

## Almost back to normal...

I'm not sure our readership understands that I am a Head Track and Field Coach. I have 107 athletes, 11 assistants, two buses and probably a thousand pages of forms to fill out.

So, Get Up moves over a little bit this time of year. This edition is probably one of the best ever as Dave Witt gives us an emotional insight about training (better than any season ending edition of Grey's Anatomy) and Duane Hansen raises the bar so high on articles, I decided to never ever write one again.

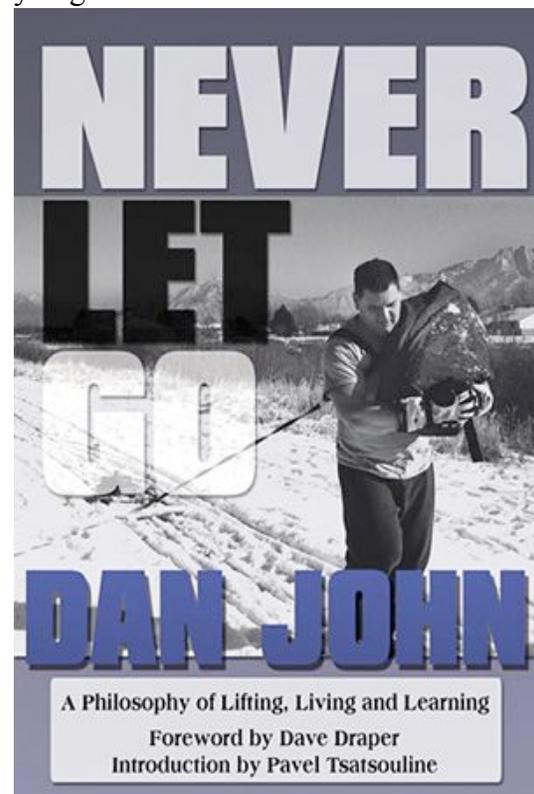
A couple of things:

First, my book is available. I had a lot of fun with the intro and afterword and especially with the "Suggested Further Reading List." There are some repeats, but a lot of new stuff. It's called "Never Let Go: A Philosophy of Lifting, Living, and Learning" and I hope we can get people to buy it from here:

<http://davedraper.com/blog/2009/05/13/never-let-go-a-philosophy-of-lifting-living-and-learning/>

A lot of people have asked through the years why I don't charge for Get Up (the worry: no one would buy it!!!), but I

have always believed in the need to have a book to hold in one's hands. Well, here you go.



Second, I did a fun experiment with Kenneth Jay's VO2 Max Protocol. During track, I simply have NO time. It's 12 hour days every day and some times much longer. Yes, I mind it and, yes, the world doesn't need me as a martyr. So, this season, I decided to train smarter.

Basically, I Bench Press two sets of five a couple of times a week. I do *Kalos Sthenos* style Turkish Get Ups when I can with a rep on the right and a rep on the left. Then, three days a week I do an eight to fifteen minute VO2 Max Kettlebell Snatch workout (see the web for more information than you could ever want!)

The other day, I weighed in...226. The same weight that I finished the Velocity Diet two years ago. Moreover, I'm thinking that this VO2 Max, Get Up and Bench Press cycle PLUS a few deadlifts here and there might be an ideal throwers routine. Anyone who wants to hear more, meet me over at my forum on Dave Draper and let's talk.

It's based on the Program Minimum from Pavel's book, "Enter the Kettlebell." (By the way, many have wept reading the forward). Here you go:

### **The New RKC Program Minimum Summary**

- Twice a week alternate sets of swings with easy jogging for recovery for 12 minutes
- Do your swings to a comfortable stop. Once you are well conditioned you may go all-out occasionally
- "Shake out" the lactic acid and tension from your muscles when jogging. Relax! The purpose of jogging is active recovery, not more conditioning.
- Twice a week, do get-up singles, switching arms after each rep, for 5 minutes.
- Focus on perfect technique, not on reps. Don't count you get-up reps, and don't try to top them!
- Arrange the weekly plan any way you want, e.g., Mon., Thurs.-Swings; Tues., Fri.-get-ups or Mon., Thurs.-get-ups;

Tues., Sat.-swings. If you want to add an extra swing or get-up day, go ahead-make your day.

- Start each workout with 10 minutes of face-the-wall squats, halos, and pumps.
- Unless you are an experienced strength athlete, do no other lifting.

