

Football Season...

Did you watch FSU-Miami? I have a bunch of kids who want to play D1 football and I had to point out today that *most* major college football players are not only huge...but incredibly strong and fast. So, how do we get there?

I'm telling you...it ain't through a bunch of curls and some BSing in the cafeteria. I can't get some of these guys to eat breakfast and they expect to walk on to a major college and compete at 165 pounds? Well, I did...but I was half crazy...ahem...that changed, of course.

So...let's get serious again. Let's focus on what makes us great. Let's get going...

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*.

The Gary Column

Gary John, brother of the Editor, has become our most popular writer. Gary began writing when he decided to stop the "evil...known as running" and become "one of us." His questions are the simple ones, his insights are those of someone who has been around...

When not running a business, Gary tosses things at a local high school and works with anyone who "shows up."

Some things are kind of simple. I bet most of us have a checking account. The biggest trick is to keep more money in, than is coming out. Simple, except when the mortgage is due, the kids need new school clothes, and the Chevy just dropped its transmission. Unlike the government, us

private citizens aren't allowed deficit spending.

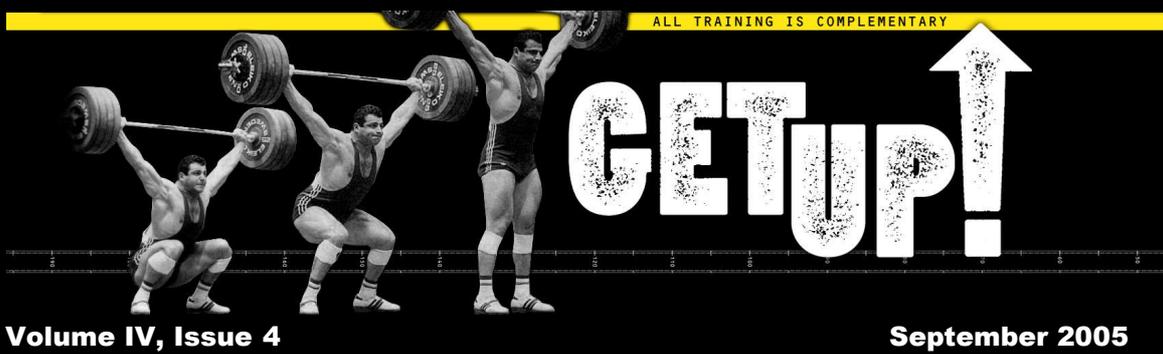
Training is the same thing.

Along about August, most of us who compete in throwing, lifting, Highlands's games, or strongman, are pretty much broke. Our body is letting us know we are running on empty. Yeah, you need some rest, but what we really need to do is refill the account.

In one of my past lives, I was a fairly decent runner. I ran as a middle distance runner in college and ran 5k and 10k's in my late thirties. In between, I have years of not doing anything. Then, I'd start feeling old and out of shape. Out came the running shoes and I would start slow and just put in the miles. The pounds would start coming off; the rhythm would slowly come back. After about six weeks, my knees would start popping up and I could actually run again. Now, I was ready to train. It would take six more months of hard work to get in a good solid base. My account would be full.

Once that base had been established, I could keep racing at a high level for at least another year. Usually, like most runners, a repetitive injury would end that cycle before I ran out of gas.

Luckily for me, the first "GetUp" came out in August of 2002. I was feeling extremely old and worn out. I just figured age had finally caught up with me. So, I started with two 35# dumbbells and an old weight set. From



the start, farmer's walks and waiter's walks formed the foundation of my training. I did lots of 3x8 sets, super setting military presses, power curls, and dumbbell snatches. And after about six weeks of forcing myself, I started to get results. And then, I started to train harder.

Ever since, I have added something new, to keep from getting bored. First came the discus, now the weight pentathlon. But near the end of each August, I try to return to a program heavy in GPP work. This year I'm doing a lot more hill sprints and carries. My new favorite is racking 225# on my shoulders and trying to walk as far as I can. Between now and January, this will be my time to push up my fitness. What I'm finding, is by building a strong base in the fall, I'm not "bouncing checks" in the summer.

