

THE DINOSAUR STRENGTH TRAINING NOTEBOOK

By Brooks D. Kubik

**Author of Dinosaur Training:
Lost Secrets of Strength and Development**

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CHAPTER 1

THE SUPPLEMENT MINDSET

Fifty, sixty or seventy years ago, most people had never even heard of weight training. Many young men (and some who were not so young) were very interested in building bigger, stronger and more muscular bodies, but had little idea of how to go about it. They used various types of calisthenics and light exercises with rowing machines, pulleys or indian clubs. Occasionally, a young man found a light dumbbell or a pair of dumbbells, and perhaps he used those. Chinning and dipping were highly thought of, as the necessary apparatus was found in most YMCA's or athletic clubs or could be easily improvised at home. Anyone can find a tree branch to hang from to do chins!

The problem was, these exercises did little or nothing for the guys who used them. The chins and dips sometimes led to bigger arms, but only an inch or two of muscle--remember, 14" arms were big in those days and 15" arms were considered to be almost unnatural. More importantly, however, the light exercise enthusiasts never developed anything approaching true total body strength.

A very small number of men learned "the secret"...and back then, it really WAS a secret. They learned about progressive weight training.

They learned that exercising with barbells would make them bigger and stronger in three months than any amount of calisthenics would do in an entire lifetime.

The secret of progressive weight training began to become more or less accessible knowledge in the 1920's or so...and when Bob Hoffman started the York Barbell Company, the word began to spread fast. From that point, in the early 30's, to the early 50's, more and more young men and boys (and women too!) learned first hand of the MIRACLE of progressive weight training.

In those days, big gains were commonplace. If you look at the old magazines, you see one success story after another: letter after letter from young men who gained 20, 30 or even 40 pounds of muscle during their first year of progressive weight training. Letters from readers who DOUBLED or even TRIPLED their strength in a year's time. And they did it by training with nothing more exotic than a plate loading barbell and dumbbell set--an exercise set, mind you, not an Olympic set--supplemented by a set of squat stands if they were able to buy or make them. Some young men, such as John Davis, Steve Stanko, John Grimek, Clyde Emrich, William Boone, Bob Peoples, Doug Hepburn, Reg Park and Louis Abele developed world class strength and development as a result of basic training in a home gym with a simple barbell set.

In those days, once you learned the secret--that progressive weight training with adjustable barbells and dumbbells was the key to strength, power and muscular size--you bought a barbell and got working and that was that. You viewed your success as more or less assured...and with that sort of mindset, IT WAS!

In letter after letter you see a young man saying that he read about the gains that others had made from barbell training and had decided, "If he can do it, so can I!"

In the early 1950's something happened. The barbell companies discovered food supplements. Suddenly, owning a barbell was not enough. The magazines began to teach the Gospel of the Protein Pill. They told you that if you were not crammed to the gills with protein pills, powders and vitamin/mineral tablets, you would never gain an ounce no matter how hard you trained with those barbells and dumbbells that YOU (poor, deluded lad) had thought were the key to your dreams of physical glory.

Now there was a new game to play...and bucks to be made. What's the profit on a barbell? A couple of dollars for the manufacturer for a product that literally lasts forever without ever wearing out. What's the profit on a box of protein powder? A couple of bucks on a product that the consumer uses in a week or two...and then he needs to buy some more...and some more... and some more....

With those kinds of profits in the balance, the magazines did as much as possible to brainwash their readers into believing that food supplements were absolutely necessary to weight training success.

It worked. Pretty soon, the majority of weight trainers were running around saying (and believing) such foolish things as "Bodybuilding is 90% nutrition!" (Yeah, right...so a 400 pound bench press is 40 pounds the result of strength training and 360 pounds the result of nutrition? Does that mean I can bench 350 without ever training--just by eating the right foods and taking the right supplements?)

Of course, if nutrition was the most important aspect of successful weight training, then your actual workouts didn't matter very much. Don't like squats? Skip them! Take an extra handful of protein pills instead! It's quick, easy and thoroughly scientific!

Today, we are reaping the harvest of nearly half a century of outright brainwashing. Today, virtually no one believes that he can do it without supplements. "Train without creatine?--Are you crazy!"

And then we have steroids.

Steroids are the direct result of the 1950 food supplement craze. They have been an integral part of the supplement game for almost as long as supplements were on the market. You see, once you start thinking that the SECRET lies in a bottle of pills, the distinction between a bottle of chemicals and a bottle of protein tablets starts to blur. All that matters is finding THE SECRET ...the pill or tablet or potion that will transform you overnight from a scrawny toothpick to an heroic mountain of muscle.

Remember, the basic premise underlying supplement use and steroid use is precisely the same: **THE SECRET SELF-ADMISSION THAT YOU CANNOT DO IT ON YOUR OWN.**

John Davis did it on his own. He clean and jerked 402 pounds on nothing more exotic than three square meals a day...William Boone did it on his own...he gained well over 100 pounds of muscle and developed the strength to deadlift 700 pounds and jerk 420 or more pounds from the rack--on nothing but good home cooking, milk and plenty of water to keep him hydrated during his 12 or 14 hour a day jobs digging oil and water wells in the southern United States...Peary Rader gained nearly 100 pounds in two years and built the strength to become a regional lifting champ--on nothing but plenty of food and lots of milk.

What did John Davis have that the modern guys don't have? What separates William Boone from the current crop of wannabes? What allowed Peary Rader to achieve what he achieved?

Davis, Boone and Rader were MEN. They were tough enough and MAN ENOUGH to do it on their own. The modern guys are brainwashed jelly-fish. Pass the creatine--the bunnies need feeding!

CHAPTER 2

THE FAILURE MINDSET

The biggest friends of the supplement and steroid industries are the self-appointed "weight training authorities" who teach **THE FAILURE MINDSET.**

What do I mean by **THE FAILURE MINDSET?**

In yesterday's post, I described the **OPPOSITE** of the failure mindset...**THE SUCCESS MINDSET** that the barbell companies and their magazines taught back in the 20's, 30's and 40's...The mindset that said "With barbell training, good results are guaranteed...Others have done it, and so can you..."

When weight trainers approached their training with a confident expectation of success, they achieved...guess what!...**SUCCESS!**

In the 1950's, the muscle magazines killed that idea. They strangled it...shot it full of bullets...poisoned it...knifed it ...broke every bone in its body...weighted it down with heavy chains and drowned it at sea. And in my opinion, they did this deliberately, intentionally and with malice aforethought...and if they did it with the best intentions in the world, well, all I can do is refer you to William Blake: "The road to Hell is paved with good intentions."

As I explained yesterday, the muscle magazines started to convince their readers that barbell training alone was not enough ...that MORE was needed for training success...such as a bottle of vitamin/mineral tablets...a box of protein powder or a month's supply of amino acid wafers and protein tablets.

Once the readers accepted the idea that barbell training alone was not enough to build strength, power and muscular size, you could sell them anything. After all, even if they trained with weights, they didn't gain very well...how could they, when they had been programmed for failure? And once they trained and didn't gain, they were quick to look for the secret something that would solve their training woes...be it a new piece of equipment...a new training course...a "secret" training system...a "secret" exercise known only to "the champs"...a new supplement...or, in the 60's and thereafter, a new drug.

The current state of affairs is worse than ever...because of the large number of writers who consciously teach THE FAILURE MINDSET. You know who they are. The guys who talk incessantly about "genetic potential"... "genetic limitations"... "good genetics"... "bad genetics"... "wrist size"... "bone structure"...and "the hereditary advantages of the champions."

Far too many modern writers are obsessed with genetics. Or more correctly, far too many modern writers are obsessed with making THEIR READERS become obsessed with genetics.

Think about it for a second. What is the INEVITABLE result of telling weight trainers that they just don't have "the genetic potential" to become big and strong'?

From a psychological perspective, only one thing can happen! As a result of pounding that sort of negativity into someone's head: HE WILL BECOME A WEIGHT TRAINING FAILURE!

If you bend a sapling until it almost breaks and tie it down, it will grow into a bent-over mockery of a tree. What could have been a proud, tall monarch of the forest will become a stunted abortion.

Exactly the same is true with human beings...and in this context, with weight trainers.

Teach a young man that he is DESTINED to be weak and scrawny, and he will BE weak and scrawny. Make him believe that strength and muscles are something he can never achieve, and he will never achieve them. Convince him that he is doomed to mediocrity, and he will become a barbell Babbit.

But something else will also happen. The guy the "expert" has turned into a weight training failure--a guy, by the way, who would have made ENORMOUS gains if he had been taught THE SUCCESS MINDSET instead of THE FAILURE MINDSET--will eventually

start to wonder if his failure is due not to "genetics" but to...following the wrong exercise system...not using the right kind of equipment...not having the latest type of pullover torso machine ...not taking the right kind of supplement...or not taking drugs...

Then he'll bounce around from one exercise schedule to another ...from one supplement to another...from one type of equipment to the next...and perhaps (if he is truly unlucky!) from drug to drug until one of them either kills him or screws his internal system up so badly that he can't even live a normal life, let alone gain strength and size.

So let me conclude. What sells all the courses, equipment, machines, training systems and supplements that are making so many people so god-awful rich so quick?

It's THE FAILURE MINDSET...and there's an army of self-appointed weight training authorities who are peddling it as hard and fast as possible...and if you're not careful, it's gonna step right up and GRAB YOU, and ruin YOUR weight training career.

I sincerely hope that no one who reads this will fall for that sort of thing...and if it has hurt you in the past, get rid of the baggage and get a new start on strength training. Drop-kick THE FAILURE MINDSET into the nearest waste-basket. Learn to EXPECT success. Understand that weight training works...it works for me and it works for YOU...and you don't need any secret training systems...you don't need any special supplements...and you don't need any sort of "super genetics." If you can walk, you can train...and if you train, you will gain!

CHAPTER 3

MORE AFTER EFFECTS OF THE FAILURE MINDSET

Yesterday I defined THE FAILURE MINDSET as the modern fairy tale that brainwashes weight trainees the world over into believing that "you can't get good results from weight training without one in a million super genetics."

I explained how THE FAILURE MINDSET sells supplements...exercise machines...training systems...books...courses...magazines...and drugs.

There are other, equally insidious, effects of THE FAILURE MINDSET. One of the most common is the way it causes weight trainers to give up any sense of personal responsibility for their training progress...or more accurately, for their lack of progress.

If weight trainers still believed in hard work and heavy iron, the guys who don't gain would have no choice other than to admit that the fault was entirely their own. Are you gaining or not? If not, you are taking it easy...not training hard...missing workouts...not adding weight to the bar...it's as simple as that. Stop COMPLAINING and start TRAINING...HARD and HEAVY...and you'll start GAINING.

At least, that's the answer if you live in a world where people believe that weight training works.

If you live in a world where most people have been brainwashed into believing that weight training only works for a small handful of "genetically gifted" individuals, then you can be a complete failure or an utter mediocrity and not have to accept an ounce of responsibility. Instead of admitting that you are too lazy to do squats, you can blame your lack of progress on your bone size. Instead of confessing your deep-rooted aversion to hard work, you can blame your parents. Instead of acknowledging that you don't have the mental discipline to go to the gym three times a week, you can talk about how "you train as hard as the champs--even harder, perhaps--but you just don't have the right genetics."

Weight training needs to return to an Era of Personal responsibility. Are you gaining? If not, you have only yourself to blame.

CHAPTER 4

A LITTLE RANT FROM PEARY RADER

Peary Rader was one of the best and most decent men who ever graced the Iron Game...but every once in awhile he get royally steamed about something...and sometimes he let certain people have it right between the eyes.

A good example appears in the Feb/March 1958 *Iron Man*, where Peary prefaced an article with the following note:

So often readers will follow our articles month after month and will never get the point of what we are trying to put over. Actually, all they read for is to be entertained and to hear that others have made big gains and that they can make them too if they will try. They will take their workouts haphazardly. They will follow the diet advice in the same manner and then wonder why they don't gain. When we say you must work hard we mean **HARD**. When we say you must use heavy weights we mean **HEAVY WEIGHTS**. When we say you must push yourself we mean you must **DRIVE YOURSELF UNMERCIFULLY**. When we say you must drink four quarts of milk we do not mean two. When we ask you to eat more food, we mean more food, not a canary bird diet. If we tell you to eat five meals a day we do not mean two skimpy ones per day. We know that many of you follow, advice in this indifferent manner and you will not gain as long as you do. Let this be a turning point in your training. Make a resolution to go "all out" this coming year and become a superman.

The message is there. It's been there for many years. Why do so many weight trainees continue to miss it?!

CHAPTER 5

TEN THINGS THAT WORK MUCH BETTER THAN ANY FOOD SUPPLEMENT UNDER THE SUN...

1. Squats.
2. Abbreviated training programs that focus on heavy duty compound exercises with barbells and dumbbells.
3. Supplementing your barbell and dumbbell work with heavy awkward objects (bags, barrels, beams, etc.).
4. Dropping the heaviest dumbbell you can find on the head of any self proclaimed "weight train' authority" who tells you that "genetics are everything."
5. Ditto to anyone who advocates slow motion training. Twice.
6. The heavy pulling movements that Olympic lifters use...the exercises that have been building the biggest, thickest, strongest backs in the world for close to a century: power cleans, power pulls, power snatches and the clean and press.
7. The type of HEAVY dumbbell lifting detailed on my training tape, *The Lost Art of Dumbbell Training*.
8. A no nonsense, never say die, never give up attitude...a strength of mind and power of will that allows you to SMASH through any sort of adversity or obstacle.
9. Plenty of good, nutritious food.
10. Heavy partials to build tendon and ligament strength.

CHAPTER 6

THE ENTOURAGE...

For several years I served as an official at drug free bench press and powerlifting contests. This gave me an opportunity to observe first hand how different lifters react to the stress of competition.

One thing I noticed immediately was "the entourage syndrome." Time and again, inexperienced lifters--usually teenagers and college age guys--would approach the platform

surrounded by a group of friends, all imploring the lifter as loudly as possible to "BE STRONG!" "FIRE UP!" "GET PSYCHED!" "BLOW IT AWAY!" "THINK UP!" "WAIT FOR THE SIGNAL!" and "DO IT!"

The amount of concern was always puzzling because the entourage never seemed to be impressed with the weight on the bar: "BABY WEIGHT, MAN!" "YOU GOT FIVE WITH THIS IN TRAINING!" "THIS WEIGHT IS NOTHING!" "EASY WEIGHT, BABY. EASY WEIGHT!"

Even more puzzling was the fact that everyone was so worried when the lifter was the studliest muffin to ever grace the platform: "YOU ARE THE MAN!" "YOU ARE THE ONE!" "YOU ARE THE CHAMPION!" "YOU ARE SO-0-0 BAD, DUDE! " "YOU ARE UNRIGHTEOUS!" "YOU ARE THE TOTAL PACKAGE, MAN!"

Then I would turn my attention to judging the lift...and lo and behold, the studliest lifter in history would get under a baby weight he supposedly had repped in training and...MISS!

After the lifter and the entourage stumbled despairingly off the platform, an experienced lifter would walk out all by himself, and without any fuss or fanfare, easily lift far more than the weight that had just buried the guy with the groupies.

I saw this repeated so many times, at so many meets, that I soon realized that there was a common element to it all.

The first lifter was relying on other people to get his head on straight. The second lifter did it on his own.

The first lifter had so many fears and doubts that the only way he could even approach the lift was to have a gaggle of cheerleaders accompany him to the platform. The second lifter had the quiet confidence of a champion.

For the first lifter, lifting was a way to gain peer approval. For the second lifter, lifting was something he did for himself.

Which of the two lifters was a dinosaur?

CHAPTER 7

FIRST, LAST AND FOREMOST: . . . SQUAT!

If you are SERIOUSLY interested in developing maximum possible levels of strength, power and muscular size, you WILL squat. You will squat two or three times per week.

You will do heavy back squats to parallel or heavy full squats, depending on your body structure and flexibility. Some can do either variation; other men should stick to the parallel squat. And remember that parallel means TOP OF THE THIGHS parallel to the floor. Most men who do "parallel squats" cut the movement off a couple of inches above the parallel position. This is a mistake. Heavy partials have their place in your training program -- but they are best used by very advanced men who also do plenty of full or parallel squats.

Don't use knee wraps. Don't use a squat suit. Use a belt if you wish, although many of you will not need them. Olympic lifters are terrific squatters, and they don't use belts.

When you work your squats, work them HARD. You MUST get TOTALLY PSYCHED UP for heavy squats. Half hearted efforts won't do the trick.

Make it a BATTLE...to the finish...between you and the bar.

For men who are trying to gain weight, a warmup set or two followed by one set with 20 reps, and plenty of puff and pant heavy breathing between reps will trigger terrific gains. See Randy Strossen's terrific book, *Super Squats*, for further information.

For the rest of you, nothing beats the tried and true 5 x 5 system, as detailed in *Dinosaur Training*.

There is way too much anti-squat propoganda out there. The mainstream mags are filled with it. If you see an article that downplays or dismisses the squat, or that dwells at length on "the dangers" of squatting, send a letter to the editor and ask him to obtain and print a full-length, un-retouched photo of the author. There are too many muscleless midgets out there posing as "experts"...clown-babies who have about as much muscle on their frames as an undernourished scare-crow does...and these guys seem to take particular delight in attacking the squat.

I will put it to you in very simple terms. To achieve the success you desire, you MUST become a squatting fanatic. Period. End of discussion.

CHAPTER 8

MOTIVATION

Do anything and everything to keep your motivation as high as possible. Motivation is one of the critical keys to strength training success.

Subscribe to the GOOD training magazines...order reprints of the classic training books and courses from the pre-steroid era (available from Bill Hinbern)...order training tapes from IronMind, Bob Whelan, Matt Furey, Joe Kinney or myself...treat yourself to a

new training tool -- either something from IronMind or PDA or a huge tire or a barrel or keg or anything that looks like it would be fun to lift...order the new book by Steve Justa (the guy who put barrel lifting on the map). The more you read and watch and absorb, the more intense your training enthusiasm will become.

Use other dinosaurs to fuel the fires. Challenge each other to friendly competitions via the internet. See who can carry a pair of 100 pound db's the greatest distance in the farmer's walk. See who can put 25 pounds on his bench press, squat or clean and jerk the quickest. See who can reach 120 or 130 in one of the one hand overhead lifts. See who can hang the longest from a 2" bar...or a 3" vertical bar.... Share training tips with one another...teach each other how to throw tires, carry or lift bags or barrels, or do unusual grip exercises...

Remember, the key to training success is nothing more nor less than consistent hard work over a long period of time...and MOTIVATION is what helps you hang in there.

CHAPTER 9

IRREGULAR TRAINING

In one of his very best and most profound books, *Secrets Of Strength and Development*, Bob Hoffman repeatedly referred to what he called "irregular training." At page 232 he wrote: "Irregular training is one of the first of the York principles that have helped so many to success."