I do the Get Ups this way:

### **Turkish Get Up Progression:**

Roll to side (I call this "Cuddle") (Be sure when on your back put your right ear to the ground at least once and your left ear to the ground at least once)

Up to elbow (Raise your "straight leg" up and down a few times)

Up to post (I call this the "T Position" like I use in explaining the discus) (I also look back and forth at both hands a few times, too) (Do the leg raises, too)

To high hips (The Key. Hold the Hips High for a while and keep stretching the "Four Knots")

This is my simple explanation of the VO2 Max from a Q&A at [davedraper.com](http://davedraper.com):

"I just do 15 R, rest 15, 15 L, rest 15 for as long as I can do 8's From experience, you get a weight you can do 8 snatches with in 15. When the reps get sloppy, stop. When you can do 8 for a long time, for me 20-25 minutes, go heavier and do 7s. It's not complex for the 15/15."

*It works...*

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*.

**Loss of a Partner**

**Dave Witt**

*Get Up readers will be happy to know that Dave, our most prolific writer, has been raised to Assistant Chief Muggywump in our hierarchy here at Get Up Staff Headquarters. He can use the indoor bathroom now.*

I'm a little sad right now. After more than four years, my training partner is going away. I had some in the past that lasted a year, maybe two, but four is an awesome number when it comes to having the same training partner with you.

September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2004 was the first time we trained together. I did snatches, front squats, and bench that day. Eight days later my training partner went with me to the track as I did some 400's and 200's. Even competitions, indoor meets, Bluegrass Games, Highland Games, my training partner was there. Rare indeed.

My training partner saw me through some of my experiments in training. The three weeks volume, followed by three weeks of heavy was one of the first. The dice training was something we pioneered together. Timed benches, how fast can you do 8 reps with 205? For me, 10.71 seconds. We only did that for 4 weeks my partner reminds me. If my partner wasn't at the gym with me, I felt lost. Sometime I would go get him

and drag him there, I couldn't workout without him.

On February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2006, my partner went with me when I walked away from the local gym because they wouldn't let me drop the bumper plates anymore and followed me to my garage for several months of training. When the gym changed hands, we went back together, they let me drop the plates again.

My partner has been there for some of my lifetime bests lifts. Best snatch, deadlift, squat, to name a few.

It's not like I didn't know this day would come. My training partner is pretty old. A little worn and rough around the edges. I don't have anything against the old, I'm getting closer to joining their ranks every day. But my training partner is used up, and it is time to get another one.

So I say goodbye to my training partner. I'll go back to him every now and then, but like most training partners I've had his days are over. Soon I must replace him, get another.

Goodbye my friend, my trusty workout notebook, my training partner.

*-Flowers may be sent in care of the editor-Editor*

**Oly Training: 101**

**Duane Hansen**

*Duane was worried that this piece was too "stream of consciousness" for our readership. I told him that the flowers in New Zealand love the sunlight, too. Welcome aboard, Duane...this is a great addition to our work*

**A Weightlifting Dialectic**

THESIS: The average person who lifts weights goes into the gym three days a week.

ANTITHESIS: The best weightlifters live in the gym and lift weights all day, every day.

SYNTHESIS: There seems to be a very large disconnect between what the average person does and what the best lifters in the world do. I will be the first to admit that there is a vast difference in the ultimate results that any individual person can accomplish, but when it comes to training, the gap is no so large as it might seem to be.

The very first step that every weightlifter takes is learning how to lift a barbell. There are two lifts that are judged in a competition and you need to learn how to do them well enough to satisfy the referees. This task is simple enough, especially if you have a decent coach to show you what to do. After this is mastered (at a rudimentary level, at least) the next task is to lift more weight.

For a while, the beginning lifter will be able to make progress just by showing up and lifting weights. Just for clarity, I define a novice as someone who needs to learn how to lift the weights from the floor to overhead and a beginner as a lifter who is practicing that skill.

As an aside, there could be a very good argument made that all novices and beginners should be practicing the skills that they need every day (and likely several times a day). I will not disagree with this because I think it is true, but the reality is that people who lift weights lift weight three days per week.

A common question (and a very good question) for a beginner is this: how much weight should I lift? There are many stories about people who have spent months going through the motions with a broomstick and then a few years later they are lifting for real on the Olympic platform. I love a good story, but this is the real answer: every day you go into the gym to lift, you should lift as much as you can. The first reason is that no one ever gets bonus points for moving a broomstick very nicely and the second reason is that a beginner will not have enough skill to lift that much weight. The second reason is the most important here.

