



## Now, that I am a “Big Deal”

Yep, pics in Men’s Health AND Outside Magazine in the same month. It’s all gone to my head.

Welcome two new authors this month. Some of the other regulars have basically gone into hibernation after successful seasons and refuse to share secrets any more.

For timely answers, don’t forget the Q and A site:

<http://www.davedraper.com/fusionbb/showforum.php?fid/73/keyword/Dan+John/>

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*.

## “A Nice “Article Email” from a Reader

Brian Brown

*Brian dropped this email off to me the other day and I was amazed to see the*

*depth and passion of his work. I hope we see more of him in the future...*

Hi Dan,

I’ve been reading your Get-Up newsletter for a while, and I’ve been keeping an eye out for a new installment for a few months. And perhaps like your other readers of the newsletter (which I’m sure you still have plenty of) I’ve always been too lazy to write anything, so here goes.

When I read about your hip injury, I was reminded of a similar group of recurring injuries that I have had in the past. I highly recommend a foam roller (which you’ve probably tried) and also trigger point therapy (which you may or may not have tried).

Here’s a piece I wrote on my website ([brian-brown.blogspot.com](http://brian-brown.blogspot.com)) last year the injuries:

\* Trigger Point Therapy

A few years ago I discovered Trigger Point Therapy while reading Stuart McRobert’s book Beyond Brawn (<http://www.hardgainer.com/beyondbrawn.html>). McRobert recommended Bonnie Prudden’s book Pain Erasure (<http://www.amazon.com/Pain-Erasure-Bonnie-Prudden/dp/0871319837>) which I read

and used to work through several of my pains.

Trigger points are tight knots or spasms in a muscle that are very painful to the touch. Trigger points cause direct pain to the muscle or, more commonly, referred pain to other areas of the body. Trigger points are caused by physical and emotional stresses to the body.

Fortunately trigger points are well documented and it's easy enough to massage them away once you know where to look. Unfortunately trigger points are responsible for all sorts of pains that doctors commonly prescribe pain medications to merely mask the pain or, worse, unnecessary surgery.

I obtained a 1984 copy of Prudden's book, which was rather out of date. That book recommended merely applying pressure to trigger points which worked OK, but was unnecessarily painful. Recently I read *The Trigger Point Therapy Workbook, Second Edition* by Clair Davies (<http://www.triggerpointbook.com/>), which I highly recommend. Rather than just applying pressure to trigger points, Davies recommends firmly massaging trigger points to work out the trigger points and increase blood flow. Personally I find this method of self-therapy easiest.

Sometimes I have lower back pain that is entirely attributed to trigger points in my upper glutes. Typically these will flare up after doing some heavy leg lifting. I can easily massage these away either using a tennis ball on the floor or by standing using my thumbs supported by my index finger.

Sometimes after I run, I feel pain in my left knee and my left foot. (I hypothesized that this was due to running counter-clockwise on a track, so I try to switch directions every lap or so.) My knee pain is caused by trigger points in my outer quads that I massage with either a golf ball or supported thumbs. My left foot pain is caused by trigger points in the soleus muscles of my calf (which I massage with my thumbs) and by trigger points in the soles of my feet (which I massage by standing on a tennis ball and moving it around).

Sometimes after I play with my kids or lug groceries or do overhead lifting I get pain in my neck and shoulders (I think these were originally created when I threw my arm out several times while throwing shot put in high school). This pain is caused by trigger points in my supraspinatus, scalenes, upper trapezius, and sternocleidomastoid muscles which I massage using my thumb and fingers.

Typically when one of these areas flares up, I can get rid of the pain by massaging the responsible trigger points for about 20 seconds four or five times per day.

It's also interesting to learn what other parts of your body have trigger points even though you're not aware of the pain being caused by them. Davies states that the "number one myofascial source of pain" is the lateral pterygoid muscle in the upper jaw.

After massing these muscles I felt the muscles in my face and neck relax remarkably. A physical therapist friend of mine says that massaging this muscle (in the jaw, remember!) will loosen up a tight pelvis also -- how strange! She also

states that a person's emotions will cause trigger points in certain parts of the body to flare up. In fact, I've noticed that if I have an extremely stressful day, the trigger points that affect my lower back and neck will flare up, even though I've done nothing physical to stress the muscles of those areas.

