat out another month of training.

Boneheaded Mistake #5: Not scheduling any back-off weeks or light days.

For three months I trained three days a week. I would warm up with Sean Burch's Hyperfitness drills, followed by Olympic lifts, followed by hill sprints or tire pulls. Each session lasted at least one hour. I exceeded my recovery ability and burned my nervous system. For weeks I experienced uncontrollable mood swings -- but I only had two moods -- irritability and rage.

Boneheaded Mistake #6: Being too stubborn.

I set out to do the Military press with an 8-6-4 set/rep scheme and had one press left to complete the third set. The weight was going up too slow and I should have ended the set early due to bad form. Instead, I forced the weight up and I felt something snap when my left elbow finally locked out. I couldn't press overhead for the next six months.

Well there they are, my biggest boneheaded mistakes so far. I found Dan's website and newsletter from an article in the January 2008 issue of Fitness Rx. I made the first four mistakes before reading Get Up! and the last two mistakes after learning enough to become dangerous. I certainly learned a lot from Dan and his other contributors and I hope this article will someday help someone too. Since the New Year is fast approaching, I'll make this resolution: By this time next year I will be able to kick up to a handstand and knock out some handstand pushups (because everyone knows that you have to be able to stay balanced on long trips). Thank you Dan.

Published by Daniel John

Daniel John, Editor

Copyright © Daniel John, 2007

All Rights Reserved

Any unauthorized reproduction is strictly prohibited.