



October is nearly over...

So, I thought I would bring out the October edition. Call me crazy...

Hey, I've been busy. I actually work for a living. I'm telling you, though, things are going very well.

Some news...the DVD for the Olympic Lifts and the squat is being made next week. Here's the thing...there are better DVDs out there on the topic, but my approach is how I teach people to do the lifts in twenty minutes. Perfection...that takes a little longer...

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*.

How to throw like a stripper

Earl R. Curry

Made you look

I competed in my first track meet in 27 years on July 9th, 2005 at the Dayton Masters Track Meet. I spent the last year planning and training hard for this one day in July. I had a lot of fun, met some great people and learned a lot. I changed my workout schedule around the week before the meet so I would be fully recovered and at my best. Basically, I backed off the weight training. I think it worked. I felt good on meet day and didn't have the same daily

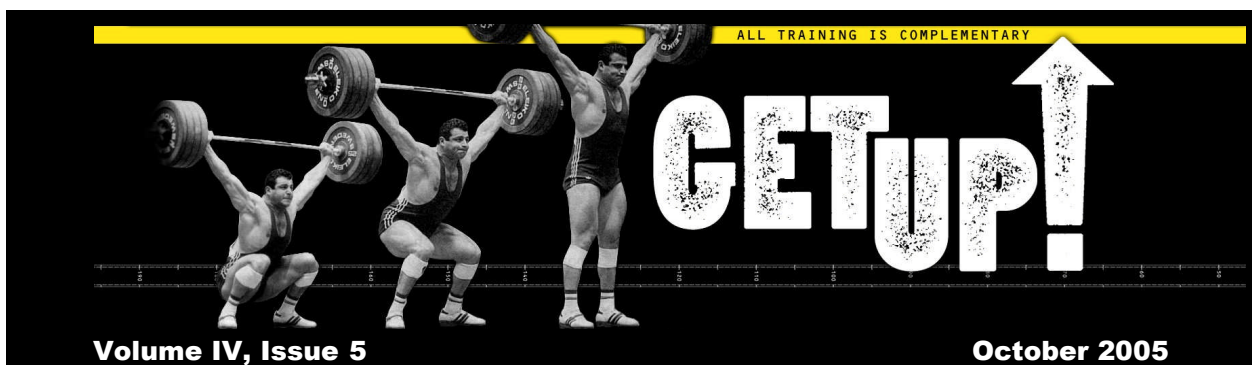
aches and pains I usually have while training everyday.

I took my last heavy upper body workout 7 days before the meet on Saturday. I maxed out on Power Cleans and Suspended Floor Presses. I took my last heavy lower body workout 5 days before the meet on Monday. I maxed out on Suspended Squats and Good Mornings. I did my last weight training session, a Speed Bench day, on Wednesday with some light upper back and Power Cleans.

I threw everyday, sometimes twice a day up to Friday. I took Friday completely off to rest and recover. I felt pretty good the day of the meet, so I'll use that schedule on the next meet.

Originally I was only training to compete in the Discus. But at the last minute I decided to throw the shot put at the meet along with the Discus. I made that decision about 4 weeks before the meet.

First issue I had with throwing the 16# shot was hand strength. At first, I had to tape my first two fingers together to keep the shot from rolling off my hand sideways at release. So I started training my grip every other day. Just playing around with the shot is great grip training. Grip it in an overhand grip, then release and catch as it falls. I do deadlifts with a thick bar I built from an



old Olympic bar and some 2" PVC. I have some grip training toys also, like my 55 # anvil. I grip it by the horn and hold for time or I'll do bent over rows while gripping the horn. I also have a Rolling Thunder handle from Ironmind <http://www.ironmind.com/> to practice 1 handed deadlifts. I do lots of pinch gripping too, mostly pinching the end of a Hex Dumbbell. I've done 40 # but most of my training is done with 30 # or 35# Dumbbells. Grip a couple of Dumbbells like this and do farmer walks until they drop out of your hands. Killer! This really made a difference in my release, to the point I didn't need tape on my fingers on meet day. I'm planning on doing a few more wrist curls in various forms over the next year to strengthen this weakness even more.

