

A Very Special Edition of...

David Witt deserves a medal. He writes about two columns a week for Get Up and I remember to put one or two in a month. So, I found a bunch of his back unpublished columns and felt the need to reward him.

At the same time, ANOTHER David sends in an article...and my Confirmation name is "David," so there you go...

The "Dave" Edition!

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*.

Thoughts for Master Athletes

David Witt

"I weighed less, my waist was smaller, I felt better...I threw farther"

The quote above was from our esteemed editor in Volume 1, issue 12 of GETUP! As we get older, our base metabolism decreases 10% every decade. A decrease in metabolism leads to an increase in body fat. Think about it, how many people look the same in their 40's as they did in their 30's? Or from their 50's to 40's? Even if your body appears the same, underneath is another story. A body fat caliper that I have has a chart that explains why your body fat percentage increases as you get older even though your

skin fold measurements may stay the same. As you get older, your body stores more fat around the internal organs, so even if you can't see it, your body fat percentage does increase.

So why the quote? Because excess weight will not make us better throwers. I submit that losing some of that excess will make us better throwers.

"As far as losing weight helping athleticism, the biggest advantages for me were the increase in mobility, flexibility, speed and endurance. I'm actually weaker technically. I used to close grip 385 for reps and can barely do 275 now. But I'm throwing farther because of the speed and mobility increase."

I started asking people to share with me their stories of weight loss and the effects it had on their throwing. The above quote is from Earl Curry, another GETUP! Author.

Men tend to gain weight around the waist and gut. Think about walking on a tightrope holding a bar for balance. Now add weight to one side of the bar only. Changes the balance of the bar, right? This is similar to the effect of weight gain in the gut for men. That extra weight out front creates a strain on the lower back in most people. For the athlete, it throws off the balance. Balance through the ring is critical for throwers. If you're like me, you probably have some extra weight. But I've had it for so long now that I don't remember what I moved like without it. All I know is I threw farther. So I imagine myself wearing one of those pregnant belly things that actors wear on TV. What if it weighed 20 pounds? Now how would I move if I tried to throw the discus with this thing on? I imagine it pulling me off balance as I move toward the middle of the ring in the 2 position. I can see

it throwing me forward as I move through the power position making it hard to hold positions. Again, a thought from Earl:

“Power cleans and snatches were out of the question before weight loss, just can't get the bar around the belly when your super big or get down into the proper position to start the lift. Deadlifting is actually a lot easier after losing the weight.”

I know, Alexeev had a big belly. Well, I'm not Alexeev. I've seen the model of what I look like when I throw far, and it doesn't involve a big belly.

What does a mechanic do if he wants to race a car? The first step would be to go out and get the biggest engine possible...Then that engine would be modified for power. The car itself would be stripped of all unnecessary chrome and accessories for efficiency. Like the race car, lifters must rid themselves of unnecessary fat.

This quote is one of my favorites from Fred Hatfield in his book “Powerlifting, a scientific approach”. ISBN 0-8092-7001-3. To continue from his book,

“Since fat contributes nothing to maximum effort, except perhaps as added leverage for the heavies and superheavies, lean muscle mass should be maximized and fatty tissues removed.”

When was the last time you saw an overly large world class thrower in the sense of body fat? Riedel, Schult, Schmidt, all examples of the lean European throwers. For the thrower, I submit that fat is dead weight that suppresses power and contributes nothing to a throw.

Rick Eklof talked about the power index, multiplying the square root of your bodyweight by the square root of your vertical leap. I decided to do an experiment. I did a vertical leap on my deck up against the house and then did it again holding a 20 pound dumbbell. The differential appeared to be about 4 inches. So 20 pounds added decreases the vertical by 4 inches. So just play with numbers, imagine a masters athlete that is 235 jumping 18 inches. That gives a power index of 65. Now take that same

athlete and decrease his bodyweight by 20 pounds to 215 and increase his vertical by 4 inches, and that yields a power index of almost 69. So power did increase.

