

JUGGERNAUT

SQUAT MANUAL

**TRAINING, PROGRAMMING, AND TIPS FROM
THE STRONGEST TEAM IN THE WORLD**



**BECOME
UNSTOPPABLE**

JUGGERNAUT SQUAT MANUAL

BECOME UNSTOPPABLE

by TEAM JUGGERNAUT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE SQUATTERS	4
8 WEEKS TO MASSIVE LEGS	11
HOW I BUILT MY BEST SQUAT EVER: FRONT SQUATS	18
HOW I BUILT MY BEST SQUAT EVER: SAFETY SQUAT BAR SQUATS	21
WORLD RECORD SQUAT TRAINING	23
HOW I BUILT MY BEST SQUAT EVER: LOW BAR GOOD MORNINGS	29
SQUAT DEVELOPMENT FOR WEIGHTLIFTING	32
HOW I BUILT MY BEST SQUAT EVER: SPLIT SQUATS	49
STRENGTH IN THE HOLE	52
BUILDING THE SQUAT	56
VANILLA GORILLA SQUATTING	61
WORLD RECORD SQUATTING	64
200 POUNDS OF PR	70

7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE SQUATTERS

BY CHAD WESLEY SMITH

Run faster, jump higher, tackle harder, whatever your athletic goal is, improving your squat will help you reach them. The squat is ultimate developer of quad, hamstring, glute and hip strength and these are the muscles that are responsible for sprinting speed and jumping ability. It is no coincidence that Olympic sprinters, the fastest athletes on the planet, possess tremendous lower body development. Ben Johnson, the former World Record holder in the 100m was said to have squatted 600 pounds for 6 reps at a bodyweight of only 175 pounds. Whether your goal is powerlifting dominance, legendary strongman performances or tremendous athletic feats, these squat training tips will get you there.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW CHAD'S SQUAT TRAINING TIPS](#)

1. IMPROVE YOUR MOBILITY

A lack of mobility will make it difficult for you to hit proper depth and if you are able to hit depth, it will be difficult for you to maintain your strongest body position. This inability to maintain proper body positions is more likely to lead to injury and if you are injured you can't squat.

Consistently stretching your hips, quads, hamstrings will



For Chad Wesley Smith, becoming American Record Holder in the squat didn't happen by accident— but from forming these habits.

help you maintain better squatting positions and stay healthy so you can train hard.

2. SQUAT TO DEPTH ALL THE TIME

If you are going to be a great competitive squatter you must squat to depth all the time. Do not fool yourself into thinking that you can squat high in training and then will hit legal depth in a meet. I have always made it a motto to “Leave No Doubt” in my squatting. I don’t want to have to even look for 3 white lights when I finish a squat because I should already know that I hit proper depth. Film your squats from the side to check your depth or having your training partners assess your depth for you and remember, friends don’t let friends squat high.

3. SPEED, SPEED, SPEED!

The best way to squat big weight is to squat fast. Generating great speed and force is the best way to drive through sticking points. Focus on imparting maximal speed to the bar all the time. From 135 to your max, you need to be trying to drive the bar through the roof. When you are looking to develop great bar speed you need to jump and do speed work.

Jumps of all kinds (box jumps, squat jumps, jump for distance, depth jumps) will all help improve your Rate of Force Development so make sure you are jumping at least once per week. Jumps will also serve to activate your central nervous system prior to a heavy squat session. When you are doing speed work for the squat, I

suggest you use straight weight (no bands or chains) in the 55-70% percent range for sets of 2-4 reps and focus on performing at least 1 rep per second. Get out a stop watch and time your sets.

[CLICK HERE TO SEE SHANE HAMMON'S SPEED AS HE SQUATS 925LB](#)

4. DOMINATE THE WEIGHT

Do you know how I put 905 pounds on my back and smashed it for the American Record (raw w/ wraps-308 class)? Confidence. One of the most common mistakes I see people making when attempting a max squat is to slow down their descent. This happens for 1 reason...fear. There can be no fear when getting under heavy weight. This supreme confidence comes from proper preparation, both physically and mentally. If you have trained to the best of your abilities there is no reason to have a doubt in your mind when stepping on the platform.

Not only must your training be great, you must also prepare your mind. 905 was a number that was constantly in my mind leading up to squatting it, mentally I owned 905. I had squatted it hundreds, if not thousands of times in my mind. Fill your mind with positive mental imagery and know that you own whatever weight is going on your back, unrack it powerfully, descend with it confidently and then explode with it out of the hole; be on a mission to lockout.

5. BUILD STRENGTH OUT OF THE HOLE

The most common place for a raw lifter to miss a max squat is right out of the hole (ie. The bottom portion of the lift). Putting extra



attention to this portion of the lift is what I believe is most responsible for improving my squat from 800 to 905 pounds over a 10 month period.

The two best exercises to improve your strength out of the hole are dead squats and pause squats. Dead squats are performed by placing the pins in a safety rack at 1" above parallel, getting under the bar in that position and squatting up from there. Try this 3 week training cycle of dead squats...

WEEK 1-10 SETS OF 1 AT 60% WITH 30 SECONDS BETWEEN SETS

WEEK 2-7 SETS OF 1 AT 67.% WITH 45 SECONDS BETWEEN SETS

WEEK 3-4 SETS OF 1 AT 75% WITH 1 MINUTE BETWEEN SETS

Pause squats are another great option to improve your strength and power out of the hole in the squat. Pause squats done with 1, 3, 5 or a 7 second pause will not only help you build strength by diminishing or eliminating the benefits of the stretch reflex out of the hole, they will also build static, supportive strength in the lower back, hips and abs, teach you to stay tight and help your body find its strongest position. Try this 3 week training cycle of pause squats...

WEEK 1-3 SETS OF 5 REPS WITH 50% USING A 7 SECOND PAUSE

WEEK 2-3 SETS OF 4 REPS WITH 60% USING A 5 SECOND PAUSE

WEEK 3-3 SETS OF 3 REPS WITH 70% USING A 3 SECOND PAUSE

6. BUILD UP YOUR BACK

Bill Kazmaier, arguably the strongest man of all-time, said that “A strong back equals a strong man”, I don’t argue with Kaz and neither should you. Back strength is often the limiting factor in someone’s ability to squat. If your back (upper and lower) is weak, you won’t be able to support heavy weight. Your hamstrings, quads, hips and glutes may be strong enough to squat 500 pounds, but if your back can’t support it, you aren’t going to squat it.

A great starting place to improve your lower back strength is to avoid wearing a lifting belt as much as possible. Not wearing a belt will make your midsection work much harder to support the weight and in turn, make it that much stronger when a belt is worn. Another great exercise to build the static supportive strength necessary in the lower back for a huge squat are deadlift hypers.

A deadlift hyper is a combination of a 45 degree back raise and a deadlift. Set up the bar on the floor, take a snatch grip on it and do a back raise while holding the bar. I have personally gone over 300 pounds on this exercise for a set of 5. Adding in a 1-3 second static hold at the top of each rep will also be effective. When looking to

strengthen your upper back to improve your squat, all type of rowing and pulling variations will help.