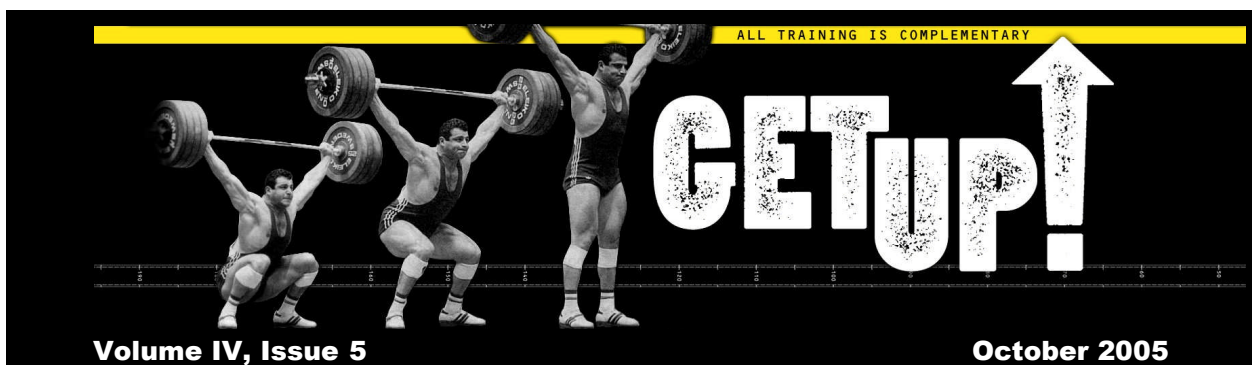
Not sure exactly why, but throwing the 16# ball just destroys my inner elbow, forearm, tricep area of my throwing arm. It's 3 months after the meet now and I'm still hurting in that area. Not to the point I'm crippled, but I have to make sure to warm up the area very well before I train. I wore a neoprene sleeve over my elbow at the contest for my warmup which helped keep the heat in. I'm going to have to be really careful in the future with this injury. I really like throwing the shot and don't want to be forced to drop it. I wanted to use it as my stepping stone event to doing a highland game competition some day soon.

As for what form to use for the shot put, I tried the spin and just couldn't "get it". I felt very off balanced with the weight of the shot. I have the Oldfield DVD and tried to put it all together step by step using the instructions from the DVD, but felt I didn't have enough time to get this working. I tried the glide and was semi-comfortable with that. So I did the glide. (It was more like an upright kick, skip, lunge looking thingy.)



Earl shaking hands with David Witt...a goal of most Americans...

Anyway, meet day arrives. Discus started at 8:30 am, oldest to youngest, women to men was the order. This is one of the few times I actually felt like a youngster. We met one thrower who was 75. I told his wife I was training to be the world's strongest 75 year old. Only 30 more years on my training cycle and I'm there. Seriously, there were some really good Master throwers there. They really impressed me and gave me a lot of hope for the future. There is life after 40, despite what my 14 year old tells me.



While waiting my turn I ran into another Get-Up! Author, David Witt, of Kentucky. David's a great guy and my wife Valerie and I really enjoyed hanging out and spending time with him. It seems like out of the 8 hour or so track meet, I spent a grand total of 5 minutes throwing. So, we had a lot of time to talk and even took a little road trip to find a place to eat lunch between events. David was just back from John Powell's Throwing Camp at Denison University and he had a lot of good pointers for me he learned at camp. David uses a spin for the shot put and showed me some good drills to get me started. Denison University is just around the corner from where I live. I really would like to spend some time there next year and learn from the best. Maybe Dan and David can hook me up next year.



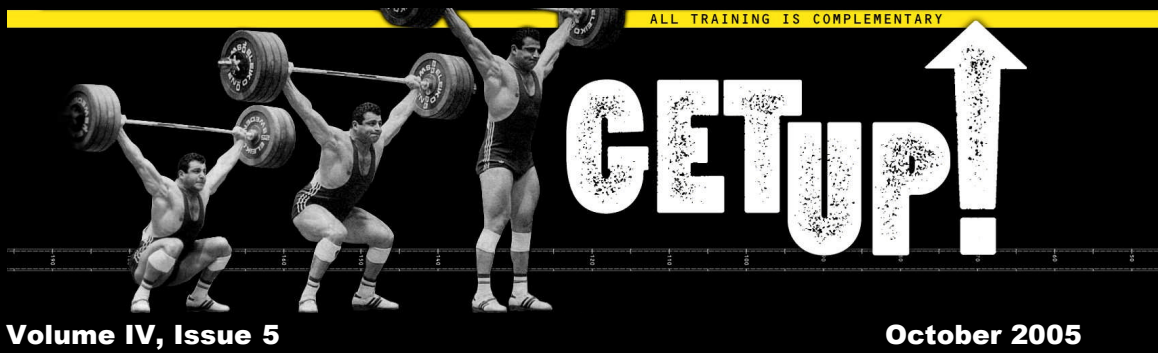
You want to hang out with these two??? Be sure to what you wish for...

