



Volume III, Issue 8

January 2005

Bowl Games!

Las Vegas Bowl...and the Bowl in Boise...whatever it was called! I just about wore out my fun button!

Again, I get shut out in this edition, but welcome aboard to Coach "Pain," who writes his first article for this ragazine. Coach Pain is one of the great ones...make him write more!!!

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**.

Strength Training...Part Five

David Witt



As a high school thrower, David ended up third in Kentucky's State Meet under the coaching of Marty Mayer

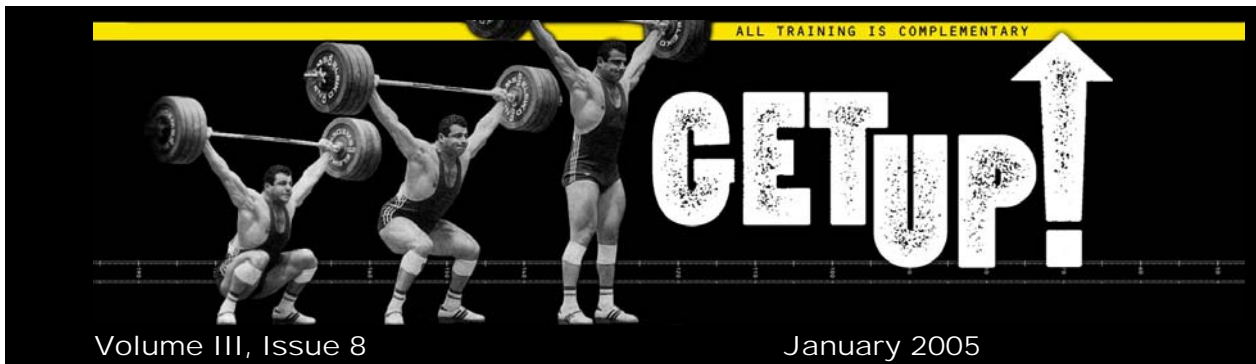
*and Pep Stidham (God rest his soul, he died young in his 40's of heart problems). Going to college that **didn't** have a track program, David has competed as an open and unattached thrower for years in and around the Kentucky area. Married to Pam with two children, David teaches high school math.*

In my last article I provided a few routines for strength development. But before you go jumping into a strength program, you have to get the body ready to handle the heavy weights. Believe me, I know what happens when you don't.

The problem with a strength routine is it will strengthen the muscles, but not so much the tendons and ligaments connecting the muscles to the bones. This is because tendons and ligaments don't gain strength at the same rate as muscle fiber. This is an issue common with steroid use. The muscles get very strong, start pulling on the tendons, and the tendons snap under the strain. Even without steroids jumping right into a strength program with out getting the tendons and ligaments ready can be catastrophic. I know. When I was 28 I jumped into a strength program after two years of intermittent training and suffered a 20% tear of a tendon that connects my left pec to my upper arm bone. The sound it made when it happened was audible to everyone in the room and can only be described as the sound a bed sheet makes when ripped in half.

So how do we get ready to lift big weights? I recommend a conditioning period of 4 weeks in which lighter weight is handled for more reps. I generally use reps of 10 with about 60% for sets of 3. This is my body-building program. I also try to use this time to increase muscle mass.

Increasing muscle mass is an idea I got from Dr. Squat. Fred Hatfield was one of the most successful squatters of all time in powerlifting. In his book, "Powerlifting, a Scientific Approach", Dr. Hatfield makes an analogy to a race car. To build a good race car you start



with a big engine. Then you get a chassis that can support the engine. A small, weak chassis would be torn to bits by a powerful engine. To quote,

“Like the race car, lifters must rid themselves of unnecessary fat, strengthen the entire body for stability and synergy, develop and modify the important muscles for great power”

Dr. Hatfield also makes the point of removing fat. Fat contributes nothing to maximum effort, whether powerlifting, Olympic lifting, or throwing. He also advises building muscle mass in the important muscles. Quads, hamstrings, gluts, erectors, pecs, deltoids, and triceps. With the exception of the pecs and delts, these are the famed “walking away” muscles that make things go far.

A conditioning program will help prevent injuries by strengthening the supportive muscles and tendons. Between cycles, I use a conditioning program to get ready for the next cycle. This helps those supportive systems catch up. I paid the price once and I don’t want to again. At my age, I can’t afford another couple of years to recover.

