

GET UP!

Volume 1, Issue 22

1 July 2003

The Annual Discus Camp Edition

Here we go again: the best camp ever! It was a great two weeks at Denison College in Granville, Ohio with John Powell, Brian Oldfield, Bill Witt, and the whole gang. We had tons of great collegiate athletes helping us along, too.

The key to the camp is what we all take away and redevelop over the next year.

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 First Annual John Powell/Brian Oldfield Highland Games



The Cast:

(Left to Right)

Mike, 222 Hammer Thrower from Boston

Dan, the Editor of Get Up!

Ben Thuma, University of Delaware Discus

Aaron Ross, Penn State Discus and Hammer

Greg Henger, West Virginia Throws Coach

Dave Witt, writer for Get Up!

Mike Rosenberg, writer for Get Up!

We gathered on Friday afternoon, after a week of four a day training and serious carousing. The campers had left and we headed down the hill for the event. A handful of campers stayed around to judge the event (without giving any help to me...and I was willing to buy them off)

We had Scottish music wailing throughout in the background from a stereo.



The Implements

(Left to Right)

Off the Picture...105 Sled and Two "Rosenberg" Bars

22 Pound Heavy Hammer

28 Pound Light Weight for Distance

35 Pound Weight for Distance

56 Pound Weight for Distance

22 Pound Open Stone

60 Pound Braemer Stone

Results

Atomic Ball...60 Pound Braemer Stone

Mickey	Aaron	Dave	Ben	Dan
18'6	14'3	14'	14'7	17'6
	Mike	Greg		
	13'4	15'4		

22lb Open Stone

Mickey	Aaron	Dave	Ben	Dan
39'9	28'10	29'5	35'6	35'4
	Mike	Greg		
	21'11	35'5		

28 WFD

Mickey	Aaron	Dave	Ben	Dan
57'8	55'5	42'1	48'10	58'8
	Mike	Greg		
	39'8	41'10		

35 WFD

Mickey	Aaron	Dave	Ben	Dan
40'2	37'8	33'	37'5	47'7
	Mike	Greg		
	27'4	32'8		

Important notice...by this time, additional beverages were being provided for the hard working athletes...

GET UP!

Volume 1, Issue 22

I July 2003

56 WFD

Mickey	Aaron	Dave	Ben	Dan
24'7	21'8	17'6	20'	27'11
	Mike	Greg		
	12'5	18'7		

22 Heavy Hammer

Mickey	Aaron	Dave	Ben	Dan
80'1	67'	53'	71'10	81'5
	Mike	Greg		
	40'11	53'10		

Juggernaut...100 yards in Heavy Grass with 2 1/2 inch Rosenberg Bars (65 pounds each)

Mickey	Aaron	Dave	Ben	Dan
17.09	19.14	29.65	17.60	20.69
	Mike	Greg		
	23.23	26.59		

All week long, all we discuss is rotating the feet in the direction of the throw, like John does here:



"Move the feet, hold the stretch..."

So, what do I do in my first event?



I tell you...this stuff can drive you to drink!!!
Excellent day overall, thank you to all my friends! Why do we even mention this competition? Because...we simply invented it! No federations, no dues, (no don'ts either), just guys wanting to compete! "Show UP!"

THE BOTTOM OF THE SQUAT

Keith Wassung

Keith Wassung is a former natural Powerlifting and Olympic lifting champion, with an impressive athletic resume in football, track and wrestling.. He is the author of nearly 40 publications relating to health research and lectures extensively around the country to both Doctors of Chiropractic and to Medical Doctors.

It is my contention that the bottom one third of the full squat represents the primary limiting factor for most people in the increase of lower body strength and development. Since the full squat often acts as a barometer and or catalyst for the development of the entire body, then this portion of the squat may very well be a primary limiting factor for the entire body. This is also the area of the squat where the greatest potential for trauma and injuries can occur.

By bottom position, I am referring to the fully descended position to about 30 degrees above parallel. This area is the toughest part of the squat and there is often a feeling of discomfort, vulnerability and anxiety as to whether the proper depth has been achieved. This is likely due to lack of flexibility in the hips, knees and ankles and the fact that we spend very little if any time in this position in our everyday lives.

The best way to overcome this apprehension is to squat as deeply as you are able to. This negates the anxiety of wondering if you hit the right squat depth each time. Obviously a competitive powerlifter will have to spend some time squatting to break parallel, but many would be wise to squat deeper more often in order to build their confidence and overall lower body strength. From a very early age, I learned to squat much deeper than parallel in the gym and in powerlifting meets and I don't feel that it put me at any competitive disadvantage. I competed in over 60 powerlifting meets and never once received a red light for failure to hit proper depth. You can use up a lot of energy and mental focus trying to just break parallel that could be better spent on the execution of the overall lift.