My personal favorite is the chest supported row and again adding in a static hold at the top of each rep for 1-3 seconds will be of tremendous benefit. Front squats or safety squat bar squats are also a great way to build up your upper back in a very specific manner. I would definitely encourage you to include these variations in your training.

7. HONE YOUR TECHNIQUE

If your technique in the squat is poor you are wasting your strength. Great technique is what allows great strength to be expressed effectively. Not everybody's technique will be the same, individual body dimensions, leverages, strengths and weaknesses will dictate what technique is most effective for you. From an empty bar to your max, you must practice great technique on every rep.



Great technique starts with a great setup so get TIGHT and create a good shelf for the bar while driving your sternum up and your head

into your traps. Technique can only be perfected through practice, so make sure you are turning the volume up on your squat training. I have had squat sessions with as many as 18 work sets of squats and squat variations. With that being said, if you want to be a great squatter and have great technique, you must practice that skill, you must squat.

The Barbell Back Squat must be the foundation of your training and front squats, box squats, pause squats, dead squats, etc are there to supplement that work. I start every squat session with the back squat and work on other things after. If you want to be great at something you have to do that thing, not just something similar to it. I can confidently say that my best squat ever, 905 pounds, was also my most technically proficient squat ever.

These 7 tips are only a glimpse into what is necessary to become a great squatter and strength athlete but they will give you a great start on the road to success and building a legendary squat.

Chad Wesley Smith is the founder and head physical preparation coach at Juggernaut Training Systems. Chad has a diverse athletic background, winning two national championships in the shot put, setting the American Record in the squat (905 in the 308 class, raw w/ wraps) and most recently winning the 2012 North American Strongman championship, where he earned his pro card.

In addition to his athletic exploits, Chad has helped over 50 athletes earn Division 1 athletic scholarships since 2009 and worked with many NFL Players and Olympians. Chad is the author of The Juggernaut Method and The Juggernaut Method 2.0.

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8 WEEKS TO MASSIVE LEGS

BY BRANDON LILLY

If you have read, listened to, or watched anything I have said in the past you will know that I hate the definitions we give ourselves. “I’m a powerlifter, bodybuilder, strongman, etc.” We need to just get back to a point where we respect strength for strength, and stop badgering it, and disrespecting others because what they choose to focus on may be different than what you do. So when I was thinking about what to share with you all, I had an idea, a challenge of sorts.

As a powerlifter this is a great “blast cycle” to run after a meet, as I have done this many times over in my lifting career with much success. Hopefully, you will step up to the plate and grow from it as well.

I began doing this while a geared lifter, and after a meet to give myself a mental break from the gear I always did a 4-8 week cycle raw. Being an upper body dominant lifter I always wanted to maintain balance, and focus very hard on my legs so that I didn't become the “Johnny Bravo” in our gym, walking around with pencil legs. This rotation can be implemented for anyone, and is not a part of the Cube rotation as you will see, it very progressive, and very taxing, but at the end of six weeks I guarantee you will be able to tell a difference, and you will need some new pants. This is a step by step, rep by rep detailed plan. You will lift Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and one of the weekend days. The split mimics the Cube, in that on Wednesday you will need to Bench, and fourth day will be a bodybuilding day. Monday and Friday will no longer be Squat, and Deadlift, it will just be a dedication to lower body entirely.

WEEKS 1-4

WORKOUT A

Olympic Squats (Feet shoulder width apart)- 3 x 6-10 reps with 60 seconds rest

Deadlifts Standing on 1-2” Block- 60% x 1 x 12 reps x 20-30 seconds rest

Lunges- Short Strides 3 x 15 x 45 seconds rest

Leg Press- Wide Foot Placement 4 x 15
Ankle Weight Leg Curls- 100 reps

WORKOUT B

Deadlift from the Floor- Work up to a heavy Triple
Wide Stance (Comfortably Wide)- 60% x 2 x 8 sets
Stiff Leg Conventional Deadlift- 3 x 12 (Weight should be light
enough to move quickly, but challenging for 12 reps)
Leg Press- Narrow Foot Position 5 x 10
Ankle Weight Leg Curls- 100 Reps

WEEKS 5-8

WORKOUT A

Competition Stance Squat- 3 x 3-5 reps (Use a weight that would
challenge you to do for 6 reps)
Deadlift from 4" Blocks or Pin Pulls from just below Knee- Work up
to a Max Double
Romanian Deadlift- 3 x 10
Sissy Squats- 2 x 20 reps (These are brutal if done properly, add
weight only if using perfect form)
Leg Curls- 4 x 15

WORKOUT B

Deadlift standing on 1" Mat- Work up to heavy 5 x 5
Front Squats- 3 x 12
Pause Squats- 3 x 6
Lunges w/DB in Hand- 3 x 15 Strides (Long Steps)

Leg Curls- 4 x 15

*Squat Depth is crucial to this program as we are trying to maximize leg stimulation, this occurs through maximum range of motion. Even if you enjoy squatting high regularly, give this a chance for 8 weeks and you will be shocked at the difference.

UPPER BODY

The design of this program is to allow you to train outside your gear if you are a geared lifter, but primarily for anyone that wants to increase leg size and power. The upper body should take a back seat to the lower body for this time period. That does not mean you should slack off of the upper body work, just take into account that you are going to be taxing your body, so train the upper body smart, don't chase heavy doubles, or singles, rather keep the rep ranges at 3 or above. Also this is a great time to dedicate to some upper body

mobility work, and trying new exercises.

PROGRESSION

The first week of an exercise, begin by handling weights that you know you can move well. Begin at the upper end of the allowable rep range



Brandon Lilly earned the highest RAW powerlifting total in the world in 2012.

and add weight accordingly each week. The next week, increase the number of reps from the week before but steer clear of failure. Repeat for the next week: keep the weight the same and shoot for more reps from the week before without hitting failure For the fourth week, keep the weight the same and try to beat the numbers from the week before, but the difference on this week is you can go to all out failure.

Let's use the Olympic Squat as an example over the first four-week period using a 3×6-10 rep scheme.

WEEK 1: 405/9 – 405/7 – 405/6

WEEK 2: 405/8 – 405/8 – 405/7

WEEK 3: 405/10-405/10-408/8

WEEK 4: 405/10 – 405/10 – 405/12

Keep in mind that this is just a reference of an example. Everyone is different, the goal being to challenge yourself as much as possible. If you start hitting 10's on the first three weeks for all your sets, you need to up the weight. You need to be in the low to middle end of the rep ranges for maximum growth.

NUTRITION

You better believe you are going to need to ingest tons of food on this. Like I said I like to run this after a meet, and for me my only focus after a meet, is growth and recovery. I feel like you should be

on a food free for all, and only scale back if you start to see a dramatic increase in bodyfat.

REST AND RECOVERY

This program is going to be hard on your body, and the only way for anyone to grow is to recover. Dedicate to this portion of the program just like you would in the gym, and you will get maximum results.