Nothing earth-shattering, just a decision that to be more explosive, I could either become lighter or get stronger or both. Summertime in Texas will help you lose weight and cleaning up my diet did too. I also realize that I wasn't going to be able to out-gorilla most of my competitors, so I started on the "speed kills" mentality.

Rick Eklof makes a good point here. Speed of release is the most important, changeable factor in throwing. If wearing a 20 pound belt around my waist makes me slower in the 100m dash, wouldn't the same hold true for throwing? Blasting out of the power position is very much like a vertical leap, and that 20 pound belt will hold you down. I would rather apply that force to the throw.

So I'm convinced. Fat has to be dumped in order to throw farther. Just one more thing to add to the arsenal of training .

Another Contrarian Approach

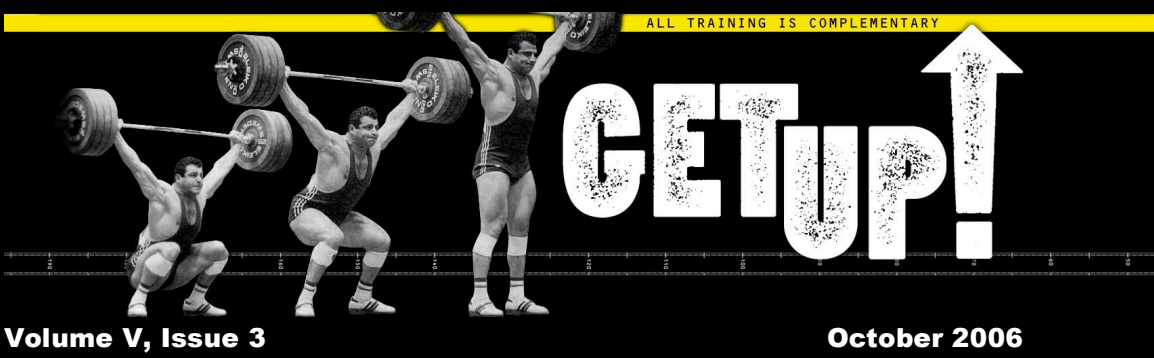
David Witt

Here at GETUP we march to the tune of a different drummer. Actually, I think it is a saxophone. Whatever, here is another bit of contrarian training for your consideration.

Most people workout according to a set schedule, MWF being the most popular. But what would happen if you worked out every other day for a whole year. Some weeks would be MWF, but the other weeks would be STTS.

If you work out MWF all year, that would give you 156 workouts for the year. Now if you work out every other day, that would be 182 workouts. That's 26 more workouts, or the equivalent of 8 extra weeks on the old 3 day a week routine.

How many more throws could you do with an extra 26 workouts? How many more reps on the weight room? Would you now have the extra time to work on your Olympic Lifting techniques? How many of use say, “If only I had more time”.



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My Take-Away from 2006 What I think I learned

David Witt

The 2006 season is over for me, and as usual it is time to reflect in order to prepare for the coming year. In 2006 I improved over my 2005 performances in the shot and discus. I added an inch to my 60# atomic ball throw, and picked up another mantra.

So I'm not spiraling downward, that's the good news. This year is the first in many that I didn't throw distance-wise less than the previous year. Age is not that big of a factor. Fitness is. My new mantra that I picked up this year is "Fit goes Far". I have noticed that when I am more fit, and consequentially weigh less, I throw farther. In 2002 and 2003 when I was really throwing good I weighed about 15 pounds less on average than I do right now. I also notice that when I've been running, my throwing workouts are less taxing and I can do more with them. In order to throw 50 throws a day, you have to be in shape. Think about the average kid at a high school track practice that only throws 8 throws in a session. That kid probably couldn't run a lap around the track. You know what I mean, they aren't in any kind of athletic shape at all.

So I need to trim some weight and get fitter. Ok, I'm doing that. What else?

I've notice over the last few years that I get silly strong in the fall. Well, silly strong for me anyway. My strength levels peak right before Christmas break, and I never get back to that intensity again. This year I'm going to coast through the fall in the weight room and try to time my strength peaks with the throwing season. Or at least the beginning of throwing season, that way the loss of strength will not be so pronounced in June and July, my prime shot and discus season.