Just Show Up...One Man's Journey

Randee Treece

The readership of Get Up has DEMANDED more from Randee. He has a way of putting the "journey" in a way that every author can understand the trials and tribulations...

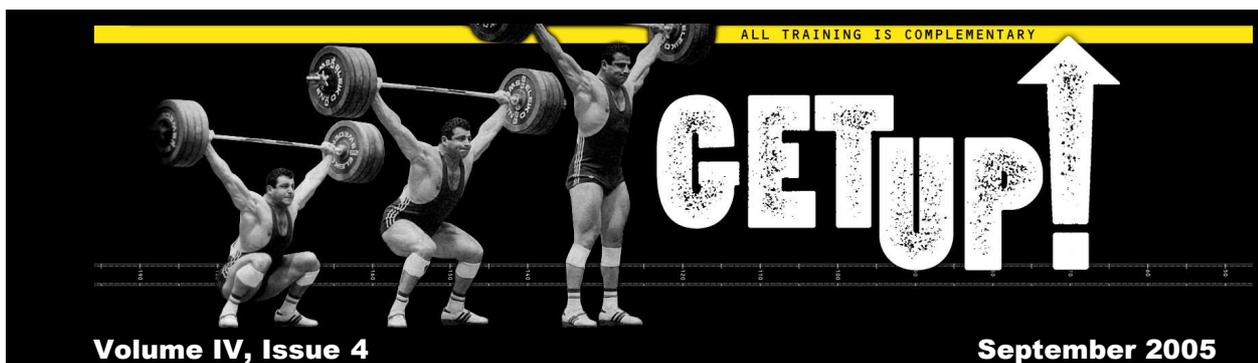
Unexpected Travels

Well, I just met one of my goals for 2005: Go to a National Meet. Achieving this goal did not require increasing a physical performance, but it did force me to deal with some mental issues. Frankly I only made it a goal based on

Dan's admonition to "travel to meets...meet new people...learn new things". He has this stuff in much of his early writing and at the beginning of the year when I was setting goals I thought it would be a good idea.

I've been competing as a Master since 2000 I was 39. But, I had restricted myself to meets within a 90 minute drive of my home, due both to time and money constraints. This seemed reasonable for the first few years since I was not that competitive. However, once I started getting up on the Master T&F rankings I began to think it was time to go out and throw with the big dogs. But time and money are real considerations. Then last year a generous friend bought my ticket to the USATF Masters Weight and Super-weight Championships. He "forced" me to go, i.e. I didn't have a good excuse not to go. So, I went and had a good time. I even brought back a championship in the Super-Weight (56#) and a 3rd in the Ultra-Weight Pentathlon (throwing the 35#, 56#, 98#, 200#, and 300# are scored like a weight pentathlon).

So, my Fall 2004 training had been going well and I decided to travel to another National meet in 2005. But as life does, I hit a wall in my training in February and needed to take some time off (my article discussing this is in Get Up! Vol III, issue 13). I basically took



March and April off and then came back slowly. Before that, I had been eyeing the USATF National Weight Pentathlon in Dallas since Dan told me that he and Gary were going, and also since Rick Eklof had extended such a grand invitation to me to go to Texas.



Why Bother? I'm not in good shape. However, going to the meet was a real test for me. I knew I was not in good shape, but I went anyway. So, I knew my throws would be below previous year's performances. The test was being willing to go to a meet for which I was not prepared. I went for non-throwing reasons, and that was a first. Up until this meet I only went to meets to break my PRs. If I broke a PR it was a good meet, if not it was a failure. This put huge pressure on me and made me an asshole at the meet. I missed a lot of opportunities to meet other people and enjoy the day.

Well, I feel I passed the test. I had a good time. I met some great people. I was less of an asshole. I had a great time away from home with my son.

I had a great chance to meet and talk with Rick Eklof. We talked all day. Talk about a class act. He brought 5 folding chairs for us to sit on and a cooler full of sandwiches, water, and beer. He got us through the 9 hour meet in the Texas sun.