The basic workout for a beginner will start with the snatch. They will start lifting a light bar and add weight for additional sets. Eventually the bar will be heavy enough that they will not be able to make the lift. The starting weight for the bar is not that important, really. I have started with 30kg and worked up to a top weight that was more than 3 times as much. The bottom line for a beginner is that they will reach a weight where they will run out of skill and the weight will not be lifted. If there is a simple correction that can be made (never try to lift a missed weight a second time if you don't know what you did wrong the first time) then try again. If the weight is lifted either try more weight or decide that the weight you lifted is good enough for the day (a good coach will help you make that decision). Once you find the top weight you can lift for the day, lower the weight on the barbell by 10% or so and do a few more lifts. Ten percent less weight will allow you to lift the weights with speed and precision and that is an important skill to

learn: lift big weights and look good doing it.

The same pattern is done for the clean & jerk: work up to the most weight you can lift for the day and then do a few more lifts with a bit less weight for some practice.

In case there is any question at this point, the classical lifts (snatch and clean & jerk) should be done for singles. On the platform in a meet, you will be doing just one lift with a barbell, so you should learn from the beginning to do it right the first time. There are, of course, many opinions about this, but this is my opinion and I tend to insist on it.

After you have finished doing your snatches and clean & jerks, it is a good time to squat. The front squat is a good option here, again, for a couple reasons. First, it is very similar to the recovery from the squat clean which is a place where many lifters get stuck. Second, the performance of the lift demands a better posture (compared to what you need in the classical lifts) and the front squat can fill in a lot of gaps that a beginning lifter may have. The overhead squat might be an even better choice, but the logistics of getting the barbell into position often suggest that the front squat is more practical in most situations.

The difference in the amount of weight used in the front squat and the overhead squat is based on two factors: first, getting the bar in position and second, the strength of the "little" muscles in the upper back. Consider what the elite Chinese lifters can do. They will overhead squat the same weight as their front squat, starting the weight from the

bottom position and using a clean grip. If you could get to that point, do you think you would have any problem supporting a barbell overhead?

A good starting point for front squats is the top weight that you can clean. A lifter may need some warm-up sets to get to this weight and there may be the need to do some remedial work on mobility in the wrists and shoulders, but if you are doing a few sets of 2-3 reps with the same weight you can clean for a single, you will be getting stronger.

When it comes to planning a day's workout, you should try to do about the same number of reps in the same snatch and the clean & jerk. The snatch may need a few more sets with the lighter weights to get the body loose and warmed up, but after this the total number of reps should be about the same. When it comes to squatting, the total number of reps with your working weight should be about the same as the total number of reps in the classical lifts. This can be taken two ways. If you do 10 reps in the snatch and 10 reps in the C&J, you could either do 10 total reps in the front squat or 20 total reps in the front squat. The first option is plenty of hard work and is often good enough. The second option is some serious work and probably shouldn't be done all of the time. Some lifters may need extra work on the squat and others will have "enough" squat strength, at least for what they are lifting right now. A good coach will usually be able to steer you in the right direction. The bottom line here is that the squat is just an assistance exercise. It is good to be stronger rather than weaker, but if squatting too much is holding back progress in the classical lifts, it is too much of a good thing.

Back Squats are a good lift, too, but the relationship to a bigger back squat to a bigger Olympic total is not nearly as strong as the relationship between a bigger front squat and a bigger Olympic total. If there is a bias, it should be towards front squats rather than back squats.

Every training session should be finished with some serious ab work. It is impossible to have abs too strong. I prefer the basic 5x5 approach with added weight. My coach (a former Olympian and coach of some seriously strong athletes) likes one set of 30-50 reps with added weight. Both approaches work and as long as the athlete is getting stronger, it is all good. A key point here is not to worry about isolating the ab muscles. In weightlifting, no muscle works in isolation, including the abs.

After the lifting is done, any remedial flexibility and mobility issues should be addressed. Most beginners will need to loosen up the hamstrings and low back. Stretching the quads and the muscles of the upper body will help the athlete relax and recover.

To summarize: Snatch up to a top weight, then do a few more singles with 90% for practice. Then Clean & Jerk up to a top weight and again a few more singles with 90%. Squat, abs, stretch and then go home.