Sleep – Make sure you get a minimum of 8 hours of sleep a day. I say “day” because I tend to only sleep in bursts of a few hours at a time, but I love to take naps, so make sleep a priority, if you can’t sleep at night, take a nap during the day. Whatever it takes get it done.

Stretch – Make sure you stretch upon waking, when you get to the gym, and after your workout. I’m talking 20-45 minutes a day. Make time for this and you will see the benefit.

Foam roll – Foam rolling single handedly changed everything for me. I started using the roller every night, and upon waking and I feel like a new man. I also use it to warm up, and also if I get tight between sets I roll. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Wrapping up this program is fun, it’s hard, and rewarding. I challenge you to try it, and see what kind of gains you can get on it. But remember this is not a program you want to do year round. Once, or twice a year is plenty to maximize the potential of this

program, now go out and kick some ass! I wanna see some pant legs begging for mercy!

Brandon Lilly is very well traveled, Elite powerlifter. He has trained at Guerrilla Squad Barbell, Westside Barbell, Lexen Xtreme, and is now home at Berea Barbell. In his strength journey he has competed in bodybuilding, strongman, and powerlifting. Brandon is one of only 19 men to ever total over 2200 raw, having 2204 which ties him for 16th all time (826.5 squat, 573 bench, 804.5 Deadlift). He also amassed a 2530 total in Multi-Ply, and has best lifts of 1005 squat, 820 bench press, and 765 Deadlift. Brandon is the author of The Cube Method and is aiming to create a paradigm shift in the Powerlifting world.

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BONUS MATERIAL

Check out this video in which Blaine Sumner, IPF Raw World Champion and SHW Raw w/o wraps World Record holder (881 pounds) breaks down some technique of Juggernaut fans...

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH WORLD CHAMPION BLAINE SUMNER BREAK DOWN THE SQUAT](#)



Dan Green is the World Record holder at 220 and 242 pounds with a 2160lb in just a belt and wraps. Dan's best squat is 826lbs. Learn more about Dan at BossBarbell.com

HOW I BUILT MY BEST SQUAT EVER: FRONT SQUATS

BY DANIEL GREEN

The best exercise for improving my squat has been the front squat. I learned them during my Olympic lifting years, but reinstated them in my powerlifting regimen after speaking with Mr. Sam Byrd.

Of course the most important way to improve the squat is to just squat and squat heavy! But for me the front squat has been huge. This is because of the nature of the exercise. Because the front squat forces you to not lean forward, you are forced not to allow your lower back strength to take over the lift. It forces you to squat with the knees forward loading up the quads.

This is key for me because I have fairly long legs and had always had trouble not letting my back take over during heavy back squats.

Front squats force the quads to do the work. Also holding a barbell racked across your chest and shoulders will provide enormous work for the upper back—erectors and traps. I like to use the front squat in the 5-8 rep range to really build the quads with high volume.

Maxes are ok too but I feel reps carry over to the back squat best. For me I know that when my front squat numbers go up my back squat inevitably will too. In fact my squat tends to be about 200 pounds higher than my front squat! In sleeves I've front squatted 525×3 and back squatted 716×3. With wraps I hit 615 right before an 815 back squat.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH DAN FRONT SQUAT 635LB](#)

I like to perform the front squat to a full depth with a moderate stance. I rack the bar by shrugging my shoulders forward as far as possible and gripping the bar bodybuilder style by crossing my hands over the bar near the center knurling. On the first few warmups I'll pause, sitting in the hole at the bottom, tightening up the posture of my upper back and hip flexors. This type of stretching really prepares you to move well under the top weights.

When I train these I try to never go for reps I'm not certain to complete as that leads to bad form at best, plateauing at worst. Making small progressions on these will add up to big gains quickly.

Either train them as a second lift after back squats or on their own day altogether.

Dan Green is one of the top names in powerlifting today. The Raw Total World Record Holder with 2030 (belt and sleeves), Dan is the dominant force in the 220 weight class. Dan is the founder of Boss Barbell Club in Mountain View, CA where he trains team sport and strength athletes.

Facebook, YouTube

BONUS MATERIAL

Ryan Brown of Darkside Strength & Conditioning coaches you from the ground up on the Front Squat...

[CLICK HERE TO LET RYAN BROWN TAKE YOU THROUGH THE FRONT SQUAT](#)

HOW I BUILT MY BEST SQUAT EVER: SAFETY SQUAT BAR SQUATS

BY GREG PANORA

I'm going to let u guys in on a little secret. I'm not that strong. I'm not a genetic freak or a phenom. Louie Simmons constantly made fun of my "uniceps" and "reverse canklles". I'm too tall, too thin and my form is pretty bad. So how did I break the world record multiple times? How did I squat 1060?

Because I have a couple of things that I learned to do really well. The mental aspect of being strong has always been more important than the physical. I watched bigger, stronger lifters crumble under squats because they couldn't control their fear. Fear of the hole seperates a good squatter from a great one. It's being able to push past the pain and awkwardness of that final two inches. How do you learn to do this? How do you teach yourself to think when your internal organs feel like they are going to come out your nose?

Anyone who has ever been to Westside Barbell knows about the safety squat bar. None of the specifications make any sense. It resembles a safety squat bar, but is a totally different entity. The neck pad is the same material as your grandparents leather couch. It smells like an old band aid and the faux leather is all frayed. If you look close enough you can see the blood stains from a thousand popped neck zits. The bar sits way to high on your neck and makes

135 feel like 505 pounds. Either you control the bar or it will control you.

So, how did I use this to squat 1060? I would use this bar for sets of 5 raw off a 12 inch box. I'm not sure if it made me any stronger, but it taught me to confront my fear. It taught me to think when my ribs felt like they were braking. It taught me to hold air while swallowing vomit. It taught me to continue my mental cues while blood was pouring out of my nose. So, that's my big secret. I learned to think and control my body when it wanted to shut off. So, before you put on your briefs and suit to do a high box, reverse band squat, ask yourself, should I be doing something different? Am I ready to ready to ride a big squat all the way through?

Greg Panora is a certified legend in the sport of Powerlifting. The former World Record Holder (and current American Record Holder) with a 2630 total (Multiply) in the 242 weight class, Panora now has his sights set on breaking the 242 raw total world record and is off to a strong start already having recorded a 500 raw bench and 750 raw deadlift. Greg coaches powerlifting at Crossfit Casco Bay in Portland, Maine.

Facebook

BONUS MATERIAL

Check out this video of Chad Wesley Smith breaking down how to fix the dreaded problem of "butt wink" in the squat...

WATCH CHAD WESLEY SMITH TELL YOU HOW TO FIX 'BUTT WINK'



Caitlyn Trout has squatted 160kg (352 pounds) in the 123 pound class for the World Record raw w/ wraps only a year into her powerlifting career

WORLD RECORD SQUAT TRAINING

BY COREY HAYES

Coming freshly off of a 65lb competition squat PR in the December North of the Border meet, it was time to go back to the drawing board to create a plan to take over the world....er, I mean world record.