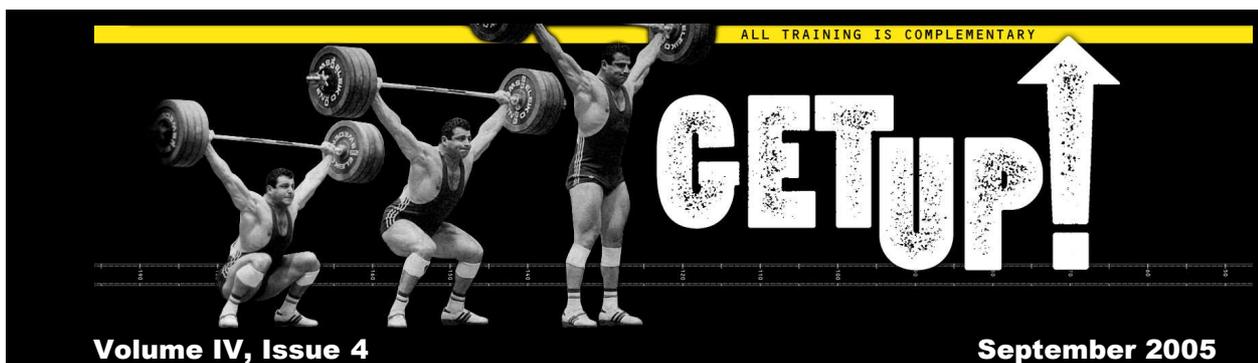
Results from the Meet

By the way, I actually got 2nd place in the Weight Pentathlon. The guy who had the second highest score is not an American, so he was not counted in the placing. He could throw well, though. So, 2nd and 3rd place went to men with the 3rd and 4th highest scores in the 40-44 age group.



*The 40-44 group.
I'm the little guy in the middle!*

All of my throws were below previous bests (except the javelin where I had a



5m PR (127' 4"). My two main throws, hammer (155' 7" versus 168') and 35# wt (~44' 10" versus >49'), were well below marks from even 3 years ago. Shot sucked (~33' 11"), discus (107' 11") was OK. My score was 2969, only 22 point ahead of the 3rd place guy, but more than 300 point behind first place.

For perspective, my all-time best is 3246 points from 2002, and in the 2003 Nat Wt Pent I scored 3107 for 3rd place. (In 2002 I had 4 PRs in one meet - A real banner day.)



Conclusions

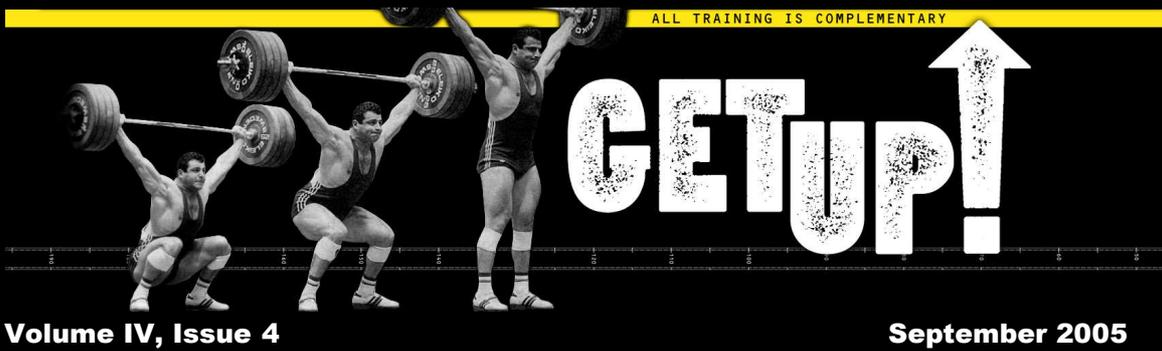
I draw two conclusions from this experience. The first is that I will continue to ENJOY the throwing activities and meets. I'm going to try to attend at least one national meet each year. The second conclusion is that the wt pent is fun, but if I want to excel in it I need to bring up my weak throws and maintain my good ones. Funny how that works.

Another "Just Show Up!"