This is the basic plan and it should be done three days a week. Eventually a lifter will get to the point where they will start running out of strength before the run out of technical ability. When this happens (and it may be a gradual process) the lifter will advance from

being a beginner and is now an intermediate lifter. The good thing about the basic program described so far is that it will still work. Working up to a limit lift every time is still a good thing to do and the singles at 90% will be more strength work than technical practice, but it works out about the same on paper. The thing to watch at this point is the squat work. After a while a lifter will become much more reliable on how much weight they can lift in the squat compared to what they can clean. Repetition work (sets of 2 or 3 reps) should be watched because it will be easier at this point to do so much squatting that everything else will start to stagnate from the effort. A good idea is to keep the total number of squats to no more than the total number of clean in a workout. Also, it will be useful to try for a really heavy single in the front squat every now and then. Start with the best weight in the clean and work up in 10kg jumps until you find a limit. This is some hard work, so do not do it every day.

An intermediate lifter will also need to pay attention to intensity. Intensity is just the ratio of the weight on the barbell to the maximum lift. Any attempt to define intensity as more than that is just thinking too much; do not over think things here. The rule of thumb is that weights less than 80% are warm-up weights and really do not count for anything other than warming up. So if you are counting the total number of reps in a training session, don't count weights less than 80%. Medium weights are in the 80% range (90% of the best clean for the front squat). Heavy weights are in the 90% range (100% of the best clean from the front squat). Maximal weights are 100% or more of

the max weight in the classical lifts; maximal weights in the front squat are the actual weight that you can front squat. Seriously, keep this stuff simple and do not over think it.

Planning gets a little bit more involved when a lifter is trying to move up from being an intermediate lifter to an advanced lifter. It still remains pretty simple, however. The three days a week of maximal lifting will still be there. Experience has shown, however, that it takes at least 48 hours for the Central Nervous System (CNS) to be ready for another limit workout. The muscles will be ready in 24 hours or less for more work, but it cannot be at the limit efforts that the beginner and intermediate lifters were using.

This is where the idea of intensity becomes important. Prelipin's Table is an idea that has been around for many years and this is the time to apply it. Simply, the idea is that a single training session with 80% weights should include 10-20 total repetitions; 90% weights should be used for a total of 4-10 total repetitions. Practical experience suggests that 10 singles with 80% of your max in the snatch and 10 singles in the C&J with 80% of your max is quite enough for one training session. Squats should be done for sets of 2-3 reps; 5 sets x 2 reps with 80% is average work and 5 sets x 3 reps is hard enough. If you are doing work with 90%, 4 singles with 90%, 3 singles with 90% or 1-2 singles with a weight between 95 and 100% is plenty. This applies to snatches, clean & jerks and squats. By this time, a lifter should know their best front squat.

A limit lift in the snatch and C&J will still be doing several times a week; a limit lift in the front squat should be done every week or two at least. It is also important to realize that by this point a lifter will be fairly stable in the amount of weight that they can lift. It will not be changing that much from day to day. The general trend (observed over a period of a few months) should be up but the actual weight lifted on a given day will vary 5-10%. The important idea to get from this is that the percentage you select for a working weight is based on what you have done most recently. This lets the program be self-regulated. Some days will be better than others (depending on many factors, some of which are beyond the lifter's or the coach's control) and the program will adjust with it.

The other critical point (the first one being that you need to lift as much as you can lift as often as you can) is that you need to back off from time to time. This means a lifter needs to back on both the intensity of the lifts and the total amount of work that they do during a week. Practical experience has shown that two weeks of hard work needs to be followed by an easy week. The elite lifters of the past would work hard for three weeks before taking an easy week. Two points must be emphasized here. First, the elite lifters of the past were using "supplements" that allowed them to work hard for three weeks in a row. Second, they still backed off for a week, despite using the "supplements". This point is perhaps the most important: bust-ass for a couple of weeks and then back way off. The point of backing off is to let the body recover from the hard work. It will recover and build the capacity to handle the work during the

easy week. After the easy week the lifter will jump right back into the high-volume, high-intensity program. This is the way to keep ratcheting up the level of performance over an extended period of time (years, ideally).