To start, I needed to get her re-adjusted to the high volume that is placed on her during the off-season. We also took this time to bring up some weak points by training completely raw, as in no belt, no wraps, no nothing'.

PHASE 1	VOLUME LOADING		
Week 1	Squat-210x8x3	Olympic Squat-160x5x5	Good Mornings-95x2x12
Week 2	Squat-210x9x3	Olympic Squat-160x6x5	Good Mornings-95x2x14
Week 3	Squat-210x10x3	Olympic Squat-160x7x5	Good Mornings-95x2x16
Week 4	Squat-160x6x3	Olympic Squat-110x3x5	Good Mornings-65x2x8
Assistance	GHR-50 Total	DB Rows-50 Total	Planks-3 sets of max time

As you see, we kept the weight the same for the entire training month, only lowering for the deload. The work comes from increasing the sets and/or reps each week which in-turn increases the total tonnage lifted each week. Next came the normal off-season volume phases which are quite vanilla and not very flashy but are what really increase Caitlyns lifts like no other. The total number of daily lifts stay at a flat rate (around 75) and we adjust the total weight weekly, striving to add 10lbs a week or about 3 percent. All the lifts stay the same, although she is strong as shit, she isn't an "advanced" lifter as she has only been training for a year and a half. I see no need to vary her training lifts weekly. During this phase, we re-introduce the belt only on regular squats, no belt worn for anything else.

PHASE 2	VOLUME PHASE		
Week 1	Squat-210x8x3	Olympic Squat-160x5x5	Good Mornings-95x2x12
Week 2	Squat-220x8x3	Olympic Squat-170x5x5	Good Mornings-105x2x12
Week 3	Squat-230x8x3	Olympic Squat-180x5x5	Good Mornings-115x2x12
Week 4	Squat-160x6x3	Olympic Squat-145x3x5	Good Mornings-80x2x8
Assistance	GHR-50 Total	DB Rows-50 Total	Planks-3 sets of max time

PHASE 2-2	VOLUME PHASE		
Week 1	Squat-240x8x3	Olympic Squat-190x5x5	Good Mornings-125x2x12
Week 2	Squat-245x8x3	Olympic Squat-200x5x5	Good Mornings-130x2x12
Week 3	Squat-250x8x3	Olympic Squat-210x5x5	Good Mornings-135x2x12
Week 4	Squat-170x6x3	Olympic Squat-145x3x5	Good Mornings-95x2x8
Assistance	GHR-50 Total w/ Micro Mini Band	DB Rows-50 Total	Planks-3 sets of max time

Two months of the volume phase was ran, the only difference being ever increasing weights. In month two of the volume phase, we increased the difficulty of her assistance work as well.

Next starts the fun part, the off-season work is now done and its time to transition into competition prep. Phase 3 of the plan is the transition phase as its a stepping stone between the insane volume of the off-season and the incredible weights of the peaking phase. In the transition phase, we lower the total amount of reps done per workout to around 50 and continue increasing the weights on everything but good mornings.

The goal of good mornings change at this point from a builder to a “maintainer”. ALL FOCUS IS NOW ON THE SQUAT. Again, the same exercises are used each week. During this phase is when we introduce knee wraps. I have Caitlyn wrap her own knee’s during this phase to make sure they aren’t super tight or more than needed.

PHASE 3	TRANSITION PHASE		
Week 1	Squat-260x6x2	Olympic Squat-210x3x5	Good Mornings-125x2x12
Week 2	Squat-270x6x2	Olympic Squat-215x3x5	Good Mornings-125x2x12
Week 3	Squat-280x6x2	Olympic Squat-220x3x5	Good Mornings-125x2x12
Week 4	Squat-195x4x2	Olympic Squat-155x2x5	Good Mornings-95x2x8
Assistance	GHR-50 Total w/ Micro Mini Band	DB Rows-50 Total	Planks-3 sets of max time w/ weight

And finally, the peaking phase. The volume drops again, now dropping slightly every week while weights keep increasing. We also introduce reverse band work done with doubled micro-mini bands which reduce the weight by about 30lbs at the bottom and zero at the top. This is enough to have her handle some heavier weights, build confidence and prime the central nervous system without killing herself. I'm a big believer in "saving it for the platform" so I never have her take more than a few pounds over an opener without the reverse bands.

During this phase, knees are wrapped as tight as possible and good mornings are completely dropped. Volume on the assistance lifts are also slightly decreased for recovery's sake.

PHASE 4	PEAKING PHASE		
Week 1	Squat-290x2, 310x2, 330x1*	Olympic Squat-230x2x3	
Week 2	Squat-300x1, 320x1, 340x1*	Olympic Squat-240x2x3	
Week 3	Squat-310x1, 330x1*, 355x1*	Olympic Squat-250x2	
Week 4	Meet Week-Complete Deload		
Assistance	GHR-25 Total w/ micro mini band	DB Rows-3 sets	Planks-3 sets of max time w/ weight
* Reverse Doubled Micro Mini Bands			

So you see, hard work and proper planning is abundant. Proper planning is a per-cursor to success so why are you still going to the gym without a plan? As Mike T says, “months and years, not days and weeks.”

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH RYAN’S ATHLETE, CAITLYN TROUT, SQUAT A WORLD RECORD](#)

Corey Hayes is an up and comer to the strength and conditioning world. He is currently a student at Eastern Kentucky University and a Professional level powerlifter. His best meet lifts are 725/425/675 at 220 raw and 880/640/680 at 242 geared. He has future plans of taking over the world and making a living doing what he enjoys, the iron game.

Facebook, YouTube

BONUS MATERIAL

Team Juggernaut’s Brandon Lilly breaks down the squat technique of some Juggernaut fans...

[CLICK HERE TO LISTEN TO TEAM JUGGERNAUT’S BRANDON LILLY BREAK DOWN THE SQUAT](#)

HOW I BUILT MY BEST SQUAT EVER: LOW BAR GOOD MORNINGS

BY BLAINE SUMNER

As long as I can remember, the squat has always been my favorite lift. But it took me a long time to get good at it. My lifting from the time I was a freshman in high school until 2011 was based around football and I was at the will of football strength coaches. But I can remember as a freshman in high school I was 6'1" 145 lbs. and had the weakest squat on my high school football team. Which was a small 3A mountain school in Colorado. Fast forward to April, 2012 and I set the IPF World Record Raw Squat with 881 lbs. wearing just a belt and knee sleeves weighing 350 lbs.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH BLAINE'S WORLD RECORD SQUAT](#)

Besides doing tremendous high volume squatting with higher than normal intensity, the Good Morning has been the bread and butter assistance exercise to bringing my squat up to where it is now. For an assistance exercise to carryover to your main lift; you must understand it's purpose and WHY you are doing it. This is why you cannot follow a program blindly and what works for Lifter A may not work for Lifter B. Because of my squat style, I choose to do Low-Bar Good Mornings. I am a low-bar squatter and I have a big intentional lean so I emulate that with my assistance lifts. A close stance, upright squatter would benefit more from front squats and higher bar good mornings.