Two Conclusions Based on 2004

Rande Treece

Rande is one of Get Up’s most popular authors. Every few months, Rande goes through his notes and puts together a few insights...this is part of the message of the magazine!

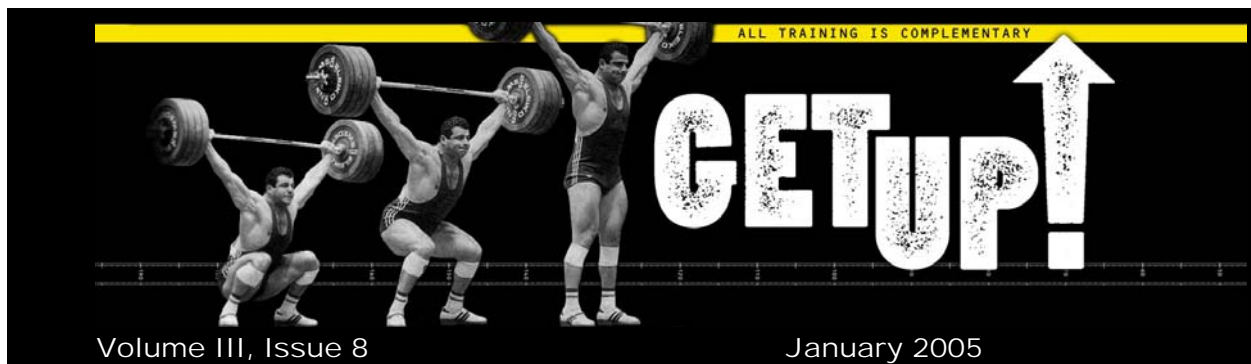
Now that we are at the end of the 2004 Track and Field season, I am in review mode. Looking back, I have come to a couple of conclusions.

First Conclusion: In order to improve in a specific event, I need to work on that event. In the Spring, when I decided that I was going to attend the USATF National Masters Weight and Super Weight competition in September, I began seriously training the 35# and 56# weight throws. Up to this point in my masters throwing career, I had focused on the hammer and only thrown the



The weight throw in Fort Collins.

weights in meets for fun. I progressed a little from year to year but I always felt a



little unsure about throwing the short, heavy implements.

My friend and coach Tim Edwards loaned me the 35# and 56# weights with which I could train. I began working them into my training program and competed a few times during the Summer. Slowly, as the training volume increased, my comfort with the weights improved.

I determined that I would focus my training on performing well at that meet. However, a style issue arose. When throwing the hammer I use 4 turns with a toe turn start. However, I threw the weights off of three turns with a heel turn start. I figured that I wanted to start all of them the same way so as to reduce the potential for neuromuscular confusion. So I emailed several throwers and asked if they saw any advantage or disadvantage with me going to a three turn throw in the hammer event. Since I was going to focus on the Nationals in the weight and super weight events, I was willing to risk a decrease in seasonal hammer performance. The responses from the guys I emailed were universally supportive of moving to a three turn hammer throw in order to reinforce my weight throw technique.

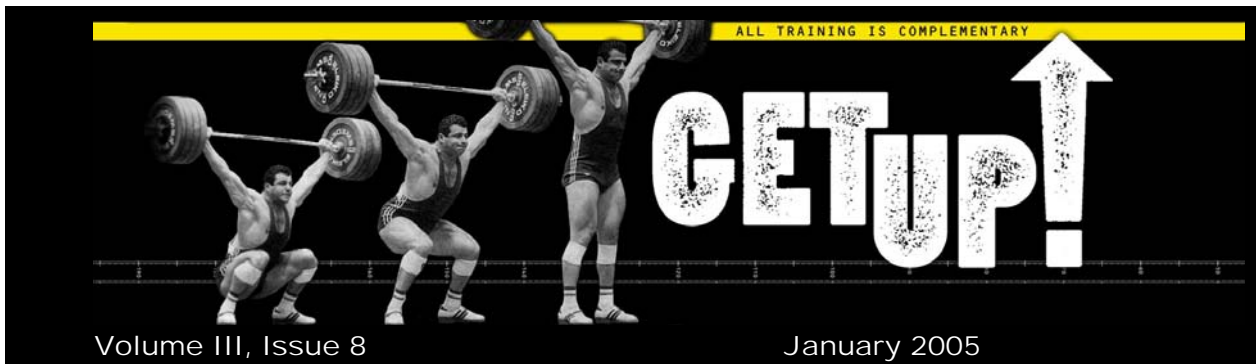
As the summer progressed my training throws improved. By the time of the big meets I felt I ready to throw far. Our

biggest local meet T&F meet, the Rocky Mountain Masters Games was one week before the Nationals. I hoped that meet would be a good warm up for the Nationals. I threw the hammer (16#) 51.04m (168' 5"). It was a seasons-best mark and my second longest throw as a master. (In the same meet last year I threw my masters PR of 51.32m (168' 4"). Next I threw the 35# weight over 15 meters for the first time ever 15.05m (49'3"), and threw the 56# weight over 10m for the first time 10.03m (~32' 10"). I was in the groove and it felt great.

