



KILOS FOR
HEROES

JUGGERNAUT

POWERLIFTING CLINIC MANUAL

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THE BAISICS

We strive to bring you the highest quality education and coaching to help you improve and reach your goals. We hope you enjoy this bonus gift to take home with you, remind you of key concepts from the clinic and continue your journey towards improved strength.

Before we get too much into it though, make sure you remember a few key tenets of powerlifting, programming and training in general...

DO THE LEAST AMOUNT NECESSARY TO GET THE DESIRED RESULT

Whether lifting, conditioning or dieting, you must use the minimum effective dose. If you can get stronger from doing 3 sets, why do 5? If you can get leaner from cutting 20g of carbs, why cut 50g? If you can improve aerobic capacity with 20 min of tempo circuits, why do an hour? Regardless of what adjustment is made, it will eventually



cease to yield results and you will have to increase the workload from whatever it currently is. These kind of incremental improvements is what will set you up for long term success.

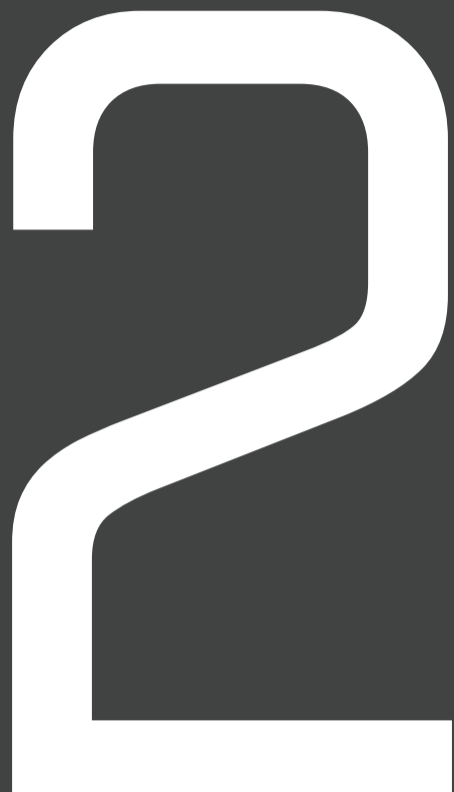
SPORT PRACTICE IS KING

If you want to squat more, squat more. If you want to bench more, bench more. If you want to deadlift more, deadlift more. Nothing can replace the specificity and carryover of the competition exercise at varying intensities. No football player would ever think that they could improve from just drills and no scrimmaging, yet powerlifters often try to make misnamed special exercises the focus of their training. Don't make the mistake of thinking that good mornings are the key to a big squat, or board presses the key to a big bench, or rack pulls the key to a big deadlift-practice your sport.

$$\begin{aligned} & (\text{WEIGHT} \times \text{REPS} \times .033) + \text{WEIGHT} \\ & = \text{PROJECTED MAX} \end{aligned}$$

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO PR

Training PRs can come in many varieties and falling into the trap of thinking that only more weight on the bar for a 1-rep max means improvement. You can do more weight, more reps or better reps to signify improvement in training. If one week you squat 315 for 3 and the 3rd rep is a grinder and a few weeks later you squat 315 for 3 and the 3rd rep is explosive, have you not improved? Of course you have. Find more ways to PR and you've found more ways to improve.



WARM UP

A good powerlifting warmup will achieve a few key goals, 1-Increase the core temperature of the body, 2-Activate the musculature that is going to be utilized in the training session and 3-Excite the Central Nervous System to prepare it for the work ahead.

Breathing drills are a powerful tool to improve your performance and keep you healthy, they will also kill two birds with one stone by raising your core temperature (well done breathing drills will have you dripping sweat) and activating muscles throughout your body.

A WELL DESIGNED WARMUP CAN BE STRUCTURED AS FOLLOWS...

- 1-Feet Up Breathing Drills x10-20 breaths
- Focus on pressing the low back into the ground

2-Half Kneeling Breathing Drills x10-20 breaths each side

-Keep firing the glute of the down leg to rotate the hip under you

3-Glute Bridges x10-20 reps

-Grab the ground with your feet (big toe, little toe, heel), press the arch into the ground before initiating the bridge. Squeeze something soft (foam roller, airex pad) between your knees to improve the drill.

After this general warmup, you'll want to move to a more specific warmup of joint circles to improve range of motion in the bodyparts to be used in the training session and low intensity calisthenics to improve bloodflow to the muscles and activation...