It does take some practice to find the trigger points and to learn some of the basic massage techniques, but it's well worth the time invested. And you can help your family and friends with a simple method of removing common pains.

After reading all of the different types of pain caused by trigger points, I think a massage therapist who specialized in trigger point therapy could help so many people be free of their pain and could make a lot of money with a minimal investment in schooling.

Again, I highly recommend Davies' book *The Trigger Point Therapy Workbook, Second Edition*. \*

Here's another bit of writing regarding performing the O-lifts with cast iron plates that your readers might be interested in:

\* Olympic Weightlifting without Bumper Plates (with Cast Iron Plates!)

Olympic Weightlifting is a fun sport and makes for an excellent workout. For optimum safety, one should do the overhead lifts with rubber bumper plates. With bumper plates, after completing a lift the weight can just be dropped in a controlled manner and no energy is wasted on the descent as you do when

using cast iron weights (if you don't want to destroy your equipment like me).

However, rubber bumper plates are much more expensive than cast iron plates! At [JesupGym.com](http://JesupGym.com) (a nearby business), for example, two 45's, two 25's, and two 10's (all rubber bumper plates) would cost a total of \$316 (and that doesn't include the bar or the collars, or shipping and handling). Whereas a standard 300 pound Olympic weight set including bar and collars can be had for less than \$200. Especially if you already have a cast iron set, ponying up for an extra set of bumpers can seem like an unnecessary cost.

Here are a few points on how to do the Olympic lifts with cast iron weights. Don't forget: at one time the only option was iron!

1. Get a 3/4 inch rubber mat (from a farm store, etc.) and place 1/2 inch sheet of plywood over it. This is your launch pad.
2. Don't EVER miss a lift that you put over your head! If in doubt, don't get under it! You will probably never know your true max. without using bumpers, but you can still get in great shape with sub-maximum attempts.
3. Don't drop the weights after a completed attempt. Dude, this is my house and my equipment! Using a clean grip, return the weight to the shoulders/chest while absorbing the impact with your legs, drop down in a little squat and lower the bar to the ground after

bouncing it off of your thighs.

You can see Dimas doing this a little bit in this awesome video (<http://media.putfile.com/Pyrras-Dimas-training-75>). For snatches, get a clean-grip at the top ala' Dave Rigert ([http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7\\_LVFWmbBGs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_LVFWmbBGs)) and return to the floor as described above.

3. Snatches: power snatches combined with overhead squats using sub-maximum full snatch weights will get you in awesome shape. With some courage and good technique you can get into a full squat snatch using cast-iron weights.

4. Clean & Jerks: Do clean & push presses instead. You can monster-up so much weight in the clean & jerk that it can be difficult to bring back down to the ground as described above. There's also a good Russian article out there (somewhere?) detailing how shoulder injuries increased in lifters after they dropped the Press from the Olympics. Also, my shoulders and arms feel and look stronger when worked through the greater pushing ROM that push presses provide.

5. Toss in at the end of a workout as finishers Turkish get-ups, overhead squats, front squats, bent presses, etc. and you won't miss the bumpers at all! \*

Here's my weight training background:

\* I've been weight training very consistently for the past 20 years (since I was in high school).

In high school I played football and threw the shot put & discus (and ran the weightman relay! [and high jumped for one year]) in track. So I lifted weights then to gain strength and bodyweight for football mostly. My sophomore year in high school I weighed 185 lbs and could bench press 225 lbs. My junior year I weighed 205 and could bench 275 and run a 4.8 40. My senior year I weighed 228 before two-a-days and could bench 305, run a 4.68 40, deadlift 455, and squat 450!

I trained hard in high school and ate a lot of food. The only reason I reached 228 lbs back then was because I drank home-made weight gain shakes until I almost puked! But I probably put on about 15 lbs too much -- I had much less endurance at 228 than at 205, and had ankle problems my senior year.

Since then I've been doing a modified powerlifting/bodybuilding weight training routine. In college I weighed about 215 but I was stronger than I was in high school. After college my weight settled down to about 195 and my strength came down also. I was trying to train like I did in high school and college, but I wasn't taking in the nutrition necessary to support gains. Also, I did no cardio work at all besides generally walking, hiking, and riding a bike.