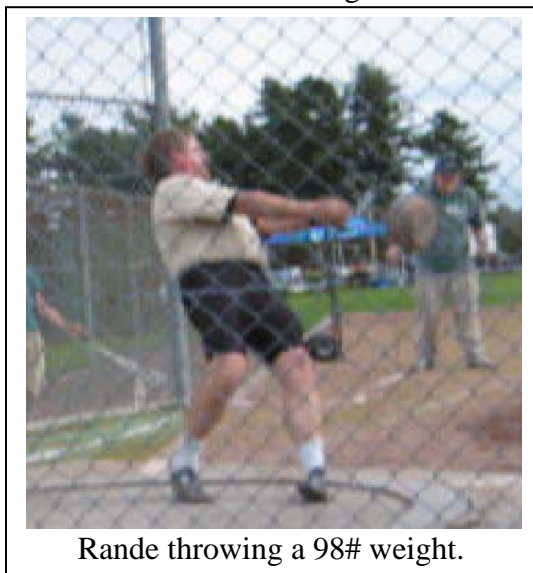
This next weekend I went to the USATF Masters Weight and Superweight National Championships. This was my chance to win a National Championship. 31 men and women between the ages of 40 and 77 showed up to throw. I threw a foot less than the previous weekend at 14.65m (48') and won silver. I was not in the groove, but the throw was the second longest throw of the day regardless of age.

Next was the Superweight (56#). I won that with a throw of 9.2m (30' 2"). Again it was the second longest throw of the day. The longest was by a guy in the 45-49 div (9.78m).

Then began the Ultra-Weight competition: 98#, 200#, and 300#. I won the 98# (5.11m) and the 200# (1.95m), and I placed second in the 300# with 1.08m. My result in the 98# throw



also is an example of practicing an event. I made a 100# weight out of chain, four 25# weights, and a hammer handle. I threw it one to five times per workout and used three turns with a sling start. It took me a while to be able to turn with that much weight.



Rande throwing a 98# weight.

Finally, there was an ultra weight pentathlon that added up age-graded points for each event. Awards were given to the highest two point getters in 40-69 year old group and the over 70 group. Our group (40-69) was won by Todd 'Ironman' Taylor with 4584 points. Mike Fritchman was second with 4135pts, and I was third out of 17 men with 3934 pts.

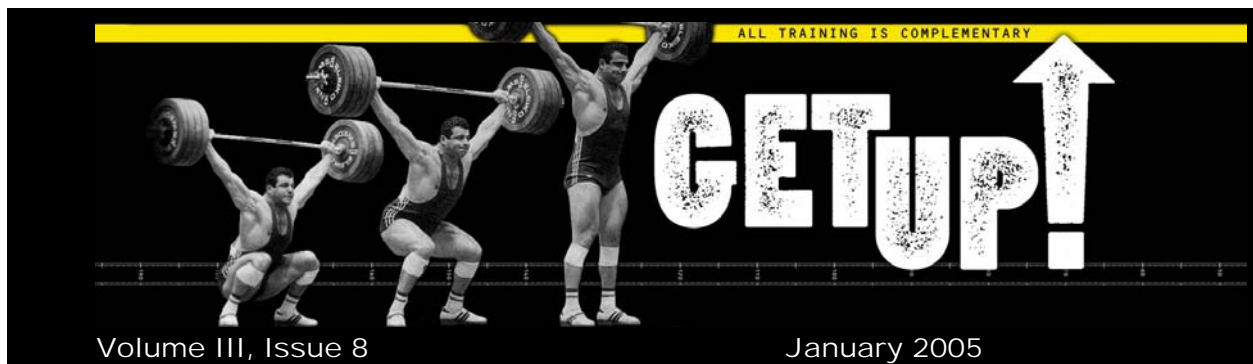
Second Conclusion: In the throws, technique trumps physical preparation. Before anyone gets excited, let me

explain. Obviously, being physically strong and conditioned is important. Throwing far requires strength, and all things being equal if one increases strength he should also increase his distances.



