

# GET UP!

Volume 1, Issue 12

December 2002



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*If you like Highland Games...throwing heavy stuff, but you can't see dropping over \$300 for a kilt, see our friends at sportkilt.*

## Deep in the Off-Season

...we start looking towards our next in-season! This issue of Get Up! has a great article about Triple Jumper Jon Edwards approach to maintaining strength. Great stuff from a new writer for our emagazine, Scott Weiser. In addition, I offer a few insights about keeping a journal. This is the best time of year to sit down with the back issues of your life and start prepping for next year's success!

### 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**.

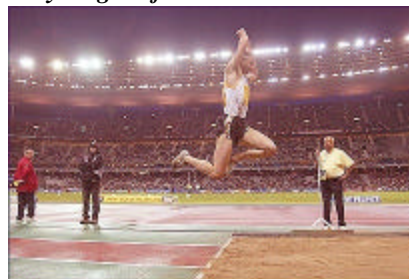
## Jonathan Edwards' Program By Scott Weiser, CSCS

*Scott is the current throws coach at New Mexico State University and is the Track & Field team's Strength & Conditioning coach. Scott was a former Division II national qualifier in the hammer thrower with experience in competitive Powerlifting as well as being a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist and Level I Olympic Weightlifting Coach.*

### INTRODUCTION

Every so often there is talk about Jonathan Edwards and his legendary strength levels. For those of you scratching your heads Jonathan Edwards is the current world record holder in the triple jump at over 60 feet. The year he broke 60 feet he said that he focused on **sprint speed**, a **lower take-off angle** and **getting stronger**. Technically, he conserves forward speed better than anyone else in the event.

Strength-wise he has posted **a 150 kilo clean at a bodyweight of 70 kilos!!**



He has two coaches, one of which is a former powerlifter and consults Jan Zelezny's coach. Jan is a Czech javelin thrower and another world record holder at 323 feet! The javelin and the triple jump are very similar. Both require a lot of forward speed. Both are technical, but not overly technical like the hammer or pole vault. Both beats you up like you wouldn't believe. Both require strength, but strength in an instant - far more than most throwing events.

This program was used to help maintain his strength levels between his pre-season meets and his major meets and money-making meets. Most high level track athletes have a small pre-season to tune up their competitive form and get ready for the major meets and money-making circuits. Most Americans will compete in the US and then travel to Europe for the major meets and money-makers. One can liken this to spring football as compared to the regular season in the fall months. I am not sure how long this was done, but I will offer two ways of doing this depending on how long you plan to use this program.

### THE PROGRAM

Again, this is a program to maintain strength levels between competitive seasons. So technical work will also be done and one has to assume that peak strength levels have already been reached before this program is to be implemented. Since this comes from a triple jumper sprinting was also integrated. Pick one quick lift (clean, snatch, etc.), one big lower body movement (back squat, front squat, deadlift, etc.) and one major upper body movement (bench press, push press, etc.).

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Jonathan used cleans (from floor), back squats, and bench press.

I don't know if assistance lifts were used, but if you decide to implement them keep it very simple. Do things that balance the major lifts: abdominal work to balance the Olympic lifts and squats and pulling movements to balance the pressing. Don't get caught up in hamstrings and such. Take care of those weak areas in the preceding months.

**DAY ONE:** Day one is short, but very intense.

**After warm-up sets perform one all-out set to 10 reps for each lift.** Once you reach 10 then move the weight up for next week. After 2-3 weeks you will feel the "intensity" of this day. 10 reps in the olympic lifts is TOUGH. 10 reps alone isn't that bad, but moving the weight up each time you complete 10 is the hard part.

**DAY TWO:** Three days later you will be ready for Day 2. Make sure you are recovered. This is a long day. **After warm-up sets perform 6 very heavy singles for each lift.** When you can get all 6 singles at a particular weight then move it up for next week. This helps you to develop the ability to maintain a high intensity over six attempts.

From personal experience six weeks seems like the longest you want to do this. If you are doing it longer or if you aren't proficient with the heavy weights you can try alternating the six singles with four sets of triples. So week one would have the six singles on Day 2 and then week 2, Day 2 do 4x3 and keep alternating those weeks.

## WRAP-UP

I have had a lot of personal success with this program with limited time spent in the weightroom. This is a plus for someone who needs to spend more time in the field. I must warn again that you must be ready for this. It isn't the kind of thing to do unless you have spent a lot of time building up your lifts. Manipulate the program for your individual needs, but keep the basic concept the same. For you ply hounds I once did my hurdle hops just before lifting on Day 1. On Day 1 you are in and out before you even know what hit you.

## Mining Your Journal

About a decade ago, I worked with a young man, let's call him "Ed," who had all the physical tools, listened to everything I said, worked hard in my presence, and went home. But, he couldn't get himself to follow my most important commandment: Keep a journal. The second year I worked with him, I also found out that he did absolutely nothing on weekends, virtually nothing all summer, and lumped over any extended break.