Anyway, I got second place in the discus, or last, depending on how you look at it. I think there were 2 of us in my age group. I had the goal of breaking

100 feet and I would have been ecstatic to get that. I've been getting a consistent 100 feet in practice with the 2 k discus. My best throw was my last, at 96'8.5". Close, but no cigar. I was still happy to just be competing. It didn't matter if I won or lost the event, I was still a winner. I was lying in a hospital bed about this same time last year and all I had was the "thought" of throwing again. To actually, finally, be competing again, really was a dream come true for me.

David won his division with 120'. According to David, "The important thing is not how you placed, but how you felt you performed, and I was way lower in distance than I wanted to be." Personally, I would have been jumping around like an idiot if I hit 120' at this meet.

Shot put in the July heat. Damn, we were cooking out there. I actually won my division in the shot put. I think there were 2 or 3 competitors. It's actually kind of hard to tell the way everyone is group together. My best throw was on the forth attempt with 31'8.5". Not too shabby for not having any technique or very much practice. My wife, Valerie, told me one of the other competitors said he was using me as his gauge on technique. Hope I didn't screw him up too much.



David kept telling me to bend over more at the back of the circle before my glide. While I was throwing, I didn't understand what he was telling me. I'm thinking, "Geez guy. My head's touching my knee already, what the heck do you want?" Then I saw the movies my wife took. Funny how what you think you're doing, in your mind's eye, has absolutely nothing to do with reality. On every throw, I was practically standing upright. And my long flowing glide across the circle was more of a 3 inch shuffle. I've seen line dancers glide farther than me. My release was good. But I have a lot of work to do. I'm glad David's a youngun and not in my division, because he had several good throws. David emailed me when I told him I was writing this article and said, "The shot was one of my farther throws in over 2 years. 33 feet something. I did enjoy beating that young guy. After my first throw he asked me how heavy my shot was. Don't believe he thought I could throw that far."

If I learned only one thing during the last 12 months of training, it was "Film yourself!". Film yourself in practice. Film yourself at meets. Film yourself doing drills. If you're like me, you're really not doing what you think you're doing. That arm's not as high at release as you think it is. That left foot's not rotating as much as you think at the back of the circle. You're float, float, sting is

more like a hop, trip, thud. If you have a coach or training partner to help point out things like this, that's great. I train alone and I'm going to start taping more the rest of the year.

I can't wait until my next meet.

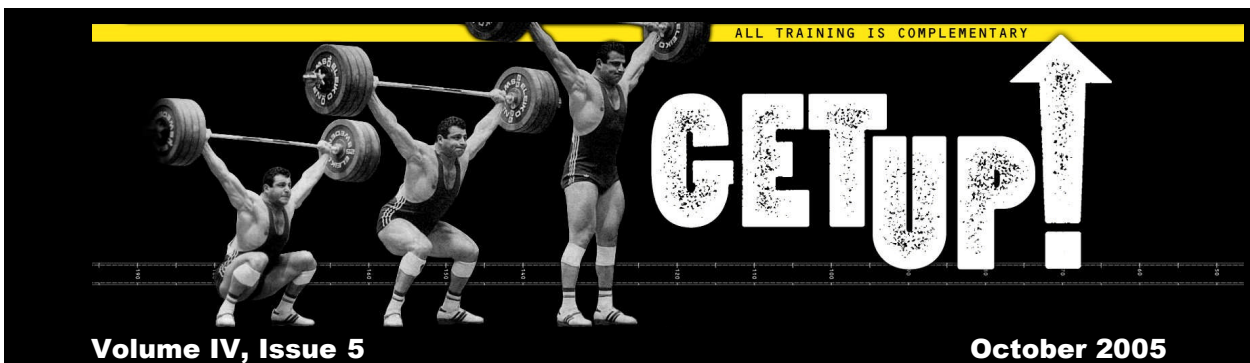
Show up. Train hard. Repeat.