Ron Dykstra

Ron's experience here is what Get Up has become famous for...he is a typical guy (like you and me) who has decided to climb the mountain. We don't care what the mountain is...but we sure like Ron's insights. Welcome to the staff of our little corner of the world. Hello Dan John.

Having asked you some fairly annoying and inconsequential questions in the past, it finally came to me (slowly) what the whole "show up" concept was about. I told you of my plans to compete in a local meet, the Blue Mountain Open at Wasaga Beach, Ontario, Canada (a non-qualifier), and you asked me to let you know how the meet went. Well, here is a little about my journey. While not remarkable, I was surprised at what started to happen when I gave a name to my goal. Everyone I know is familiar with my borderline obsession with training, and they have politely listened to my tales of training highs and woes, until inevitably they glaze over, and we have to change the subject. So when I started telling friends and family that I was going to compete in a weightlifting competition, coincidentally falling on my birthday in August, I was surprised at the response. They got into it. They dug it. They wanted to be there. They wanted to know what they could do to help. I was a little taken aback. This will be my first competition (I will be 34



Volume IV, Issue 4

September 2005

years old the day of), and had anticipated doing the meet in a relative vacuum. Wrong. It won't just be me and fellow lifters. My whole family will attend, depending on health (more on this later).

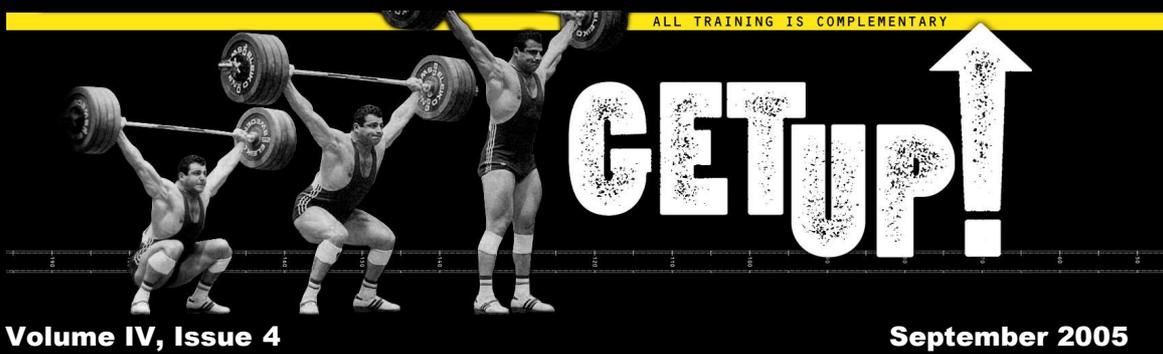
Initially I received help from John Gray, CSCS, Phd candidate at Waterloo University, someone I've known for a couple of years. He is one of those guys who always tries to advance the sport. He agreed to help me when he could, usually only once a week. He encouraged me to train seriously again. Just this in itself was a big deal. I had been training infrequently, buying guest passes on the weekend, and mostly to continue hanging out with the lifters I'd met at a more serious phase. Injury and cash flow problems led me to take an extended layoff, which is why I started the once a week thing. I knew that I'd have to get back into it, at least 3 days per week, in order to have a chance of not embarrassing myself at the meet. Well, in a leap of faith, I decided to start buying 3 guest passes a week (which I could not afford) until such time as I could put down a one month payment. Soon I began to pay month at a time until I could save up for a year. As stupid as this seems, this is one of the day to day challenges I've encountered since deciding to pursue the goal of competition. I recall you saying that Dick Notmeyer only charged 25 cents per week (?) when you started training with him at Pacifica. Well as my Dad

says, if you've got nothing, a dollar is a lot, and this is how I felt. Still, I knew I



Dick and Joy Notmeyer... Two of the Best needed to train, and wanted badly to compete. I wanted to be one of those people who do more than talk about their lifts. I wanted to be like Dan John, in short, not to sound psychopathic. You sound like a prophet crying out in the wilderness compared to those other fitness types, and you never try to sell anything. In short, you are clearly an alien. I read all your stuff, sent you some dumb emails that you politely responded to, now here I am. I'm writing you again, hopefully having learned something in the nine months since I started reading "The Coach".