When I began powerlifting full time after I was done playing football; my squat days were basic and consisted of this: Squats, Good Mornings, Box Jumps, Abs. Good Mornings were the only direct squat assistance I would do and the results speak for themselves. I would do GM's at the same rep/set/intensity scheme that I would perform my squat. When I perform GM's, I walk the bar out and set-up identical to how I would squat. Then I break at the hips just as I would for a squat, but instead of lowering my hips down, I continue to push them straight back. I lean as much as possible until I feel that if I leaned any further forward I would lose it; then I come back up.

Sounds simple enough right? I do not concern myself with keeping my legs straight – I push my hips back and lean forward as much as I am comfortable with then drive the hips forward and come up. I do not have good video of me performing a GM but below is an exercise I made up called “Good Weeks” which I began doing as

rehab for my torn hip labrum when I could not squat. They are very similar to my GM's but where I would usually come up from the GM, I drop



Blaine Sumner holds the IPF RAW World Record in the squat at 881lbs. Blaine also set NFL testing records in the 225 bench rep test (52) and Kirwan Explosive Index (95).

my hips to a box, then shoot my hips up intentionally, returning to the GM form. Here is 585 X 5 against green bands...

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH BLAINE'S SQUAT 585X5 WITH GREEN BANDS](#)

As a powerlifter, when picking assistance exercises focus should be on MOVEMENTS and WEAK POINTS, not MUSCLES. So if a lifter misses a squat in the hole, the answer isn't to try to bring up the glutes and hamstrings – it is to focus on where he missed and why. In this case pause squats or box squats (not WSBB style – just to break the rebound) would be the answer. I, like 80% of raw lifters miss a squat a little less than halfway up after the rebound from the hole slows.

As a result I choose to do GM's the way I do because I reverse the weight about where I miss a squat. But because of the gap in relation to my hips/bar, I am in a compromised position making the lift harder. I hope you can take away bits and pieces of this article and incorporate GM's into your arsenal to take your squat to the next level.

Blaine Sumner is a drug-free powerlifter who competes in the IPF and USAPL both raw and single ply. He holds the IPF Raw World Record for Squat (881 no wraps) and Total (2,056) in addition to winning the 2012 IPF Raw World Championship. Sumner played Division II football at the Colorado School of Mines where he started at nose tackle for 4 years in addition to scoring 8 touchdowns as a short yardage fullback. He also set NFL testing records for 225 bench reps (52) and Kirwan Explosive Index (95). In addition to having a 33" Vertical Jump and 50" box jump at 350 lbs., Sumner was a 4 sport athlete in high school (Football, Wrestling, Lacrosse, Track). He is originally from Colorado and now lives in Oklahoma City where he trains at HATE Barbell and works as a Petroleum Engineer.

Facebook, YouTube



SQUAT DEVELOPMENT FOR WEIGHTLIFTING

BY JACOB TSYPKIN

Since the press was eliminated from competition in 1972, weightlifting has become a completely lower body dominant sport. Yet – not surprisingly – there is much debate over the best methods by which to develop leg strength for weightlifters. Sometimes – very surprisingly – there is even debate over the need for weightlifters to have strong legs. In this article I will attempt to dispel some common myths pertaining to the squat in weightlifting, and outline the methods I use to improve the squat in my weightlifters, with the goal of using the developed leg strength to improve results in the snatch and clean & jerk.

SOMETIMES, PEOPLE ARE JUST WRONG.

I would first like to clear up some misconceptions about the role of squatting and strength in weightlifting. To be clear, most of these are held by people who are outside observers, perhaps participants in other strength sports but not competitors in weightlifting. Still, let's get these ideas out of the way so that the questions that may accompany them need not hinder us later on.

1. WEIGHTLIFTERS AREN'T STRONG

I really have no idea how this happened, but a surprising amount of people think that weightlifters aren't strong. Somehow, the fact that speed, position, rhythm, and timing are all just as crucial as strength in weightlifting, has led some to believe that people who put nearly 600lbs overhead aren't strength athletes — I'll just leave this here for you...

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH IDALBERTO ARANDA OF CUBA SQUAT 280KG @ 75KG BODYWEIGHT](#)

That is 75kg Idalberto Aranda of Cuba, back squatting a laughably easy 280kg. Close to 4x bodyweight, no wraps, not even a belt, with such ease that he literally throws it over his head when he's done. He is rumored to have squatted 310. Though he is perhaps an extreme example, it is probably safe to say that weightlifters train to be strong, and succeed at it.

MYTH DISPELLED. MOVING ON.

2. RESERVE STRENGTH

The concept of reserve strength works like this: If a weightlifter has a 80kg clean & jerk, and a 100kg back squat, if he increases his back squat to 120kg, then 80kg will represent a relatively smaller percentage of his maximal strength, and the weightlifter can now make the 80kg clean & jerk even if the lift is mechanically suboptimal.

Because of the relative lightness of the load, the lifter can make small corrections to position during the lift which he would not be able to make if the load were heavier relative to his absolute strength. While this concept seems sound on the surface, we must consider what those numbers represent.

A weightlifter who clean & jerks 80 and back squats 100 is clean & jerking 80% of his back squat. Soviet manuals suggest that 80% is an ideal ratio. If the weightlifter increases his back squat to 120, and his clean & jerk stays at 80, he is now only clean & jerking 66% of his back squat. If the lifter increases his C&J to 90, he is still only now clean & jerking 75% of his back squat. He has become less efficient.

Perhaps he can make the lift with smaller variances in form, but that just means that his form has worsened. Only if the lifter increases his clean & jerk to 96kg, has his efficiency remained optimal. A 16kg improvement in the C&J is unlikely merely from increasing the back squat by 20kg, except in some very particular circumstances.

Over time, the back squat will increase to 120, and the clean & jerk to 96, but biasing training towards quickly increasing the back squat will likely reduce efficiency, and be detrimental to the lifters long term competition results.

There are obviously exceptions to this rule. Aranda, in the video above, had a best C&J of 205.5kg, or 68% of his best back squat if the rumor of 310 is true. Usually, larger lifters will tend to be less efficient relative to their max squat. However, the vast majority of readers are not major exceptions, and almost none of you are Aranda. If you have a 200kg back squat and a 120kg clean & jerk, you don't have "reserve strength," you have crappy technique.

3. ALL MAXES, ALL THE TIME

This one probably stems from the so-called "Bulgarian System" that no one really understands (myself included.) A lot of folks seem to think that weightlifters just max their squat every single day (this applies to the snatch and clean & jerk as well.)

While this is certainly an approach used by some coaches and athletes, and one which I have used in certain circumstances, it is safe to say that the vast majority of lifters do simple volume work at some point in their training. Volume forms the crux of the program which I utilize, and most of the coaches and lifters I work with use a lot of volume in their programming.



4. ALL FRONT SQUATS, ALL THE TIME

Not completely certain where this one came from, but I suspect it may be also have risen from the “Bulgarian System” people. While there are instances of weightlifters who do not back squat, or who predominantly front squat, most weightlifters should and do back squat.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH JACOB BRIEFLY INTRODUCE THE FRONT SQUAT](#)

The front squat is the variant which is most specific to the Olympic lifts, since it is the bottom position of the clean. Note the full depth, very upright torso, and acute hip and knee angles.