PRE-BENCH WARMUP

1-Shoulder Circles x10 each way 2-Small Arm Circles x10 each way

3-Big Arm Circles x10 each way 4-PNF Chest Stretch x10 each way

5-Pushups x10-20

6-Face Pulls or Band Pullaparts x20-50 Pre-Squat/Deadlift Warmup

1-Banded Hip Distraction x1 min each leg 2-Quad Bench Stretch x1 min each leg 3-Bodyweight Squats x10-20

Once this warmup is done, a few sets of explosive movements will cause a post- activation potentiation effect.

For the bench, choose from either clapping pushups, pushups onto box, drop pushups or rebound pushups (depending on your fitness level) for 3-5 sets of 2-5 reps.

For the squat, seated box jumps are a great option. Sit on one box (8-18") and from that seated position, jump onto a higher box. Focus on landing softly and in a parallel or above squat. 3 to 5 sets of 2-5 jumps will suffice here.



For the deadlift, weighted squat jumps holding a dumbbell or kettlebell between your legs will be excellent. Focus more on the speed of movement, rather than the weight being used. Focus on short ground contacts, landing on your whole foot and full extension through the hip for 3-5 sets of 2-5 jumps for maximum effect.

Taking an extra 15 minutes before your training to make sure you are effectively and full warmed up is critical to maximizing your performance and increasing the longevity of your training career.

3 THE SQUAT

The squat, as with all the competitive lifts, requires great strength throughout all the prime movers and great technique. Great squatters have tremendous strength from head to toe; the quads, hamstrings, glutes, hips, abs and entire back must be well developed for success. Total body strength and technique is best developed in concert with each other, so that your technique doesn't hold back your strength development, nor your strength not being enough to hold proper technical positions.

KEY TECHNICAL POINTS IN THE SQUAT ARE...

1-The closer you can put your hands to each other on the bar the easier it will be to have a tight setup. Make sure though that your elbows are



inside your hands to maintain tightness. Using a thumbless grip often improves the comfort of a close hand position.

2-Squeeze your elbows towards the middle of your body to improve upper back tightness in the setup. Once you squeeze them toward your body as hard as possible, force them forward, under the bar. There will be very little movement of the elbow forward if you are doing a good job of squeezing them in.

3-Get air into your midsection by focusing on breathing into your low back, this will create 360 degrees of pressure, improving performance and helping your back stay healthy. Get air before you bring the bar out of the rack with your hips.

4-The walkout should be achieved in 3 steps maximum and can be achieved in 2. Step back with your off foot, set your dominant foot and then make any repositions of your off foot necessary to find your stance.

5-Once your feet are set, take more air into your midsection by breathing into your low back, while also flexing your glutes hard to neutral your spine and squeezing the bar hard in your hands.

6-Focus on maintaining 3 even points on contact in your feet throughout the lift, weight should be even through the big toe, little toe and heel. Do not focus on excessively sitting back onto your heels if you are a raw lifter, this is not advantageous because you don't have a suit to sit back into. There will be some forward movement on the knees in the lift and that is fine. A short movement of the hips backwards and then squat down from there. "Back, back, back" isn't for you, it is more "down, down, down".

7-Commit to the descent in the lift. Going down as fast as possible is critical to take advantage of the stretch reflex and avoid expending unnecessary energy on the way down. This doesn't mean you need to divebomb squat by any means. You need to descend as quickly as YOUR TECHNIQUE can hold up to. There are great squatters like Stan Efferding that descend very slowly because he has balance issues, so that is as fast as he can go down. However fast it is, practice it from an empty bar to your max and keep it consistent.

8-Keeping the knees in line with the toes or slightly outside is valuable to create torque in the hips. "Knees out" though is often not the proper cue to achieve this as it causes the lifter to shift the weight to the outside of their feet and lose 3 points of contact. Instead, try to "screw your feet into the ground" by externally rotating them throughout the lift.

9-The last thing to move during the descent is the lift, so it should be the first thing to move on the way up. Keep your chest up out of the hole by driving your head and shoulder back into the bar. Also drive your elbows forward under the bar (again there may not be much actual movement of the elbows but the intent will help you avoid collapsing forward) as you initiate the drive out of the hole.

10-Focus on accelerating the bar throughout the concentric movement all the way to the top of the lift. The bar doesn't need to actually jump off your back (ala Eric Lilliebridge) but that intent should be there.