Which brings up another point. I'm a thrower. Always have been. I'm not a

powerlifter, though I could be, or an Olympic lifter, which I could never be. Don't have the technical proficiency for it. So why have I been training like a powerlifter or the other? My focus needs to be around throwing things, and the weights need to be a supplementary task, like the running. Back in 2002 I was throwing the discus 10 feet farther than I do now, but back then my weight room numbers were pitiful compared to what I have done for the last couple of years. I literally added 100 pounds to my deadlift, but I didn't throw farther. I need to focus more on being a thrower instead of some kind of thrower/lifter hybrid.

So no more max lifts this year. I'm going to use sets of 3 to test myself until February. Then I'll start pushing big weight. I need to keep running, and even run indoors if it gets too cold to run outdoors. And I need to trim any excess weight.

Next time: The technical things I need to work on my throws for the coming year.

O Lift Ladders

Not David Witt

David Chiu!

Dave Chiu has O-lifted to ten state championships in Utah and Virginia. He is perhaps best known for dropping 162.5 kg on top of his head at the 1990 Olympic Festival, before coming back to PR w/ 167.5 and take the silver. He earlier won that year's Collegiate Nationals on a 6-for-6 day that increased his Total PR by 25 kg.

*You can ask him how many fingers you're holding up at
DYChiu@verizon.net*

Steven Shafley's article (Vol. V, Issue 2) was a real motivator!! I have really enjoyed a semi-related kind of format that incorporates some of the other great ideas you've read in Get Up!

Here's how I do it using moderate weight – about 50 to 60% of C&J max – for a workout of (power clean + press):

(4+1)
(3+2)
(2+3)
(1+4)

As you can see, the PC's decrease by one each set, and the PR's increase by one each set, and both come to a total of 10. This changing mix from set to set is much more mentally engaging (especially if you're kinda number compulsive), but you have to pay enough attention to not forget what you're on for.

You can do the same for sets of (power snatch + overhead squat), even in the same workout with about 10% less weight.

If you want to get more reps, either go with less weight for:

(7+3)
(6+4)
(5+5)
(4+6)
(3+7)

OR with varying weight (as suits you) for:

(4+1) w/ 50%
(3+2) “ “
(2+3) “ “
(1+4) “ “
(2+3) w/ 65%
(3+2) “ “
(4+1) w/ 60%
(3+2) “ “
(2+3) “ “
(1+4) “ “

If you don't mind a little extra mental challenge, or even prefer it (maybe have some ADHD along w/ the minor OCD), you can use a further mix that goes “from harder to easier” (for example, it's harder to press a given weight than to jerk it). Here's how I usually do the first workout above:

(PC + Hang Clean + PC + HC + Front Squat Jerk)
(PC + 2 HC + FSJ + Quick Jerk)

(PC + HCJ + FSJ + QJ)
(PCJ + FS Press + FSJ + QJ)

In the first set, the top end of the front squat is the thrust of the jerk. In the next, the catching of the first jerk is the dip for the second (QJ). In the third, the catch of the HC is the dip for a jerk. In the last, the FS starts the PR.

As you can see, I really prefer to Jerk (I'd have not been as relatively accomplished a competitor back in the days before the Press was dropped), and there are 5 front squats worked in.

The Snatch version also alternates Power Snatch and Hang Snatch, as well as Overhead Squat w/ what I call a Squat Jerk (bar held w/ a snatch-width grip on the upper traps, squat down, then up -- accelerating as if to jump – thrusting the bar overhead as the legs bend and torso lowers to catch it):

(PS + HS + PS + HS + OHSQ)
(PS + HS + PS + OHSQ + SQJK)
(PS + HS + SQJK + OHSQ + SQJK)
(PS + OHSQ + SQPR + OHSQ + SQJK)

Whether you go simple or more varied, these ladders are a great way to work power and skill w/o overstressing the joints. Enjoy!!

Finally...don't forget the information on the upcoming clinics from the last edition!

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