Editor's Note: I think that this is the reason I love this little newsletter. Real people talk about real training. There is no need to lie or make stuff up...we are working towards the same basic goals. Welcome aboard, that is a great article. Now...did David mention payment?

An interesting little cycle

David Witt, Our #1 Contributor Here is an interesting little cycle that I'm currently trying right now that I thought you might be interested in seeing. I call this my 5 week cycle. It consists of two weeks of volume, two weeks of strength, and a week of testing.

The first two weeks are volume weeks. Three sets of 8 or 10 with lighter weights, 60% or 70% of maxes. These weeks are to help prepare the muscles and tendons for the two strength weeks. Once you get into the cycles, these weeks are back off weeks after the test week. Caution: don't do three sets of 10 with the same weights in the same exercises for both weeks. Throughout this cycle we are always striving to add more weight, in both the volume and strength phases. Once you get three sets of 10, or 8, in a particular exercise, bump the



weight up next time. More weight on the bar is the primary goal.

The second two weeks are the strength phase. Now we increase the weights and drop the reps. In the first week of this phase, I may do sets of 5 with 80%. Later, in week two maybe, or later the first week, I will go to sets of 3. Then, maybe the last workout before testing, sets of 2. Always with more weight than the previous time I ran this cycle. We are building toward a new personal best. The last week is the test week. You can test your max, or if you don't want to do that every 5 weeks, you can test your best for 3, or 2, or 5, whatever. This cycle addresses many issues. Variety: the body adapts to a particular workout very quickly. We have to constantly be changing things around to keep the body growing. This cycle changes every two weeks, and if we continue to put more weight on the bar, it changes every workout. Hypertrophy: The volume phase can be used to try to add a little more muscle on the body. Never a bad thing. Goals: this cycle lends its self to setting and achieving goals. If you have a yearly or 6 month goal, you can break it down into 5 week increments and track your progress. Decide what's working and what's not. Want to add 50 pounds to that lift? Fifty sounds like a lot, but breaking it down over a year in 5 week cycles means you only have to add 5 pounds a cycle. That sounds more doable.

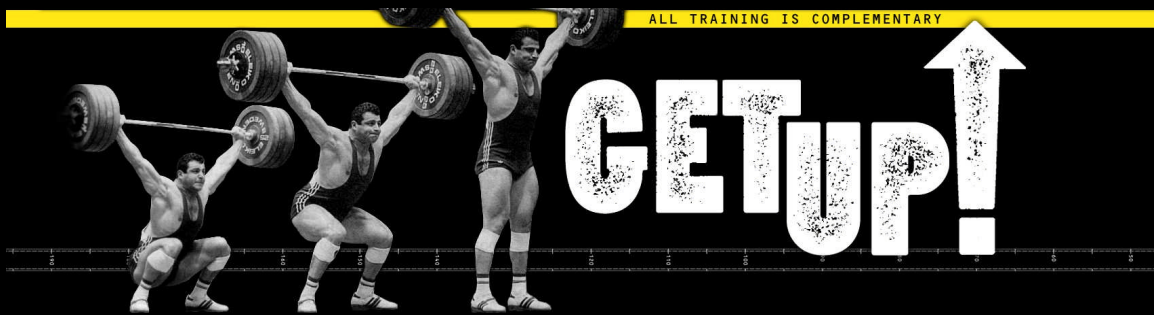
I'm currently following this routine. So far things are going well, I'll let you know how it progresses later.

Dave's Diary...with his permission

Diary: 2005

Aug. 10th. The season is over. I only garnered one PR, 21 feet in the 56 wfd back in May. My discus was 4 feet shorter than last year, and 10 feet shorter than 2002. Things need to change. I have not had enough focus in my training. I'm twice as strong as I was in 2002, but not in throwing strength. I need more throwing strength.

I'm also too fat. My weight earlier this week was up to 240, an all time high for me. More weight just slows me down. In college I threw at a bodyweight of about 215. I was quick, explosive. I had a 30 inch vertical and a 26.5 sec 200m time. I think back and wonder what I would have been capable of if I had a 25 pound backpack on back then. How high could I have jumped? How fast could I run? How much would 25 pounds of extra weight slow me down across the circle? I need to lose weight. Period. I've made a pact with myself, I'm not throwing another object until I get down under 230. And I'm not doing any full techniques until I get under 225. Today, I weigh 233.5. I have a ways to go yet.