About 3 years ago I reread some old Mike Mentzer (<http://www.mikementzer.com/>) articles and came upon the work of

Stuart McRobert ([www.hardgainer.com/books.html](http://www.hardgainer.com/books.html)). I abbreviated my training and simplified my routines. But I was still not eating enough to support strength gains. And training was becoming rather unexciting after so many years. (I was generally in good shape, however, still weighing about 195 lbs.)

Last year I started adding some jump rope work before my weight workouts to prepare for an annual high school alumni basketball tournament. Jumping rope before hitting the weights really kicked my metabolism and endurance into high gear and I shed about 10 lbs to my current weight of 185 lbs.

It was also around this time that I saw the movie '300' a few times and marveled at the shape that this horde of actors was in and after some research I found the website (<http://www.gymjones.com/>) of the trainer (Mark Twight) of the actors in the movie (it was then that I started reading Get-Up also). The crazy training that Mark Twight had the actors doing looked like hard work, but it also looked like fun. After some more research I found that the training they were doing was based primarily upon the routines and system created by the folks at Crossfit (<http://www.crossfit.com/>).

So, slowly but surely I started doing the Crossfit workouts, which are posted fresh daily on the Crossfit website. Crossfit is a combination of Olympic weightlifting, gymnastics, powerlifting, running, throwing, rowing, and several other activities. It's

unique in that there is no set workout routine. A different workout is posted daily on their website.

When I started Crossfitting, I noticed a huge increase in my endurance and energy levels. Before starting, I hadn't run at all for exercise since high school!

The Crossfit workout regimen calls for three days on and one day off. And after about a year it became too much exercise for me. I wasn't eating enough to support the recuperation required to keep up the 3/1 schedule. So I decided to cut back to three workouts a week that I fashion in a Crossfittish manner, and which mimic the workouts you recommend, Dan.

The general format of the workout is as follows:

1. Modified Crossfit warm-up for one or two rounds depending upon the air temperature in my barn (shoot for 10 bodyweight reps of each exercise): reverse-lunges/Samson stretch, overhead squats, sit-ups, back extensions, dips & pullups with ab/leg momentum. I like to see how fast I can complete the warm-up. (5 minutes)
2. One or two functional movements that incorporate the entire body. Typically I'll pyramid the weight for three sets, then do doubles, then singles. OR I'll work up to a base weight, then see how many reps I can do (like snatch 135# 30 times). (15-20 minutes)

I start a stop-watch before the warm-up. I can quite the workout

at 20 minutes, but I usually go just beyond 25 minutes. I never go beyond 30 minutes.

My favorite workouts are as follows: (a) snatch, (b) clean & push-press followed by bent-presses & 1-arm overhead squats, (c) overhead squats followed by front squats, (d) overhead squats supersetted with Turkish get-ups & 1-arm overhead squats, (e) pistols supersetted with pullups & dips, (f) 3x400m sprints supersetted with as many pushups as I can do OR a mile as-fast-as-I-can followed by as many pushups as I can do, and (g) the Bulgarian: snatch to max. followed by clean & push-press to max followed by front squat to max.

These days I feel like I'm at my normal bodyweight (185-190) for my height (6'2"). I think for a long time I was trying to be a muscular beast when this was in fact contrary to my nature.

Thinking back to the body I had before I started lifting weights in high school I remember being strong and fast and having excellent balance. Somewhere along the way I lost that, striving for something else. But now I feel I have it again and I enjoy working out more than I have in years! Now I feel more athletic and speedy, especially when playing with my kids, which is really a plus.\*

Thanks Dan, and keep up the great work!

Enjoy,

Brian Brown

## **Me and Fitness**

Richard Ham-Williams

*Richard runs*

<http://www.hamsfitness.com/about.htm>  
*a fun little site on the net. I really think he is going to be a "big deal" in this industry. His first article and good, good stuff here...*

I am just a guy that likes lifting stuff. Not too fussed what it is I lift, it just gives me a warm fuzzy feeling inside knowing that I tried my hardest to move something gravity didn't want me to move.

I've always been an active person, my grandmother swore I was hyperactive but my Mum assured me I was just energetic. Bouncing off walls seems to have been used to re-tell stories of my childhood – it makes me smile every time I hear that.

A usual day for me as a kid would involve lots of running, tree climbing, horse crap flinging and hay bail wrestling among other things. I am the youngest in my family and with my brother and sister both being older and stronger than me as a kid, I wanted to find ways to give me the "edge" in our wrestling and running matches – well they would wrestle me and I would run like hell.