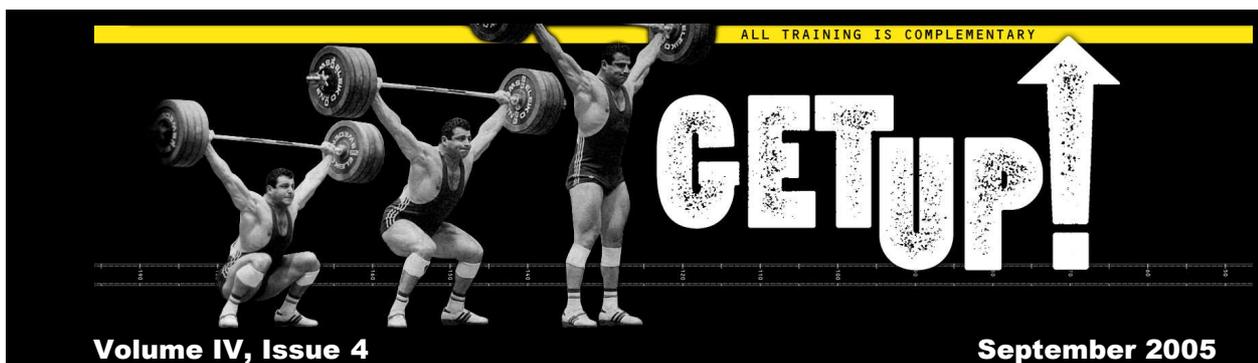
Getting back to the journey, one of the things other lifters always told me is that I need lifting shoes. I am stubborn and poor, and have always trained in sneakers, so for a couple of years I ignored this very reasonable advice, but



when I made my goal and needs known to my family, they wanted to help. My parents, both in their sixties, both still working (my Dad about to retire from his second career and start a third, my Mom still teaching high school English), both having lent me untold money and support over the years, well, they helped me again. They got me the shoes as an early birthday present. This was very inspiring to me. I wanted to ... not disappoint them, you know? Okay, so there I am, finally possessed of the right shoes, the gym membership, and occasional coaching, but still stuck with bad form and poor conditioning. This is when John Gray introduced me to a guy who scares me; a Turkish lifter who has competed in the World Championships. His name is Dursun Sevinc. Apparently you can see him in one of those training hall tapes that Ironmind sells. A professional sportsman, trained under Abajiev, randomly appearing in my gym. I have rarely been more freaked out than I was that day, training in front of a guy who can snatch 170kg, clean and jerk 200kg. Well, he hated everything I did that day. How I held the bar, where I put my feet, my knee position, how I failed to finish pulls and had to leap forward to save lifts, how tense my face appeared in the bottom of the pull, my squatting, my high pulls, hell, I think he was offended by how much I sweat. He upset me out of the comfortable place of mediocrity. I have been fortunate to train under his eye a

few of times. He yells, he curses, he hits, he throws his hands in the air in frustration, he comes to the gym in street clothes and pisses off the staff; in short he is a real nightmare. But in a very short time he made me reconsider what I'd been doing wrong for the past two years. I've been scared into trying harder.

Trying harder is completely necessary, as it turns out, especially since after the long layoff and sporadic one per week training, my strength levels and technique are lacking. I'm out of breath on the platform, I sweat a frightening amount, my hands have blistered, cracked and healed, and I have learned the wonders of athletic tape and cold water dousing. I have had to adjust to a new, lighter bodyweight as well. Meat, leaves and berries, but on a budget, has translated to a 28 pound weight loss. I am around 202lbs now, and hope to not lose any more, because at 6 feet tall, I'm frankly scared to lose any more. People keep telling me how fit I look, but what I really want to hear is that my technique looks better. The extra weight always gave me the confidence to approach weights that my erratic training and lifestyle would otherwise preclude. Now I have to train smart and hard to lift reasonable weights. If I bust out of good form, I can't rely on extra muscle to keep me in one piece. So I can't heave, or cheat, round my back, or take it to the limit on no sleep and no training like I