COMMON SQUAT PROBLEMS AND EXERCISES TO HELP FIX THEM

The first step in fixing all of these is technique, once that is dealt with, work on these...

Folding Forward Out of the Hole -Front Squats

-Safety Squat Bar Squats

-Upper Back Work (Rows, Chinups/Pullups, Upright Rows)-My favorite variation is chest supported rows with a static hold at the end of each set

Getting Stuck In The Hole

-Pause Squats in the Bottom Position (2 to 10 second holds in the hole)

-Pause Squats Just Above Parallel On the Way Down (2 to 5 count)

this is effective for those who squat with a quicker descent in a more Olympic style. If you squat with a slower descent and wider stance and just break parallel on a normal squat, these will not help as they will really just be high squats. -Wide Stance Squats will help build hip power out of the hole

SQUAT TUTORIAL WITH CHAD WESLEY SMITH



Chad Wesley Smith takes you through a full squat tutorial – explaining everything from stance and setup through the finish. Click play to watch this video.

[CLICK HERE TO PLAY VIDEO](#) ▶

*WHEN YOU CLICK ON THE LINK TO THE LEFT, YOU WILL BE TAKEN TO YOUTUBE.

Getting Stuck Just Above Parallel

-Pause Squats in the Bottom Position, the more speed you can generate out of the hole, the better you will break through any sticking point on the way up. -Pause Squats Just Above Parallel On the Way Up (2 to 5 count) these are extremely difficult as you will descend drive out of the hole and then hold right above parallel. It is the spot right where you don't want to stop, that you need to hold at.

-Dead Squats, set the bar on pins at 1-2" above parallel and start the movement from there at a dead stop. These are always done for singles.

JUMP TRAINING TO IMPROVE SQUAT POWER

Building explosive power is key to a big squat, as well as athletic performance. Jumps are the most effective and simplest way to build this power. In regards to improving the squat, my favorite exercises to build explosive power are the seated box jump and the depth jump.



The seated box jump starts by squatting to a box or bench, holding static on that bench for a moment and then jumping from there onto another higher box. Avoid rocking back on the box and using your momentum to go back into the jump, this defeats the purpose of squatting onto the box in the first place. Don't let box jumps turn into an exercise of how well you can pull your knees to your ears, rather focus on vertically displacing hips as much as possible and landing softly in an above parallel squat. Try using 8 weeks of these jumps, as the first 8 weeks of a meet training cycle to enhance explosiveness.

Week 1-6 sets of 3 jumps at 75% intensity wearing a medium/heavyweight vest
Week 2-5 sets of 2 jumps at 85% intensity wearing a medium/heavyweight vest
Week 3-4 sets of 1 jump up to a max wearing a medium/heavyweight vest
Week 4-3 sets of 3 jumps at 70% intensity.

Week 5-6 sets of 3 jumps at 75% intensity wearing a medium/lightweight vest
Week 6-5 sets of 2 jumps at 85% intensity wearing a medium/lightweight vest
Week 7-4 sets of 1 jump up to a max wearing a medium/lightweight vest
Week 8-3 sets of 3 jumps at 70% intensity.

After this 8 week phase you'll want to move to depth jumps. Depth jumps are a powerful but very taxing tool, because you're overcoming so much inertia and for this reason they must be used sparingly. To perform a depth jump drop from one box (12-36", higher box for relatively stronger and lighter athletes) and immediately upon landing jump as high as possible, either into the air or on to a second box. This depth jump cycle will peak you for maximum explosiveness going into a meet.

Week 9-2 sets of 5 jumps from relatively low box

Week 10-2 sets of 4 jumps from relatively moderate box
Week 11-2 sets of 3 jumps from relatively high box
Week 12-No jumps

4 THE BENCH

Building massive pressing power requires a combination of strength through the pecs, triceps, shoulders, biceps, forearms, lats, rear delts, rhomboids and traps, as well as technique and confidence. It is important to understand that as with all the lifts, much of the information you have been presented with in the past via articles/videos, was written with geared lifters in mind and that while they are strong, the techniques and exercises (max width grip, reduced range of motion lifts, accommodating resistance) they use to improve won't necessarily translate to your success.

KEY TECHNICAL POINTS IN THE BENCH ARE...

1-Grip width will be individual based upon limb length. Set your hands

at a width that allows the bar to be right over your wrist and wrist right over your elbow when it is on your chest. Keeping these three things in line is critical to maximizing power.

