



300

Μολὼν λαβέ

“Come and Take It!”

Mark Twight...a good friend and one of the best there is in the training world...trained the fighters for the movie, “300.”

Having said that...as I quiz my students, the bulk of them have no idea about the Battle of Thermopylae...the 300 Spartans who held off the whole Persian Army.

You see, my students have a great education: they learn things. But, honestly, until they come into my weights class...in many cases anyway...they have never done a difficult thing in their life. Mommy phones the school and complains that the doctor visit reported “deep muscle soreness” and Junior needs three weeks to recover.

I heard somewhere that the problem with America today is that you can live a long life and never discover whether or not you are a coward.

So, my students have a great education: they learn things. Hopefully, some of them will learn to stand up to tyranny and evil...and I pray none of them are the causes of tyranny and evil.

*“Go, tell the Spartans, you who read this stone
That we lie here, and that their will was done.”*

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*.

Beginner’s Mind

David Witt

David: “Ok, now we are going to do some South African drills”

Athlete: “I’m not doing that Texas two-step!”

The above conversation happened for real in 1989 I think, or maybe it was 88. Whatever, the athlete in question was a shot-putter in his senior year of high school. He had had a successful junior year, coming within a few inches of the school record. His senior year he was supposed to break that school record by many feet. The problem was he wasn’t coachable. He thought that he knew all that there was to know about throwing in this, which was probably his 4th year of throwing. He considered himself an “expert”.

If you study or read about the philosophy/religion of Zen, you may find some things that can be useful in our pursuits of throwing. In Zen, they talk of the Beginners Mind. In the Beginners Mind there are many possibilities, in the experts mind there are few possibilities.

The beginners mind is open, can absorb and learn many new things. The experts mind is closed, and cannot learn much more. Zen encourages us to be more like we were when we first started something, a beginner. We learned so much the first year we started throwing or lifting. But how much did we learn last year? I've been studying throwing since 1980, but I still learned a lot last year.

Discus camp helps with that. Being around John Powell and Brian Oldfield and Dan John and Bill Witt forces you to learn or be left behind. And there is still a lot to learn! Even someone like John Powell, who many would argue is an expert thrower, still looks for opportunities to learn. In the past two years I've lent him other tapes by other throwers and he has always expressed an interest in seeing them. Many experts would refuse to even watch the other tapes.

As a young thrower, especially in college when I was more mobile, whenever I went to another town, I would go to the local library or college library and look up anything they had on throwing. I found a lot of great things that way; I never stopped being a student of the event.

Keeping a Beginners Mind helps when we get frustrated. Sometimes when we've gone a couple years without surpassing a p.r. we get really frustrated. Really, really frustrated. In the film "The Soul is Greater than the World" Ricky Bruch urges a young thrower to reset her tolerance level. He basically said that if she was throwing 52m and her level of tolerance for a poor performance was 45m, then lower that 42 or 40m. Then she wouldn't put as much pressure on herself. John tells me that she did go on to become the national record holder for Sweden. But maybe going back to the distances she threw when she was younger, a beginner if you will, she could get past the frustration and focus on her goal. So maybe we need to readjust our expectations to move ahead.

And the young thrower that wouldn't do the South African drills? He never threw farther his senior year than he did his junior year. He never broke the school record, never won the state meet.

David...as always great work..."The Soul is Greater" is available from John Powell at discususa.com

Mental Victory

David Witt

This last Friday night I opened my season for 2007 indoors at the Mason-Dixon Games in Louisville, Ky. Even though I didn't throw an age-group PR, and in fact I was one centimeter below what I threw at the meet last year, I didn't feel disappointed by my performance. Oh sure, I wish I had done better, but the weather here has not been too helpful in getting out to throw. Where I succeeded was a mental victory.

Ever since 2001 when I started competing again, I've had toeboarditis. This is the fear of tripping over the toeboard and breaking something. My fear has kept me from driving toward the front of the ring and committing myself totally to the throw. Brian Oldfield spoke of this in his video "Shotputting with the Big O". (available at BrianOldfield.com) His approach was to purposefully jump out of the ring, foul on purpose. He didn't want to create a demon about staying in the toeboard, he implied that many throwers look down to see where the toeboard is, and miss the whole point of the throw, which is to explode upwards and out into the throw. Brian also felt that you should jump straight up in the power position, and then gravity would bring you straight down and you wouldn't have to worry about fouling.

My issue with the toeboard was not the board itself, but the 7-foot circle. I spent three years throwing the discus in high school before I picked up a shot. My coach at the time felt that if you weren't

throwing at the very front of the ring, you were giving up inches on your throw. So I spent my time getting to the front of the discus ring where my left foot would be right up against the rim of the circle.