The second thing you can do is to develop a habit of squatting instead of sitting whenever you can. Obviously you cannot do this at a

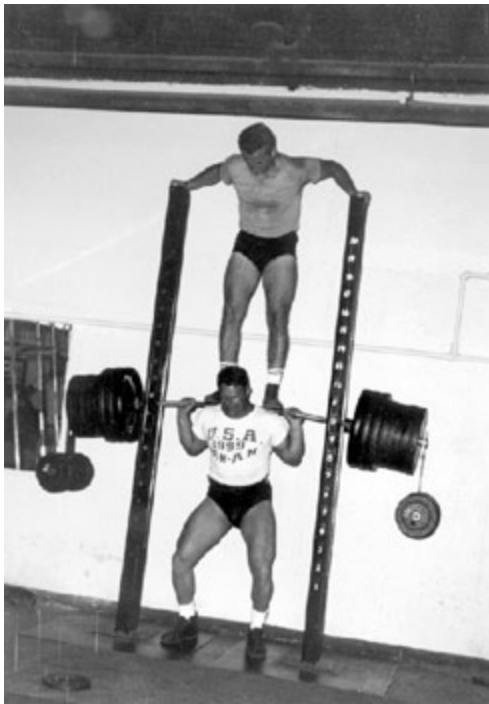
GET UP!

Volume 1, Issue 22

1 July 2003

business meeting or at church, but you can work it into daily habits such as petting the dog or picking up something from the ground. Do this a dozen times a day for about two months and you should notice a marked increase in your comfort and confidence in the bottom portion of the squat.

The third thing you can do is to perform some adjunct squat movements in your training which will strengthen the bottom one-third of the squat movement. The following are two of my favorites.



"Don't worry, as soon as I warm up we can go heavy..."

Deadstop Squats, also known as Bottom Position Squats, are an incredible exercise; in fact I predict it will someday become a contested lift in some type of strength competition. I like to do these after I perform regular full squats. Using either a power rack or a set of adjustable squat racks, place the bar as low as you possibly can and still be able to position yourself underneath the bar in the bottom part of the squat position.

When you are properly set up for this lift, you should feel as though you are in a very powerful position, rather than a feeling of being cramped and "out of position" A lot of this has to do with lack of hip, knee and ankle flexibility. I have found a great way to loosen and warm-up the hips and knees is to pedal a stationary bicycle and alternate normal pedaling, with a pedaling movement in which you place the outer edge of your feet on the pedals with your knees spread out wide. It looks a bit obscene, but it gets the job done. When you first begin doing bottom position squats, you may have to initially start at about a half squat, and gradually move the pins down until you find the right starting position. Make sure your entire body is tight and then elevate the weight upwards until you are standing straight up, then, using precision control, lower the bar down the pins. Take a few breaths and then repeat for the target number of reps. You will find that your biomechanical position and technique must be near perfect when handling maximum weights. I like this movement for several reasons. When you start the movement from the bottom position, you are directing all of your initial energy into doing the toughest part first and once you break past this initial phase, the rest is easy by comparison. I also like the fact that there is virtually zero ballistic impact on the knees and I have had many people who claimed they could not squat because of pain in their knees, be able to do deadstop squats without any pain in their joints.



"Squats are fun!"

Pause Squats are full squats performed exactly like traditional full squats with the addition of a

GET UP!

Volume 1, Issue 22

I July 2003

3 second pause in the bottom phase of the squat. Take the weight off the supports and descend to your lowest squat position, holding that position for approximately 3 seconds, then drive the weight upwards to completion. You can use either a training partner to count off the seconds or you can do it yourself. Either way, I like to use a cadence and command of 1.....2....3. followed immediately by a powerful "GO"! Perform these after your regular squats with a rep range of anywhere from 3-6 reps per set. This exercise will teach you to stay tight throughout the entire range of motion in the squat and will greatly enhance your ability to drive out of the bottom.

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An email from Aaron...

Aaron Ross is one of my favorite people in the world. We first met at the John Powell Discus Camp when he was in the Eighth Grade. He spent the next year drilling himself over and over becoming an outstanding high school and college (Penn State) discus and hammer throwing. For non-throwers, this article gives some insights into taking what you learn to applying it to yourself.

Dan,

I hope this week at camp is going great. Thanks for the help and insight with the hammer.