BS DEALT WITH. LET'S MOVE ON.

RULES OF SQUATTING FOR WEIGHTLIFTERS

When developing the squat to improve the snatch and clean & jerk, there are some important keys to remember. These should guide your technique, your programming, and the prevalence of the squat in your training.

1. YOU ARE A WEIGHTLIFTER.

You compete in the snatch and the clean & jerk. Neither the back nor the front squat are contested events in the sport of weightlifting. While there may be times for some lifters when it is appropriate to prioritize squatting strength at the temporary expense of results in the competition lifts, this is limited to particular individuals in particular circumstances. If you show up at a meet, go 2/6, and finish last, no amount of “but I back squat 3x bodyweight!” is going to make you feel better about getting your ass kicked. YOU ARE A WEIGHTLIFTER. TRAIN THE SQUAT ACCORDINGLY.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH JACOB BRIEFLY INTRODUCE THE LOW BAR BACK SQUAT](#)

The low bar back squat is the least specific squat variant for the Olympic lifts. It is so far removed that I would strongly recommend against its use at all for leg strength development in weightlifting. Note the clear difference in torso, hip, and knee angles. Training the low bar back squat will likely lead to poor receiving positions for both the snatch and clean.

2. GRINDERS ARE OKAY.

Shitty squats are not. Really this one applies to all strength athletes, but



it's of particular importance for weightlifters. While a powerlifter may risk injury, either chronic or acute, by doing shitty squats all the time, he can still win a meet with a heavy below-parallel good morning. Regularly squatting in this fashion is detrimental in a more direct way for the weightlifter, because it will influence the way he interacts with heavy loads in the snatch and clean & jerk.

Squatting with an inclined torso and rounded back will lead to these traits carrying over to the competition lifts, and that's going to lead to misses. An occasional ugly squat on a PR attempt is okay, and probably inevitable, but the majority of your squatting should be done with good positions which effectively approximate the positions of the snatch and clean & jerk.



3. HIGH BAR BACK SQUATS

I will make this clear now. The low bar back squat does not carry over effectively to the lifts. It leads to a less than ideal bottom position in the snatch. IT MOST CERTAINLY DOES NOT MIMIC THE PULL FROM THE FLOOR. Weightlifters high bar back squat. This is only a debate amongst people who don't actually know what they are talking about. That is all.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH JACOB REVIEW THE HIGH BAR BACK SQUAT](#)

The high bar back squat is less task-specific to weightlifting than the front squat is, but it is similar enough to carry over very well to the snatch and clean & jerk, while also allowing the lifter to train with heavier loads. Note that the torso, hip, and knee angles are very similar to those of the front squat.

NOW. LET'S GO TO WORK.

METHODS

The primary method I use is based on the same framework as the program Coach Pendlay uses at MDUSA. It is a variation of the so-called Texas Method.

The setup is very simple. On Monday, back squat for volume. On Wednesday, front squat, usually heavy triples. On Saturday, attempt to back squat some type of PR. We typically push the set of 5 in the back squat more than any other rep range, something else I picked up from Coach Pendlay. It seems to carry over to the clean & jerk better – probably because of the increased time under tension. In my experience, lifters are also less likely to sacrifice form for a new PR set of 5 than they are for a new PR single.

Closer to a meet, we will lower the volume and increase the intensity, and do more front squatting than back squatting. I generally don't do much work with percentages, and I also don't often dictate changes in rep ranges, but prefer to let them happen naturally. When a lifter can no longer perform 3 sets of 5 on

Monday, we'll move to 4 sets of 4. When he has failed a new 5RM attempt two weeks in a row, we'll move to 3RM. However, for the sake of having a concrete example of the program, the following is a depiction of how this may look over the course of 12 weeks, with a 13th taper week, at the end of which the lifter competes.

DISCLAIMER: This is an example of the basic framework I use to develop the squat. The reality is that it is more fluid and variable, dependent on individual needs and circumstances. As Coach Pendlay once told me, "Theory and practice are the same in theory, but not in practice."

Also, this program assumes that the lifter has already gone through and moved beyond a basic linear progression for developing the squat. All of my lifters start their training with 3x5 back squat on Monday and Saturday and 5x3 front squat on Wednesday until they can no longer make improvements. Then they switch to the program outlined here.

*All notation is Sets x Reps where load is NOT indicated, Load x Reps x Sets where load IS indicated.

WEEK 1

Monday	Back Squat 75%x5x3
Wednesday	Front Squat 75%x3x5
Saturday	Back Squat 5RM (I actually advocate starting somewhat conservatively, a very hard but not quite maximal set of 5)

WEEK 2

Monday Back Squat 3×5, add load from previous Monday
Wednesday Front Squat 5×3, add load from previous
Wednesday
Saturday Back Squat 5RM

WEEK 3

Monday Back Squat 3×5, add load from previous Monday
Wednesday Front Squat 5×3, add load from previous
Wednesday
Saturday Back Squat 5RM

WEEK 4

Monday Back Squat 4×4, add load from previous Monday
Wednesday Front Squat 5×3, add load from previous
Wednesday
Saturday Back Squat 5RM

WEEK 5

Monday Back Squat 4×4, add load from previous Monday
Wednesday Front Squat 6×2, add load from previous
Wednesday
Saturday Back Squat 5RM OR 3RM (*DO NOT move to 3RM
unless you have missed your new 5RM attempt for two weeks
straight)

WEEK 6

Monday	Back Squat 4×4, add load from previous Monday
Wednesday	Front squat 6×2, add load from previous Wednesday
Saturday	Back Squat 5RM or 3RM

WEEK 7

Monday	Back Squat 5×3, add load from previous Monday
Wednesday	Front Squat 6×2, add load from previous Wednesday
Saturday	Back Squat 5RM or 3RM

WEEK 8

Monday	Back Squat 5×3, add load from previous Monday
Wednesday	Front Squat 6×2, add load from previous Wednesday
Saturday	Back Squat 5RM or 3RM

WEEK 9

Monday	Back Squat 5×3, add load from previous Monday
Wednesday	Front Squat 6×2, add load from previous Wednesday
Saturday	Back Squat 5RM or 3RM

Use SMALL increases in weight, particularly on Mondays and Wednesdays. You should not miss reps on Monday or Wednesday. You are putting work in, not setting records. If necessary, stay at

the same load for a few weeks at a time. Saturday is your day to make PRs.