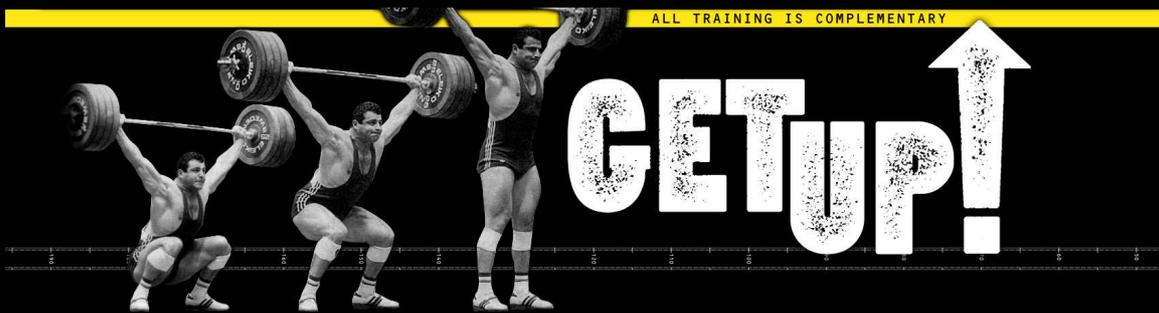


used to.

What I am saying in a long and roundabout way, is that a lot of stuff has happened since I lay down this goal of competing in a weightlifting contest. I haven't gotten to the real life changer yet, and here I am, a couple of pages in. In the beginning of this letter I mentioned how stoked my family was when I told them my plan, and that health permitting they all want to be there to cheer me on. There is a distinct possibility that my sister, Brenda, will not be able to attend. Brenda is a shining example of how to do things right in life. 4.0 GPA all through college, MBA from Tulane, executive jobs first with Ford, and now with a major IT company, married her college sweetheart and has twin boy and girl with him, all of them as beautiful as can be. She is devout, smart, talented, virtuous and beautiful. About two weeks ago I got a call from her and she told me that she has leukemia. She has the kind where you need blood marrow. My three siblings and I were typed to see if we can donate. Two of us are a match, not myself, and that is a huge asset to her treatment. I pray that she will live long enough to find a cure, to see her kids graduate from elementary, high and post-secondary school. I pray a lot more these days. I don't know what exactly I believe anymore, but I pray anyhow.

Whatever happens at the meet, this has been a personal victory for me. I am in good health, I can still be athletic, and I can help my family with love and positivity, if not with the donation of my tissue. Whatever else occurs is just the icing. With the competition 24 days away I was on one hand, utterly freaking out, and on the other, very happy and reconciled to the fact that although this is my first comp, I was training hard, improving my technique, eating and sleeping well. I decided to learn a lot by attending and competing, and let everything else take care of itself.

So, on August 20 I got up early, drove a couple of hours from Toronto to northern Ontario. I head up with my brother, who is the match for bone marrow donation, and is thus back in town for a couple of weeks. It really was a case of the planets aligning just right. We arrive, early for the weigh-in, and I get a look at the competitors and facility, and I'm nervous as anything you'd care to name. The organizer, Jill Miller, sets my mind at ease about a few things, and informs me that since my official coach could not attend, my brother is now my coach. He adapts to this easily, despite the fact that he has no knowledge of the sport. He was my intermediary all day long. I had no idea how things were going to go, but I'd told everyone that the lifting starts at 10:30am, and damned if my whole family plus friends, nieces and nephews and babies don't all start