It wasn't until I was about thirteen that I first saw my brother lifting weights that I was exposed to structured exercise, fair to say that my interest was piqued as he seemed to get stronger and harder to fight with – my feeble attempts at push

ups and pull-ups were leaving me lacking.

As the years passed I started reading more and more about weight training and quickly realised that there were many different opinions and so many experts out there tempting me with amazing stories of champs and secrets – I had the bug really bad, for the first year of lifting I saw some pretty good gains – people started to notice and ask me questions. Since then I have taken the courses I must and read everything I found and everything recommended. The pool of knowledge is huge to choose from and the menu of super routines is like a never ending buffet in Vegas. So many choices!

Now my profession is to train people in the best way I can to help them get where they want to be, which in most cases is actually at home in front of the TV with a take away or in the pub, however, I do have a few that bizarrely want to train. The few that come to me and have the drive and commitment make my day – I love training them. The buzz I get when we start a session, the kick in adrenals I feel when they go for a PR in anything. They are the people that keep me going. It is my duty therefore to sift through the hype and marketing goop that seems to engulf every aspect of the fitness world we have thrust upon us every day.

It is newsletters like this that hold a torch in the darkness and bring a light hearted and refreshing breeze to the nightmare that is leisure industry.

I believe I read in the past that Dan's view is basically, get as strong as you

can and then practice your sport – I am very much of this view point too.

My life seems to be made up of finding the best way to get muscles as strong as possible, that and my dog Freddie (a Staffie for any dog fans out there). Trying and being swallowed by high volume body building routines and low volume HIT routines I have done my fair share of following and hoping. No More. It would seem obvious that all of the above work, to some degree, many people have got very strong (and large) from all sorts of varied and seemingly opposing training methods when each camp swears can't be possible and they "must be on drugs".

One thing that ALL of these methods have in common is muscular tension. The higher the level of tension the muscle is forced to handle – the stronger it will become. How that tension is applied can vary greatly, it can come from lifting weights like barbells, or from body weight exercises too – gymnasts as we all know have literally staggering physiques and awesome levels of strength. What interests me is the amount of tension, the duration of tension and frequency of tension.

How much is needed for strength? Is there really any difference in training for strength and size? Why do body builders lift in the "hypertrophy range" of 8-12 and weight lifters lift in the "strength range" of 3-5?

From everything I have learnt to date, there is no difference in training for size and strength apart from the amount of work. By this I mean, how long the muscle is exposed to a given tension or how many times it is exposed to that

tension. Weightlifters for example, have huge leg muscles that would satisfy even the most hungry of body builders yet they lift in the "strength range" so how can this be? Tension people, tension! They lift really heavy weights over and over for lots of reps in any training session. Now comes the tricky part – would said legs be as big if they only lifted those really heavy weights half the number of times in any given training session. My thoughts are no.

Body builders aim to increase fatigue and waste products for some weird reason, from what I know, weight lifters and pretty much all other athletes do what they can to avoid it like the plague, yet still those huge thighs appear! I believe, perhaps wrongly, that structural fatigue of the actual fibres and not metabolic fatigue of the fuel systems is of far greater importance to strength and size. A muscle that feels fatigued is likely spent before the fibres are fully stimulated due to the supporting fuel system being tired out before the fibres have had a chance to get started. In my opinion it is the depth of *structural* fatigue that is the difference between size and strength – that and food consumption.

This leads me to train any of my clients that want "toned" muscles and not big muscles, with really heavy weights for a handful of total reps (perhaps 10 and they don't have to be done in 1 "burn" set) whilst avoiding fatigue. Any client that wants to get bigger does the same but instead of only a handful of reps I will have them perform at least double that handful (who ever said more than a handful is a waste) to total at least 20 really heavy reps if not 30 – depending on how the session is going. All the

while I have them deliberately avoiding fatigue.

Now it would seem that I am quite down on fatigue.....that's because I am when it comes to stimulating muscles and strength and when people need to recover to workout another day and sleep and live and generally feel healthy and perform and.....you get the picture, having said that, I am sure it has its place somewhere.....

(From Rinnan on the davedraper site)



Published by Daniel John  
Daniel John, Editor  
Copyright © Daniel John, 2007  
All Rights Reserved

Any unauthorized reproduction is strictly prohibited.