WEEK 10

Monday	Front Squat heavy single (NOT maximal,) then 90%x2x2 *90% of today's single
Wednesday	Front Squat heavy single (NOT maximal,) then 90%x2x2 *90% of today's single
Saturday	Front Squat 1RM

WEEK 11

Monday	Front Squat 1RM
Wednesday	Front Squat heavy single (NOT maximal,) 90%x2x2 *90% of today's single
Saturday	Front Squat 1RM

WEEK 12

Monday	Front Squat 1RM
Wednesday	Front Squat heavy single (NOT maximal)
Saturday	Front Squat 1RM

WEEK 13 (TAPER AND COMPETITION)

Monday	Front Squat 85%x1x1
Wednesday	Front Squat C&J opener for single
Saturday	No squatting
Sunday	Compete

BREAKING PLATEAUS

Like anything else, eventually this will stop working, and you will need to do something to move past your current limitations. The program outlined above is a mix of intensity and volume work. To break through plateaus, I typically just use a program which biases either volume, or intensity. The methods I commonly use are presented here.

VOLUME: SMOLOV JUNIOR

I have seen quite a few variants of Smolov Junior floating around the internet. This one may or may not be the “correct” or “original” one. I’m not sure. Whatever it is, it seems to work pretty well. Rather than the traditional 4 days/week that Smolov calls for, I stick to our normal Monday-Wednesday-Saturday schedule for this program. It alternates between 4 rep schemes:

3×9

4×7

5×5

6×3

The first four workouts would look like this:

Monday	Back Squat 70% \times 9 \times 3
Wednesday	Back Squat 75% \times 7 \times 4
Saturday	Back Squat 80% \times 5 \times 5
Monday	Back Squat 85% \times 3 \times 6

For the next workout, go back to 3×9 and move up by 5%. Do the same with each of the following workouts. For the third cycle, increase by 2.5%. After that, you can back off for a week, and retest your back squat, at which point you may choose to repeat Smolov Junior, or return to our regularly scheduled programming. Though there is an intensification phase for Smolov, which I assume could be adapted for Smolov Junior, I have never tried to use it with my weightlifters.

PROS

1: LOTS OF SQUATTING. If you need to gain size, this will likely help. And it's more than likely going to push your squat up, unless you are one of those few individuals whose strength endurance is good enough that high volume squatting doesn't necessarily improve 1RMs.

2: INCREASED WORK CAPACITY. Squatting like this will help improve your tolerance to heavy lifting in general, which is definitely a good thing.

CONS

1: IT IS GOING TO KICK YOUR ASS. Not as bad as the original Smolov, but bad enough that you can expect your snatch and clean & jerk to take a hit. It's also an absolutely terrible way to squat if you're trying to lose weight, because you are going to need to eat your face off.

2: NO FRONT SQUATS. I suppose you could work in a heavy single front squat before your back squats once or twice a week, but beyond the first cycle, the last thing you're going to want to do is more squatting.

INTENSITY: DAILY SQUATTING

And here are the famed “daily maxes.” But let's clear a few things up about how this works.

1. A daily max is not a true max. Don't expect to hit a PR every day. Set a minimum number that is a goal for you to work up to – probably around 80% or a little bit less of your PR. Try to hit that every day, and gradually bring that number up to 90%.

Occasionally, when you feel great, go big. You should almost never miss a rep.

2: Find the right balance between back and front squats. I think most lifters should do 2:1 back squat:front squat, but that may not be what works best for you, particularly if you are a weak front squatter. This method is about functional, not structural adaptation. It's practice with heavy weights. So if your front squat is what needs to come up most, that may be what you do more frequently.

3. Daily squatting does NOT have to be a daily single. This is generally how I prescribe the program: Start by hitting 80% of your max in either the back or front squat at least 6 days/week.

Gradually increase that number over time. Occasionally do a double with your daily weight or a little bit higher. Occasionally do 2x2 with slightly below your daily weight.

4. Increase all weights gradually. When you go for a PR, it should be a SMALL PR. If you make it, call it a day. Bring up your daily weight gradually, a few workouts at a time. Let yourself adapt. If you don't, this can end poorly.

PROS

1: TASK SPECIFIC. Weightlifters train to do one rep, this method will get you good at doing one rep.

2: HIGH FREQUENCY SQUATTING, PROGRAMMED INTELLIGENTLY, WON'T HAVE MUCH OF AN EFFECT ON YOUR SNATCH AND CLEAN & JERK. It's relatively easy most days and you can get through it in about 10 minutes.

3: SHOCKINGLY, THIS WAS A GREAT WAY TO DEAL WITH MY KNEE PAIN. My knees feel far better doing this than they did when I was squatting 3x/week, and I am squatting heavier than I have in close to a year. I have heard similar reports from other lifters.

CONS

1: IF YOU DO NOT CHECK YOURSELF, YOU WILL WRECK YOURSELF. Let your ego take control and you will pay the price.

2: TO BE DONE CORRECTLY, A LIFTER NEEDS TO KNOW HIMSELF PRETTY WELL. This is a very intuitive method and you need to be fairly experienced to employ it correctly.

CONCLUSION

It is clear to any critical observer that developing leg strength is crucial for the weightlifter. It is also not as complicated as it may seem at first glance. I hope that if you choose to try the outlined program, you find it beneficial. However, of greater importance is understanding the foundations upon which this program is built, and those are what I hope you take away from this article.

“As to the methods there may be a million and then some, but principles are few. The man who grasps principles can successfully select his own methods. The man who tries methods, ignoring principles, is sure to have trouble.”

— Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)

Jacob Tsytkin is a CrossFit and weightlifting coach, and the co-owner of CrossFit Monterey and the Monterey Bay Barbell Club in Monterey, CA.

Website, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter



HOW I BUILT MY BEST SQUAT EVER: SPLIT SQUATS

BY COREY HAYES

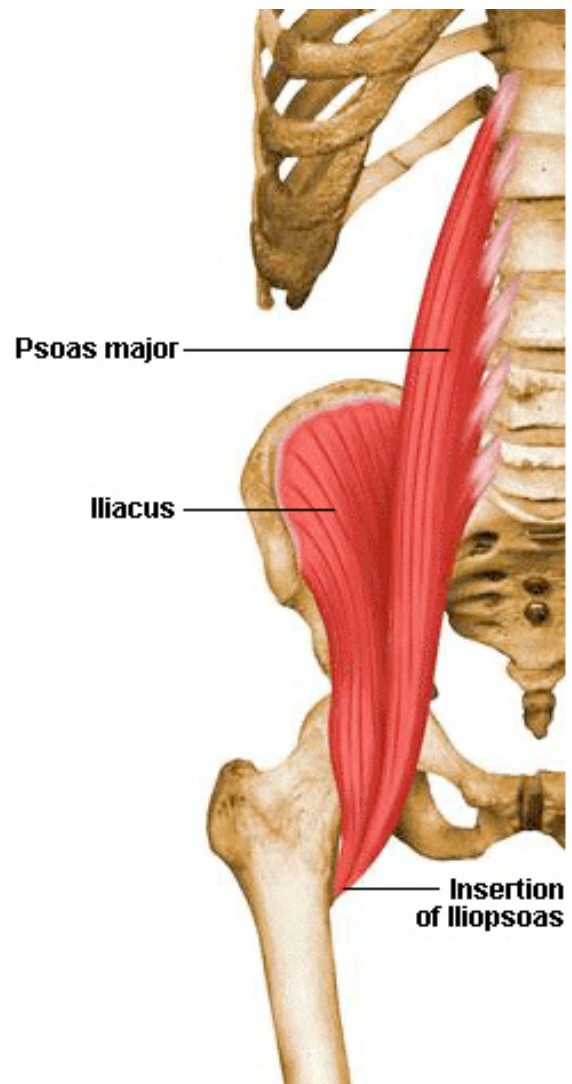
After sitting and thinking about an assistance move that has helped me the most throughout the years and going back throughout my old training logs, one movement kept popping back up. It was a movement that I hadn't ever thought about much but it just so happened every time my squat was at its best, I had been doing this movement for weeks before hand. What is it? The split squat.... I feel like the split squat is honestly a flawless assistance movement. Why? The split squat is a perfect combination of strength, mobility, coordination and balance.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH AN ATHLETE DOING A HIGH REP SET OF HEAVY SPLIT SQUATS](#)