Volume IV, Issue 4

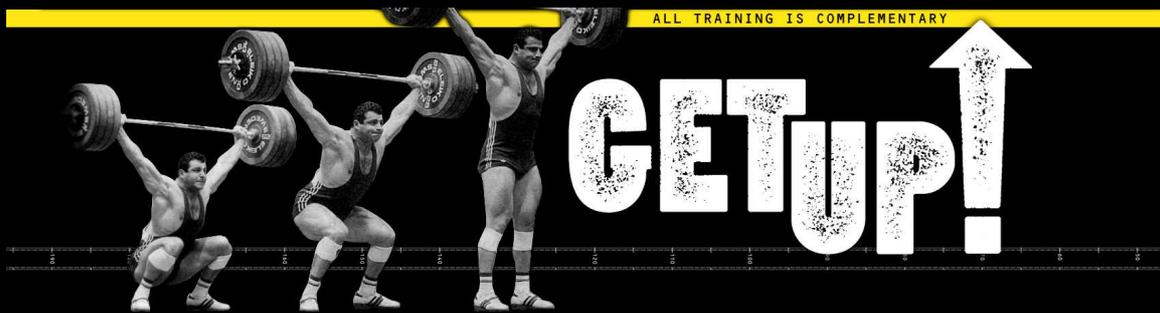
September 2005

arriving right on cue, **including** my beautiful sister who is struggling with leukemia. I had the biggest entourage going, including lifters who came with their clubs. Everyone who didn't know if they could make, made it. With my lofty understanding of the sport I had failed to realize that the bigger lifters will be lifting quite a bit later in the day. So my whole lovely family sat through the girls lifting including one 8 year old, who was coached by her Dad, as well as a 60 year old female competitor who was an inspiration, and a national level female lifter named Jill Halligan, who is very pretty and opened at 75kg in the snatch. Whoa. I was fielding questions from my family, and realizing I really didn't know what I'm talking about. I realized I didn't know if I wanted red lights or white lights. I discover that you get three attempts total per movement. I had been thinking that you get three attempts per each chosen weight. Very wrong. I became amazed at the competitiveness of the 77kg men's class. Great athletic lifters in this category, most of whom are moving much better numbers than I despite the fact that I weigh in at 15 kg heavier than they. These guys were young, tough and chilled out. As the crowd goes silent before an attempt, this 77kg dude comes out from the warmup area whistling. Talk about tranquil mind. Whistles his way on to the platform, hits his lift, and saunters off. Meanwhile my heart is in my throat and I'm about to lose it, and yet somehow feel like I'm in



heaven.

The second group of men take the stage, and what a gamut of lifters. Huge young high school guys, masters lifters with white hair, masters lifters with no hair, sporting tree trunk thighs and massive upper bodies, a true giant of a man who was over two meters tall and 140 kg, and some very tough and confident lifters in their prime. I didn't feel intimidated. I wasn't there to take anything from anyone. I was there to learn, to compete with myself, and to celebrate my birthday doing something I love. One of the guys my age who had competed a lot gave me a little advice as far as timing out my warm-ups. That helped. One of the great seasoned lifters, Bob Walt of Apollo club, was competing in the same class as his nephew. How cool is that? Well, my number came up, my name was called, and my brother was there to



Volume IV, Issue 4

September 2005

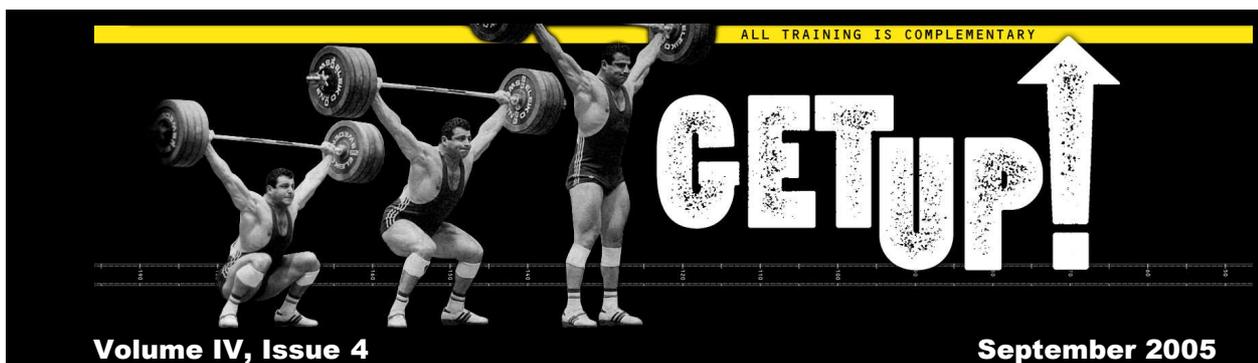
give me the pep talk. I so wanted to make my first lift. I was scared that I had started too heavy. Funny, all the big high schoolers were done lifting by the time I attempt 80 kg. I smoked it. My brother was so stoked. I was so happy to have gotten a lift in. I think I power snatched it, it was like nothing. I dump 85 kg on my next attempt, take another try, and get white lights. I warmed up for the C&J, just like you described in one of your articles. A few 60kg lifts, a couple of singles with 90kg. I was ready to pull my opener, 105kg. I realize that something odd has happened, though. The guys snatching similar numbers to me in the snatch had all started lighter. I had made 105kg and 110kg in training, so I figure I'll at least get those. Wrong. I dumped 105kg three times in a row. I was lifting alone at this weight. It was too heavy for the intermediate guys, and way too light for the really tough guys. So I go three times in a row, and don't take advantage of the two minute grace period until my third attempt, only taking it then because Jill Miller had realized that my brother and I don't know what we're doing. Jill, the president of the Ontario Weightlifting Association, comes over to coach me. She did not have to do that, but she realized that I was inexperienced and helped me. Still didn't make my lifts, but I was touched. So I fail to total, and move out of the running for fourth or fifth place to no place, but I'm done! The training, the sacrifice, the tension,