Hoffman explained, "Your muscles quickly become accustomed to the work they are asked to do." At that point, in order to trigger further progress, new methods are required. "Something must be done to jolt the muscles out of their regular routine."

The principle of "irregular training" is an integral part of dinosaur training. Think about it. What are you doing when you do a killer round of finishers at the end of your workout? What does the barrel lifting, sandbag work, farmer's walking and tire throwing do for you? In Hoffman's words, it gives you the needed "jolt" that triggers continued gains.

Be a dinosaur. End at least one workout a week with some sort of total body torture test. Go beyond your current horizons. Venture into new realms. Kick your muscles in the teeth...and then kick them again. Keep the body guessing. Remember, the body grows bigger and stronger only if it thinks you will KILL it if it fails to do so.

Weekends are a great time for the hardest, heaviest session of the week. As I write these words, it is Saturday morning .. as you read them...what time will it be? TIME TO GO TRAIN...HARD ...HARDER AND HEAVIER THAN EVER BEFORE.

CHAPTER 10

AN IRON WILL

PERSEVERE!

KEEP GOING!

NEVER GIVE UP!

I'll tell you a secret: The vast majority of those who start weight training are quitters. They give up. They quit. They wimp out. They can't keep going. They don't have what it takes.

They guys who succeed in the Iron Game are the guys who have the ability to PERSEVERE. The modern writers like to talk about "genetics" -- they like to pretend that the size of your wrist is what determines whether you succeed or fail. Or they pretend that success comes only to those who use the latest training system or the food supplement fad of the month. The modern writers are wrong. The ability to keep going, week after week, year after year--to forge ahead no matter how daunting the odds -- to smash through any obstacle in your path -- that and that alone is the key to strength training success.

In one of my favorite books, *An Iron Will*, O.S. Marden wrote:

Persistency of purpose is power. It creates confidence in others. Everybody believes in the determined man. When he undertakes anything his battle is half won, because not only he himself, but every one who knows him, believes that he will set out to accomplish whatever he sets out to do. People know that it is useless to oppose a man who uses his stumbling-blocks as stepping stones; who is not afraid of it; who never, in spite of calumny or criticism, shrinks from his task; who never shirks responsibility; who always keeps his compass pointed to the north star of his purpose, no matter what storms may rage about him.

CHAPTER 11

STRENGTH TRAINING 101

The basic requirements for building strength, power and muscular size are no different today than they were 50 years ago. The basic equipment is also the same.

Train two or three times per week. Pick a couple of basic, compound exercises and devote 90% of your time and attention to those movements. Do lots of heavy squats. Train

the back (especially the lower back) extremely hard. Avoid isolation exercises -- they are a waste of time when you are training for strength, power and muscular size.

Get plenty of good food. If you like milk, drink plenty of it.

Use barbells and dumbbells in your training, not machines.

Work hard. It takes EFFORT to build strength, power and muscular size. In the Iron Game, you only grow if you work hard. Period. Half hearted efforts just won't cut it.

Use several sets of low to medium reps...such as 3 x 6-8, 4 x 5-6, 5 x 5, 5 x 6, 6 x 3, etc. If you wish, try one set of 20 reps in the squat -- it's a time-honored way of promoting BIG GAINS.

Expect to succeed. Many others have built incredible levels of strength, power and muscular size through basic training programs with barbells and dumbbells...WITHOUT food supplements and WITHOUT drugs...and I am not talking about "easy gainers" or the "genetically gifted"...I am talking about typical, average guys. If THEY can do it, so can YOU!

Read *The Dinosaur Files* or *Dinosaur Training* for specific exercise schedules.

Good luck and good training!

CHAPTER 12

"HOW MUCH CAN YOU BENCH PRESS?"

Picture the following...

A number of years ago I was training at a fairly decent, black iron, minimal chrome commercial gym located in the basement of a local shopping mall. To get to the gym you would go down the steps to the basement, then down a long corridor underneath the mall.

So I'm leaving the gym after my workout one day and there are these four little girls -- about 13 or 14 years old, as near as I could tell -- all dolled up like Madonna wannabe's...and they are seated in a semi-circle outside the gym door.

As I walked by, one of them asks: "How much can you bench press?"

Now this is a strange question coming from bubble-gummers ...

"I did 407 in competition this year," I answered.

"Oh...okay."

THAT was an interesting response! A 400 plus bench didn't faze these kids for a second. Suddenly I got suspicious. The little witches had been asking everyone who came out the gym door what he benched...and 407 was on the low end of the answer! Mind you, the 407 was a NASA Submasters American record at 220...and no one else in the gym was anywhere near 400 pounds...and the average bench at the place was probably what it is at most gyms -- somewhere around 200 pounds if you don't count the teenagers and the beginners, and something like 150 if you do count them.

"How does my bench press compare to the other guys who train here?" I asked.

The four little heads bobbed down and the conspirators compared notes for 30 seconds. Then the leader said, "It's in the middle."

"What's the most anyone says he can bench?"

"TWO THOUSAND POUNDS!"

Is it any wonder I now train in my basement?

CHAPTER 13

THE VERTICAL BAR LIFT

Train the grip with the vertical bar lift. What's a vertical bar lift? It's a one hand deadlift performed with a vertical bar. The weights are loaded at the bottom of the bar, and the top of the bar should be around the knees or lower thighs.

Stand in front of the bar with the feet to the sides of the plates. Brace the non-lifting hand on the knee...grab the bar with the thumb down (in other words, the same grip as if you were holding a hammer in your hand and then allowed the hammer to rotate forward until it was hanging head down)...pull the bar up so the plates are fully off the ground...hold...lower. If possible, use a 2" bar.

The vertical bar deadlift is murder on the grip because the bar rotates and spins out of your hand unless your thumb is strong enough to keep it from doing so. For poundage, try to match your best one hand deadlift with an equivalent thickness of bar.

CHAPTER 14

DINOSAUR STYLE DUMBBELL TRAINING

Learn the art of heavy dumbbell training. Make no mistake about it -- heavy dumbbell training is one of the most important keys to strength, power and muscular size. The oldtimers knew full well the value of heavy dumbbell training. They were able to elevate huge poundage in one and two handed dumbbell lifts. And the results showed....The oldtimers built tremendously rugged, incredibly strong physiques...bodies that were fully functional from head to toe. Nowadays, very few lifters are even aware of the names of many of the most result producing dumbbell exercises -- let alone, know how to perform them. **LEARN THE OLDTIME DUMBBELL LIFTS.** The time you devote to them will be repaid a thousandfold.

How do you learn the lost art of dumbbell training? Bill Himbern's reprints of old books and courses will get you started. *The Dinosaur Files* is a good resource. But the best resource is my dumbbell training video -- there's simply nothing that can convey "how to do it" the way a video can.

In a recent conversation, Matt Furey mentioned how much stronger he is becoming -- as a direct result of the one hand lifts he has added to his training schedule: the one hand clean and press, the one hand clean and jerk and the one hand dumbbell snatch. "I can't believe the carry-over," he told me. "These are the greatest thing I've ever done for combat strength."

Dumbbell training is where it's at for dinosaurs. Give it a try.

CHAPTER 15

"YES, IT REALLY IS 12:15 IN THE MORNING ..."

Today is a holiday at most businesses in the U.S., but my job is a seven day a week deal, so I walked into my office around 9:00 a.m. The message light was flashing on the telephone.

I punched in the codes and retrieved the message.

The irritatingly metallic whine of the disembodied voice mail attendant grated like fingernails scratch-screeching across the chalkboard.

"MESSAGE ONE...RECEIVED AT 12:15 A.M. FROM AN OUTSIDE CALLER
..."

At which point I had to ask myself, which one of my clients had called the office at 12:15 in the morning...and why in the world did anyone think I'd be a work at that hour of the night before a three day weekend?

"Brooks, this is Greg."

That explained it!

Greg Pickett...massive powerlifter...dinosaur to the max... my buddy from Cincinnati...the man I have nicknamed "MR. DEDICATION." You see, Greg is in his late 30's...married to a wonderful girl...has several small children...a full time job... plenty of obligations and responsibilities. He has to fit his training in whenever he can. Sometimes he gets up at 4:00 or 5:00 in the morning to train...other times he trains late at night. And don't think he handles light weights when he goes at it. The man knocks off dumbbell deads with plus 200 pound bells and 1/4 squats over 1,000 pounds...at 5:00 in the morning!

"Yes, it really is 12:15 in the morning," Greg continued. "I just completed a massive workout. Finished with heavy dumbbell one hand clean and press, then one hand dumbbell clean and push press...just like your tape. Did 110 each hand, 130 each hand, 135 left hand -- cleaned it -- drove it up -- just missed locking it out...right hand, same weight, cleaned it, drove it overhead."

"Now I guess it's time for bed...."

NEED I SAY MORE ABOUT DINOSAURS AND DEDICATION...STRONG BODIES AND STRONGER HEARTS...OR ABOUT THE REAL SECRET TO STRENGTH TRAINING SUCCESS?

CHAPTER 16

THE TOP TEN LIST

Here's a list of the top ten things modern weight trainers don't like; it explains why 99.9% of them are total wimps:

1. Squats
2. Deadlifts.
3. Standing presses.
4. ANY exercise where you stand on your feet (seated or supine exercises are so much more pleasant!).

5. Hard work.
6. Heavy weights.
7. Barbells (exercise machines are much more comfortable).
8. Training for strength and power instead of training for "cuts."
9. Being told that there are no miracle systems or guaranteed programs for overnight development without sweat, effort or dedication.
10. Being told that drugs are for losers, that food supplements are hokum and that the only way to build your body is by good old-fashioned hard work!

CHAPTER 17

A DIFFERENT SORT OF EXERCISE...

Here's a fun way to finish a training session. It's an exercise I learned from Kim Wood, strength coach for the Cincinnati Bengals.

Take a 100 to 150 pound sandbag and lay it on the floor in front of a sturdy bench or platform. You can make a platform out of wood...but just be sure to make it **STRONG**. You also can use the back end of a pick-up truck or a backyard picnic table. The platform should be about 3' or 4' high.

Grab the sandbag and lift it up and onto the platform. Then lower it back to the ground. That's one rep.

Now do 50 reps.

It doesn't matter if you can't do 50 continuous reps. It's okay to stop for a few seconds to catch your breath. The point is, you **WILL** do 50 reps. The pain will not stop you...fatigue will not stop you...sweat in your eyes will not stop you...the feeling that your heart and lungs are about to explode will not stop you...the burning feeling in your muscles will not stop you ...**NOTHING WILL STOP YOU.**

I call this exercise **SANDBAG TORTURE**. Give it a try and you'll understand why.

CHAPTER 18

STAND ON YOUR FEET

Stand on your feet when you train.

The best and most productive weight training exercises are performed with barbells and dumbbells...not with machines...and they are performed in a standing position, NOT lying or sitting on a bench.

Nowadays, the typical trainee can go to the gym and spend 90% or more of his training program flat on his back or flat on his butt. This is an absurd parody of REAL strength training.

The oldtimers stood on their feet for virtually all of their exercises. As a result, they developed incredibly powerful bodies from head to toe -- especially the all important lower back. They were fluid and athletic...fast and well coordinated ...and STRONGER than heck!

What exercises did the oldtimers use?

Squats.

Power cleans.

Power pulls.

Deadlifts.

Barbell bent-over rowing.

One arm deadlifts, cleans, snatches and dumbbell swings.

The bent press. (And yes, that's B-E-N-T press, and not b-e-n-c-h press.)

Continental.

Heavy overhead presses, pushes and jerks...with one and two hands.

The farmer's walk.

Snatches.

All of these movements trained the entire body from head to toe...in an athletic manner...with the lower back involved from start to finish on every move.

Once again, the oldtimers did it the right way.

CHAPTER 19

BRAD STEINER SAID IT ...

... many years ago. "Squats alone constitute a complete workout if you train them hard enough." That's not an exact quote, but it's pretty close. I'm working from memory.

Anyhow, Steiner was RIGHT!

Last night I did the following workout:

Bottom position squat, from just above parallel, in the rack --

135 x 1

225 x 1

315 x 1

405 x 1

450 x 10 singles

THAT WAS IT!

And today...guess who is having trouble walking.

CHAPTER 20

HIS WORDS ARE STILL TRUE TODAY ...

...perhaps even more so. In the December, 1932 issue of *The Strongman* (published by the Milo Barbell Company), editor Mark Berry wrote:

We don't believe in bringing arguments into our magazine, but one thing we are out for and that is to de-bunk this game of muscle and health culture. Bunk costs our culturists untold dollars and leads many an earnest enthusiast astray to the extent that valuable time is wasted, and in all probability there are those who give up in despair after falling for the foolish ideas promulgated by unscrupulous persons.

CHAPTER 21

DINOSAUR ARMS

Many guys are interested in dinosaur style arm training. Here's an arm specialization program for dinosaurs.

Train 3x per week. Two total body training sessions and one session where you hit arms only. Train for strength and power -- and you'll not only build BIG arms, but arms that are FUNCTIONAL as well! You can curl HEAVY poundage if you make up your mind to do so...I've done 185 for 5 reps in good form. Ditto on heavy triceps work such as the close grip bench press. Shoot for 250 to 300 plus pounds. Too many guys train the arms with bunny poundages and then wonder why they don't grow bigger and stronger.

Here's your training schedule:

Monday

1. Squats 2 x 10, 2 x 8, 2 x 6.
2. Barbell or dumbbell bench press 2 x 10, 2 x 8, 2 x 6.
3. Barbell bentover rowing 2 x 10, 2 x 8, 2 x 6.
4. Two db clean and press (do a complete db clean AND press on each rep -- NOT one clean followed by all of the presses) -- 4 x 5.
5. Situps or leg raises...one or two sets...15 to 40 reps.

Wednesday

1. Standing barbell curl 5 x 5...three progressively heavier warmup sets followed by two working sets.
2. Close grip bench presses (shoulder width grip) 5 x 5 (same as the curls).
3. Standing hammer curls with db's...4 X 8-10 (work up to your top weight for the final set).
4. Parallel dips 4 x 8-10 (work up to your top weight for the final set).
5. Standing reverse bb curls...or the rectangular fix...5 x 5 (same as barbell curls).

6. Bench dips...5 x 10-12 (add weight each set)...**OR**...one arm db presses 5 x 6-8 (a great triceps exercise used by the oldtimers)(work up to top weight on final set).
7. Grip work with grippers, thick bar holds, or hang from 2" bar for as long as possible
...

Friday

Repeat Monday's schedule, but finish with cheat curls for 5 x 6-8 and close grip bench press for 5 x 6-8.

THIS IS A HEAVY PROGRAM! Use it for 6-8 weeks, always trying to add weight to all of your exercises whenever possible. Get **PLENTY** of good food -- one gram of protein per pound of bodyweight for the under 25 group, and about 75% of that for the rest of you. Try to gain bodyweight while specializing on the arms...it makes the job much easier. It usually takes a ten pound gain in bodyweight to permit a one inch increase in arm size.

Any questions regarding exercise performance, 5 x 5, mental intensity (a very critical part of any successful training program) are probably answered in *Dinosaur Training* or *The Dinosaur Files*...please check them out if you have questions. For example, you may not know how to do a one arm dumbbell press or a rectangular fix, but both were covered in recent issues of *The Files*.

Good luck and good training!

CHAPTER 22

KIM WOOD LIVE

...Matt Furey's new videotape, *Kim Wood Live*, is selling like hotcakes. And for very good reason...you can't find a more interesting guy than Kim Wood when it comes to real world, hardcore, no nonsense, drug free strength training. I'm serious about this, guys. If you want a videotape with **REAL** information, order this baby. It is **EXTREMELY** good...and **FUNNY**...Check it out!

CHAPTER 23

MORE SANDBAG TORTURE...

...Here's a variation of the exercise described in Chapter 17. Instead of sitting the sandbag on the platform on each rep, lift it **OVER** the platform and place it on the floor on the side. Do it like this. Start with the sandbag to the right of the platform and a bit in front...lift it up and over the top of the platform and lower it to the same position, but on the

left side of the platform...then repeat...in other words, you lift up and then to the side on each rep.

Just for fun, you can place a loaded glass of water (plastic, not glass) on top of the platform and force yourself to keep the sandbag high enough on each rep so that you don't knock the thing over.

British strongman, Thomas Inch, used to do a similar exercise with a low bench and a heavy, thick handled db...and he'd do the exercise with one hand...up, over, down...up, over, down...this is an unparalleled grip blaster.

CHAPTER 24

THE IRON ROPE

Like to try a new forearm and grip exercise? Here's a dandy ...an exercise invented by the ever fertile mind of Charles Smith nearly 50 years ago...I call it THE IRON ROPE.

1. Stand on a sturdy bench.
2. Stand a 6' bar on its end in front of you...the bar should be loaded at the bottom end only.
3. Grasp the bar at about waist height, thumbs up grip, right hand on top of left hand, both hands touching. Lift the weight two inches off the floor.
4. Hold the bar motionless with the left hand only, as the right hand slides off and comes back to grab the bar BELOW the left hand.
5. Now hold the bar motionless with the right hand, and slide the left hand off and below the right hand.
6. Work alternate hands until you are at the bottom of the bar, then reverse the process to lower the bar back to the floor.
7. If you think about it, this is like climbing a rope in reverse. Hence the name.
8. This one will FRY your forearms and grip.

CHAPTER 25

DINOSAUR TRAINING PROGRAMS

Many of you have asked for some dinosaur style training programs. Here's a simple three day per week schedule.

Monday

1. Jump rope 3 x 100 times as a general warmup.
2. Bottom position squat or parallel squat 5 x 5.
3. Two dumbbell clean and press 5 x 5.
4. Sandbag load and lift exercise -- use a 100 to 150 pound sandbag. Lift the bag onto a high (and sturdy!) platform, lower and repeat. (The back of a pickup truck works fine.) Use either one or two hands, if you use one hand, alternate hands. Do 50 reps.

Wednesday

(General warmup as before.)

1. Bottom position bench press in power rack, or two dumbbell bench press or dips -- your choice, 5 x 5.
2. Barbell bent over rowing, 5 x 5.
3. One arm clean and press, 5 x 5 with each arm.
4. Bent legged situp, 1 x 20-30.

Saturday

(General warmup as before.)

1. Power cleans, power pulls, deadlifts, stiff legged deadlifts or trap bar deadlifts, your choice, 5 x 5.
2. Thick bar curls or reverse curls, 5 x 5.
3. The farmer's walk -- two times for as far as possible (using a weight that limits you to no more than 100 yards).

4. Hill sprints, 4 x 50 yards, 2 x 10 yards, 1 x 200 yards.

If you feel you are overtraining on this schedule, spread the three sessions over a 10 day period.

CHAPTER 26

EXPECT TO SUCCEED!