2-A tight setup is critical to a big press. In your setup, your knees need to be aligned below your hips to ensure that your butt stays down on the bench through the movement. Think about squeezing your shoulder blades together as tight as possible make sure your chest is as high as possible.

3-Whether you are using a thumbless or full thumb grip, you need to squeeze the bar as hard as possible. This will send a tightness response through the body.

4-Tuck the elbows as you bring the bar to your chest. Whether you want to think about bending the bar or any other cue, it is key to engage the lats. Thinking about loading your lats, like you are loading a spring.

5-There are two styles that are widely used in the bench, a more dynamic style (Dan Green style) in which you lower the bar quickly letting it sink into your chest before the press command-which allows for great leg drive but is a more high risk-high reward technique. A more strict style (Brandon Lilly style) where you pause the bar on your chest by touching it as lightly as possible, maintaining as much tightness as possible through the whole body before getting the press command. One isn't necessarily better than the other, you just need to see what works best for you.

6-Regardless of style you use, leg drive is critical. Your leg drive should drive you down the bench towards your head, but since your shoulder blades are dug into the bench you won't move, instead the highpoint of your chest will rise. Your feet should be pressed into the ground (heel

up or down depending on federation and comfort) and you should think about doing an explosive leg extension action but instead of you leg extending, you will drive your body towards your head.

7-The bench press is a violent movement. As you loaded the spring with the descent of the bar, now you must violently uncoil it in the press. As your elbows tuck on the way down, they should flare on the way up.

8-Practice a strong lockout by fully locking out every rep, rather than cutting them short as 'bodybuilder reps' and hold the final rep of each set at lockout for a 3-5 count before racking it.

COMMON BENCH PROBLEMS AND EXERCISES TO HELP FIX THEM

The first step in fixing all of these is technique, once that is dealt with, work on these...

Weak Off the Chest

-Paused Reps, training a longer pause than you will be required to do in competition is the simplest way to build strength off of the chest. Pauses of 3- 10 seconds will work best.

-Deep Stretch DB Press, letting the dumbbells sink deep and stretch your chest will build strength off the chest. Reps in the 6-12 range will work best. -Cambered Bar Bench Presses, if you have access to a cambered bar that will increase your range of motion by 1-2" this will be very beneficial in improving bottom end strength.

-Back Strength, stronger lats and upper back will not only increase the thickness of the back and shorten the range of motion it will also improve drive from the chest.

Weak In The Midrange

-Spoto Press, pause the weight 1" off your chest, try to quickly drop the weight to that point and stop it with the tension in your lats. The bar never touches the chest in this variation.

-Dead Bench, set the bar on pins 1" above your chest. Press up from this dead position. These are done only for singles.

Weak At Lockout

-Closegrip Bench, your grip doesn't need to be excessively close 1-2" inside your competition grip will suffice

-Dips, these worked for Pat Casey, Kaz, Al Davis and plenty of other all time greats. Take them through a full range of motion, load them up and work them hard in the 5 to 12 rep range.

-Slingshot Bench, overload the top end of the movement by 3-10% with this great tool from Mark Bell. An overload more than 10% is overkill and won't carryover. My favorite way to use the slingshot is to work up raw, then take an over set with slingshot for a heavy set of 1-3, then drop 10% from that set and do max reps with the slingshot on, all paused.

DEVELOPING EXPLOSIVE PRESSING POWER

Pushups and throws are a tremendous tool to build explosive strength in the bench press. Improve explosive strength will enhance off the chest and help you generate more force to carry you through any subsequent sticking points. Developing explosive strength is about high quality efforts, so very short work periods are necessary. Two to 5 reps in a set for 3 to 8 sets, is enough to build the power you need. Any of these drills can be intensified by adding a weight vest or increasing the height of the boxes.



Listed here are a series of drills to develop explosive power, listed in order from least to most advanced.

-Explosive Pushups, a regular pushup done so your hands leave the ground.

-Clapping Pushups, these can be done with a single clap in front of the body, multiple claps or add difficulty by clapping behind your head or back.

-Pushups onto Boxes, situate yourself between two boxes and in an explosive pushup, jump your body up to the boxes landing one hand on each. As with box jumps, don't let this turn into an exercise in how well you can pull your hands up as this will defeat the purpose of the drill and stress the shoulders, so focus on landing with your arm in an above parallel angle and landing as softly as possible. Walk your hands back down to the ground to begin the next rep.