well it's all over! I am surrounded by family and friends, congratulating me, taking pictures, giving me gifts and love, spoiling me rotten. Finally I lost it, big tears, full of joy, so many wild happy feelings that I could no longer contain them. My beautiful family really helped put it into perspective, and I felt I was the luckiest man alive. We ate a big dinner, drove home and I partied hard for the next two days, and felt no shame. Dan, I don't think this would be complete if I didn't try to wrap up with what I learned. You were so right, if you want to learn about something, show up. Get some stamps, get registered to your local organization and fill out the entry form. Do the training, concentrating on the classic movements and power movements, pulls and squat variations. This really works. Show up on time, make weight, and do your best. Anyone using this method will learn something.

I would have done a few things differently. Next time;

1) I will rest more between weigh in and lifting. As a heavier lifter, I have more time to get nervous than some of the lighter people. I think a nap or change of scenery is a good option during this time.

2) I will choose a more realistic start weight for the C&J. Bob Walt said to me, "Just get the first one in. You can jump as much as you want after that". On the plus side, to improve at my next



meet, all I have to do is C&J **anything**. Make sure to total!

3) I will hang out more afterwards and get to know the competitors better. I was spent, to be honest, but I should have taken advantage of the collective knowledge and camaraderie. I missed out on this chance to keep learning.

4) I will sleep more. Funny thing, I slept well until the week before the meet, and then out of nerves began to lose sleep right when I needed it the most.

5) I will get a singlet. They are not stupid, they are the ideal lifting uniform. Plus you get to show off what you've been training for.

Well, Coach Dan John, it has been months since I sent you an email that said I was slowly starting to understand what you've known for a long time. Joe Average might "work out". Athletes train. Then they test themselves in a regulated forum. That is how they judge their progress. That is how they learn. They show up, pay attention and ask informed questions. In my case, I had to get humble, be willing to listen and learn, be willing to apply the criticism of others without getting my feelings hurt. Along the way, I learned that what is really important is family and true friendships. Everyone who came to see me lift traveled. Some came hundreds of miles, some came thousands of miles. My beautiful sister attended despite terminal illness. I was and am overwhelmed. By putting a name to my

goal and opening myself to the help of others, I discovered a wealth of support. I shared my dream and it really came true.

I've already thanked my family and friends. I want to thank you too, Coach. I would maybe never have competed if it hadn't been for this simple and powerful advice. Show up. Two short words that teach big lessons. It has been such a great ride, that now I don't want to get off! I want to show up again and again! I'm going on a new program now. It is the end of August, so maybe I'll start the Big 21, or do some of the York courses for a while. I've got loads of little gems to choose from, and I'll bet you know where I got them. Thank you, Dan John. Your voice reached me.

Good Stuff...I'm glad to be part of it...

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