Too many modern writers dwell ad nauseam on the supposed difficulties of "genetically typical trainees," contending that the "average" trainee should expect to have incredible difficulty in building his body. There's hardly a magazine on the newsstands nowadays that doesn't have an article about the plight of the "hardgainer" ...with a brief introduction from the editor implying that 99% of the men who read the magazine probably belong in that category.

Teaching beginners to EXPECT TO FAIL is one of the worst things anyone can ever do to the Iron Game.

In the old days, they knew better. The men who wrote about physical training were men who had built large, muscular, strong and powerful physiques. These authors taught readers to EXPECT TO SUCCEED...and as a result, readers ordered barbell sets, started to train and GREW BIGGER AND STRONGER!

One of my favorite writers, Harry Paschall, met the issue head on in *The Bosco System of Progressive Physical Training*. In response to the questions, "How long will it take?" and "What should I expect from my training?" Harry noted that he had gained 25 pounds of muscle in his first year of training (on an old Milo Barbell that he used in his bedroom)...and 60 pounds over a period of several years. When he began, he was able, "by a supreme effort," to shove a 90 pound barbell overhead...but three months later he was able to lift 100 pounds overhead WITH ONE HAND! He eventually lifted 320 pounds overhead (in the jerk from behind the neck).

Now then...pay attention, because this is the most important part of Harry's message.

Harry added: "We feel we were average in type. Nine out of ten will do as well or better than we. The tenth man (and it may be you) will find progress slower, but even in such cases, gains will come."

Harry concluded this section of his training course by noting: "[W]e may sum it up this way...expect great things! Your eventual progress will be regulated by the quality of your own thinking....If you follow the schedules indicated in this course, you cannot fail to make progress worth many, many times the time and effort involved."

CHAPTER 27

A THOROUGHLY HI-TECH COMPLICATED TRAINING PROGRAM

All modern day training programs are totally hi-tech, super scientific, ultra-advanced and insanely over-complicated...and if they are not, no one bothers to try them...so I have developed the most complicated and hi-tech training program in the history of the world.

Actually, it may not be the most complicated schedule you ever saw, but it's about as complicated as I can manage without a slide ruler, pocket calculator and one of those fancy equivalency charts correlated to the lifter's one rep max, bio-rhythms and the lunar cycle.

1. Lift two or three times per week on alternate days.
2. Do squats and standing presses on one day...using the 5 x 5 system detailed in *Dinosaur Training*. Then do one grip exercise of your choice, neck work with a headstrap and bent-legged situps...two sets each...you pick the reps.
3. On the other training day, do power cleans or power pulls, followed by bottom position bench presses in the power rack or dumbbell incline presses...followed by standing barbell curls...all for 5 x 5...one grip exercise of your choice ... and one set of leg raises with a weight attached to the feet.
4. One day per week, use a "finisher" at the end of your session...the farmer's walk or four 100 to 200 yard sprints up the highest hill you can find.
5. Do no other exercises.
6. Eat a sensible, well balanced diet, with lots of protein and carbs. Take a multi-vitamin/mineral tab every day and don't take any other supplements.
7. Add weight to the bar whenever possible.
8. Work hard.
9. Expect to succeed. Others have done so. You can do it too!
10. Don't miss any regularly scheduled training days.
11. Stick to the above program for at least three months.

12. Concentrate when you train. The power of the mind controls the power of your muscles...your rate of progress...and your ultimate success in the Iron Game.

Good luck!

CHAPTER 28

STICK TO THE BASICS

Use basic, primarily compound exercises: squats, deadlifts, power cleans, power pulls, bench presses, standing presses, push presses, the clean and press, the barbell clean and press (or push press), the one hand deadlift, standing barbell curls, and heavy rack work. Add some grip work, neck work with a headstrap, situps or leg raises and "lugging and loading" with heavy awkward objects. Use barbells and dumbbells. Forget you ever heard of exercise machines or "isolation" exercises. Remember, exercises are the "tools" you use to build your body. Choose them wisely and well.

CHAPTER 29

LET'S TALK PERCENTAGES...

Let's talk percentages.

The percentage of weight trainers who build significant levels of strength, power and muscular size...without drugs... .001%.

The percentage of weight trainers who do heavy squats, power cleans, standing presses, bent-over rowing, heavy dumbbell work, the farmer's walk, hill sprints with weight, etc.001%.

Figure it out.

CHAPTER 30

SOME VERY IMPORTANT WORDS ...

1. Hard work.
2. Heavy weights.
3. Dedication.
4. Motivation.

5. Perseverance.
6. Tenacity.
7. Squats.
8. Barbells and dumbbells (not machines).
9. The Iron Will to Succeed.
10. Burning Desire.

CHAPTER 31

THOUGHTS FROM THE OLD MASTER

Here are some gems from the Old Master, George F. Jowett...taken from his 1926 masterpiece, *The Key to Might and Muscle*:

1. "I have often wondered to myself if the many who hesitate to take up physical training, ever stop to realize how the various senses of fear and cowardliness give place to fortitude and confidence in the process of reconstructing the body. This was one of the first assets I recognized to spring from my training." (p. 19)
2. "To see a man take something in his hands and crush it... has always had a fascinating influence over everybody. For some unknown reason, such feats seem to grip the layman with greater interest than great feats of bodily strength." (p. 117)
3. "It goes without saying that if the muscles of the [lower] back are up to par the blood condition will also be good, and when the latter condition is good the nervous system is healthy." (p. 156)
4. "At one time bar-bell users trained considerably with dumb-bells, but at the present time dumb-bells and kettle-bells are seldom used. Perhaps you may not think so, but to press a pair of dumb-bells to arm's length overhead is much more difficult than pressing a barbell." (p. 175-76)
5. "If I were to be asked, which are the muscles to which muscle builders pay the least attention, I would say the muscles of the legs." (p. 199)
6. "The mere suggestion of an exercise without an explanation, is like putting a ship to sea without a rudder. It sails, but it gets nowhere. We have to find

out just why that muscle is there; how it operates; or whether it operates best alone or in conjunction with another muscle. Then we have something on which to work. This knowledge allows us to find out the best means of control in order to make muscles more subject to growth. Boiled down, we must become acquainted with cause, effect and determination of the muscles and their growth." (p. 200)

7. "Try to build a big thigh or biceps with a pair of two-pound dumb-bells. It can't be done. You must give the muscles the necessary amount of resistance and they grow, in order to be more capable of handling the greater weight. In other words, the greater the material resistance, the greater the muscular growth." (p. 210)
8. "Everything depends upon the skillful co-ordination of mind and body." (p. 211)
9. "[T]he science of weight lifting always resolves itself upon the amount of knowledge possessed by the lifter on the muscular principles of leverage, mathematical deduction of timing a weight, the sustaining power of the combined physical forces, co-ordination between mind and body, plus speed, strength, stamina and a well-balanced muscular body." (p. 224)

CHAPTER 32

THE ONE HAND SWING

Speaking of George Jowett (see previous post) reminds me that he was credited with the tremendous feat of performing a one hand swing with more than bodyweight. The one hand swing with a dumbbell is one of the best back building exercises ever invented -- and a tremendous test of power and strength when performed with a heavy poundage. It's hard to describe the exercise or to visualize it if you have never seen it performed. Even men who have been serious students of the Iron Game for 30 or 40 years have never seen anyone perform the lift. The dumbbell swing is featured in my videotape, *The Lost Art of Dumbbell Training*. Check it out so you know what the exercise looks like with a heavy bell (I got up to 151 on the tape)...then imagine Jowett swinging a dumbbell heavier than his own bodyweight...then ask yourself whether the Old Master knew a thing or two about heavy training.

CHAPTER 33

MASTER THE WEIGHT!

Master the weight.

What do I mean by "master the weight?"

I mean this...stop thinking of any particular weight as "heavy," "unapproachable," "super-human," or "unliftable." If you view a particular poundage in those terms, you set a mental barrier that makes it IMPOSSIBLE to lift the weight. You have allowed the weight to master you!

At breakfast, this morning, I was reading an old magazine (1951), wherein an author mentioned that he had met Bob Hoffman at a weightlifting contest, and had asked Hoffman what he considered to be the greatest feat of strength he had ever witnessed.

Hoffman answered, "The day at the York Gym when I saw Steve Stanko clean 380 pounds 18 times in one afternoon."

Hoffman noted that he told Stanko that he was "working too hard."

Stanko replied, "No, I'm not. It's a light weight!"

Stanko had MASTERED THE WEIGHT.

CHAPTER 34

A LETTER FROM PEARY RADER ...

In 1984, I received a letter from Peary Rader, the founder of *Iron Man* magazine and its editor and publisher for FIFTY years. Peary wrote:

...I've often mentioned two work-outs a week are sufficient and for a long time I used only one set per exercise and gained very rapidly on it. At a later date I went to two sets and finally to three sets, but I found the other just as effective and my exercises which were used were very limited in number. So you see, the general practice among most bodybuilders is to over-train and thereby stop their progress or at least slow it up drastically and then they become discouraged and quit. Whereas if they were content to take it easy and slow and reduce their workouts and the size of their workouts, they would make much better progress. Most of them can't believe that they can gain on a small workout. As a matter of fact, I have seen people gain very good on

one exercise -- the squat. In fact, they've made twenty pound gains in one month on the squat and the press behind neck. Of course, they had to perform these exercises properly and have the proper diet to make the gains that they desire.

CHAPTER 35

MORE FROM PEARY RADER...

Peary Rader continued his letter as follows:

I think probably the biggest problem with bodybuilders throughout the world is overwork. They all try to use the so-called routines of champions. As a matter of fact, most of the champions do not use those routines. Only the fellows who write the articles know anything about those routines and they're rather loose with the truth. I'm not saying that some of these supermen couldn't make progress on some of these routines, however, most of the routines are set up for their pre-contest training for about three or four weeks and during this time the primary idea is to over-train. They do this over-training in order to develop their definition and shape and to reduce their bodyweight for a contest and most of them are injuring their health during this period. They become very nervous and irritable prior to a contest and most of them will go off of all training for a while after a contest in order to recover. Yet, many young fellows think that this type of routine is what made the champion. Actually, it is what destroys them if they stay on it very long.

CHAPTER 36

YESTERDAY'S TRAINING SESSION...

...was pretty darn basic. Bottom position squats from just above parallel...135 X 1, 225 x 1, 315 x 1, 405 x 1, 460 x 10 singles...then standing barbell curl with a York ez curl bar (a favorite bar for someone who grew up seeing the long-running ads with John Grimek doing a curl -- lord, what impressive arms he had!)...112 x 1, 132 x 1, 162 x 1, 182 x 1, 202 x 1 (slight swing), 232 x 1 (full cheat curl)...I'm doing multiple sets of heavy singles in every training session now, sticking to a handful of basic movements...all in preparation for several new challenges I've set for myself...

CHAPTER 37

THE PURPOSE OF THE DINOSAUR FILES

What is the purpose of *The Dinosaur Files*?

Think about it. A monthly newsletter is an enormous undertaking...the publishing deadline comes around so fast that you barely get one issue out the door and you have to start working on the next one. Bi-monthly and quarterly publications are enormously easier projects...particularly if you are like me and work a full-time job and do the newsletter only as a hobby.

But when I started the project I decided to make the newsletter a monthly.

Why? Because there are very important benefits to a monthly magazine for strength trainers. The most important of these is motivation. Fanning the flames. Keeping the lifter at a fever pitch of white hot training intensity.

The Dinosaur Files are written primarily for guys who train alone, in the dark silence of basement and garage gyms around the world. Sure, many of our subscribers train in commercial gyms ...and that's fine...but the ones who train alone are the ones who need the monthly dose of motivation. And that's what I try to offer in each and every issue.

Letters from readers constantly acknowledge the importance of getting a monthly training mag that is specifically designed for serious, no nonsense, hard training Iron Slingers. "The regular dose of monthly motivation makes all the difference," they say.

Just the other day I received a sub renewal and a note from a reader who simply said "MADE INCREDIBLE GAINS OVER THE PAST YEAR! LOOKING FORWARD TO MORE GREAT GAINS...."

I don't want to sound like a broken record, but guys...give *The Files* a try. The training information in *The Files* is available nowhere else in the world...and each issue literally distills the very best of the great training articles from the Masters of the Game...immortal teachers such as Paschall, Rader, Smith, Berry, Jowett, Calvert and Hoffman...combined with the latest material from today's top writers of REAL weight training advice: Pickett, Whelan, Furey and others. The mix is literally unprecedented...and in coming issues, it's going to get better and better.

For U.S. readers, a one year subscription costs something like 10 cents per day...for overseas readers a penny more. If you can't spend 10 cents a day on strength training advice, motivation and inspiration...you better start looking for another activity, because strength training ain't for you.

One year ago, when I started *The Files*, I did so as an experiment. One year later I can say, without any reservation, that the results have been fully successful. Join our army of dino-subscribers (also known as subscrib-o-sauruses) and get ready for the best gains of your life!

CHAPTER 38

A SIMPLE EXPERIMENT ...

Here's a very simple experiment for anyone who is confused about the merits of various strength training and muscle building systems.

Do this for the next three months.

Stop worrying about...talking about...arguing about... reading about...or posting about different training systems.

Do the following workout 2 x per week:

1. Standing press with barbell 5 x 5 (start light and add weight each set for the first three sets...then add more so you use a weight heavy enough to make you FIGHT for all 5 reps on the 4th and 5th sets...thus, you do three progressively heavier warmup sets and TWO heavy sets with your "working weight." Use this system on all exercises.)
2. Power cleans 5 x 5.
3. Parallel squat 5 x 5.
4. Power pulls 5 x 5.
5. Situps with extra weight. 1 x 25.
6. Hang from chin bar for as long as possible, once.

DO NO OTHER EXERCISES.

Train at normal speed reps...do NOT count the seconds up and down...add weight whenever possible...try to add at least 50 pounds to every single exercise over the next three months. Take NO food supplements. Eat three big meals and two high protein snacks every day.

At the end of three months, you will have TRANSFORMED your body.

So what will the experiment prove? It will prove that productive training is ridiculously simple. All it takes is hard work on a basic, abbreviated program built around the BIG exercises...the basic barbell and dumbbell exercises.

CHAPTER 39

CAN SHE COVERT KILOS TO POUNDS?

A few years ago I was working as the head judge at a NASA state championship powerlifting meet here in Kentucky. One of the contestants was an absolutely beautiful teenage girl from a little town in the mountains. She was a cheerleader, Homecoming Queen, co-captain of the girls gymnastics team and a likely candidate for Prom Queen. Weighed about 120 pounds and had the prettiest blue eyes you ever saw in your life. Paul Kelso's Texas cheerleader with the "etruscan temple dancer's eyes" had nothing on this girl.

She had been powerlifting for just three months and was now entered in her first meet. Her coach and team mates, mom, dad, little sister, big brother, boyfriend, the boyfriend's brother, english teacher, gymnastics coach, fellow cheerleaders, cheerleading coach, and half the high school football team had made the long trip to Bardstown to cheer her on. Talk about pressure!

One of the other judges, Carla Patterson, came over to me before the lifting started and said, "Did you see the little blonde girl -- the one with all the guys following her? She's in the ladies' room right now -- puking ..."

"Nerves?"

"She just missed her opener back in the warmup room."

"Let me go find her coach."

I knew the guy from other meets. He was pretty cool. After all, anyone who loves powerlifting enough to build a team up in the mountains is a solid citizen in my book.

"Hey, I just heard that one of your new lifters is having a bad case of nerves -- that little cheerleader ..."

"Yeah -- she just missed her opener back in the warmup room. Usually she triples that weight."

"Well, it's nerves. It's her first meet."

"Yeah, I suppose. Guess, I'll talk to her a little -- get her fired up or something. Pep talks always help."

Well, okay. Talking to your lifter is a good idea, but sometimes matters call for more direct measures.

"There's still time to drop her opener. Why not let her start 20 or 30 pounds lighter?" I suggested.

"No," he said. "No -- I couldn't do that. If she knew I dropped the opener she'd think I had no confidence in her. Then she's miss it for sure! It would destroy her mentally."

"So don't tell her."

"She'd hear them call the weight. She'd know I changed it on her. It wouldn't work."

"Look, we use kilos in these contests. Do you guys train with kilo bars or regular bars?"

"Regular bars."

"Can she convert kilos to pounds?"

"No, I'm the only one who can -- DAMN! I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN."

So he runs over to the score table and drops her opener a full 15 kilos. Then he has her mom go bring her out of the ladies' room and get her over to the platform.

They called the weight, we loaded it, she walked out, pale as a ghost, got under the thing and backed out. She was shaking like a leaf. She was looking down at the floor. She had forgotten she needed to give me the signal -- a head nod -- so that I could start her off with a squat command.

"Carrie -- look at me," I said.

She looked up. Her eyes were like those of a helpless deer caught dead center in the headlights of a speeding truck.

"I'm going to help you do this lift. Wait for my signal. Then squat. You can do it."

"NO, I CAN'T!" said her eyes.

"You can do it," I repeated.

Judges don't normally talk to lifters at powerlifting meets. But a teenage rookie in a state meet deserves special treatment. The rookie also deserves to make the day a success -- especially if it's his or her first meet.

"Squat!" I said. It wasn't a signal. It was a command. But my tone said that I had full confidence in her ability to make the lift.

She dropped down into a full squat and bounced right back up.

"RACK IT!" I shouted.

She racked the bar. The place was going wild. I thought we were at a rock concert. I wished we had thought of crowd control -- possibly even a police barricade. Her family, friends, teachers, fellow lifters and coaches swarmed the platform.

I walked over to the score table, checked the record book for a second, dropped \$20 into the pot to enter her in the teenage division as well as the high school division, picked up the mike and announced: "LADIES AND GENTLEMEN -- THAT WAS A NEW STATE RECORD IN TWO SEPARATE DIVISION!"

The place went even more nuts than before. Pandemonium reigned. I wished that Sam and Spencer had been there -- this was starting to become their kind of party.

Five or ten minutes later, things died down and we were able to get on with the meet. The little girl went 8 for 9, missing only her final deadlift. On squats, she ended up going 20 kilos past the weight she had missed in the warmup room. She set something like a dozen state records that day. She went home with two powerlifting first place trophies, two bench press first place trophies and an extra trophy we gave her for "Best Novice Lifter."

That little girl is probably grown up and married now...so her first powerlifting contest may be only the SECOND happiest day of her life. But it was a happy day.

Damn good thing she couldn't convert kilos.

CHAPTER 40

TWO FINGER DEADLIFTS

One of the best exercises to develop a ferocious, bone-crushing grip is the two finger deadlift. It's a simple exercise and one that requires no special equipment--but it produces great results for those who are tough enough to give it a try. Tough enough? You're damn right...because these babies hurt like the devil.

The two finger deadlift is performed exactly the same as a regular deadlift, except you use only the first two fingers of each hand to hold the bar. Use a reverse grip.