Rande and Todd 'Ironman' Taylor at the meet in Seattle. Todd easily won the Ultra-Weight Pentathlon.

However, I am finding that all things are not equal. The idea of the relative importance of technique began growing in me following my email discussion with Dan John (published in the previous GetUp! (Vol.III no.3). We have both observed people (and ourselves) who throw far when deep in a heavy training phase when they should be too tired to perform well. We've also experienced and observed poor performances when one is physically 'peaked'. In Dan's



opinion, these observations are so pronounced and common that he does not believe in 'peaking'. (For more of Dan read GetUp! (Vol.III no.3))



How do you get a 300# weight to go farther than one meter?

In my case, a hint of this was apparent during a heavy training phase this summer. One day I had three 35# throws well over 50' and several 56# throws over 33'. I arrived at the field tired and feeling rather ill. After warming up, I was throwing unbelievably. Then, in the one meet I had meet PRs, whereas in the very next weekend my performance was sub par. I felt about the same for both meets. I had prepared the same.

After reviewing the films of the meets the difference was immediately obvious. On the good day I was doing everything right. In the next meet just one week later, I was doing nothing right. I was just as physically prepared, but could not execute the same technique.

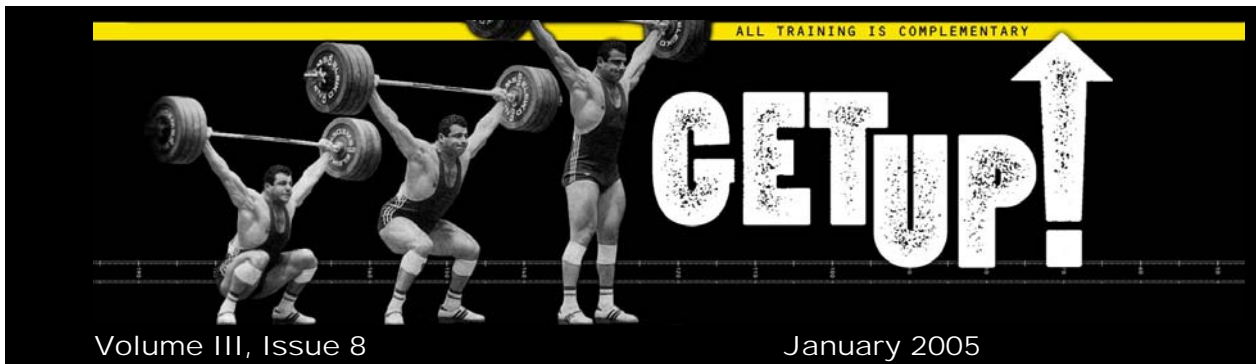
I've got to get to the point that each and every throw is identical: good days, bad days, or any day. I need to really keep pushing technique.

Summary? Well, if you have been sticking with the GetUp! publications, this may sound familiar: To improve on a certain event, one must train that event, and to perform well in a meet it is necessary to peak ones technique for the meet. What does peaking technique mean? I'm still trying to figure that one out.

The "Default" Strength Coach
Greg Henger



Greg competed as a high school thrower in Pennsylvania in the early 70's with moderate success on no instruction. He became involved in the sport again when his son's began to compete in the throws in middle school and he was drafted as a volunteer coach. Seeking more information and real instruction, he found John Powell's throwing camp and along with his boys, participated as a camper for two years. Now approaching his fourth year as



a member of the coaching staff of the camp, Greg has coached four West Virginia state discus champions, including his sons, and his athletes have earned thirteen total medals at the state meet in the shot put and discus. While working for the WV Dept. Of Environmental Protection, Greg serves as an assistant track coach at Ritchie Co. High School and as an assistant football coach for Ritchie Co. Middle School.

Winter is here, which of course means that high school football players and track athletes that are not participating in winter sports want to lift weights.

Since I've been seen in the schools weight room throwing weights around in somewhat unique ways, (learned from our editor), I have become the default strength coach. That in itself is a scary thought, but now, what do I do with these kids?

As with all small schools, we fall victim to the Limitation Curse. Limited equipment, limited space, limited time, limited knowledge (mine), limited athletes (lots of participants but not all necessarily athletes), and limited other things that I can't think of right now. So, with all these limitations, I don't have the luxury of setting up individual programs with customized exercises along with set and rep schemes. The routines that I work out, by necessity, have to be easy to learn and execute, short in duration, be able to be performed by several athletes in a circuit

format and (at least by my standards), physically taxing.