Any strength and power athlete who can't train alone is going to fail. Sometime, sooner or later, you need to stand alone. I took an idea from the Soviet track coaches and quit going to meets with my athletes, when appropriate. Why? Well, they had to deal with their own problems. Forgot your throwers shoes? Deal with it. Mean judges? Deal with it. Bad conditions? Deal with it. Tiffini still thinks it is funny that I get telephone calls on mornings throughout May that start with: "Dan, I won the State Championship!" and usually have the line: "Have you had coffee yet?" I'm often in bed when our newest member of the State Championship club calls.

Ed never won a state championship. With a couple of years of hindsight, I am now convinced that he gave it away by missing the most important tool in the athlete's toolbox...the training journal. His journal would have helped him with the single most important key to athletic success:

*Try to **only** make the same mistakes over and over again a couple of times.*

What? Simply, we tend to repeat our errors. We want to be successful, so we increase our volume and intensity to make the big leap, then find ourselves hurt, injured, and sick. Of course, a week or so after the flu, we hit our season's best mark. Next year, we do it again...train too hard, get hurt, then improve. By the third year,...well, now it is "fool me twice, shame on me."

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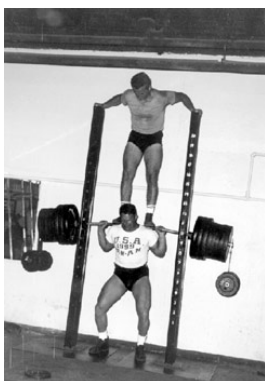
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Without a journal, Ed relied solely on others to discover his path to success. He didn't understand one of the great keys to athletic success: **Mining your Journal**. Your training journal is goldmine of information...if you take the time, daily, to record your workouts, your attitudes and your life in general. Years later, you can sift through this material to discover what makes YOU tick!

Sometimes, the answers aren't apparent. For example, in 1991, I was coaching at the Upper Limit Gym here in Utah. So, I had access to great facilities, lots of training partners and great enthusiasm about the strength sports. I began to really push my Back Squat poundage. There were weeks when my squat would go up by twenty and thirty pounds as I was shamed into lifting more by excellent powerlifters. I topped out at 605 for three reps...I remember realizing that the weight was bending my ribs...and I also noticed something else.



This increase in squatting weight did not add one foot to my discus throw. I threw 190 at Utah State and never went over 405 in the squat, yet 605 got me to 181. Two years later, talking with John Powell (twice bronze medalist in the discus at the Olympics), he

told me that he had quit squatting heavy years before he began to really "bomb" the discus. He felt that heavy squatting "didn't feel good," so why do it?

That made no sense to me at all. I was stronger, so I should throw farther. Then, in 1994, after not squatting heavy for three years, mostly rapid squats up to sets of eight and lots of hill sprints, I dropped a 184 throw. I weighed less, my waist was smaller, I felt better...I threw farther.

So, how do I "mine my journal?" I went back to 1991 and I looked at the videos of my throws. I compared them to 1994. I looked "healthier," but it was hard to see any other difference. Then, I thought about the hill sprints. In 1994, my finish was smoother somehow, I held together better. Could all the hill sprints have been the key, or the dropping of heavy squats?

You know, I don't really know the answer, but my journal entries found no injuries in 1994, lots of energy, lots of inside jokes and fun with the group. 1991's entries talk about buying ankle wraps, knee wraps, wrist wraps, and biweekly visits to the chiropractor. Clearly, increasing the load with my squatting got me hurt with little pay off.

Maybe, it was simply what I thought about a month ago: heavy squatting makes your hips and legs strong...but the body is one piece. When you throw, you snap off your whole leg and you are only as strong as...your ankle. If you cave at your ankle, you lose your finish. Hill sprints seem to be an ankle/calf builder with no peer.



As John Price reminds me often of the only key in athletic success: you are only as strong as your weakest link. For me, and probably everyone, the goal should be to strive to bring your weak points up to a point that they become your strong points!

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So, we have seen the first technique in Mining Your Journal: Reviewing one season in the light of another. Big deal, everybody does it ...or do we? How often have you cracked open your old journals and looked at them carefully? I would argue doing this at least twice a year. The off season is obviously a time to harvest the knowledge you earned and forgot in the past. I think the next best time is just before peaking. What gems have you forgotten, what mistakes are you about to repeat?

My favorite in-season use of the journal is the "Countback." I take the four weeks prior to a "hot" performance ...a day where nothing goes wrong or you just are in the groove...and look at the month.

In 1991, I posted these workouts, just before my breakthrough in Olympic Lifting:

**5-25-91**

25 throws with new Red Obel at the U with John, John, and Kjell. Some excellent throws. "Hang" that disc and right leg out there.