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I need to focus my training on throwing. All activities need to be geared toward throwing farther. I equate throwing strength with scales, or power position throws. From a stopped position, no momentum built, how far can you throw that thing? This year I seem to be throwing the discus 100 feet from a stand. I want a 120 stand. So that's a 20% gain. I've decided to buck all the systems and train for a 20% gain in everything across the board. Lifting, throwing, running. 20% better. I've broken things down to what I need to lift, throw, run each month to arrive at a 20% gain by May next year. Let's see what happens.

Right now I'm lifting and running. No throwing, not until I get under 230, and no throwing unless I stay under 230. Aug. 15th. Well, one week later. My weight this morning was 236, down about 3 pounds from this same day last week. The weight is coming down, slowly, but that's ok. Slower weight loss may become more permanent than sudden weight loss. I must be patient. My weight training is progressing. I haven't made any big lifts yet, but my numbers are increasing. I'll test things in two weeks. I already have it mapped out. As far as running goes, I'm doing a lot of distance right now. From my house to the local Ameristop is exactly one mile, over some pretty rough hills. I'm running out to Ameristop and walking back, but sprinting up the hills on the

way back. My aerobic activity is getting better. This is also to help me lose the weight.

Aug 16th. "One thing at a time, all things in succession. That which grows slowly endures." J. G. Hubbard
I like that quote. Slow gains, but always gaining, that's going to be my key this year. This morning, 232.5 pounds body weight. Not down below 230 yet, so today I run. Yesterday was a good day in the weight room. I did two sets of three in the back squat with a very heavy weight for me right now. Power cleans were great. Five sets of 2 with a fairly heavy load. Each set got easier as I learned better how to use my legs. Bench wasn't bad either. I wish I could have started last year over again, but I'll pretend like this was the start of last year and work smarter. Notice I didn't say harder. Working smarter means sometimes harder and sometimes softer. It depends on where you are at and how your body feels. Last night I was at the track after weights. Ran a mile in 9min 15 sec. Did a couple of sprint like runs afterwards, and my left calf got really tight, so I backed off. I may run a lot today, or I may not, depending on that calf. Listen to the body, it tells you when to go and when not to go. Get in tune with it, it can be your best coach.

Aug 19th. "Be not afraid of going slowly; be afraid only of standing still." Chinese Proverb.



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Weight this morning, 229.5 pounds. Too bad today is a weight room day. I really would have liked to throw something, even only if it was a standing throw. Maybe after the weights. In ten days I have to start testing myself in the weight room. I'm thinking about adding some running and jumping tests as well. See how much I am progressing, it does no good to add 50 pounds to a squat if you don't jump any higher. I need to focus more on running and jumping numbers than weight room numbers. I think this is why I didn't improve over my performance in 2002 in the discus. I don't run or jump any higher than I did then. I have to see what happens when I improve in these areas.

Aug. 25th. It's been a few days since I last wrote. After the 19th, on the 20th, I got down to 228.5 pounds. Then we went out to eat. Don Pablo's, my favorite "Mexican" place. Back up to 233 the next morning. Today, I'm down to 230 again. Slow but sure.

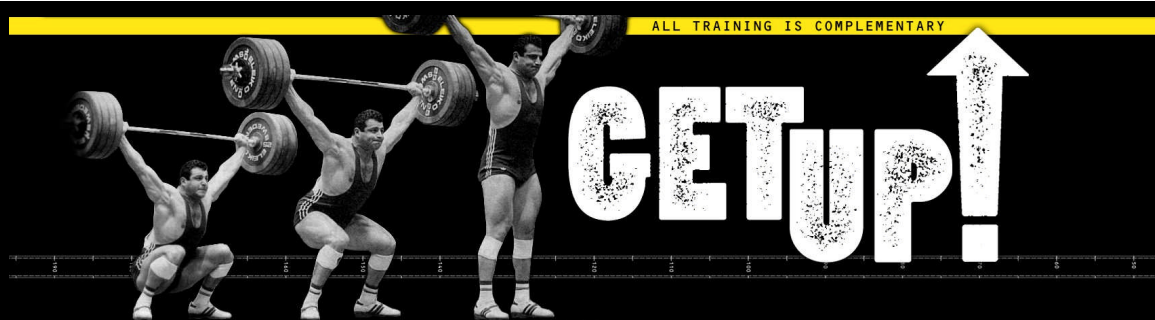
My strength is coming back also. Funny to be losing weight, but getting stronger. Yesterday's workout in the weight room was one of my better ones in a while. I was really pushing well in the press and pulling well in the deadlift. On Monday I squatted 2 sets of 3 reps with 315 on the back squat. Knee wraps, no belt. I haven't used a belt for a squat or deadlift in a while. I must thank my chiropractor Mark Franzen of Alexandria Ky for his care. I wouldn't be doing any of this