Generally speaking, I've adopted a philosophy training "movements". The three that I like to emphasize are an Upper Body Pressing Movement, an Upper Body Pulling Movement and a Hip and Leg Thrust Movement. In those movements, I like to incorporate core work as well so that all of the exercises that I choose are multi joint/compound exercises.

I have decided to draw on camp as my inspiration, (which means I'm sort of borrowing everything from Dan). Below are the routines that I have chosen. Each routine incorporates the three basic movements. As a note, the routine listed below is for the guys. The girls that I am training are using a modified version of the program and I will explain the differences shortly.

Monday

As every good routine needs a name, this one has affectionately been dubbed the "Jello Maker" since that is pretty much how you feel when you're done.

Coreblasters

3 sets @ 30 sec. / set

The athletes work in groups of 3-4 using the same amount of weight and rotate through.



Thrusters

3 sets @ 20 sec. / set

Again in groups of 3-4 using dumbbells of the same weight.

1 Arm Dumbbell Snatch

3 sets of 6 / arm

I like Olympic movements and this is a relatively easy exercise to teach and learn and fits within my limitations.

Wednesday

This is a “power” routine for the guys. Because they are guys, they want something that will make them bigger. For this routine, I have settled on 5 sets for each exercise with two progressively heavier warmup sets and 3 working sets. The warmups are sets of 10 and 8, (or depending on the individual, 8 and 6), while the working sets are sets of 4 with as much weight as the individual can safely and correctly handle. The exercises are;

Back Squat

Dead Lift

Bench

Typical of most high school boys, they think they need to bench. Personally, I encourage the Push Press and am beginning to get some converts. The throwers that I work with, I limit to the Incline Bench. Somewhat of a compromise.

Friday

This is a modification of the East German Javelin Thrower routine that I learned at camp a couple of years ago. I liked the intensity of the workout and the speed in which routine could be performed. It is ideally suited to involving a large number of athletes in a short period of time.

It needs to be noted that the throwers have a separate routine that I believe is more appropriate to them. In this routine we call “Crazy Eights”, the athletes perform 8 repetitions of each exercise without resting between exercises and without changing the amount of weight on the bar. Again, the athletes use only the amount of weight that allows them to safely and correctly perform each exercise. The exercises incorporated are;

Back Squats

Push Press

Lunge

4 / leg

Power Curl

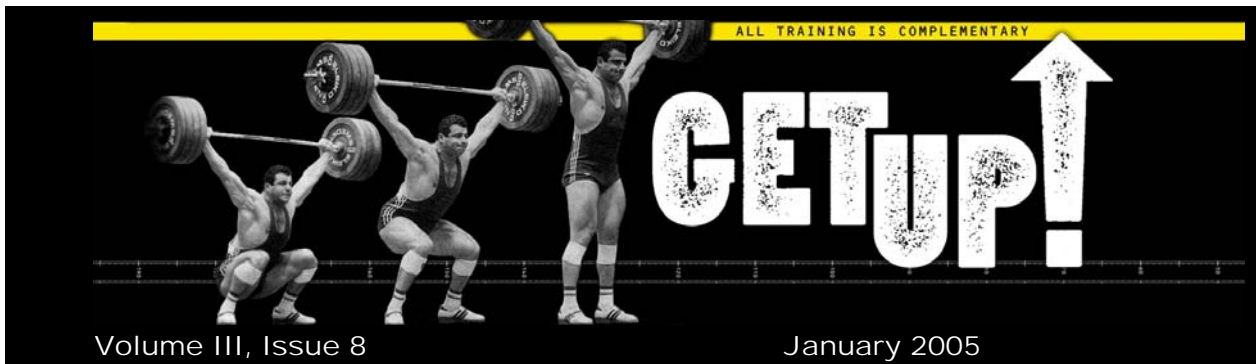
The throwers routine is:

Overhead Squats

Push Press

Snatch Grip High Pull

Power Curl



Earlier I mentioned that the girls that I'm training are using a modified version of the training plan. They want to be stronger, don't want to get big and like the idea of burning fat. To meet their criteria, I'm using the following routines.