Moving to the shot my senior year, and throwing rotational style, I found that my foot wanted to land right where the toeboard was. I had to shorten my step across the ring and my base in the power position as compared to my discus technique. This was the beginning of my toeboard fears.

Friday night, I found myself not even thinking about the toeboard, even though that night was the first time this year I threw with a toeboard. I was able to just throw and not worry about whether or not I was going to trip over the board. This is a huge step, now I'm going to be able to focus on my technique and be able to throw farther in the shot.

So sometimes we need to stop worrying about how far we throw and look for other victories. Things we learn about ourselves, friends we meet, people we help. Another fellow I throw with at our state games, Jimmy, brought a young man up to the meet Friday to see if I could give him some pointers about the discus. The young man wants to throw in college, and if he is willing to go to a meet that he wasn't even competing in just to meet someone who might help, then he might go far. He reminded me of myself, I did a similar thing in college.

If we stop worrying about the distance, a whole world of victories will open up for us and keep us motivated to continue on our journey.

The Big 21...an Example

Editor, Dan John

In my last article at t-nation, I discussed in detail the Big 21 Program...it was a total waste of my time, of course, as the number of emails piled up, I realized that this simple program is far too simple.

So, here is an example:

		Sn	C & J
Day 1			

	5	75	85
	5	80	90
	5	85	95
	1	90	100
	1	95	105
	1	100	110
	1	105	115
	1	110	120
	1	115	125
Day 2			
	5	80	90
	5	85	95
	5	90	100
	1	95	105
	1	100	110
	1	105	115
	1	110	120
	1	115	125
	1	120	130
Day 3			
	5	85	95
	5	90	100
	5	95	105
	1	100	110
	1	105	115
	1	110	120
	1	115	125
	1	120	130
	1	125	135
Day 4			
	5	90	100
	5	95	105
	5	100	110
	1	105	115
	1	110	120
	1	115	125
	1	120	130
	1	125	135
	1	130	140
Day 5			
	5	95	105
	5	100	110
	5	105	115
	1	110	120
	1	115	125

	1	120	130
	1	125	135
	1	130	140
	1	135	145
Day 6			
	5	100	110
	5	105	115
	5	110	120
	1	115	125
	1	120	130
	1	125	135
	1	130	140
	1	135	145
	1	140	150
Day 7	5	105	115
	5	110	120
	5	115	125
	1	120	130
	1	125	135
	1	130	140
	1	135	145
	1	140	150
	1	145	155
Day 8	5	110	120
	5	115	125
	5	120	130
	1	125	135
	1	130	140
	1	135	145
	1	140	150
	1	145	155
	1	150	160
Day 9			
	5	115	125
	5	120	130
	5	125	135
	1	130	140
	1	135	145
	1	140	150
	1	145	155
	1	150	160
	1	155	165

This would be for an athlete who tested out with a 145-150 snatch the week

before and a 155-160 Clean and Jerk...not unusual numbers for a high school boy. (The Jerk is usually the issue...they can often clean a lot more than they can jerk.)

A Nice Book to Consider

I recently purchased Josh Hillis's ebook entitled, "The Stubborn Seven Pounds." Along with the book, Josh includes some extra pamphlets on abs, supplements, Q & A, some updated materials and a nice journal that has some excellent daily questions to review.

I like the materials. I have great respect for Josh...his enthusiasm carries over to the page. What I like best about this book is the simplicity. The overriding principle for fat loss is your food diary and Josh pounds this away throughout the text. Also, he does a nice job synthesizing the basic principles of lifting weights and explains the concept of "skinny fat" as well as I have seen. I have already stolen one workout from him...my emergency "I have to workout workout:"

Push ups supersetted with Goblet Squats: 25-20-15-10-5

With track season on me, this little adaptation...Josh uses Swings and I have done that workout, too...is a great time saver and leaves a nice soreness the next day.

As many of you know, I like books like this...a summary of this and that and this and that and this and that...spelling out everything you need to know. I know it is basically about the "Last Seven Pounds," but Josh gives you a nice template for how to put it all together.

Oh, and "I know, I know," the average Get Up reader already knows everything that is in the book. That might be true...but many of the readers often email me and ask "my wife/mom/girlfriend (I hope never all the same person...I'm not judging...just saying) wants to train and she thinks that cardio and high carb is the answer.

Well, Josh answers that better than I ever can.

Do you want to write for Get Up?

Why?

Well, if you really do...and I get about three or four emails a month from interested authors...just send your work in with a short overview of “who you are.”

In return, you will receive enlightenment on your deathbed! Well, I can't promise that either, but other than the world-wide fame of being an “Official Get Up Author”...and that is not that big a deal...you get, um, nothing.

But, you get the right to complain about nothing, too!!!

So, interested?

Email me at dj84123@yahoo.com

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