-Drop Pushups, starting with one hand on top of each box, jump off

the boxes and land between them. Quickly decelerate yourself upon landing and stop yourself halfway down into a pushup. Walk your hands back to the top of the boxes to begin the next reps.

-Paused Pushups onto Boxes, starting between two boxes, lower yourself into a pushup position, so your chest is a few inches off the ground, pause in this position for a 1-3 count, then explosively pushup and launch yourself to the top of the boxes. Walk your hands down to ground to begin the next rep.

-Rebound Pushups, a combination of drop pushups and pushups onto boxes. Start on top of boxes, jump off, land between the boxes and immediately jump back up. You should land softly on both boxes and smoothly decelerate yourself and rebound yourself back onto the boxes. This is the equivalent of a depth jump.

-MB Bench Throws, laying on a bench, lower a medicine ball from arms length to your chest and explosively throw it into the air. Have a partner catch the ball and hand it back to you to begin the next rep. A heavier ball (ie. A weight you can throw 2-4' out of your hands) will be best to develop strength for the bench while a lighter ball (a weight you can throw 5'+ out of your hands) will be better for athletic development for people like football linemen who have to develop an explosive double hand punch.

-MB Drops, lay on the ground and have a training partner drop the ball to you from their shoulder height and you'll quickly absorb the force, stopping the ball before it hits your chest.

-MB Rebound Throws, have a partner drop you a ball (like MB Drops), quickly absorb the force and then rapidly reverse that energy and throw the ball as high as possible.

5 THE DEADLIFT

The deadlift in some ways is the simplest exercise, just pick the bar up off the floor and in other ways, the most complex, as it is the most taxing to the CNS and the technique varies the greatest from athlete to athlete based upon individual leverages.

KEY TECHNICAL POINTS IN THE CONVENTIONAL DEADLIFT ARE...

1-Stance width will vary from athlete to athlete based upon individual body types, limb proportions and strengths/weaknesses but a good starting point is where the athlete would do a vertical jump from.

2-Bar placement in relation to the shin will also be pretty individual

based upon the athlete's size but a good rule of thumb is to have the bar covering the knot in your shoelaces (or where that knot would be if you're barefoot). Bigger lifters may move the bar a bit farther away from themselves, while smaller lifters may have it a bit closer. Rolling the bar in during the setup is a popular move (ala Benedikt Magnusson), especially among larger lifters and for thicker waisted lifters it may be necessary to get into a good starting position. Just understand with this type of dynamic move is another thing to think about/screw up in your technique, so weigh the risk/reward for yourself.

3-Grip width is a bit individual as well, you want it set just outside your legs so that your hands don't scrape up your legs during the pull. Larger athletes may need to set their hands a bit wider, this will also force you to get your hips down a bit more. Improve your grip strength by giving the bar an indian burn, this will dig the bar into your hands and lessen the chance of dropping a heavy dead.

4-Hip height/shin angle is yet another individual characteristic of the deadlift start, controlled by limb length and ankle mobility. Your shins may not be quite vertical at the start of the pull due to mobility limitations, but you should strive to get as much of your weight behind the bar as possible and have your shoulders directly over, or even slightly behind the bar. This position will put everyone's hip in a different place.

5-Creating tension in the start position is critical to a big pull. Think about externally rotating your feet into the ground (screw your feet into the ground), flexing the glutes and hamstrings as you pull yourself down into position. Pack your neck, flex your triceps, pull slack out of the bar and engage your lats (protect your armpits). Draw big air into your core (breathe into your low back). Now you're ready to pull.



6-Initiate the pull from the floor by driving your shoulders up and back as if you are driving them into the bar during a squat. This plus an aggressive driving of the feet into the floor as if you're trying to jump up and backwards will generate speed from the floor.

7-Avoiding bar drift throughout the lift, but particularly with the bar at the knees is critical. Make sure to flex your lats hard and think about pull the bar up and back into the body.

8-As the bar pass the knees and you approach lockout, many people want to throw their head back. Avoid this for two reasons, 1-this will lengthen the distance to lockout and 2-it will shut off your glutes which are the prime muscles needed for lockout. Keep your head neutral or even tuck your chin down as you lockout.

9-Toe position can influence starting strength and lockout ability.

Straighter toes improve the lockout, while a more toe-out position will improve power from the floor but reduces it at lockout as it is harder to fully engage the glutes in a toe-out position.