stuff without him. I wish I had started seeing a chiropractor in college. My calf is better, thanks Mark. Tuesday, I ran my cross country mile over hills to our local Ameristop. I made it there in 9:01.37. My best time yet, even on a flat track. My overall physical preparedness is getting better. Today I try to get it under 9 minutes, period. I wonder how high I can jump now.

Aug. 30th. How high can I jump? 19.5 inches. Not bad for being still 15 pounds over-weight. My weight continues to decrease as my strength increases.

Yesterday I tested in the Clean and Jerk, Snatch, and Bench Press. Got 2 out of my 3 goals. Tomorrow, I'll test the Squat. I've decided to initiate a 5 week cycle. First two weeks, volume work, sets of 8 or 10. 3rd and 4th, weeks, strength work, sets of 5 or 3 reps. On the fifth week, test all lifts and jumps again. Each cycle, a little more weight than the previous, both in the volume phases and the strength phases. Oh, and I got my cross country mile down to 8:57.37 last Thursday, as I planned. Then, Saturday, I ran it again. Thought I was flying, going faster the whole way. Bottom line, I was in at 9:03. Slower somehow. I thought it would be faster than the 8:57. Weird.

Sep. 6th. I started the volume work last Friday. I hate volume, especially the squats. I'm much weaker doing sets of 8 than sets of 3 or 1. Or, to put it another



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way, I can't do 8 with what my max squat says I should be able to do. Well, with this 5 week system I'm changing the sets and weights every two weeks, so maybe this will shock the system a bit. On Saturday, I ran my Ameristop mile in 8:48.81. Now I'm getting the crazy idea that I can get down to 7 minutes flat. I think my best mile was in my sophomore year of high school at a weight of 140 pounds. Six and a half minutes for one mile. No, I don't entertain hopes of beating that, it just makes for interesting comparisons. I'm right on schedule with the weights. Last night in looking through my training logs, I noticed back in 2002 when I was throwing farther I was doing more high pulls than recently. Could high pulls be a key to big throws? High pulls start with the feet and work their way up the body. Much like a throw should. Does that make sense?

David, great stuff as always. You seem to be asking those questions that literally haunt us throughout the off season...good work here.

Editor's New Job

Well, I'm working for a living. I took the job of Strength Coach at Juan Diego Catholic High School and, to be honest, I didn't want to do it. Hey, I had been retired...or, at least, working an office job. So, back into the school setting which I thought I would never see again.

It's funny how well my theories bore out with a larger group of athletes. First, I feel that the more chaos in a person life, the more ordered their training needs to be in the gym. The more ordered...the more chaos in training. With high school kids, they lead "Chaotic Ordered" lives.

So, we do the same warmup every day to simply bring an almost "liturgical" (church-like) opening class up with a simple warm up of Overhead squats, pushups, pullups, medicine ball ab throws, and a hip stretch. Following that ten minute warm up, we attack our daily workout.

The "daily workout" is generally a four to ten minute challenge. It can be one, two or three exercises in a row...or a dozen variations. I like the ones that mix running with a complex lift, but the students hate them...

We then do "the" workout... This is one that seems to be going well:

The Exercises:

Front Squats with Chains

Bench Press with Chains

Pullups

Box Jumps

Deadlifts

We have the athletes go light on this and try to push the idea of good form, yet a quick workout.

The reps are

10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1

The athletes follow one another very quickly. We start with the FS, do ten, move to the next exercise, do ten, then pullups, ten, box jumps, ten and deadlifts, ten. At that point, the athlete returns to the FS and does nine and continues on that all the way to one.

Each exercise is done for a total of 55 reps. Moreover, the whole workout goes very, very fast. We do a lot of other things in the workout, but this is great...

Published by Daniel John

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