This is the essence of the theoretical application of modern weightlifting training. If you are curious or skeptical (and you should be) you have to be asking, "Can real people in the real world with real lives actually do this?" The simple answer is, yes, they can. I can share a real life example that proved it to both the lifter and the coach. *(The next part is Part Two, but I think it flows pretty well-Editor)*

This is a good, productive training session: First, snatch up to a top single for the day, then do a few more singles with 90% or so. After that, clean & jerk up to a top single for the day, then a few more singles with 90% or so. Next, front squat with some serious weight (about the same as you can clean) for a few sets and reps. Do some ab work like you mean it, stretch if you need it, then go home and rest.

A good, productive week will have you doing that workout three days during the week. It is possible to do it more often, but it is best to put 48-72 hours between limit training sessions like this. It is also best to only work really hard for two weeks in a row and back off during the third week. This ratio of 2:1 (hard week : easy week) is usually best. Sticking to a schedule of hard work and easy work will keep the general trend of progress moving up. What, then, should a lifter do during the back-off week?

Using a weight that is 80% of your max is about the least amount of weight that

will still be productive; less weight is just for warming up and practice. Ten reps with 80% is a good number for a lift in an average workout. So a minimal training session will look like this:

Snatch - 10 singles with 80% of your max

Clean & Jerk - 10 singles with 80% of your max

Front Squat - 5 sets x 2 reps with 80% of your max

Your max in the snatch and the clean & jerk is simply the best lift you made during the previous week. If you found a top lift in the front squat, then that is your max, too. If you are basing your squat weights during the hard weeks on what you were able to clean, then use about 10-20kg less that you did during the previous hard week. Perform this workout on your normal lifting days. Often a lifter will be worn out after two hard weeks in a row and even this lighter training session will feel heavy on the first day of the back off week. By the third training session, the weights should be feeling ridiculously light. Do not give in to the temptation to lift more; stick with the program.

As the intermediate lifter progresses, they will develop a tolerance for more work. Remember that the CNS can really only perform a limit workout every other day or so, but the muscles can recover in 12-24 hours. As the tolerance for work increases, start adding additional training days. The work on the added days can just be the minimal workout that is used during the back-off week. The best plan is to add one additional training session to a 3 week cycle. If the lifter responds well to this (meaning that they are still making the

big lifts on the three heavy days during the hard weeks), you can add another day in the following 3 week cycle. My preference for adding days (assuming a Monday, Wednesday, Friday schedule for the heavy days) would be Saturday first, then Tuesday next and Thursday last.

It is often useful to have a lifter get used to lifting on Saturday mornings as soon as possible in their career, since meets will most often be held on a Saturday, starting in the morning. It is also useful to switch the heavy and light days on Friday and Saturday. So the max lifting sessions will be on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday and the 80% session will be on Friday.

Another useful change when you start adding additional training sessions is to do back squats in place of front squats during the lighter training sessions. The same weight can be used for both front squats and back squats (i.e., about the same weight as the lifter can clean) and 5 sets of 2-3 reps works for both lifts. What this does is build a heavy/light scheme into the squat work. Going heavy all of the time in the squat can be too taxing for many lifters in the long run and it can make the progress in the classical lifts stagnate. A good plan would be to do heavy singles once a week in one of the squats and 5 sets x 2-3 reps the rest of the time. For example, on the Saturday of the first week start with the lifter's best weight in the clean and do singles in the front squat, working up in 10kg jumps (5kg may work better for lifters who are not yet quite as strong) until they find a top lift. It may not be a true max, but it will be a good, heavy lift. On Saturday of the second week, do singles in the back

squat, working up in 10kg jumps to a top lift. Saturday is a good day for this since most lifters will take Sunday off and this will give them an extra day to recover from the effort.

If a lifter stands up with a heavy squat but it is a slow grinder or they have to round their back, stop there. For our purposes here, 3 seconds is plenty of time to stand up with a squat; if it takes longer than that or if the lifter slows to a halt at some point in the lift, that weight is heavy enough. Getting hurt while squatting is never a good idea and running that risk just to put a few more kilos on a PR in a non-competition lift is just not worth it.

It may take some time for a lifter to develop a tolerance for the added work and there will be times when it is best to take away an additional training session, but eventually a lifter should be able to develop their ability to tolerate 5-6 training session per week and still make gains during the three hard training sessions. The gains may be come less often, but the general trend should always be up. It will likely be most apparent when the lifter competes in a meet. If the meet total keeps going up over the course of the year then the lifter is definitely doing something right in their training.