KEY TECHNICAL POINTS IN THE SUMO DEADLIFT ARE...

1-Sumo deadlift stance width, like conventional, will vary from athlete to athlete. The ultra wide stance, when it looks like the athlete is going to drop the weight on their toes, is better suited to an athlete with great groin/hip strength. The modified sumo, ala Ed Coan, is best suited to athletes with great quad (squatting) strength. Choose accordingly based on your own strengths.

2- Bar placement in relation to the shin will also be pretty individual based upon the athlete's size but a good rule of thumb is to have the bar covering the knot in your shoelaces (or where that knot would be if you're barefoot). Bigger lifters may move the bar a bit farther away from themselves, while smaller lifters may have it a bit closer. Rolling the bar in during the setup is a popular move (ala Benedikt Magnusson), especially among larger lifters and for thicker waisted lifters it may be necessary to get into a good starting position. Just understand with this type of dynamic move is another thing to think about/screw up in your technique, so weigh the risk/reward for yourself.

3-Grip width in the sumo pull will be at shoulder width so the arms fall in plumb lines down from the shoulders.

4-Hip height in the sumo start is a bit misunderstood, as often people want to start with their hips too low so they can seemingly squat the weight up, but for most (Andrey Malanichev excepted) an above



parallel position will be best. Once the bar is in its starting place over the foot, stretch your hamstrings by raising your hips until your legs are straight. From here, lower your hips while maintaining tension in the hamstrings. Externally rotate the feet (screw the feet into the ground) and arch up at the t-spine until your shins are touching the bar. The pull will start from this position.

5- Creating tension in the start position is critical to a big pull. Think about externally rotating your feet into the ground (screw your feet into the ground), flexing the glutes and hamstrings as you pull yourself down into position. Pack your neck, flex your triceps, pull slack out of the bar and engage your lats (protect your armpits). Draw big air into

your core (breathe into your low back). Now you're ready to pull.

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9-Timing and sequencing of the lockout is critical, the power of the legs must drive the lockout. The legs should lockout slightly before the hips. Finish the leg drive violently so the back/hips can finish it the last few inches once the legs are fully extended.

COMMON DEADLIFT PROBLEMS AND EXERCISES TO HELP FIX THEM

The first step in fixing all of these is technique, once that is dealt with, work on these...

Weak Off the Floor Both Styles

-If you are weak from the floor but are training your deadlifts, touch-and-go you are missing out on the simplest way to improve strength from the floor. Train your reps dead stop.



Conventional

-Front Squats or Safety Squat Bar Squats, these will improve quad strength. Paused variations of both of these will be even better. Do them in the 3-8 rep range.

-Deficit Deads, don't make the deficit excessively high as this will put you in an unrealistic starting position. Longer/leaner athletes can use a 3-5" deficit, while heavier athletes should stick to a 1-3" deficit.

-Depth Jumps, a powerful tool that must be used carefully since it is very stressful to the body.

Sumo

-Dead Squats, doing these with a stance that mimics your start position is key.

-Deficit KB Swings, heavy KB swings while you stand on two blocks so the KB can swing lower (at or slightly below the level of your feet) will help enhance mobility and strength in this position.

-Weighted Squat Jumps, let the weight (DB or KB) hang between your legs as you go from a half squat into a powerful jump. 3-5 sets of 2-5 jump will be best.

Weak at the Knees Both Styles

-Bentover Rows, lat strength and engagement is key to keep the bar close to the body during a heavy pull.

-Paused Deadlifts, deadlifts can be paused for a 1-5 count at any point during the lift to address a specific weakpoint. Pause either where you are sticking or an inch below it.

Weak at Lockout Both

-BB Glute Bridges/Hip Thrusts, weight is certainly important here but do not sacrifice full hip extension. Train them hard in the 5-12 rep range.

Conventional

-Sumo Deads, training the opposite style will strengthen other muscles that aren't as developed from conventional pulls, particularly the glutes and hips. -Snatch Grip Deadlifts, either done from the floor or from blocks. Wear straps for these and train them in a higher rep range like 6-15 reps.

Sumo

-Block Pulls, pulls from 3-6" blocks, following the same prescription as with deficit pulls will allow you to overload the top portion of the lift. Mostly focus on pulls for reps in the 2-8 rep range, while very occasionally working up to a heavy single. Straps are acceptable here as well.