**Upper Limit**

**Pwr. Snatch (hang)** with Kjell

135 x 5

195 x 5 x 5 x 5

**Squat**

225 x 5

315 x 5

405 x 3

455 x 2

**Bounds x 7**

**5-27-91**

**Upper Limit**

**Pwr. Snatch**

135 x 3

205 x 3 x 3

225 x 2 x 2

245 x 2

New Guy: Paul, lives at BFS

**Pwr Push (Push Jerks)**

135 x 3

225 x 3

315 x 2 x 2 x 2

**Frog Jumps**

**5 jumps x 4**

*As I trained through this month, I knew I was overdoing it...look at this interesting entry:*



**6-22**

Ben canceled the meet at the last minute, but I threw with Jeff, Monette, John et al with a bunch at 184! I have outrageous inflexibility in my right shoulder. I spoke to a National Convention on weight lifting here in SLC today...snatch, clean and speed. I snatched 225 for a bunch of easy one's. Working on USOC talk that L. Jay asked me to give in Colorado Springs.

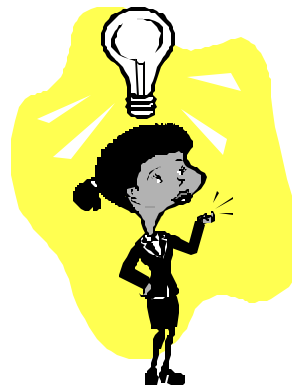
Start considering:

1. One squat workout a week alternating with push jerks  
jumps  
bounds  
overloads
2. Microperiodize the snatch each week...5-3-2
3. Move up to five minute rests
4. Seven sets...45 minute workouts
5. Increase protein.
6. Add stiff dl, good mornings.

A week later, I tossed 181 '7" in a left handers wind, put 50'9" and snatched 314 (clean and jerked 358, cleaned 402 and missed the jerk) in a three day period. Then, I went into a six month tailspin of injury upon injury.

What did I learn? Well, I thrived on Power Snatches! But, the heavy jerks and heavy squats all led to injuries. **You can see that I was leaning towards more and more protein, but the nutritionists at the USOC told us to eat High Carb.** It would take a couple years to really mine this season!

Another tool for mining your journal is to LOOK for insights...that you may need to rekindle.



Jeff Armstrong came over last weekend and I noted that he needed to ease off on his 56 pound weight tosses as he seemed to have a Speed

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Barrier. He was aware of the Soviet Drill, from my book, "The Contrarian Approach to the Discus Throw." For those of you who missed it: *"Yes, I know...no more Soviets, but the drill is called "the Soviet Drill." I learned about this drill years ago as a way to break through the "speed barrier." After marking the best throw, step off about 15 feet for most high school athletes...some 20-25 feet...back towards the ring and put a large marker there. Cones work great, towels and bags are fine. If you have many throwers, you might have a little colony out there.*

*The Soviet Drill is simply a series of twenty full throws trying to just hit the marker as easily as you can! Many athletes simply can't do this! Yet, once they get the hang of throwing with less, they soon find that that they can easily surpass their previous one throw mark, but using good technique and rhythm. Also, this drill comes in handy when the pressure is on to qualify for the finals at a meet."*

Jeff, like most strength athletes *couldn't* grasp how easing off could help you throw farther. Then, I asked him: "Do you max squat every day?" As the words came out of my mouth, I thought to myself, "you know, you should practice what you preach!" I have a journal entry where this concept whacked me on the head again:

## November 7, 2000

Great trip to Las Vegas and Phoenix. Really enjoyed watching ASU come back from 35-6, only to lose in double overtime. My Cardinals defeated the over-inflated Redskins, as well.

While at the Orleans, I got in a nice workout with two fifty-pound dumbbells. I did about an hour of clean and press, one arm snatches, and one arm presses. Last night, after getting off the plane, I did a nice workout of Power Snatches (six singles with 155), Power Clean and Push Jerk (six singles with 195), then some real snappy Clean Pulls and Romanian Deadlift Clean Pulls (a bunch with 235). This is the kind of workout that seems to give me a lot of long term benefit. When I drop back to "one lift a day" style of training, it really helps to have this volume with snappy, fast workouts in my quiver.

I had a nice talk with John Powell on this trip. We ate three meals together and went bowling for a couple of hours. We both agreed that one of the real secrets to increasing your throwing distance and your lifting maxs is to push your 60-80% lifts/throws up. In throwing, you try to see how easy you can toss 80% of your best. In lifting, you try to dominate those lighter weights. If you have the patience to back off, you can shoot ahead later.

This doesn't mean what most people think. We have a saying, "I said it was simple, not easy." It is simple to do, but

not easy. For me to back off, I have to have something to back off from!!! Too many guys don't put the heavy training in early, so they can back off later. I wouldn't consider this method of training until you at least snatch bodyweight. These fast snappy workouts should still have some nice weights on the bar, too. Don't use vinyl dumbbells from Sears to do your "heavy" day squats, if you know what I mean.

Use your journal minimize the number of times you make the same mistakes. Sure, you won't nip every mistake in the bud the first few (five, ten, fifteen) times, but if you take some time each year to review your journals, it is like mining a vein of pure gold. Try comparing one season to another, try the countback when you peak, and keep looking for those insights that you may have forgotten. It is part of the road to success.

"Eat tuna and handle heavy weights."

Art deVany on Weight Gain

From our Sponsor Page:

<http://powerathlete.com>

Have you checked out Eric's Coaching Page? Great Stuff!



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