Do singles. Start out light and work your way up slowly and steadily. Don't try to rush the poundage or you are likely to strain a tendon in the fingers...and that sort of injury takes a l-o-n-g time to heal.

Over time you can go awfully high in poundage on the two finger deads. I eventually worked up to 420 or so the last time I worked them into my schedule. Others have gone much higher. I think Hermann Goerner handled something like 590 or 595 in the two finger deadlift; there's a picture of him holding the weight in the finish position of the lift with his eyes closed and his face totally impassive...as if he were out for a walk in the park instead of pulling close to 600 pounds using only the first two fingers of each hand.

CHAPTER 41

THE BASICS...

The basics never change. Nor does the fact that sticking to the basics is one of the most important training secrets that I can share with you.

What do I mean by the "basics?"

When I say "basics" I mean the time tested, result producing exercises...the compound movements that have been proven time and time again to be the best strength and power movements a man can do...the exercises that build the most muscle and size...and the ones that help you "pack on the pounds."

The basics include squats, deadlifts, bench presses, barbell and dumbbell standing presses, one arm dumbbell presses (standing), barbell bentover rowing, one hand deadlifts, the one hand snatch, the one hand clean and jerk, the one hand swing, power cleans, the barbell or dumbbell clean and press, push presses, dumbbell deadlifts, power snatches, power pulls, the farmer's walk, the Hise shrug, heavy partials and support work in the power rack... And not much else.

90% or more of your time and effort should be devoted to the basics. The rest of the time should be used for "lugging and loading" exercises (sometimes referred to as "finishers"), heavy grip work, heavy oblique and ab work, heavy neck work and any extras that you need to fit in to hit a particular part of the body extra hard because of a former injury, a specialization schedule or the physical demands of your chosen sport.

The guys who stick to the basics are the guys who succeed. The guys who neglect them fail. Don't be a failure. Become a weight training success! Stick to the basics!

CHAPTER 42

O TEMPORA! O MORES!

I was talking to a guy in his mid-twenties who recently started working at our firm. He asked if I lifted weights, so I told him about my powerlifting days and a little about the dinosaur thing.

He knew all about powerlifting and bodybuilding--especially the latter, as he had trained for awhile at a gym owned by one of the top bodybuilders in the world.

I showed him one of the dinosaur videotapes, with the jacket photo of my 151 pound one-hand swing.

He couldn't figure out what lift I was doing, so I explained how to do a one arm swing.

"Oh," he said.

He studied the photo a minute. Then the light went on.

"I guess that's real good for the rear delt, eh?"

CHAPTER 43

AN ABBREVIATED TRAINING SESSION

Yesterday's workout was about as basic and abbreviated as you can get...but left me drenched in sweat and feeling exactly the same as if I had played a quick game of bumper cars with a very large, fully loaded moving van.

The workout was deadly in its simplicity. Barbell clean and push press... 175 x 1 ..225 x 1...then the real work...250 for ten singles. I used a 1 1/16" non-revolving bar and exercise plates for these...my preferred bar for pulls and presses. It's tougher than an Olympic bar because it doesn't have the "life" and "spring" of an Olympic bar. Back in the 50's, Clyde Emrich used to train with an exercise bar, and he always said it made him STRONGER in competition, when he would use an Olympic bar.

After the clean and push press, I did one hand deadlifts with the same bar, starting with the bar in front of the shins (the way Hermann Goerner used to do them), which for me is much harder than straddle style. I did 165 x 1, 225 x 1, 275 x 1, 305 x 1 with each hand...and 330 x 1 with the right hand...but missed it with the left hand...then I did another single with 330 with the right hand, and that was it,

I used a hook grip on the deadlifts, and on the first single with 330 started bleeding from around the thumbnail on the right hand due to the pressure. "Great," I thought. "I literally am sweating blood today."

CHAPTER 44

SHORT AND SIMPLE

I'll keep this one short and simple. Slow motion training is bunny training. Period.

CHAPTER 45

THE DB VIDEO

I received an e-mail from a Canadian dinosaur, Yuri Dubowik, concerning my dumbbell training tape. Yuri wrote:

Well, we got the video in the mail today...and watched it from start to finish, and I must say, it is unlike any other instructional video I have ever seen! I enjoyed it immensely, not only the shots of the lifts themselves, but also the between set explanations, tips, and psyching-up. I was particularly impressed with not only your excellent technique (keeping the bells close all the way up the body), but your ferocious speed on both your cleans and your swings.

The heavy one arm dumbbell swings remind me quite a bit of one arm snatches...very explosive. I am quite eager to try the cleans and presses and swings....

Yuri, thanks for the kind words. Keep us posted on your dumbbell training and let us know how those cleans and swings feel! And for anyone out there who is interested in a no nonsense, heavy duty strength training tape with lifts you probably have never seen in your entire life...order the db training video!

CHAPTER 46

THE BEST BOOK CATALOG IN THE WORLD...

...is now available from my good friend, William F. Hinbern. For those of you who do not know Bill, he is one of the leading collectors of strength training memorabilia in the entire world. He's been collecting and selling old books, courses, magazines, etc. for something like 30 years...Heck, I can remember ordering a copy of Reg Park's famous *Strength and Bulk Training* course from Bill back in 1972...when I was a sophomore in high school...(Darn good course, too!)

Bill has just come out with a brand new catalog, and it is GREAT! Here is just a SMALL SAMPLE of some of the great old books that Bill offers for sale in deluxe reprint editions:

1. *The Textbook of Weight-Lifting*...a 1910 masterpiece by the immortal Arthur Saxon, legendary strongman who bent pressed 370 pounds and did a two hands anyhow with 448 pounds...lifts that have NEVER been surpassed...Complete with original photos...a CLASSIC!
2. *The Development of Physical Power*...written by Arthur Saxon in 1906...122 pages, with 45 original photos and illustrations. A masterpiece. Learn old time weight lifting from its greatest master.
3. *The Truth About Weight Lifting*...written by Alan Calvert, the "father" of American weight training and the founder of the Milo Barbell Company...the FIRST hardcover book on weight training published (in 1906) in the United States... 160 pages...42 original photos...a gold mine of lost information.
4. *Goerner the Mighty*, by Edgar Mueller...one of my all time favorite strongman books...written by a longtime friend who knew the intimate details of Goerner's life and lifting career...Tells how Goerner trained to develop the power to do a one hand deadlift with 727.5 pounds back in the 20's... 136 pages, many photos and illustrations...worth its weight in gold...[Note: This one is an original, not a reprint, so supplies are limited.]
5. *Molding a Mighty Grip*, by George F. Jowett...one of the best books ever written on the grip training...authored by one of the finest physical culture writers who ever lived...and one of the best prose stylists who ever graced the Iron Game... you've got to have this book!
6. *The Way to Live*, by George Hackenschmidt...173 pages...89 photos and illustrations...a combination training manual and autobiography of the legendary strongman and wrestler, George Hackenschmidt...The Russian Lion...First published in 1908, this book went through 21 editions by 1940, and may be the most popular and best selling strength training book ever written...a remarkable work...
7. *Weight Lifting Made Easy and Interesting*, by William A. Pullum, the "Wizard of the Weight-Lifting World"... originally published in 1926, this is the MOST DETAILED text ever written on the correct performance of the 42 BAWLA STANDARD LIFTS...authored by a man who set over 200 OFFICIAL British and World records in the various lifts...163 pages and over 70 photographs...THIS BOOK IS THE KEY TO LEARNING HOW TO

**PERFORM THE LONG FORGOTTEN LIFTS THAT MADE THE
OLDTIMERS SO INCREDIBLY POWERFUL...**

8. *Strength & Bulk Training For Weight Lifters and Body Builders...* a complete set of three courses in strength, power and bulk training by the legendary Reg Park, THREE TIME Mr. UNIVERSE...this is one of the best training courses ever authored, and one that taught me much of what has brought me training and lifting success over the years.

And the catalog goes on and on...for a full 24 pages...making it a GOLD MINE of valuable material...

DROP BILL A NOTE AND ASK FOR A FREE CATALOG TODAY!!!

William F. Hinbern 32430-K Cloverdale Farmington, Michigan 48336-4008 USA.

CHAPTER 47

DOES DINOSAUR TRAINING WORK?

...Just ask Brent Lukowich, who forwarded the following e-mail message to me:

I'd like to thank you again for showing a pudgy 16 year old the real ways to get big and strong! I won the 1998 AAU Teenage Nationals in the 16-17 242 RAW division and set 11 of the 12 RAW American, National and Meet records. Rest assured, Dinosaur Training will be well represented at the AAU Worlds in October!...

CONGRATULATIONS, BRENT! GOOD LUCK AT THE WORLDS!!!

CHAPTER 48

ANOTHER EXPERIMENT...

Learn for yourself the power of the mind...and how the mind controls your training and the results you get from your training. Here's a simple experiment to prove once and for all that your ultimate success in strength training depends on the power of your mind and the force of your will.

Pick up two 60 to 100 pound dumbbells...Use 60's if you weigh under 160 pounds, 70's or 80's if you weigh between 160 and 180, 80's or 90's if you weigh between 180 and 200 and 100's if you weigh over 200 pounds.

Now walk as far as you possibly can with the little monsters. Make it a good effort...a SERIOUS, DO OR DIE EFFORT...Give it your all...everything you have...no namby-pamby, wannabe stuff...I want to see a 100% maximum effort journey.

Then measure how far you walked.

Write down the distance.

For most of you it will be well under 100 yards.

Five to seven days later...take the same dumbbells to a high school or college running track. If you can't do that because the db's belong to a gym, take them for a walk around the block. Leave your car keys as a "deposit" so management won't be afraid that you are stealing the db's.

Now, here's the fun part. You are going to carry the bells one quarter mile. Nothing less will suffice.

You are going to psyche up and get serious, and pick up those bells and carry them all the way around the track. If you have to stop and rest, fine. Just remember...under no circumstances will you quit before you have covered the required distance. You WILL do it. You WILL make the journey. You WILL go the entire distance.

I don't care if the bells fall out of your hands a dozen times before you finish the journey. I don't care how much it hurts. I don't care if the sweat pours down your face and into your eyes, if your fingers go numb, if your hands blister and bleed, and if your arms feel like they are being pulled out of the shoulder sockets. It doesn't matter a bit to me.

But it matters to YOU...because this is how you will learn exactly how powerful the mind really is...

You will learn, from first hand experience--which is the ONLY way to learn anything of value about strength training--that your strength and power and energy output literally TRIPLE when you harness them to the power of the mind.

Enough words. Make your plans. Perform the experiment.

Write or e-mail your results.

CHAPTER 49

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY...

How could Herman Goerner deadlift 595.5 pounds using only the first two fingers of each hand...way back on November 30, 1933, in Leipzig, Germany WITHOUT:

- Steroids?
- Nautilus machines?
- Creatine?
- A personal trainer?
- Someone to monitor his blood glucose levels during his workouts?
- Slow motion training?
- The assistance of any of the self-proclaimed modern-day "experts"?

CHAPTER 50

ASSISTANCE EXERCISES FOR SQUAT, BENCH PRESS, ETC.

Yesterday I received an e-mail from a college football player whose coach has him training on a strength and power routine built around the squat, power clean, bench press and incline press. The kid had pretty good numbers for an 18 year old: 500 pound squat, 320 pound bench and 315 pound power clean. But he wanted to increase all of his lifts as rapidly as possible.

"What are some good assistance exercises for the squat, bench press and power clean?" he asked.

FLASHBACK...to a conversation several years ago with one of our top strength coaches...who was telling Bill Hinbern and I about the time he met the immortal Norb Schemansky (world and olympic weightlifting champion, world record holder, one of the greatest lifters the U.S. ever produced). Here's the story the coach told us...

He was a high school football player. The coach had just put the kids on a weight program (remember, this was back in the 60's, when only a handful of coaches let their players train with weights). The program was pretty basic: presses, power cleans, squats, bench presses and a few other exercises.

The coach told us he wasn't very good at the presses and the power cleans....So when he met Schemansky at the annual York Barbell Company Picnic, it was a golden opportunity to learn first hand from one of the best lifters in the world how to increase those lifts.

Schemansky was sitting on a picnic table, blowing the foam off of a tall cold one. He weighed 270 or so, with arms like telephone poles and legs like the Empire State building.

He was an imposing sight...and not terribly approachable if you were a 155 pound teenager. So the future coach hid in the crowd for awhile and munched protein tablets and tried to screw his courage to the sticking point...or at least, to summon enough boldness to actually ask the mighty Skee a question or two.

Finally, after an hour or two of nervous agitation, he seized his chance.

"Um--Mr. Schemansky, sir--I mean, um--[pause, while Schemansky turned to survey the tiny blob of protoplasm that had dared address him half way through one of his foam flecked "protein milk-shakes"...the one that came in the Bud bottle]--you see, sir, I'm a football player and our coach makes us do presses, and I--um--well--you see--I try, but--I'm...not very good...at them ...So, I mean, you being a world champion and all, I thought I'd ask you...you see, I thought you would be able to tell me...um ...how can I increase my press?"

Schemansky turned an astonished eye to the young man.

"BY PRESSING!" he shouted.

The young man ran away and hid for awhile, and half an hour later, when it looked like it might be safe, wandered back to Schemansky's picnic table and timidly approached him once again.

Same agonizing build up...same choking, gasping sort of question ...in fact, almost the same question: "...um, I mean--how can I increase my pulling strength?"

Schemansky nearly dropped his drink in surprise.

"BY PULLING, you little twerp!"

CHAPTER 51

INFORMATION OVERLOAD

What exercises should I do? How many sets and reps? Should I use machines or free weights? How many days a week should I train? How long should my workouts last? How long should I take to lift the weight on each rep? How long should I take to lower the

weight? What percentage of my one rep max should I use? How many weeks should I train heavy before back-cycling? Is periodization better than going heavy all the time? What about HIT? Are my wrists too small for good bodybuilding results? Am I a "hardgainer"? Is Olympic lifting dangerous? Should I use slow motion training? What about Hammer machines? Is the Nautilus pullover torso machine any good? Should I try thick bar training? What size bar should I use? Is my form ok? One expert says one thing, a different expert says something totally different, and the next guy I read disagrees with both of them. Who is right? What is the most productive way of training? What is the BEST way to train? What should I do?

WHOA!

WAIT A MINUTE!!

PUT ON THE BRAKES--NOW!!!

Slow down, guys.

Strength training isn't rocket science. It ain't that complicated. In fact, it's pretty darn simple.

The problem is, there is way too much information out there. Most of it, by the way, is total bunk. A very small percentage may be well intended...but still bunk. Most of it is commercial propaganda....

Too many guys spend too much time in a state of total confusion about how to train. Don't fall into that trap. Try one of the routines in *Dinosaur Training* or in *The Dinosaur Files*. Give it an honest try for 6 or 8 weeks...work hard, don't miss any training sessions, always try to add weight. Forget about anything else...just pick a schedule and follow it...You'll do fine!

This stuff REALLY IS PRETTY SIMPLE...stop trying to make it complicated. The more complicated you make your training, the WORSE your results will be. The simpler your training, the BETTER your results.

Quit worrying about the "scientific" mumbo jumbo that all of the pseudo experts throw out. Just train. Training on a basic program will give you *terrific* results...which will teach you, better than anything else, that strength training is a pretty simple activity.

Go ahead...take the challenge...learn for yourself what REAL training--and real GAINING--is all about. Do it NOW!

CHAPTER 52

CHALLENGE YOURSELF

Challenge yourself on all of the oldtime lifts. Learn what the oldtimers handled in the one hand snatch, the one arm swing, the one hand deadlift, standing dumbbell presses, etc. Then set a goal of meeting or exceeding your favorite oldtimer's performance in your favorite oldtime lift.

Alternatively, learn what the best of the modern lifters are doing on the oldtime lifts. Obtain and study the records of the International All Around Weight Training Association. What's the current IAAWA record in your weight class and age group for your favorite lift? Find out. Having something to measure yourself against is a terrific way to jump start your progress.

Always remember the following words--eight little words that have built more muscle and strength than all the "space age" super programs ever peddled: " IF HE CAN DO IT, SO CAN I!"

CHAPTER 53

A LITTLE TIP THAT MAY SAVE YOUR LIFE

On Matt Furey's Combat Wrestling bulletin board, the great pro wrestling champion, Lou Thesz, posted a short note on neck training. He noted that the most important body parts are the neck and back, and said that your training should always begin with, and focus on, those critical areas. He noted that his 19" neck literally **SAVED HIS LIFE ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS...**

On Matt's new videotape, **KIM WOOD LIVE**, there is a similar discussion of neck training. Wood notes that football players and martial artists need to develop the strongest, largest possible necks. According to Wood, the key to preventing a broken neck as the result of a collision on the football field is to increase the size of the neck as much as possible. The size of the neck, not it's actual strength, is what provides protection in a high impact collision.

Here's the bottom line. Even if you never play football and could care less about wrestling or other martial arts, train your neck. Everyone drives or rides in a car from time to time, and auto accidents can easily lead to neck injuries. Be safe. Live long. Train your neck. Make your neck a thickly muscled column of iron hard tissue. Training your neck is **FAR, FAR** more important than pumping the rear delt or bringing out the upper, inner bicep.

CHAPTER 54

A RESPONSE TO THE POST ON NECK TRAINING

A reader from Texas sent the following by e-mail in response to my post about neck training:

I firmly believe that neck training can save your life. I know that it has saved my life in actual fact once.

At the time of the accident, I was working out alone in my garage. I had a crude set-up of sturdy wooden equipment. One day, I was in a hurry to get my workout done, so I skipped a usual safety device on one exercise. I figured that it wouldn't make any difference. I found out later that it made a HUGE difference.

I was doing calf raises with a 300 pound barbell on my shoulders. I faced the wall of the garage as I did the exercise. For my block, I used a concrete block (one of those half height ones, about 4-6" high). The long axis was perpendicular to the barbell on my back. I put the balls of my feet on the block and rose up....

I got to the tips of my toes and BOOM!--the block flipped up and I went forward. There was nothing I could do.

My face smashed into the wall and stopped. The 300 pound bar on my shoulders continued on and slammed into my neck. My face was pinned against the wall. The weight rolled down my neck, trapping me.

Most likely from fear, I snapped back a little and was able to slide out from underneath the bar. My head hurt, I was woozy, my face was all bloody, and I know that neck training kept me from writing this letter to you from a wheelchair...

I train my neck religiously (with, what else, the IronMind "Headstrap for Hercules". I firmly believe that everyone should do some sort of neck training. You never know when an accident will happen.

I gradually built up to where I am now, using very heavy loads for the neck, and am quite strong in that area. I hope that other people out there run with the message and train their necks.

CHAPTER 55

SO WHO NEEDS STEROIDS?