BUILDING EXPLOSIVE PULLING POWER

Improved explosive qualities will lead to enhanced speed off the floor. As with any of the lifts, improving force at the start of the concentric phase will improve your ability to overcome sticking points throughout the rest of the lift. Deadlifts do not have the benefit of an eccentric phase to load the stretch reflex, so you will benefit from training your explosive work from paused/dead stop positions.

My go to movements to build explosive power from the floor in the deadlift are weighted jumps and throws.

For throws, either an overhead backward or rocket (underhand throw for height) from a static starting position will be great. Six to 10 total reps done with a complete recovery will suffice.

Paused squat jumps holding a kettlebell or dumbbell between your legs will be the best way to build power in the starting position. Squat down so you are a few inches above parallel, hold in that position for a 2 to 5 count and jump powerfully from there. Three to 6 sets of 1 to 3 jumps will be sufficient.

6 TRAINING Q/A

Q: WHEN SHOULD I WEAR A BELT?

A: Belts and other supportive equipment can have a valuable role in your training, but training without it can also be a valuable tool to build the body. Training without a belt will help you 'build your own belt' of strength and muscle through the midsection but you can't train beltless for a whole cycle and expect to hit a belted PR as soon as you add the belt back in. Within the context of a 12 week training cycle for a lifter who competes in belt and wraps, I would dedicate the first 3-4 weeks towards beltless training and higher frequency squatting. The next 3-4 weeks would be for belt only training and slightly decreased frequency and then the last 3-4 weeks would be dedicated to full equipment and the lowest frequency/highest intensity. Not using a belt during higher frequency training is the best option because it will reduce your output capability. The belt will cause the limiting factor of your lifts to be your back though, so to ensure that your legs are

provided with enough stimulus to improve you must reintroduce the belt to use heavier loads. Take times in the off-season to work without equipment and build your body and as competition approaches become more specific and use your competition equipment.

Q: WHEN SHOULD YOU WEAR KNEE WRAPS?

A: There is no distinction by strength that needs to be made in regards to wearing knee wraps, as in you don't need to squat X amount of pounds before you wear wraps, but as with the belt, working with less equipment will allow you to build your strength and musculature while equipment will allow you to overload your body and accommodate your CNS to heavier loads. As I mentioned with the SlingShot though, an overload of more than 10% will be at the point of diminishing returns for the raw lifter. So with that addressed, I would try to avoid wearing wraps as much as possible. Of course there are some very successful lifters (Andrey Malanichev and Eric Lilliebridge) who are basically always in wraps and maybe this is my aversion to wrapping my own knees talking but ultra-tight knee wraps can actually add stress to the knees. Try to wear wraps as little as necessary to accommodate yourself to any technical changes they cause and the increased loads you'll need to be able to handle.

Q: HOW OFTEN SHOULD I SQUAT/BENCH/DEADLIFT?

There isn't a right or wrong answer here and what is right for me may be wrong for you or vice versa. I know that probably sounds like a cop out but it is the truth. Different people with different training backgrounds, life stress, genetics, etc will respond better to different programs. As an extremely general rule of thumb, the more beginner



the lifter, the higher frequency they need and will respond to. They need this due to a lack efficiency in their technique that doesn't allow them to be elicited as significant a stimulus with low volume training as a higher qualified lifter. On the other side of the coin, an advanced lifter may need to utilize high frequency training to continue progress as well. Programs like Sheiko, RTS and Smolov are all tremendously successful for higher qualified lifters. So often people just look at manipulating volume and intensity as factors in training but forget about frequency. Increasing frequency allows for more practice of the competitive lifts, more quality practice equals better performance. Mike Tuchscherer explains this concept very well in *A Case Against Specificity*.

Q: I HAD XYZ INJURY, HOW SHOULD I PROGRESS BACK INTO TRAINING?

A: Well first off, I'm not a PT or a Doctor so I would encourage you to reach out to Dr. Quinn Henoch of Darkside Strength, who along with Ryan Brown, coaches our Juggernaut Mobility Clinics. My general recommendation though is, as soon as you are cleared for activity, return to whatever scaled version you can handle of whatever activity you are trying to return to. So if you had a back injury deadlifting and need to return to deadlifting, start pulling from very high blocks or pins (this may only mean a few inch range of motion), each week progress by moving the start height down a small increment until you are pulling from the floor again. I would also advocate reverse band work during a time like this. Most likely in this scenario, your back would hurt the most during the start position of the pull, using reverse bands would alleviate the stress in the most vulnerable position while still allowing you to go through a full ROM and properly retrain your movement patterns. During a time like this it is critical that you employ high frequency training, even up to 6x/week depending on how low intensity you are using.