I have to say that this was the best camp since after my freshman year in high school. The biggest two concepts that I picked up on at a camp were the "twist, twist, twist" that John had mentioned and the image of "clawing" your way across the circle which you had given me. In a sense both of these concepts are linked together, in my mind anyways. It is very difficult to keep your feet



twisting and accelerating without both feet on the ground. If I understood John right, in every phase of the throw, you want to try to have two feet on the ground as long as possible. By keeping both feet on the ground it makes it possible to make each successive twist faster than the previous. Analyzing my South-African's and step and turns over the past couple of days, the longer that I delay my left drive out of the back, the more effective it becomes in accelerating my right foot, and in creating my pendulum.

Another thing that John mentioned was the settle in the power position. While it was not the first time that I had heard of settling, I liked the way that he explained it this time. When he was working with Steff (*a thrower from Stanford, editor*), he explained that you wanted to time the settle with left foot touching down and discus reaching the focal point. Again, if I understand it correctly, this timing allows the right foot to immediately start accelerating once you hit the power position.

Probably the biggest break through came from my marathon throwing session with the 20 lbs. weight. After about two hours I finally started to get the feeling for twisting and clawing my across the circle as well as accelerating through the "3" position. If I ever really get stuck again, I will go back to the 20 and 35 lbs. weights to get the feeling again.

I threw for about 2 hours today basically working on twisting my feet. I was throwing fairly easy, just trying to let the twist of my feet propel the discus. My stands were nice and easy, about 120 to 125 w/ out a reverse and my step and turns were around 145 with my best at 148. With just working on the twisting and accelerating, I bettered my best step and turn of the season. My south-African's were only about 155 but had a best at 160. I was having a little trouble timing the left leg drive. On my best SA, I delayed the left leg drive until right foot was almost already on the ground. This really helped the right accelerate and continue to turn. Unfortunately I got a bad blood blister on my right index finger so I was only able to take a couple South-African's and a few full turns. On

GET UP!

Volume 1, Issue 22

I July 2003

the full turns, I knocked the intensity down even further, to the point where I could do a few 360's into a full turn, accentuating my feet twisting across the circle. At probably about 60 percent intensity with a less than perfect release, 150 was easy. This was clearly my most focused and best practice in a long time.

I hope some of these notes from camp and from my practice are useful. If you need me to clarify something or explain it better just let me know. Thanks again for all the help and I hope this week goes great.

Aaron

What I learned on my Summer Vacation

The Editor in Beef

Well, I love the written word, so when John Powell handed me an article from "American Track and Field Athletes Only" that he had written, I knew this would be a great two weeks.

John compared the discus throw to skating: "It's similar to a line of ice skaters moving in a circle. The person in the middle barely moves, but the skater at the end of line has to work hard to keep up with the line while it turns."

Once again, if the right foot turns for a right handed thrower...good things happen. "The illusion of arm speed is created by sprinting ahead of the discus. Once the thrower winds, the discus stays in the same relative position, "locked" behind the hip. The arm moves as fast as the foot turns. The faster the foot turns, the faster the arm appears to move."

John also shared with me a few drills that his coach, the legendary "Bud" Winters either invented or stole:

- Throws for height...but aiming for a goal
- The badly named "South African" Drill
- The rhythm of the throw is "1-2-3-and Throw!" During the and...the right foot turns.

Mike Rosenberg also showed up and brought the usual set of painful toys. I asked him

what he learned the first day and he answered simply: "You need to learn from the ground up!"

The Big Lesson of 2003

Don't give yourself an "anchor" in the back...lift your right foot. Huh?



Although Yuri is a hammer thrower, he is actually the one who gave John this clue. All too often, young throwers pick up the foot at the start by first bringing the heel to the butt then lifting the knee...Brian Oldfield calls this cantilevering.

It causes the thrower to slow, stop, or pause as the athlete gets ready to get into "two." (See <http://danjohn.org/book.pdf> for details). It kills most of our young throwers! Just lift the knee...don't bring the heel to the butt!

Oh, it looks and sounds so simple but it has a tremendous effect on getting across with speed, balance and power.

Also, John took me aside and told me that this position of Yuri is something to consider...to go from "one" to "two"...simply drop the left knee one inch and lift the right knee.

Harder to explain than do...I threw farther!

The Next Million Dollar Hint

Sound out your drills. That's right, say "1-2-3 and throw" or whatever on thrower drills. The louder the better. It takes your brain away and gives your feet a chance to work!

More Next Issue...

Published by Daniel John

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