I received a letter from a Midwestern lifter, who wrote:

Thank you for all your inspiration. Two years ago I was a steroid-infested 210 pounds with a 275-pound squat. On a whim I ordered your book and it was an eye-opener. Today, with the help of yourself, John McCallum, Anthony Ditillo, Bill Starr and Randall Strossen, I am 260 pounds with a squat of 550 pounds and drug-free since the day your book came in the mail....

CHAPTER 56

WHO NEEDS MIRRORS?

Never train in front of a mirror. Mirrors are for bodybuilders ...pumpers...shapers...toners...and others who train for looks rather than strength and power. When you train for function, you don't train in front of a mirror.

"But I need to use a mirror to check my form!"

BULL!

Does an Olympic lifter use a mirror to check his form on the snatch or clean and jerk? Heck, no! Then why would you need to "check your form" on a relatively simple and undemanding exercise such as a barbell curl? Is the lifter so much more coordinated and athletic that he can train his body to snatch 300 or more pounds **WITHOUT USING A MIRROR**, while some other poor schmuck needs to watch every single inch of each rep of his curls to avoid a catastrophic and career ending injury--with all of 60 or 70 pounds on the bar?!

If mirrors were necessary, how could any of us do bench presses without having mirrors on the ceiling?

Face it. Mirrors are there for two reasons. One is to allow weight trainers to priss and preen and admire their pretty reflections. The second is to allow them to ogle other gym members without making it too obvious. Neither activity has anything to do with building functional strength and power.

Mirrors actually make injuries happen. How? By distracting the lifter. When you look in a mirror, you focus on something outside your body--a visual image--rather than keeping your focus and concentration turned inward, where they should be.

Do yourself a big favor. Junk the mirrors. And if any self-proclaimed "expert" tells you to "always train in front of a mirror," drop a big dumbbell on his head, grab your wallet and run like hell.

CHAPTER 57

POUNDAGE GOALS IN THE PRESS

Set your sights high when you do overhead pressing. Most modern guys think 60 or 70 pounds is "heavy" for overhead pressing--and if you can handle a 135-pound Olympic bar, they think you are Hercules.

In his classic book, *The Complete Guide to Effective Barbell Training*, Bradley J. Steiner used the following rating system for the military press with barbell:

fair--a single military press with 50% bodyweight.

good--a single military press with 85% to 90% bodyweight.

very good--a single strict military press with bodyweight. According to Steiner, "any advanced bodybuilder ought to be able to press 100 per cent of his bodyweight once, after a warmup."

excellent--a single rep in the military press with 130% or more of bodyweight...demonstrating, in Steiner's words, "an extraordinary level of power and strength in [the] shoulder-tricep-trapezius and upper back assembly."

CHAPTER 58

PROGRESSION

Poundage progression is critical. Never be satisfied with any particular weight in any particular exercise. This is NOT new information, but modern trainees seem to have lost sight of it entirely.

In the old days, the importance of poundage progression was well understood. More than 50 years ago, Bob Hoffman wrote:

Constantly strive to handle more and more weight. Progression is the only way to succeed in building your body. We do not stand still in life, we either go forward or back. And your success will be governed by your ability to go forward.... You must constantly strive to overcome greater resistance, for only by making increasing demands, with the necessary rest days intervening, can you attain your physical desires.

CHAPTER 59

THE WASP WAIST ROLE REVERSAL

A reader emailed the following to me today:

I really, really try to give bodybuilding (in the modern sense of the word) the benefit of the doubt. But it ain't easy! I was in the gym last Friday and had just finished a brutal set of 20 breathing squats. I was walking it off, and walked past a desk with the usual array of supplement sponsored mags when a cover caught my eye,

It was *Flex* magazine and there was an article titled "Four Keys to Getting Huge!" I actually had hopes that I would open to the article and find "SQUAT...EAT... SQUAT...EAT" as the four keys...The article was supposedly written by somebody or other who claims to be 300 pounds at contest time. Not only did he not stress squats, he actually wrote that he stopped doing **them** entirely because they made his waist too thick!

This is what is wrong with bodybuilding. The completely warped view of the human body prompted by several decades of steroid use has actually led to a reversal of the sexes. A 300 pound man who worries about maintaining a petite waist?! A man is not supposed to look like an hour glass!

I'm all **for** staying somewhat lean (without using drugs). At 6'2" and 230, I have 12 PBF and plan to stay there, but I **sure** as hell am not going to give up squats to keep my girlish figure.

CHAPTER 60

BAILING OUT

One of the safety rules I always used to emphasize as a powerlifting judge was "If you miss a squat, don't bail out. Stick with the bar. Let the spotters help you get back to the rack."

Most guys paid attention to the rule. If they missed a squat, they let the spotters grab the bar and help them back up...and then stayed with the lift and got back to the racks. Only a couple of guys ever dumped the bar...but on one occasion, the dump was memorable.

It was at a NASA meet in Tennessee. A strong looking, experienced lifter in the 181 pound class was opening with 550. He was new to the NASA meets. I hoped he knew what he was doing.

The guy unracked the bar, set up, nodded and got the signal. So far so good.

He dropped to parallel...then a little bit lower...started up...and got stuck.

As head judge, I was looking right at him. His eyes opened wide as saucers and went blank with panic.

Then he shoved the bar backwards off of his shoulders and dove forward,

There was no warning...no sound...no hint of what he was going to do. One second the bar was balanced on his shoulders...and the next, it was hurtling back and crashing to the floor.

We had three spotters: one on each side and one behind. As spotters always do in NASA meets, they were staying close to the bar. But they were not ready for a 550 pound NO WARNING dump on an opener...and when it happened, there was nothing that anyone could do.

The guy in the back jumped out of the way---lucky for him, or the bar would have cut off his knee-caps.

The more experienced spotter on the right side tried to turn to the side and brace his hands on his thigh to catch the bar. It didn't work. The bar hit his thigh and knocked him right into the front row of the audience. An inch lower and it would have broken his leg at the knee.

The guy on the left jumped back and tried to catch the bar with his hands as it plummeted downward.

Try catching one side of a falling barbell loaded to 550 pounds. Seriously. Just try it sometime. It doesn't work.

The left side spotter grabbed the bar with both hands and tried as hard as he could to stop it. Nothing doing! The bar crashed to the floor, the spotter still hung onto it, and then he flipped upside down, over and up and somersaulted off to the side. He landed 10 or 12 feet away from the platform, flat on his back.

Not satisfied with the havoc it had wrought, the bar bounced a full five feet into the air, took out the squat stands and sent them crashing forward...directly onto the lifter, who at this point, was lying face-down on the floor, trying to cover his head.

As it all started, I dove forward and dropped to my knees directly over the lifter and to his side. I put one hand on his shoulders and held him down and flat. I didn't want him

to start up and hit the bouncing bar half-way up--that would have meant a broken back if the bar hit him as he was bentover and coming to his feet.

The squat stands crashed onto us. I blocked one with my right forearm, keeping it away from the lifter's head. That made me turn to the right side, so all I could do about the left side squat rack was stiffen my shoulder and duck my head a fraction of a second before the thing landed on top of me. It hit hard, and I saw stars.

Meanwhile, the bar kept bouncing up and down, and finally rolled over and across the lifter's legs, pinning him to the platform. He was perpendicular to it, so it didn't hurt him--it just held him down.

So we had one spotter standing at the back of the platform, white as a sheet...one off to the right side, writhing in agony, with a bruise the size of a watermelon on his thigh...the third one flat on his back and literally half unconscious off to the other side...the lifter flat on his belly, trying to figure out if he was dead or alive...and me with two squat racks criss-crossing my upper back, a bruised neck, and shoulder and a ferocious headache.

With the help of the other lifters in the meet, we finally got everything put back together, did first aid on the spotters, found some aspirin for yours truly, recruited some more spotters to replace the two semi-cripples (who worked the score table for the rest of the day), and were ready to continue the competition.

But first I called all of the lifters out onto the platform and made a public announcement. What I wanted to say was "If anyone ever does that again I am personally going to wrap the bar, the squat stands and the scoring table around his damn neck!" But what I actually said was: "Now you know why bailing out is a bad idea. Does anyone have any questions'?"

CHAPTER 61

THE STEROID MINDSET (PART ONE)

I've said it before, and I'll say it again: ANYONE WHO USES STEROIDS HAS A LOSER'S MENTALITY.

What does it mean when an athlete turns to steroid use? It means he doesn't think he can do it on his own.

Think about that for a second.

Now consider this...

What ARE anabolic steroids?

Anabolic steroids are synthetic male hormones.

Male hormones are what make you a MAN.

So if you take anabolic steroids, what are you admitting?...

...You are admitting that you don't have enough of what it takes to be a MAN...

CHAPTER 62

THE STEROID MINDSET (PART TWO)

Anabolic steroids are a direct result of the work the muscle magazines began in the 1950's. That's when magazines began systematically brainwashing weight trainers around the world into believing that weight training would not work for them unless they gobbled and guzzled an endless array of pills, powders, and, potions...protein drinks, vitamin/mineral tablets, liquid amino acids, desiccated liver tablets, wheat germ oil, herbs, enzymes and who knows what else.

Once weight trainers began to look for THE SECRET PILL, they were ready for steroids.

Don't like squats? -- Take a pill instead.

Don't like heavy back work? -- Take a pill instead.

Don't like to go to the gym on your regularly scheduled training days? -- Take a pill instead.

Don't like hard work? -- Take a pill instead.

Don't like adding weight to the bar? -- Take a pill instead.

Not sure if you can do it on your own? -- Take a pill.

Convinced that weight training doesn't work? -- Take a pill.

CHAPTER 63

A NEW BUMPER STICKER

One of our readers, Lauren Kott, says that the recent post on THE STEROID MINDSET made her think of a new bumper-sticker:

TAKE A PILL. BE A WIMP!

CHAPTER 64

HIDDEN AGENDAS

Let's talk a little more about what I described in recent posts as THE FAILURE MINDSET...i.e., the theory that "genetics are everything...that only a man with one in a million genetics can ever achieve very much in the way of weight training success...and that the average man must be satisfied with modest [translate as: mediocre] levels of strength and size no matter how hard and how passionately he trains..." You know how it goes, it goes--you see it all the time now, in books, in magazines and on the Internet.

In a previous post I explained how THE FAILURE MINDSET sells supplements and steroids. That's not all it does. It also allows anyone to become a self-styled "weight training authority."

Here's how it works. If you relied on plain old fashioned common sense, you would never in your life accept weight training advice from a guy with little or no muscular development and the strength and power of an undernourished kitten. Instead, you'd get your training advice from someone who was reasonably big and strong. Why? Because you would assume that the guy got big and strong from his training program...and you would think "If it worked for him, it will work, for me as well."

But if genetics are everything, a scrawny wimp can claim to have as much weight training knowledge as anyone else. It doesn't show itself because he "doesn't have the right genetics"--but if he did, wow! He'd be a world-beater!

Don't get me wrong. I am NOT saying you need to be a bodybuilding or lifting champion in order to know how to train others. I AM saying that too many weight training failures are posing as "experts" nowadays...and they can do so, in part, because THE FAILURE MINDSET has taught us to overlook their results...or their LACK of results. If a writer has upper arms the size of a spaghetti noodle, we excuse it as the result of bad genetics...instead of asking ourselves whether the guy ever heard of breathing squats, heavy leg and back work and all of the other things that any REAL expert should know inside and out from first hand, real world experience.

Is Richard Simmons a weight lifting or weight training authority? Of course not. Then why do we allow guys to pass themselves off as weight training experts--in books, magazines, on the web, as "personal trainers" or as instructors in fitness clubs--when they have a Richard Simmons' level of development?

Let's throw out the nonsense. Of course your bone structure is important. Yes, genetics matter. Not everyone can build world class strength and power. But the average man--the "genetically typical" trainee that they all write and talk about nowadays--can develop ENORMOUS levels of size and strength if he trains hard and correctly. So if someone looks like he doesn't train...don't let him tell you he's an expert. Make him earn it--by ten or twenty hard years of heavy lifting!

I said it in *The Dinosaur Files* and I'll say it again: DON'T BUY A SEX MANUAL FROM A VIRGIN!

CHAPTER 65

THE EXERCISE POLICE

You can see them everywhere.

It would take you years to read all of their books, articles and internet posts.

You know who I'm talking about: THE EXERCISE POLICE...the guys who spend all of their time telling you to avoid "dangerous" exercises. And what exercises do the self-appointed law enforcement officers tell you not to do'?

Squats.

Deadlifts.

Stiff legged deadlifts.

Standing presses.

Standing barbell curls.

Power cleans.

Power pulls.

Power snatches.

Push presses.

The clean and jerk.

The one hand snatch.

The one hand deadlift.

The one arm swing.

Barbell bentover rowing.

The press behind neck.

Situps

Any sort of dino style training with heavy, awkward objects.

The list goes on and on. Every exercise that has helped build massive, powerful MEN from the turn of the century to the present has been ruled to be "too dangerous" by the EXERCISE COPS.

If you think about it, the Exercise Cops have a tendency to criticize the following sorts of exercises:

1. Exercises where you use barbells and dumbbells (or sandbags, barrels, beams or other heavy awkward objects). The Exercise Cops prefer plushly padded chrome plated bunny machines. Ones where you can sit down or lie down on soft cushions while you "train." (The Exercise Cops are always quick to label barbells and dumbbells as "old fashioned." Dinosaurs think of barbells and dumbbells as TIME-TESTED, PROVEN AND PRODUCTIVE.)

2. Exercises where guys who are big and strong can lift more than the Exercise Cop. (This is most exercises, which is why the list of prohibited exercises is so long.)

3. Exercises that scare or frighten the Exercise Cops. (Such as squats--have you seen the stuff written by the buttercups and molly-coddles who complain that they feel like they are being "crushed" by the squat bar?)

4. Exercises that the Exercise Cop doesn't like to do because they involve HARD WORK. (Why do you think squats are always on the list?)

5. Exercises that the Exercise Cop doesn't know how to perform or is too unathletic and awkward to perform. (Why do you think they always condemn Olympic lifting and Olympic pulling movements?)

6. Exercises that don't lend themselves to the s-l-o-w m-o-t-i-o-n training modalities universally favored by the Exercise Cops. (Another reason why they don't like Olympic lifts--you can't do them in approved 10/6 style.)

7. Exercises that allow you to handle heavy poundages. (Heavy weights scare away potential Customers: gym members, guys who buy supplements, guys who buy muscle magazines, guys who buy books and training courses, guys who buy bodybuilding videos, guys who buy swimsuit and lingerie videotapes, etc.)

8. Exercises that build muscle. (The Exercise Cops don't have any, and they can't pretend to be "world famous weight training authorities" if other people have muscles and they don't.)

9. Exercises that have been around for so long that no one can claim them as his own discover. (The Exercise Cops like to pretend that they have discovered everything of importance in the history of the Iron Game...so if it has been around since 50 years before they were born--like squats, for example--they have to say it's no good.)

10. Exercises that build strength and power. (Strength and power scare the Exercise Cops. They prefer pumping, shaping, toning, slow motion training and cosmetic bodybuilding.)

So there you have it. The choice is yours. Train hard and heavy on the prohibited exercises and get big and strong. Or follow the rules and be a wimp. You decide. But remember--BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING!

CHAPTER 66

STANDING PRESSES: DANGEROUS? (Or, "Please, Mr. Policeman, Don't Make Me Laugh!")

One of the basic maxims followed by all of the self-appointed Exercise Cops is the rule that exercises are only safe if they are done in a seated position, using a sturdy back support to avoid any possible lower back injury. For example, it is now common to see "experts" telling people to do all of their overhead presses in seated, back supported position.

Let's examine this basic principle of modern day GENTLE-BLASTING...

First, there's the argument that a lifter invariably bends backwards while performing overhead presses--thereby subjecting the lower back to supposedly terrible stress.

In the old days, they had a simple way of avoiding this problem. Back bending is the result of one of three things:

1. Either the lifter is handling too heavy a weight to press in an upright or "military" fashion
2. The lifter's waist and trunk--abs, sides and lower back--are too weak to maintain the proper upright position ... or...
3. The lifter doesn't know how to perform the standing press and is pushing the bar up and forward (more like an incline press) instead of up and back as in a proper overhead press.

Either problem has a simple--in fact, an OBVIOUS--Solution. If a lifter is leaning back because he is not capable of pressing a particular weight in good form, he should use a lighter weight until his shoulders and triceps are capable of handling the poundage.

If the lifter is leaning back because his waist and trunk are too weak to maintain an upright position, he needs to strengthen the muscles of the waist and trunk,

If the lifter is pushing the bar forward as he presses. rather than up to the top of the head and then BACK, then he needs to be taught how to perform the movement correctly. Many modern lifters have a horrible "groove" for the overhead press because they have done too much benching and incline pressing and hardly any overhead work, and therefore they tend to automatically push the bar up and forward.)

Simple solutions'? You bet! Guys, this is NOT rocket science!

Now, what happens if you follow the old fashioned approach and FIX the problem instead of eliminating the standing press and telling lifters to do nothing but back supported, seated presses? You INEVITABLY end up producing a bigger, stronger lifter with NO WEAK LINKS in his body...which is a result that can only be labeled--even by the OSHA Inspectors -- as GOOD.

In contrast, what happens if you use the panty-waist approach and tell the lifter to stop doing standing presses and stick exclusively to back supported, seated presses?

What happens is this: YOU CREATE A SITUATION WHERE A SERIOUS INJURY TO THE LOWER BACK IS ALMOST INEVITABLE...

You see, the standing overhead press is not merely a good exercise for the shoulders, triceps and the traps. It also works the waist and trunk in an important way--by teaching them to SUPPORT a heavy upper body push without injury. Take that element out of the exercise and you have virtually guaranteed a severe low back injury at some time in the future...especially if you combine the back supported, seated overhead presses with leg presses (because squats are too "dangerous").

And don't say that you will do deadlifts, back extensions or the Hammer deadlift machine to strengthen the lower back and make everything ok. Deadlifts alone will not build the type of strength that I am describing. Remember, the results of exercise are both specific and general...and I am talking about a specific kind of strength--the strength to maintain a flat back (or an upright position) while pushing as hard as possible with the arms and shoulders.

Consider the following. Take a football player -- a lineman who uses his hands and arms to keep the opposing player away from him. That's an athletic movement that requires a hard upper body push combined with a hard leg drive. Take the guy who does that to a 260 or 280 pound opposing lineman 100 times or more in a game...and train the guy on nothing thing but leg presses and seated, back supported overhead presses...and see how long your player lasts before his back buckles on a play from scrimmage.

In *Nautilus Bulletin No. One*, Arthur Jones made precisely this point in connection with football players and shot putters who train with leg presses and incline presses, and omit standing presses. In such a situation, Jones noted, you are creating a situation where the lower back is the weak link...and the athlete could literally break his lower back if he exerts a maximum push with the legs and shoulders in competition.