Q: HOW SHOULD I CHOOSE BETWEEN PULLING SUMO OR CONVENTIONAL (SQUATTING HIGH BAR OR LOW BAR)?

A: Train both and choose the one you are best at. When making any technical adjustment, grip width, stance width, bar position, etc or programming change you need to give yourself adequate time to accommodate to it to know if it is really working. For a technical change, give it a minimum of 6 weeks and a programming change, a minimum of 12 weeks.



Q: HOW SHOULD YOUR APPROACH YOUR ACCESSORY WORK?

A: I refer to this as secondary work, supplementary work-compound movements that aren't the competitive movement on a variation of it and accessory work-single joint and machine movements. The goal of both of these are to build the competitive movement through improving strength in lagging bodyparts and allowing you better hold your technique under maximal loads. Testing these secondary lifts should not be your goal, but rather training them with volume at submaximal loads. Use the same supplementary movements for a minimum of 3 weeks at a time, but better for at least 6 weeks. Smaller accessory movements can be rotated more frequently as their carryover is much smaller and it is just significant that you give the muscle stimulus. Don't try to set PRs on accessory work during the

course of a meet training cycle, save that for the off-season. Pushing these exercise with less transfer to the competitive movement too hard will detract from your energy to put towards the exercises that matter most. Do they have value of course, just understand where they fall in the hierarchy of your training.

Q: WHAT CHANGES SHOULD YOU MAKE TO YOUR TRAINING WHEN YOU GET SICK?

A: Illness is a huge stress to the body and like any stress (training, emotional, etc) it must be accounted for. As I'm not a doctor, please don't take this as medical advice, but training while sick can be done but obviously must be adjusted. A 30% reduction in intensity is a good rule of thumb for training while sick or recovering from sickness. Adding stress to the system with high intensity training will only make recovery from illness more difficult and taking a week or two off is a very small thing in the grand scheme of your training career. Keep in mind to do the least amount necessary to get the desired result when approaching training around an illness.

COWBOY METHOD SQUAT

WEEK 1		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-10x5 at 60% w/ 45-60 sec rest	Front Squat-55/60/65/70/75%x5	Back Squat-Work up to 10rm
WEEK 2		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-10x4 at 67.5% w/ 75-90 sec rest	Front -Squat60/65/70/75/80%x3	Back Squat-Work up to 8rm
WEEK 3		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-10x3 at 75% w 105-120 sec rest	Front Squat-65x5,70x4,75x3, 80x2, 85%x1+	Back Squat-Work up to 5rm
WEEK 4 (DELOAD)		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-5x3 at 60%	Front Squat-3x3 at 60%	Back Squat-Walkout and hold 95% of goal max for 10 sec
WEEK 5		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-8x5 at 65% w/ 60-75 sec rest	Front Squat-60/67.5/75/82.5%x4	Back Squat-Work up to 8rm
WEEK 6		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-8x4 at 72.5% w/ 90-105 sec rest	Front Squat-65/72.5%x3, 80/87.5%x2	Back Squat-Work up to 5rm
WEEK 7		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-8x3 at 80% w/ 120-135 sec rest	Front Squat-70x4, 77.5x3, 85x2, 92.5%x1+	Back Squat-Work up to 3rm

COWBOY METHOD SQUAT

WEEK 8 (DELOAD)		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-5x3 at 65%	Front Squat-3x3 at 65%	Back Squat-Walkout and hold
		100% of goal max for 10 sec
WEEK 9		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-5x5 at 70% w/ 75-90 sec rest	Front Squat-65/75/85%x3	Back Squat-Work up to 5rm
WEEK 10		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-5x4 at 77.5% w/ 105-120 sec rest	Front Squat-70/80/90%x2	Back Squat-Work up to 3rm
WEEK 11		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-5x3 at 85% w/ 135-150 sec rest	Front Squat-75x3, 85x2, 95x1+	Back Squat-Work up to 2rm
WEEK 12 (DELOAD)		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Back Squat-5x3 at 70%	Front Squat-3x3 at 70%	Back Squat-Walkout and hold
		105% of goal max for 10 sec
WEEK 13 (TEST WEEK)		
Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Front Squat-Work up to 1rm	Off	Back Squat-Work up to 1rm