Monday and Friday

Coreblasters

Thrusters

Dead Lift

3 sets of 6

Most of the girls participating in the lifting program are mid and upper distance runners. The 1 Arm Snatch is not an exercise that would be particularly beneficial for them but I want a pulling motion included in the workout. To replace the Snatch, I going to use the Dead Lift. The benefit that the girls get from this lift is that it develops core strength to hold them together for the end of their races.

Wednesday

Wednesday's routine for the girls is the same as for the guys. They perform the ever popular "Crazy Eights" routine with the same exercises and the same rules.

After each of the routines, the athletes have abdominal work before they call it a day.

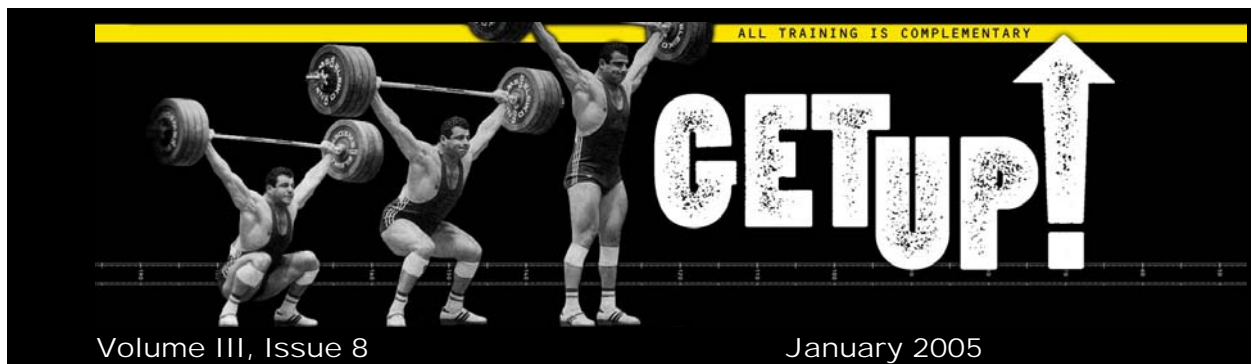
We've been working with the program for a few weeks and the kids so far are enjoying it. I'm really winging things with this and wanted to get another opinion before we got too far into it. Who else would I consult, but our own Mr. John. Dan's take on the program was favorable but he offered a suggestion to keep it fresh so that the kids would not get bored.

I've taken his advice to heart and have decided to insert a Challenge Week every third week. In keeping with Dan's idea, the activities chosen will be measurable either by keeping track of the number of repetitions performed in a specified time period, by measuring a distance completed or by tracking the maximum weight lifted. During Challenge Week, the activities will replace the normal routines. The guys are looking forward to it. I'm not sure yet about the girls. Right now, they are a question mark as to whether or not they will do it at all or in a modified version. Here is **Challenge Week**.

Monday

Farmers Walk

I've had some bars constructed where I can vary the weight of the bars. The idea is that the athletes get one chance to



walk as far as they can while holding on to the bars. The distance will then be measured. The reasoning behind the “one chance” is that I want the athletes to learn how to pull out their best efforts when they have to.

Waiter Walk

In this activity the athletes hold a sandbag, (50 lbs.), over their head and again with one chance, walk as far as they can. Measure the distance.

Sled Pull

This is going to be somewhat of an experiment. Right now, the plan is to load a sled with a weight equal to the athlete’s body weight. The athletes then have to pull the sled as far as they can backwards. Measure the distance. Again, one chance. (Picture the “World Strongest Man” competition where the athletes drag an anchor backwards.)

Wednesday

Max Lift Day

On this day, we find the athlete’s max lift on the Dead Lift and Bench or whatever Press the athletes have chosen. I’m staying away from maxing out on the squat for safety concerns. Record the weight.

Friday

Pull Ups

In this activity the athletes have 1 minute to perform as many pull ups as they can. One chance, record the number.

1 Leg Squats (or Bulgarian Split Squats if you prefer)

Using only a standard barbell as a weight, the athletes have 1 minute/leg to perform as many repetitions as they can. One chance, record the number.

Sandbag Toss

The athletes will pick up a 50 lb. sandbag and throw it in the form of a two-handed chest pass as many times as they can in 1 minute. One chance, we will then record the distance that they make in that minute. The idea for this came from one of the “Get Up” articles where the author, (I apologize for not recalling his name), threw rocks in various ways for a workout.

For good or ill, this is our off season work plan. Keep your fingers crossed.

Published by Daniel John
Daniel John, Editor
Copyright © Daniel John, 2004
All Rights Reserved

Any unauthorized reproduction is strictly prohibited.