Standing presses, properly performed, are a completely safe exercise...in fact, they are a VITAL exercise to build the type of strength necessary to AVOID lower back injuries... If you follow the ill-considered advice of the Exercise Cops and OSHA Inspectors, you are going to injure your lower back, and the injury could very well be serious. Forget about the "seated, back supported" bull crap. Stick to the basic overhead press. Build FUNCTIONAL muscle from head to toe...train the way men trained BEFORE the Era of the Exercise Professors and Armchair Experts...back in the days when men still knew how to train!

CHAPTER 67

HOW TO DO IT ADVICE--A NOTE FROM A READER

If anyone is having trouble with the proper form for the standing press, read this e-mail I received from Jim Johann, a *Milo* and *Dinosaur Files* reader:

Great post on the standing press! As an adjunct to it, let folks know that in *Milo* Vol. 4, No. 3, there is an excellent article by Bill Starr on how to do the overhead press. This article started my overhead pressing, then the Steiner article in *Dinosaur Files* on the clean and press got me to combine the power clean the overhead press into one efficient, result producing movement...and on the heavier reps I do the push press...

Starr's article is probably the best thing ever written on the overhead press; check it out by going to the Iron Mind web site and placing an order for this particular back issue. By the way, Starr makes the excellent point that back in his competitive days, you never heard about rotator cuff problems...that was when everyone did overhead lifting and bench pressing

was not nearly as popular as it is now. With overhead pressing in disrepute, and everyone doing benches, rotator cuff problems are as common as dirt. Wonder what the Exercise Cops say about THAT?

CHAPTER 68

REAL LIFE DINO STYLE TRAINING

I received several e-mails recently from readers who outlined their most recent workouts. I thought you guys might appreciate seeing some real world examples of dinosaur training sessions.

One reader wrote:

I'm sore as hell today. Did squats and deadlifts, weighted dips, dumbbell one arm standing presses (from your video), standing curls with the thick bar, standing barbell rows and the wheelbarrow push to finish me off. (I increased the thickness of the wheelbarrow handles by slicing on and attaching two pieces of 2 1/2" thick pipe. I then loaded the sucker with bricks.)...I almost had to have someone write this e-mail for me....

The second reader described a somewhat similar session. He wrote:

Today's workout went great...Squat 350 x 3...Hammer Curls with thick handled dumbbells 55 x 5...shoulder keg 165 pound keg x 10 reps, alternating shoulders--this one really made me work, puffing and panting like a steam engine, scrapes and bruises all over my shoulders...Finished up with situps and neck work....

CHAPTER 69

ANOTHER NO NONSENSE TRAINING SESSION

Yuri Dubowik e-mailed me to report on his most recent training session. It's a good example of a dinosaur style training program, so I thought I'd share the e-mail with you:

Had a humdinger of a workout yesterday, and am really feeling the after-effects today! Started with the power clean and push press...then did front squats...followed by a stiff legged deadlifts...then dumbbell inclines...and finished off with the farmer's walk: two round trips up and down the alley with a pair of 145 pounders...

By the time I got to the farmer's walk I was pretty much cooked, but with Lauren's encouragement I managed to stagger my way to the finish line. Today I am sore throughout every major body part, including traps and lats (the stiff legged deads always fry my lats the next day!)...biceps (must be from

the farmer's walk, because I did no direct biceps work)...forearms, glutes and thighs (front squats)...and the shoulders (push presses and dumbbell inclines)...

The farmer's walk was a PR, as were the stiff legged deads, and the other three exercises were very close to max's as well.

Saturday will include the dumbbell presses (both two arm and one arm)...the one arm push press...and some sandbag or log work as well...

CHAPTER 70

AN E-MAIL FROM YURI: "HELP, THE EXERCISE POLICE ARE AFTER ME!"

A Canadian dinosaur, Yuri Dubowik, wrote the following in response to the past couple of posts on the BBS:

I couldn't agree more with your last few posts. As a matter of fact, about 80% of the movements you had listed in that one post make up my current routine, and about two or three of the others I've done at one time or another. Please, oh please, don't tell the Exercise Gestapo where I live!

So Olympic lifting doesn't build muscle, huh? (A favorite theory of the Exercise Cops.) Okay, go tell it to Tommy Kono, Doug Hepburn, John Davis, Clyde Emrick, Norbert Schemansky and countless other Olympic greats...

I'll get back to you later, but right now I've got to go to the garage for my Saturday afternoon workout...which, by the way, will consist of power snatches ("Oh, my God, someone stop; the crazy bastard!!!)...power pulls (my funeral, I guess)...squats (why don't I just jump into traffic?)...dumbbell presses (SNAP! There goes my back!)...and some side bends, situps and grip work to finish things off.

I hope I'm not in the hospital this afternoon...

CHAPTER 71

PEARY RADER'S TRAINING PHILOSOPHY

The next issue of *The Dinosaur Files* features an outstanding article by Peary Rader, outlining a tried and true, sure-fire training course for gaining muscular bodyweight, size and strength. I was proofing the current draft of *The Files* last night, and found myself chuckling and nodding my head time and time again. Make no mistake about it: Peary Rader was a dinosaur.

Nowadays, many writers who claim to follow "in the tradition of Peary Rader" really do no such thing. Rather than honor his memory they cast it into the dirt. This is because their basic world view is far, far different from Peary's world view. Peary Rader believed that with proper training, ANYONE could make good gains in strength and muscular development. The modern guys really don't believe that good gains are possible--unless, of course, you are "an easy-gainer" or you take steroids by the bushel.

Peary believed in good old fashioned hard work on basic exercises. The modern writers only pay lip service to these standards. They prefer to talk about doing your reps in 3/3, 4/4 or 10/6 speed...about the merits of various special machines...and about how you shouldn't do squats unless you have exactly the right body structure, and even then, only in slow motion style once every 21 days or so.

In the article I am reprinting, Peary stated: "Don't let any crackpot critics worry you with their faulty arguments." That was good advice in 1953, when Peary penned his article, and it is GREAT advice nowadays.

Peary also wrote:

Remember, you are the master of your body. You can mold it as you wish according to the INTELLIGENT EFFORT and control you are willing to exercise in the operation. There is no such thing as a man or a woman who cannot make progress...

That kind of thinking flies in the face of one of the most cherished MYTHS of the modern weight lifting authorities; the FICTION that says that only a man with one in a million "genetics" can gain strength and muscular size from a weight training program, and all the rest of us are doomed to middle-of-the-road mediocrity. Ask yourself which world view YOU prefer: Peary Rader's belief that "you are the master of your body" or the modern expert's opinion that "you must learn to be satisfied with relatively modest accomplishments."

Peary had a simple formula for what he referred to as "hard cases", i.e., men who found it difficult to gain strength, muscle and size. He wrote: "The proper treatment for a lot of you fellows who consider yourselves problems is an adequate diet and a specialized and abbreviated exercise program."

Peary spoke from experience in this regard. A classic "hardgainer," he trained for TEN YEARS and never gained an ounce. He stood just under 6' tall and weighed something like 120 pounds as an adult...and this was AFTER ten years of training. Then he discovered the special diet and exercise program outlined in his article...and in about two years he gained close to 100 pounds of muscular bodyweight and increased his overall strength by well over 500%.

Peary believed in the squat. For fifty years he sang its praises in issue after issue of *Iron Man*. According to Peary, the squat "is generally recognized by most bodybuilders and

lifters as the most valuable single exercise known." He also noted, "[i]t is an exercise that is convenient to use and it is difficult to do it wrong."

Wow! That's rank heresay for most modern guys. Why? Because too many arm chair experts have taught us that the squat is dangerous...old fashioned...no more effective than leg presses...a difficult exercise to perform correctly...an exercise where you need special coaching and detailed instruction in order to perform it without the risk of crippling injury...

Peary knew bunk when he saw it. He would see right through the bunk of the modern day experts who warn about the "dangers" of squatting or who offer soft and gentle alternatives to the squat. Peary would tell you, in reference to such people, "don't let any crackpot critics worry you with their faulty arguments." And he might say a good deal more...because if there was one thing that distressed Peary, it was seeing men lose all hope of strength and muscular development because they had been misled, misguided and misinformed.

Some you may say, why do you keep hammering on about arm chair experts and "world famous weight training authorities" with arms the size of piano wire and lifting totals so low that if you gave them a penny a pound they couldn't buy a cup of coffee?

The answer is simple. I do it out of respect for Peary Rader. Peary devoted his entire life to teaching people how to gain strength and muscular size quickly, efficiently and with only the most basic of equipment. The modern guys and their pseudo-intellectual training methods are rapidly destroying Peary's legacy. I don't like to see that happen...and I won't let it. Peary Rader made the world a better place for having lived in it...and the dinosaurs are going to help to keep his tradition alive.

CHAPTER 72

A ONE EXERCISE WORKOUT AND OTHER ABBREVIATED PROGRAMS

Many of my most productive training sessions consist of a single exercise. I pick a basic all around exercise that is going to work for me from head to toe and start with a light weight for a one rep warmup...add weight and do a second single...add more weight and do a third single...add weight and do a fourth single...and that finishes the warmups. Then I do my working sets: usually 10 singles, sometimes 20, with 80% to 95% of my one rep max (lighter percentages on pressing moves and lighter percentages on moves I will do for 20 singles).

For example, I might do the following in bottom positions full squats (i.e., a full squat performed in the power rack, beginning with the bar set on pins to position it so that I have to wedge myself under the bar, butt on the floor, and then stand up with the weight):

135 x 1

225 x 1
315 x 1
350 x 1
375 x 10 singles

Another training technique I often use is called "power super-sets." These consist of back to back heavy singles in two basic exercises. For example, I might combine the same squat workout detailed above with stiff legged deadlifts, using the same weight (or nearly the same weight) in the deadlifts that I have use in the squats:

squat 135 x 1...followed by stiff legged dl...135 x 1
squat 225 x 1...followed by stiff legged dl...225 x 1
squat 315 x 1...followed by stiff legged dl...315 x 1
squat 375 x 1...followed by stiff legged dl...405 x 1

repeat the "working weight" superset ten times, resting about 2 to 4 minutes between supersets...

Other good combinations for power super-sets are:

squats and dumbbell deadlifts
squats and trap bar deadlifts
squats and power pulls
squats and power cleans
squats and power clean and press (or push press)
squats and dumbbell clean and press (or push press)
stiff legged deadlifts and dumbbell clean and press
stiff legged deadlift and push press from the racks
power pull and push press from the rack
squats and one dumbbell clean and press (or push press)
stiff legged deadlift and one dumbbell clean and press (or push press)
stiff legged deadlift and one hand swing
stiff legged deadlift and power snatch
squat and one hand swing

You can add variety by doing three exercises for FIVE heavy singles as a "power tri-set." For example:

squat...stiff legged deadlift...press or push press from racks
squat...dumbbell clean and press...stiff legged deadlift
squat...power pull...one hand swing
power clean and press...stiff legged deadlift...bench press
squat...bench press...power pull or barbell bent over row
squat...bench press...stiff legged deadlift

squat...bench press...sandbag clean and press
barbell clean and press...dumbbell clean and press...sandbag clean and press

The beauty of these programs is that you are able to focus on a single lift or a single combination of exercises. As result, you will find it easy to concentrate on each rep you do. You will literally get deeper into the workout than you have every gone in your life.

When you perform one of these schedules, you find yourself working to failure, but in a different way from repping until you cannot move the bar. Suppose I do back-to-back singles in the squat and stiff legged deadlift or the squat and the clean and press. The first couple of "super sets" will feel fairly light...then they start to get heavier...and around the sixth or seventh combination, I have to work really hard to make both lifts. I may even miss a lift here and there and have to repeat it. Finally, I hit the tenth combination set...and I make both lifts...and then I am g-o-n-e...there is no way I could do another of those back-to-back efforts.

If you are looking for something different, demanding, and productive, give these ideas a try!

CHAPTER 73

THE TEN TOP MISTAKES

In no particular order, here are the top ten mistakes that weight trainers tend to make:

1. Not doing squats.
2. Relying on food supplements rather than hard work.
3. Taking any sort of food supplements other than a basic multi-vitamin/mineral tablet.
4. Slow motion training or any sort of time controlled repetitions.
5. Using exercise machines instead of basic barbell and dumbbell exercises.
6. Neglecting the lower back.
7. Training for cuts rather than strength.
8. Listening to the Exercise Police.
9. Reading books and articles by self-styled weight training authorities who either do not lift or who lift weights lighter than those than an anemic octogenarian could handle.
10. Using drugs.

CHAPTER 74

MORE ON ABBREVIATED TRAINING...A REPORT FROM A FAR FLUNG CORRESPONDENT...

Another reader e-mailed re: the benefits of dinosaur style abbreviated training; you will note that he is making BIG GAINS on the most basic of workouts...and by the way, his only food supplement is good, old fashioned MILK! Here's the report:

My workout was great yesterday:

Dumbbell Bench Press (flat bench)
Deadlifts
Power Cleans

I'm sore as hell today. I'm going to start next week doing Bench Press, Squats and Power Cleans on Monday...Farmer's Walk on Wednesday...and Bench Press, Deadlifts and Push Press on Friday.

I've got a message for all the trainers who are obsessed with big arms. Since I started into dino training about six months ago, I've probably directly trained my biceps about five times. I only do close grip benches for direct triceps work about once a week or less.

The moral of the story is that I've put on about 10 pounds of solid bodyweight and my arms have increased by over 1/2 inch...Something to think about...

CHAPTER 75

CREATINE AND CRAMPING...

Did anyone watch the Tennessee-Florida football game last night? After one of the Tennessee players was reported to be out with a cramp, the commentators noted that Tennessee had had a number of players experience problems with cramping in their previous games...and the problem was so bad that the head coach gave orders taking a number of top players off of creatine...Of course, imagine what happens if you get heart cramps...while training in a hot gym...or playing football on a hot field...or while wrestling or practicing martial arts in a hot wrestling room or dojo...

CHAPTER 76

AN EXCELLENT BIRTHDAY PRESENT

Today's my birthday; 41 years old...old enough to know better, but still young enough to keep battling against windmills.

A subscriber to *The Dinosaur Files*, Gunnar Dahlin, e-mailed me with birthday wishes. He had a great idea; here it is:

I have a birthday challenge for you. Find you max in the partial deadlift. Get yourself a nice new set of 20 kg plates and paint them bright red. This time next year they should be on the bar in addition to your present load in the same movement. That is an ongoing gift to yourself. Whenever you go train, you will find those plates grinning at you, forcing you to train even harder...

CHAPTER 77

PAY NO ATTENTION TO...

1. ...anyone who says that squats are dangerous, old fashioned or unnecessary.
2. ...anyone who claims to be a world famous weight training expert but never lets the world see what he looks like, has never competed and never tells you what he can lift.
3. ...anyone who blames "genetics" or "structural limitations" for his own failure to gain or for anyone else's failure to gain.
4. ...anyone who advocates or promotes drug use...or who uses drugs...
5. ...anyone who promotes, sells or endorses the goofy, high tech food supplements on the market nowadays.
6. ...anyone who tells you to train slow motion style.
7. ...anyone who tells you that exercise machines are better than barbells and dumbbells.
8. ...anyone who claims to be an expert but has never achieved anything but the most modest of results from his "many years" of training.

9. ...anyone who goes on and on about the alleged "dangers" of the basic, result producing exercises, such as squats, bent over rowing, standing presses, deadlifts, stiff legged deadlifts, etc.
10. ...anyone who tells you to train for "cuts" or "shape" instead of strength and power.
11. ...anyone who talks the talk but has never walked the walk.
12. ...anyone who worries more about over-training than about gaining.
13. ...anyone who dismisses or pays little attention to the all-important mental aspects of training.
14. ...anyone who claims that HIS way is the ONLY way.
15. ...anyone who tells you that weight training only works for the "genetically gifted"...or who otherwise tries to convince you to settle for middle-of-the-road, muscleless mediocrity.

CHAPTER 78

ANOTHER TOP TEN LIST...

Sam and Spencer recently polled a number of world famous weight training authorities, and asked them to answer the following question: "IF YOUR LIFE DEPENDED ON IT, COULD YOU OUTLIFT RICHARD SIMMONS IN EITHER POWERLIFTING OR YOUR CHOICE OF ANY OLD TIME BARBELL OR DUMBBELL LIFT?" Here are the ten most common responses:

1. Of course not. Richard Simmons is God!
2. This is not a fair question. Richard Simmons is two weight classes heavier than I am.
3. I would never attempt to lift more weight than another person; it might hurt his feelings and scar him for life.
4. I could probably beat him in the bench press, but I'm not sure about the squat because I haven't done any for about the last ten or fifteen years.
5. Could we do the contest in slow motion style?

6. Why can't we compare "cuts" or "six-packs" instead of lifting those nasty barbells and dumbbells?
7. This is not a fair! Everyone knows that men as big and strong as Richard Simmons are genetic freaks.
8. I'm sure I could do it if I took extra creatine!
9. What is powerlifting?
10. What are barbells and dumbbells?

CHAPTER 79

FEEDBACK FROM A READER...

I received the following e-mail from a subscriber to *The Dinosaur Files*, and I thought you would enjoy it:

"I broke my PR in the squat last night, and have you to thank...The two months of barrel work have strengthened my back and enabled me to handle 250 x 12 and 250 x 10. Modest numbers, no doubt, but now that I've taken care of my weak link, I'm going for at least 320 x 12 in two months. (I started with 230 a week and a half ago). I'm now doing squats almost exclusively (it didn't do too badly for William Boone, John McCallum or Paul Anderson). I am following the tradition of "If he can do it, so can I!"

Thank you for bringing real, common sense "basement beast" training to people like myself who HATE chrome and ferns, lifting gloves, lycra, supplements, and what passes for training in the modern commercial gyms....

CHAPTER 80

SOME POUNDAGE GOALS...

How much should I be pressing? What should I be benching? I squat such and so...is that good? What's a good one hand snatch? What should a guy my size be deadlifting?

Good questions. Difficult to answer for guys who are getting started in today's totally over the edge world of MUSCLE BUILDING DECEPTION. If you look in the glossies, everyone seems to be handling enormous weights in all of their exercises...and lifts like a 300 or 350 bench press seem to dwindle into nothingness. Of course, those weights you see in the posed photos by the pretty boys may not be real...and the poundages they claim to handle

may be nothing more than the overly vivid imaginations of a particularly inventive ghost writer.

I recall an article from a 1950's magazine--a good article, by a fine writer--that attributed a 600 pound one hand deadlift to a particular up and coming powerhouse who was being groomed to become the next Mr. Everything. He was a big, strong man, but the 600 one hand deadlift seemed a bit high. In a different magazine, a few years later, there was a tiny report of an odd lift contest at, I believe, Muscle Beach. The same guy credited with the 600 pound one hand deadlift pulled only 550 with both hands. There's a moral there.

I also recall reading an article about a particular bodybuilding star who supposedly did sets of five or six reps in the seated press with 90 pound dumbbells. Ten or fifteen years later, another article about the same man credited him with 150 pound bells for sets of five or six reps in seated dumbbell press.