Most lifters will spend their entire career never doing more than six training sessions in a week and many will do just fine with only 3 or 4. Some lifters, however, they will have the capability and desire to do even more work. This is a good thing, in general. To optimize a lifter's performance in weightlifting it is usually best to have them do as much

work as they can tolerate while still making gains in their total.

It is obvious that there are only so many days during the week where you can plan to have a training session (there were only seven days in the week the last time I counted). It is less obvious that the solution is not to make the training sessions longer. Experience has shown that a lifter can train with the correct amount of effort for about one hour (plus or minus 15 minutes). If you train longer than this in a single session the return for the effort will diminish quickly. Even the best lifters with the best "supplements" rarely train longer than 60-90 minutes at one time.

It can be useful to take a break between lifts. Twenty minutes is about the most time you should spend doing any one lift. Taking a 10-20 minute break between lifts will let the body rest and recover a bit so that a better effort can be produced for the next lift. So, if a lifter spends 10 minutes warming up in general, 20 minutes snatching, 20 minutes resting (without cooling off too much), 20 minutes doing the clean & jerk, resting for another 20 minutes, then 20 minutes squatting and finishing with 10-20 minutes of ab work and stretching, the total time in the gym could easily pass 2 hours. The actual time spent lifting serious weights will still only be about 60 minutes.

There are a couple of options for the lifter who is at this point in their training. The foundation should always be the three high intensity training sessions during the week and two weeks of hard work followed by a week of

backing off. To do much less than this reduces the productivity of the training effort and the results that the lifter will receive from that effort. The options are what to do on the other training days during the week.

The first choice would be to keep the focus on the Olympic lifts and improving the lifter's total. One good way to do this is to focus on lifts that are similar to the classical lifts, but not quite the same. The best choice, in my opinion, would be to do the power snatch and the power clean on the other days. Ideally, the technique used in the squat versions of the snatch and clean should be identical to the technique used in the power versions of the lifts. The only difference will be that the power snatch and power clean will be caught higher. The advantage here is that the lifter can use less weight and more speed without learning bad habits that will transfer to the squat versions of the lifts.

There are a couple of ways to take this approach. The first would be to consider the squat versions and the power versions of the lifts as different lifts and work up to a limit lift in all of them. The danger with this is that trying to find a maximum in a power snatch (or clean) could lead to bad habits. It takes a disciplined lifter (and often a good coach) to decide when the lifter has reached their limit in the power version of a lift.

A better approach is to pick a weight in the power snatch and power clean based on how much they lifted in the squat versions of the lifts. Most lifters will find that they are quite consistent in the ratios they have between lifts. For example, say that a lifter with a few

years of experience knows that they can power snatch about 85% of their best squat snatch. If that lifter makes a top lift of 100kg on Monday, then on Tuesday they would use 85kg in the power snatch for as many good singles as they can manage. The same concept would apply to the power clean, too.

There will also be lifters who can clean a weight with relative ease and then struggle with the jerk. This lifter could likely benefit from training the two lifts separately. They could, for example, work up to a limit clean on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and then work on the jerk (either off the rack or off of jerk blocks) on the other days of the week.

The other days can also be used to work on other stuff. By this I mean it could be an opportunity to do more lifts than just the 5 or 6 lifts that the Bulgarians do exclusively. It would not be the worst thing for a lifter to put some effort into benches and curls on the other days, but experience has shown that extra effort put towards the muscles on the back side of the body will pay you back much more when it comes to improving your total on the platform.

There are many options available to a lifter who is skilled in the classical lifts (and their variations). What they do with those skills is really up to them. For a lifter who has the basic skills and the will to excel at weightlifting the next step is to train like the real weightlifters train.

*-That's it? Duane was worried he went on too long...great stuff. Welcome to the team!!!*

**Finally**, on a small note, my daughter Lindsay took second in State. She was by far the shortest athlete (we believe it is my genes), but she nailed a school record to come in as runner up at the State Track Meet. She overcame poor coaching, too.



“Now you will not swell the rout  
Of lads that wore their honours out,  
Runners whom renown outran  
And the name died before the man.

So set, before its echoes fade,  
The fleet foot on the sill of shade,  
And hold to the low lintel up  
The still-defended challenge-cup.

And round that early-laurelled head  
Will flock to gaze the strengthless dead,  
And find unwithered on its curls  
The garland briefer than a girl's.”

A. E. Houseman

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