So I tend to view poundage claims the way I view measurement claims...I usually don't believe them. Period.

That still leaves us with the question of "what is a GOOD weight on a particular exercise?"

One way to answer the question is to look at what was considered to be meritorious back in the old days, long before steroids hit the scene. For a drug free lifter in the 90's, the only way to maintain your sanity is to compare yourself to poundage goals established long before dianabol.

One of the best sources of info on poundages in the different lifts is Bob Hoffman's 1939 classic, WEIGHT LIFTING. In this book, Bob offers a table of weight lifting awards, working on a bronze, silver, and gold system for "good", "very good" and "excellent." The awards are divided by weight class, so it's easy to see where you stand on any lift at any bodyweight.

Here are some of the more popular lifts (I can't list them all as there are a total of 50). Chew on these for today. I'll list some more later in the week. And by the way...these lifts were viewed as well within the reach of any man who decided to go hard and heavy and train seriously...in other words, they were NOT marks that only "genetic superstars" could hope to achieve...they were lifts that could be reached while training in home gyms, with nothing more than a barbell, a set of squat stands and a set of adjustable dumbbells...and they were lifts that could be achieved without drugs and without food supplements--neither of which were around back then...

Deadlift

132 pound class 400/355/311 148 pound class 430/385/335

165 pound class 460/415/370 181 pound class 490/445/400
Heavyweight class 520/475/430

One arm deadlift

132 pound class 295/263/230 148 pound class 320/285/250
165 pound class 345/310/270 181 pound class 365/330/295
Heavyweight class 385/350/315

Press on box (a bench press beginning with the bar on the chest...as in the "bottom position bench press" I write about so often)

132 pound class 190/170/150 148 pound class 205/185/165
165 pound class 220/200/180 181 pound class 235/215/200
Heavyweight class 245/225/210

(Note: Those seem low, don't they? Remember, though, not many guys specialized on the bench press back then...and also remember, this was a shoulder width bench starting with the bar on the chest, with no arching or foot movement or hip lifting...a very strict movement. But by the early 50's, John Davis was handling 420 or more pounds in this style of bench press...)

Two hands Curl

132 pound class 115/103/91 148 pound class 125/112/99
165 pound class 135/120/105 181 pound class 145/130/115
Heavyweight class 155/140/125

One Hand Military Press (with dumbbell)

132 pound class 85/77/69 148 pound class 90/81/72
165 pound class 95/85/75 181 pound class 100/90/80
Heavyweight class 105/95/85

Two hands Military Press with barbell

132 pound class 165/145/125 148 pound class 175/155/135
165 pound class 190/170/150 181 pound class 205/180/155
Heavyweight class 215/195/175

CHAPTER 81

DOES IT WORK?

Just ask the guy who e-mailed the following update:

Ever since Peary Rader's article in the July issue of *The Dinosaur Files*, I have been doing 20 rep squats...I have gained over 20 lbs. and have gained huge amounts in every lift I can think of. Most of the work was done on chins, dips and leg raises (all weighted)...with some standing presses and bent over rows. The best thing is, not one bit of it is fat. My legs have grown at least 3-4 inches...My shoulders have gotten so wide I can hardly wear any of my shirts!

CHAPTER 82

TROPHY WARS

I heard there's a rumor floating around that powerlifting organizations are going to get away from those wonderful plaster-of-paris grotesqueries that they used for trophies when I was competing...and go back to simple columnar trophies made out of aluminum with a light marble base. To my mind it would be a pity. Those massive 20 and 30 pound trophies were as much a part of the game as were squat stands, bench shirts and those beautiful big old 100 pound plates.

The big trophies were so cumbersome and heavy that you had to be a powerlifter in order to carry them home! And if you won a couple of divisions or a best lifter award--well, you needed a wheel-barrow to cart the things off.

During my competition years I accumulated something like 40 or 50 of the little monsters. At first I tried to keep them at work, but eventually ran out of space and brought them all home. We really didn't have room for them anywhere, so I sort of shoved them into different out of the way places where they wouldn't clash with the decor or interfere with anything. You know--the center of the living room table, the desk in the study, the book shelves, the tv table, the dining room table, the kitchen table, the counter-tops in the kitchen, the living room tables, the dinner table, chairs, the mantle, the sofa, the nightstand...

My wife acidly suggested that they go up in the attic, down in the basement, out in the backyard or into the trash. I think she was kidding, but just to be safe, I super-glued my favorites into place so she couldn't throw them away.

One day I came home, and she had done the unthinkable.

Do you remember the Kathleen Turner-Michael Douglas movie: *The War of the Roses*? What Kathy did to Michael in that movie was nothing compared to what Ginnie did to Brooks in real life.

Picture the following. The five time national bench press champ comes home one night, after a long, hard day at work. The second he walks into the house he somehow KNOWS that something is wrong.

What is it?

Being a trained lawyer and all, and a former law review editor, it takes only minutes of concentrated thinking to solve the mystery.

The trophies are buried under a sea of underwear!

Darling wife has washed all of her hand-knits and delicates...the stuff you don't dare put in the dryer...and they are draped across each and every one of the lifter's "I worked a lifetime to win this" trophies.

Each and every trophy...

He walks over to his first national bench press championship trophy...a sentimental favorite.

"That's a national championship trophy!" he protests.

"But it's my favorite pair of panties!" she answers.

CHAPTER 83

ANOTHER QUESTION FOR THE SELF-STYLED EXPERTS

Sam and Spencer continued to poll 100 self-appointed "world famous weight training authorities," asking them the following question: "WHAT IS YOUR BEST LIFT OR FEAT OF STRENGTH?" Here are the ten most common responses from the "experts."

1. "I once made it through an entire class of POWER AEROBICS with two pound POWER BELLS!"
2. "As a world famous weight training authority, I am an expert at all forms of visualization and have visualized myself performing no fewer than SIX repetitions at approved 10/6 speed in the MED-EX leg extension machine with THREE plates! THAT is a feat of strength!"

3. "Your question is confusing. Could you please define strength?"
4. "This is an outrage! You can't expect me to be judged by what I lift instead of how many books and articles I have written!"
5. "With all the degrees I have, I really don't feel that I need to answer this question."
6. "As a weight training expert, I am insulted by your question. Everyone knows that training for STRENGTH is OLD-FASHIONED."
7. "I arm wrestled Richard Simmons and almost won!"
8. "I squatted 1200 pounds for 27 reps once. Unfortunately, there were no witnesses. I got it on videotape, but the tape got erased by accident last week. I don't squat anymore because of an injury, so I can't show you how I did it...but believe me, it was a really good lift!"
9. "My companion asked me to open a jar of peanut butter and I was able to do it after only three or four tries..."
10. "My current best lift is the cable cross-over performed in ULTRA-SLOW fashion, for six reps, with five pounds resistance. I have calculated the equivalencies, and this performance corresponds to a single repetition in the bench press with 8572.3 pounds, making me both the foremost weight training authority in the world and the strongest man who ever lived."

CHAPTER 84

MORE POUNDAGE GOALS

Continuing the list of gold, silver and bronze medal poundage goals from Bob Hoffman's *Weight Lifting*, we have the following:

HALF KNEE BEND ("A flat footed squat where the lifter lowers himself 10").

132 pound class...450/400/350; 148 pound class...490/440/390; 165 pound class...530/480/430; 181 pound class...565/515/465; heavyweight...600/540/430

DEEP KNEE BEND (A full squat...performed flat footed).

132 pound class...300/275/250; 148 pound class...325/300/275; 165 pound class...350/325/300; 181 pound class...375/350/325; heavyweight...400/375/350

ONE HAND SNATCH (WITH BARBELL)

132 pound class...130/118/105; 148 pound class...140/128/115; 165 pound class...150/137/125; 181 pound class...155/145/130; heavyweight...165/150/135

CHAPTER 85

A TWENTY MINUTE WORKOUT...

A reader e-mailed me with the details of his most recent training session...a twenty minute dinosaur session that put him flat on the floor:

I just finished an excellent workout! It took less than 20 minutes, but it was brutal...

Started with the bottom position squats you describe in *Dinosaur Training*. On each rep I lowered the bar until it touched the pins...paused...then drove the bar back up. My quads were feeling very weird afterwards...

Then stiff legged deadlifts and rows...followed by one arm standing presses...right arm first...then left arm...

Guys, never pretend that you don't have enough time to train. ANYONE can hit the weights for 20 minutes two or three times a week...and if you do it right, a 20 minute workout will bust your balls.

CHAPTER 86

THE ORIGIN OF GENTLE BLASTING...

The following is reprinted from an article in the September, 1997 *Dinosaur Files*:

The January, 1953 issue of *Strength & Health* has an exercise schedule that looks suspiciously modern. It goes like this:

1. DB incline curl
2. Incline press
3. Prone rowing (i.e., BB or DB rowing lying face-down on a bench)
4. Supine press (i.e., bench press)
5. Double knee extension (i.e., leg extensions on a machine)
6. Pullover
7. Alternate leg raise
8. 1/4 situp (i.e., crunches)

Doesn't that schedule sound pretty close to what the modern guys are doing? No squats. No deadlifts. No standing presses. No situps. No barbell bentover rowing. No cleans, snatches or pulls. Virtually no heavy exercises.

No exercises where you might strain your poor little lower back. Only SAFE exercises; prone rowing instead of bentover barbell rowing...incline presses instead of those dangerous old standing presses...leg extensions instead of squats...crunches instead of situps...Exactly the way the EXERCISE POLICE tell you to do it!

The modern crowd might add some triceps isolation work, some pec deck work or cable cross-overs...some seated concentration curls or machine curls...dumbbell lateral raises or machine laterals...pulldowns...and leg curls. A few ambitious souls might add back extensions. A pullover torso machine might substitute for barbell pullovers. But all in all, the modern program would end up looking pretty much like the program published in the 1953 magazine.

And THAT, my friends is a very interesting point. The 1953 program appears in an article entitled "Weights in the U.S.A.F. Physical Reconditioning Program."

The article is about the Air force's use of rehabilitative weight training for injured airmen.

The eight exercise training program that looks so much like 90's style gentle-blasting is a routine for "appendectomies, hernia cases, low back strain and other cases of abdominal injury."

So there you have it: conclusive proof that 90's style weight training originated as rehabilitation exercise for guys who just had low back or abdominal surgery!

The arm chair experts who are telling you to replace "old fashioned" and "dangerous" movements like the barbell bentover row or the standing press with "safe and modern" alternatives like overhead pulldowns, the prone row or back supported, seated presses or incline presses are really telling you to exercise like a hernia case.

Think about it...

CHAPTER 87

WEENIE EXERCISES...

Some of you may think I am too hard on armchair theoreticians, non-lifting know-it-alls and other self appointed "weight training authorities." I disagree. I don't believe one can say enough bad things about these clowns!

Check out the following post on "Weenie Exercises and Dehabilitation" and read how BAD ADVICE from the armchair crowd and the Exercise Cops caused a potentially serious condition for a 19 year old lifter.

CHAPTER 88

WEENIE EXERCISES AND DEHABILITATION...

A reader sent me an e-mail with the foregoing title; here it is--but don't let the dreaded Exercise Police catch you reading it:

I have done crunches for years, and got a very strong set of abdominal muscles for my efforts. Recently, I noticed pain in the front of my hip joints. It was especially pronounced after squats or playing a soccer/dodgeball/bowling hybrid sport that my friends and I invented.

I thought, "What the hell is happening--how can I be having hip pain at 19?"

Then I read a message on your BBS about the situp being superior to the crunch, so after my last set of squats, I did 15 situps on the incline board. Three days later I have almost no hip pain...I am convinced that what I was experiencing was the result of an imbalance of strength in the abs and hip flexors.

I have to thank you, because if it had not been for that post, I could have crippled myself...and because everyone says "you should do crunches--you might hurt yourself doing situps!" I WOULD NEVER HAVE KNOWN WHAT WAS WRONG...

CHAPTER 89

THE VICTOR

by C.W. Longenecker

If you think you are beaten, you are.

If you think you dare not, you don't.

If you'd like to win, but think you can't, it's almost a cinch you won't.

If you think you'll lose, you've lost.

For out in the world we find

Success begins with a fellow's will.

It's all in the state of mind.

If you think you're outclassed, you are.

You've got to think high to rise.

You've got to be sure of yourself before you can ever win the prize.

Life's battles don't always go to the stronger or faster man.

But sooner or later, the man who wins is the man who THINKS HE CAN!

CHAPTER 90

DINOSAUR STYLE LATERAL RAISES

Oscar Hills, a dinosaur from New England, e-mailed the following report. You guys know that I don't have a very high opinion of lateral raises or similar isolation movements...but I think you'll agree that Oscar's version of the lateral raise is a more than acceptable form of dino training.

Interesting note on the lateral raise. I woke up one morning in August and both medial delts were sore as all get out. It felt as though I'd been doing lateral raises, only MUCH worse.

I quickly checked--no pink powerbells around and I hadn't sprouted a cottontail.

Then it hit me. The day before, I had finished my usual workout, loaded up my 2" dumbbells with 80 lbs. each, and took them to the local high school track. Hadn't done this before...planned to make a quarter of a mile, no matter what.

About three quarters of the way around the track, I was staggering, trying to pick up the pace, and stopping occasionally and dropping the bells after going only about ten feet or so...and stumbling around in a circle for a minute before picking the things back up...

A couple of high school girl runners came blasting past me, and I heard one of them say, "he should back off that weight." That's how I knew I was doing the right thing!

Anyway, I finished eventually, and it was the next morning that I noticed the medial delts (to say nothing of the forearms, which were in exquisite pain for a week).

I realized I had done essentially a quarter mile isometric lateral raise just keeping the dumbbells off my legs. I thought to myself, "that's the kind of lateral raise that Brooks would appreciate!"

CHAPTER 91

BATTLE PLANS

SPECIAL BULLETIN TO ALL DINOSAURS:

1. The weekend is here.
2. Weekends are for training.
3. All dinosaurs reading this have orders to grab the bar and kill as much iron as possible this weekend.
4. This is a global campaign waged by a multi-national strike force of barbell bending, dumbbell tossing, sandbag heaving, keg throwing, rock carrying, log hauling, heavy poundage, iron slinging, "never say never" dinosaur commandos.
5. You are to join your fellow dinosaurs in having the best, hardest, most demanding workout of your life.
6. Doom on dweebsters...doom on slow mo bunny rabbits...doom on pumpers...doom on shapers...doom on pretty boys...doom on academic know-it-alls and armchair theorizers...and above all, doom on the Exercise Police.
TAKE NO PRISONERS!

CHAPTER 92

REAL LIFE TRAINING--DINOSAUR STYLE...

One of our readers e-mailed with a recent training session. Here it is for anyone who is curious about dinosaur training schedules:

Awesome workout last night. Worked up to 80's in the one hand clean and press...first time for these, next time I'll see how high I can go...DL from the knees, worked up to 525 x 3...felt easy, will do 550 next time...no straps--used a hook grip--ouch! Couldn't do keg clean and press tonight...it was raining too hard. So, we took the 150 pound sandbag and gave it our all on the clean and press...15 reps later, we were soaked with sweat and totally wiped. Great way to end a workout.

Sore today, but not totally destroyed...another result producing dino workout...

CHAPTER 93

TRAINING THE FRONT OF THE NECK...A READER'S COMMENTS

A reader wrote in with some thoughts on training the front of the neck. Here's what he said:

While I hate to admit that anything good could come of machines, a pulley and cable set-up is ideal for training the front of the neck. The harness can be connected to the high cable. I'm 6'2", so the high pulley on most pulley machines is at a good height for me. Shorter athletes may need to improvise or stand on a box. I think working side to side is also very important and can be accomplished in much the same way as training the front of the neck. Note, that I don't mean rotational movement side to side, rather, the movement should take the neck from vertical to a position touching the ear to the shoulder (or as close as possible).

Also great for the front of the neck is weighted sit-ups with the plates balanced on the forehead. I find that after a session of neck work with a harness, 90 pound weighted sit-ups finish things nicely.

CHAPTER 94

HOW TO SPOT A DINOSAUR...

1. He's the guy who TRAINS instead of talking about it.
2. He does squats. HEAVY SQUATS!
3. He considers a large, rare steak to be infinitely preferable to any food supplement under the sun.
4. He has the courage and common sense to do it on his own...without steroids...without andro...and without creatine.
5. He trains for functional strength and power...not for "abs and a tan."
6. He has a sense of history, and respects and admires the past Greats of the Iron Game.
7. He doesn't train in front of a mirror.
8. He uses very heavy weights in his exercises...and he trains with barbells and dumbbells, not with chrome plated bunny machines.

9. He has the old fashioned virtues that they don't like to talk about any more: dedication, determination, courage, tenacity, guts and perseverance.
10. He doesn't make excuses.

CHAPTER 95

THE CANNONBALL

I was working at home one Spring day two years ago, writing an article at the kitchen table, when Sam barked, Spencer growled and the neighborhood went nuts.

I looked out the window.

Sam and Spencer were jumping up and down like wildmen.

The mailman had driven his mail truck right off the road, across the strip of side grass, over the sidewalk, and almost into the big tree on the west side of the lot...and he damn near took down the chain link fence as well.

"What the heck?" I thought, as I went out to see what was going on.

The poor guy jumped out of the truck, went around to the passenger's side, opened the door and picked up a small parcel wrapped up in brown paper and covered in duct tape.

He held the thing in both hands, and literally staggered towards me...I mean, the guy simply could not walk with the thing.

It was either a VERY heavy bomb or else it had something to do with weightlifting.

The poor guy finally made it over to the fence. He tried to lift the parcel up to hand it to me. It didn't work.

Sam and Spencer were curious--they probably hoped it was something to eat--so I unlatched the gate and stepped out and took the package.

It really was heavy.

"What in the--gasp, wheeze--what is--pant, gasp--what IS that--a cannonball?" asked the mailman.

I looked at the return address.

Richard Sorin.

Suddenly I knew EXACTLY what it was.

"Yeah," I said. "It's a 50 pound cannonball."

"Well--don't order any more of them until I'm on vacation," he replied.

I took the package down to the basement and opened it up. Sure enough, there it was-- a BLOB ...one side of a York 100 pound dumbbell, cut off to use for pinch gripping.

Now then...for those of you who aspire to rival Sorin in the gripping department This damn thing is so big and thick that it's all I can do to get the tips of my fingers around its edges. To lift the thing--as described in *Milo* and in John Brookfield's book--you'd have to have GIGANTIC hands...and PRETTY DARN STRONG ONES, TOO...

The next time you see a York 100, take a closer look. Imagine the type of T-REX hand strength it would take to pinch grip one end of the thing. That should give you a new perspective on what it takes to close a no. 3 or match any of Sorin's other feats.

CHAPTER 96

IRON, IRON EVERYWHERE...

My basement gym is temporarily so crammed with iron there is hardly room to move!

Kim Wood loaned me a great collection of "strength implements" to use in the *Bags, Barrels and Beyond* videotape. The stuff is awesome.

A 65 pound anvil...yeah, I KNOW that sounds light, but just TRY lifting the thing by the horn with one hand!

An 80 pound cannonball. A perfectly round globe of solid iron. V-E-R-Y tricky to lift...

A 100 or 105 pound anvil...homemade...a solid chunk of iron with a stubby little horn at the end...totally unbalanced...a real challenge...

A 165 pound anvil...If you can clean and press this little baby, you are a MAN!

A lifting log with handles attached...just like they use in the strongman competitions on ESPN or in the IronMind tapes...

The famous Roark Challenge bell...more on this little baby later on...suffice it to say: the thing is a monster...a tool for SERIOUS lifters only...

Some other assorted goodies that you will see on the tape...

Trust me, guys: workouts have suddenly become very, very "interesting"...

Stay tuned for further details during the coming week...

CHAPTER 97

A FAVORITE QUOTE FROM KIM WOOD

One of Kim Wood's favorite quotes is the following: "THE STUDY OF ZEN IS NOT ZEN."

Let's paraphrase it to make it directly applicable to strength trainers: "THE STUDY OF STRENGTH TRAINING IS NOT STRENGTH TRAINING."

Far too many guys spend far too much time in the STUDY of strength training, and not nearly enough time in actual training. Remember, strength training is a participatory activity. You do not do it vicariously by watching others. You do not do it by reading about it. You do not do it by talking about it or arguing about it. You do not do it by surfing the net, visiting websites, or posting on discussion boards. You do it...by doing it.

There are FAR TOO MANY weight trainees who confuse the study of weight training with weight training. At bottom, weight training is a way to learn some very important, very personal things about yourself. You CANNOT learn these things in any way other than by TRAINING.

Don't be a student of zen. Be a master. TRAIN!

CHAPTER 98

ANOTHER TRAINING PROGRAM

Advanced dinosaurs might want to consider the following program...it's tough, rugged and demanding--exactly the sort of challenge a dinosaur enjoys:

Monday

1. Two db clean and press...5 x 5 (do a full clean and press on each rep)...or do six progressively heavier singles if you prefer.
2. One hand deadlift with barbell--straddle style or bar in front style...5 x 5 or 5 progressively heavier singles, whichever you prefer.

3. Standing barbell curl...4 x 5 or 4 x 6.
4. Parallel dips or db incline press...4 x 5 or 4 x 6.
5. Bent legged situps...2 x 25-30.

Wednesday

1. Snatch grip high pulls 5 x 3 (first rep from floor, second and third from the hang)(note--use lifting straps if necessary...otherwise, just hook and hold).
2. Push presses from the rack...5 x 3.
3. Barbell bentover rowing...4 x 6-8.
4. Pulldowns to chest or towel chins or triangle chins or regular chins or thick bar chins ... 4 x 6-8.
5. Neck work with headstrap...4 x 8-12.

Saturday

1. Parallel squats...5 x 6.
2. Stiff legged deadlifts...5 x 6.
3. Bottom position bench press with thick bar.in the power-rack!...5 progressively heavier singles.
4. Bench press lockouts in the power rack...with thick handled barbell...5 progressively heavier singles.
5. The farmer's walk...two times, as far as possible, with HEAVY DBs.
6. Leg raises...2 x 15-20 with iron boots.

GOOD LUCK AND GOOD TRAINING!!!

CHAPTER 99

ONLY A JOKE...

A dinosaur e-mailed the following message; it was only after I was thinking "Wow, what a great workout!" that I noticed the subject line on the e-mail..."THIS IS ONLY A JOKE...." Damn! It was such a good idea! Sam and Spencer would approve....

Here's what our mirthful megasaurus had to say:

Great workout this weekend. Started off by driving down to the local chrome and fern gym. Rustled up a couple of 110 pound muscle pumpers, and wrapped each of them in rope and did the farmer's walk up hill for about 1/2 mile...only dropped them four times, too...

I then did sandbag carries and throws with the pumpers inside a giant duffel bag (could hardly press them--they kept kicking too much)....

Now back to reality I did add 10 pounds to each of my 100 pound bells on my weekly farmer's walk uphill this past Saturday. Shoulders and forearms ache deep down....

CHAPTER 100

STRONGER THAN EVER AT 43...

One of our regular readers and correspondents sent in an update:

After my workout on Saturday I attempted a heavy single in the bench press and set a PR at 335 (no bench shirt!). Also did three sets of three reps in the standing DB press with 107. I may be 43, but I'm feeling younger every year! Keep up the good work with *The Files*.

It just goes to show you: dinosaurs don't get older, they get stronger!

CHAPTER 101

THE AMIABLE CURMUDGEON

One of our readers, Mike Rinaldi, sent in a report from the trenches. Mike's another guy who is setting personal records well into what most people would consider the "nothing more strenuous than golf" years:

Our amiable curmudgeon awakens on Saturday morning and arises from bed all stiff and bleary eyed...fires up a cup of coffee as he views e-mails from his assorted neanderthal

friends...the coffee registers...his canine companion beckons...so he throws on some rags, grabs a sledge hammer and walks about one half mile to the nearest construction site...

He loosens up a bit, and uncorks about 50 hard shots...then rounds up the dog and heads home...

Another swig of coffee, and then he starts squatting to whatever he feels like that day...then he ambles into the hallway, where three things are waiting. He clean and jerks the barbell...clean and presses the thick handled dumbbell...and one hand snatches the sandbag...then does some teeth lifting and works on bending a 60 penny nail...cooks some steak and eggs...eats...and goes back to sleep....

CHAPTER 102

A TRAINING UPDATE

I've been killing myself with heavy, awkward objects lately. It's all part of the fun of finishing my new video, *Bags, Barrels and Beyond*. I thought the little monster was ready to go, and then Kim Wood lent me a truckload of what he refers to as "strength implements." This stuff is great--and it MUST go into the video--so I've been practicing a bit with the more exotic stuff to get the hang of it in order to get it into the tape.

Training sessions are a combination of barbell work and heavy awkward objects. Yesterday, for example, I did bottom position full squats, the anvil clean and press (using Kim's 165 pound anvil), barrel lifting, leverage lifts with an 8' pole from a "telephone spoon" (another of Wood's toys), curls with the 165 pound anvil, and pinch grip work with two smaller anvils.

The previous session included log lifting, anvil lifting, lifting heavy barbell plates held together with a db rod, stiff legged deadlifts, the clean and press with the Roark Challenge DB, leverage work with Wood's 8' pole and barbell power pulls.

Ever been "sore"? I am sore. The serious kind of sore. Big sore. All over sore. This stuff hits you like an entire fleet of fully loaded Mack trucks.

The tape is scheduled for final shooting on November 1. If I'm lucky, I'll drop the anvil on my head and kill myself before then. If not--well, all I can say is, you guys are gonna LOVE this tape.

CHAPTER 103

THE BIG ANVIL...

The big anvil sits on the floor of the basement. It is a massive block of black iron. It weighs 165 unrelenting and unforgiving pounds. Kim Wood loaned me the little monster to use in my video, *Bags, Barrels and Beyond*. I'll shoot the video in a couple of days. In the meantime, I've been playing with the anvil. Imagine six 25 pound plates, a ten pounder and a five pounder welded together into a big block of metal. That's the anvil. Imagine trying to get a grip on the thick, chunky son-of-a-gun. Imagine trying to pull it to your chest...or trying to push the unbalanced mass overhead. In my first two sessions with the anvil I did five singles in the clean and press. In the third session (last night) I did ten singles...then I tied a 25 pound plate to the thing and did a clean and press with THAT. It's tough...REAL TOUGH. My back, shoulders and arms feel like I've been wrestling a couple of unusually large and sadistic grizzly bears. But it's a great muscle builder. After a single training session you can feel the muscles aching in areas where they never used to feel it before. It's good stuff...dinosaur stuff...and it goes on tape in just a couple of days. You guys will love it!

CHAPTER 104

THE CHAIN

The little red light was flashing furiously on the voice-mail box (we used to call them telephones, but people only communicate by voice-mail nowadays, so we call them voice-mail boxes).

I dialed in the codes and retrieved the message.

It was my long-suffering spouse.

"I got your chains. Be home on time."

GREAT!

She actually went over to the hardware store on her day off and picked up the 80 feet of heavy log chain I needed for the video shoot this coming Sunday! And I didn't even have to bribe her...although waking her up with breakfast in bed for the past three mornings may have helped...

I know what you guys are thinking.

"Why does he need 80' of heavy chain?"

Well...the guy who took my telephone order for the chain asked the same question. Here's the answer. Kim Wood lent me a lifting log he received as a gift from Dr. Ken Leistner. The log looks like a telephone pole (which is probably what it was in a prior existence)...and it has slots cut out and handles inserted in the center. You grab the handles and clean and press the thing. Just like in the World's Strongest Man comps on ESPN and in the IronMind videos. It's a great exercise--and loads of fun.

The problem is...how do you add weight if the log doesn't have bars inserted at each end to put plates on? Since the log is on loan, I didn't want to drill holes and insert iron bars...What to do? Heavy chain seemed like the logical solution. The chain is cut into 10' lengths...each weighing about 15 or 16 pounds...and you wrap one length around one end of the log and the other length around the other end of the log...and suddenly the log is 30 pounds heavier. To add more weight, add more chain. Take the chains off after the workout and the log is just like new.

I'll try it out tonight. Wish me luck!

CHAPTER 105

MY DOGS THINK I'M CRAZY...

The big chains worked even better than I had hoped. I started yesterday's training session by hauling the lifting log up the basement stairs and into the backyard (a workout in itself), and did a couple of reps in the clean and press with the log alone.

My golden retrievers, Sam and Spencer, were intrigued. What was dad doing with the big stick?

I could tell what they were thinking..."IF YOU THINK WE'RE GONNA PLAY FETCH WITH THAT THING, YOU'RE CRAZY!"

You married guys can relate. How does your wife feel when you carry logs, rocks, barrels or sandbags around the block and scare all of the neighbors? I think Sam and Spencer felt sort of the same way...

Then I started to add weight to the log. I lifted it up onto a sturdy chair--centering the log so the ends hung free--and wrapped ten feet of chain around each end. Used carabineers to hold the chain tight, lowered the log to the ground and gave it a try. It worked great--not as smooth as an Eleiko bar, but not too bad for a big old log.

Sam looked at Spencer and Spencer looked at Sam.

"He really is crazy," said Spencer.

"Woof!" said Sam.

Eventually I worked up to 205 or 210 pounds--the 120 pound lifting log plus 80 or 85 pounds of chain and carabineers. That's a tough load--the log is awkward as heck. Hard to balance. Requires a very unusual lifting groove. Definitely a good way to BLITZ your stabilizers throughout the mid and upper back--not to mention the entire shoulder girdle. Trust me, I'm sore as the devil today.

It goes on videotape on Sunday. You guys will LOVE it!

CHAPTER 106

"SORRY, MR. GORILLA..."

A friend asked if I was looking forward to doing the second video tape in the Dinosaur Videotape Training Library: BAGS, BARRELS AND BEYOND. The shoot is scheduled for 2:00 this afternoon.

"Ready?! Heck, I'm DYING to put a stake through the little monster's black heart! I've been planning, thinking, outlining, training, testing, brainstorming, inventing and experimenting for over three months now...and it's time to put the results on tape. It's starting to be a pain in the you know what. Sort of like a monkey on your back. Or to put the thing in dinosaur terms, sort of like carrying an 800 pound gorilla on your back."

I sent my friend an e-mail this morning: "The weather is great...I feel ready for battle...the gorilla dies today."

She e-mailed back a few hours later: "Goodbye, Mr. Gorilla!"

Wish me luck. It's going to be great: more "strength implements" than you could imagine...(the phrase, by the way, was coined by Kim Wood, who has loaned me a bunch of what you will see on the tape)...

Come to think of it, they may have to bury ME as well as the gorilla! But what the heck--it's all for a good cause! HAIL TO THE DINOSAURS!

CHAPTER 107

WE ALMOST LOST THE CAMERAMAN...

Picture the following. There's this middle-aged guy, with thick glasses throwing barrels and sandbags all around his back-yard, stopping from time to time to babble about the benefits of lifting, heaving, lugging, loading, carrying, tossing, or throwing what he refers to

as "heavy awkward objects," strength implements" or "little monsters." From time to time he says something about "dinosaur training."

A poor kid with a video camera is trying to film the madman's gyrations.

Oblivious to it all, two golden retrievers are curled up by the fence, scoping any good looking babe (two legged or four legged) who happens to come by. (We get lots of joggers, exercise walkers and roller-bladers; they know they always get lost of positive male attention when they come by our house. Golden retrievers give great PMA. Besides, if the old guy is out in the backyard doing his thing, it's always good for a laugh.)

So the guy with the glasses starts throwing a 135 pound barrel over a crossbar set 5' off the ground. It's jerry rigged out of a set of old York squat stands and a big piece of pipe. Works pretty well, though.

Lifting the barrel and heaving it over the crossbar is a piece of cake when the lifter stands next to the contraption. So he moves it two feet away and repeats the exercise. A little bit more challenging this time, but still no big deal.

The dogs look up and show mild interest, then turn their full attention to some total babe-cake roller-blading down the street in an appropriately tight aerodynamically correct body-suit.

The crossbar stays at 5' high but now the old guy moves it four feet away. This requires more of a heave--but he still makes it with room to spare.

The cameraman is standing 10' behind the crossbar, filming everything as the barrel comes whizzing through the air like a cannonball.

Now the squat stands and the crossbar are six feet away from the lifter...and he still makes it, albeit with a good effort. The dogs continue to ignore the performance. They've seen it before. Frankly, they are jaded.

They've seen everything before.

The crossbar moves 8' away from the lifter. He psyches up mightily, bends over, grabs the barrel in a powerful grip, heaves it up to his shoulders, presses it overhead, balances the little monster as he summons all of his strength and power--and then he throws it as hard and far and fast as possible.

The barrel comes flying towards the crossbar. The camera man is filming the whole thing achieving an almost 3-D effect as the barrel hurtles directly towards him.

CRASH!!!

The barrel hits the cross-bar dead on.

The squat stands go down as if felled by an axe.

The barrel continues on its merry way.

The crossbar joins the barrel, racing directly towards the cameraman.

It all happens in the blink of an eye.

There is no time to duck, no time to move, no time for the intervention of guardian angels or Divine Providence.

The crossbar spins and turns and now is vertical to the ground.

The barrel crashes to the ground, showering dirt everywhere and rolling up to the cameraman's feet.

The crossbar whizzes by him, missing the poor kid by about 6"...and lands a full ten feet behind him...

The poor kid is white as a sheet; the perfect picture of the term "petrified with fear."

The neighbors hear the crash and peek out their windows, asking themselves, "What's he doing now?!"

The old guy is back at the "firing line," silently surveying the carnage. He has an ear to ear grin.

"That was great!" he says. "They'll love it when they see it on tape!"

The cameraman silently nods his head..."What in the world is this lunatic gonna do to me next?" he wonders.

The dogs continue to look for more pretty girls.

"Let me introduce you to the Steel Suitcases," says the old guy.

Thus goes another quiet Saturday afternoon in a calm corner of sedate suburbia...

CHAPTER 108

TEST DRIVING THE NEW VIDEO

I've completed the filming for the new training video, and had the video guys prepare a brief "highlights" tape with the anvil lifting, log lifting and barrel lifting, barrel throwing and farmer's walking (with the world famous Steel Suitcases). The tape starts out with yours truly heaving a 165 pound anvil up to his shoulders and staggering around for a few seconds trying to get it centered and balanced pressing it overhead.

Just for fun, I test drove the highlight video by letting my wife see it. She managed about fifteen seconds and then she left the room. "I can't believe I married you!" she muttered.

The following day I let my secretary see it. She closed her eyes and put her hands over her face after about the same length of time. "I can't stand it! It's too terrible!" she cried.

For the final test I showed it to the incorrigible ones: Sam and Spencer. They grinned and cheered the whole way through. In fact, I played it for them a couple of times and they seemed to like it better each time.

Based on all of the foregoing, you KNOW it's gonna be a good tape.

CHAPTER 109

MORE THINGS THE MUSCLE MAGS NEVER TELL YOU...

A reader commented on the difference between training for functional strength and power and training the way they do in chrome and fern land. Here's his story:

Several years ago, I was living in a town house complex in Virginia. We had a very unusually heavy snow storm that dumped about a foot of snow...The company that did our snow removal work couldn't get in, so all of the neighbors chipped in, bought snow shovels and went out as a group to shovel the streets and parking spaces.

I was working on a snow mound with one of the other neighbors who I had seen at the gym I frequented at the time. While shoveling, we got to talking about the gym and our training routines. He and his buddies spent most of their time doing the usual sets of curls and pec-deck cross-overs, and not much else...

"What about your legs?" I asked.

"Oh, we do running on the Stairmaster--sometimes for a whole hour!"

At that point in the conversation, he stopped and leaned on his shovel. I thought he was looking at something, or else in deep thought. Turns out, he was gasping for air. I then continued shoveling for about two hours straight, while he stopped every ten minutes to take a ten minute break and suck in more air.

At the end of the day, the streets were clear. He asked me what I did in the gym to give me so much energy and endurance.

"Sets of 300 pound deadlifts for reps...and heavy squats, presses and chins," I told him.

The next day, I saw him walking around in a hunched over position. I asked him what was wrong and he told me he was "sore as hell" -- more sore than he had ever been in his entire life. He asked if I was sore as well. "No," I told him, "I feel great!"

He seemed to be dumbfounded by my response.

I saw him at the gym a few days later. He and his buddies were in there doing their flies and curls and pec deck work. When will they ever learn?

CHAPTER 110

SQUATTING...PULLING...PRESSING...

REAL weight training is built around a couple of basic movements:

(1) heavy squats (full or parallel), or front squats

(2) heavy pulling movements: power cleans, power pulls, power snatches, deadlifts, stiff legged deadlifts, pulling movements with heavy awkward objects (bags, barrels, beams, log, rocks, etc.), dumbbell cleans (one arm or two arm), barbell bent over rowing, one hand dumbbell swings, the one hand deadlift, dumbbell deadlifts...

(3) standing presses, push presses or jerks...with barbells, dumbbells, a single dumbbell, sandbags, barrels, logs, anvils, etc.

At least two of these basic core movements (squatting, pulling, pressing) should be included in every workout you do. In many sessions, you can include all three.

Too many people think they need to do dozens of different exercises in order to get a good workout. WRONG, WRONG, WRONG! If you train hard and heavy, squats alone are all you need to do...and a workout consisting of nothing but squats, power cleans and presses will hit the entire body from head to toe. Do you REALLY think those three exercises wouldn't give you a good, HARD, high quality, result producing workout? Give them a try!