The muscles being worked are mostly the quads, glutes and core which you can never really have enough of, I believe that the movement “activates” my glutes like no other. Many people really don’t take advantage of the glutes, these are the people that tend to stall at the top on dead lift. The core gets tied in due to the fact that your standing on one foot with a bar on your back, unless you have the balance of a tight rope walker you are going to be going side to side some which will destroy your core.

The mobility aspect is crucial for me to keep a healthy back in my opinion. On the eccentric portion of the lift, the hip flexors are stretched out. For you guys that aren’t big into the anatomy, the iliopsoas connects at the front of the hip and wraps around to the back, which can lead to an offset pelvis and messed up back if too tight.

A good goal for these, which I’m working towards is body weight for men and 75 percent of body weight for women for 10 reps. Start light to learn the movement and once you figure it out, blast



Flexibility in the iliopsoas is critical to maintaining lower back/hip health and hitting proper depth in the squat.

them every workout until you get your goal, I promise you'll end up a better squatter and dead lifter.

Corey Hayes is an up comer to the strength and conditioning world. He is currently a student at Eastern Kentucky University and a Professional level powerlifter. His best meet lifts are 725/425/675 at 220 raw and 880/640/680 at 242 geared. He has future plans of taking over the world and making a living doing what he enjoys, the iron game.

Facebook, YouTube

BONUS MATERIAL

Chad Wesley Smith coaching an athlete from square one in the squat...

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH 'SQUAT 101' WITH CHAD WESLEY SMITH](#)



STRENGTH IN THE HOLE

BY BRANDON LILLY

Being focused on my raw training for the last year or better I have faced numerous challenges since taking off the gear. One of those major issues was lack of stopping power, and reversal power coming out of the hole on my squats.

How can that be? You have squatted over 1000 lbs.? The gear was my savior. This is something I have been trying to preach to lifters since I found my own flaws. There are some weaknesses that you can never fix until you train a cycle or two raw, and heavy. But let's examine why a raw lifter needs to do away with the box, and, if not all the bands/chains, at least some of them.

Before anyone blasts me for what I'm about to say, FOR GEARED LIFTERS THE BOX, BAND/CHAIN COMBO or WESTSIDE STYLE OF TRAINING IS PROVEN, AND GREAT.

In gear, a lifter has the benefit of the equipment binding up, and being the tightest it will ever be. So like a catapult that is pulled taught, when released there will be a certain amount of rebound, and the body can drive outward against the material keeping it "stressed" all the way to the point of lockout.

That works well with a box as a guide to sit on, and the weight doesn't have to be at a maximum in the hole to get maximum result, the weight needs to be at a maximum at lockout so the lifter can "accommodate" to the weight being lifted. That's why bands and chains have worked so well in multi-ply.

For a raw lifter, there needs to be a maximum load in the bottom, this is where the majority of them fail. So in my opinion the best way to build the power needed in the hole to actually lift massive weights, is to lift actual bar weight up to 85% for reps, and then do overloads with very light bands. Do not exceed 110% at the top, as

the deload to the hole should keep you in the 80-85% range. Getting beyond that can cause breakdown.

The Soviets have proven over and over that you don't need to train at 100% to hit 100%+ in your meets, so understand that by training sub-maximally, and with planned overloads you can slowly bring up a nagging point for lots of raw lifters.

The second way to remedy this issue is to use pause reps. This is something that I really employ due to the fact when you "pause" a squat in the hole you can never be out of position. Your body will find its strongest balance point, and if practiced enough you will learn to find that "spot" every time you squat. I have worked up to 90% for a single without a belt, but don't feel like there is much benefit to that type of training. At Berea Barbell we use 65%-80% for various reps of 3-8, and for holds of 1-5 seconds. This type of training will also brutalize your core. So for a 3 week cycle this is what you would see.

WEEK 1- 70% x 3 x 6 sets, 90% x 2 w/Reverse mini bands
Pause Squats-65% x 6 x 2 sets with 3 second pauses

WEEK 2- 85% x 2 x 3 sets, 95% x 1 w/Reverse Mini Bands
Pause Squats- 75% x 3 x 2 sets with 2 second pause

WEEK 3- 90% x 1, 92.5% x 1, 105% x 1 w/reverse mini bands,
110% x 1 w/reverse mini bands, Pause Squat-85% x 1 x 2 sets with
1 second pause

With some dedication, and understanding of what your body needs you can fix any issues, but this wave, has helped not only me, but all of my training partners, and numerous Cube clients. If the hole is your problem, this is a good step towards your solution.

JUGGERNAUT'S BRANDON LILLY GIVES YOU 5 GREAT TIPS TO HELP YOU IMPROVE YOUR SQUAT

The squat is the king of lifts and Team Juggernaut is home to the kings of squatting. The authors of this article have raw squatted 905@308, 881@SHW (no wraps), 881@275, 826@SHW, 760@220 (no wraps) and 715@220 and are among the best, if not THE BEST, squatter in the World in their weight classes in the history of powerlifting.



BUILDING THE SQUAT

BY BRANDON LILLY

In honor of Squat Week I am going to share with you my best squat cycle to date. The important thing when planning a cycle is to remember the same cycle WILL NOT work over, and over. You have to look at many factors in moving forward, and that is why competing is so important — you get a reference point of evaluation, and you get to determine your strengths, and weaknesses moving forward.

The human body will never allow you to continuously progress in all areas, so you have to try and milk your strengths, and strengthen your weaknesses, and hope to find a happy balance that leads to PR's.

After my meet in June where I squatted 800 lbs. I was very happy with this, but I also found glaring weaknesses, as well as identified strengths. They are as follows:

STRENGTHS

- Quads
- Lower Back
- Stability
- Power on Reversal

WEAKNESSES

- Hamstrings
- Glutes
- Upper Back
- Mobility/Flexibility (Ease of getting down and up without compromising form)

I reasoned that many of my weaknesses were due to training dominantly in squat gear. This is in no way the gear's fault, but mine. I had let myself hide behind the layers of material, and it covered my weaknesses pretty well.

Competing raw was going to completely expose them, so this is how I went about fixing them. I picked two meets in consecutive weekends the XPC Semi Final, and The SPF Backyard Meet of the Century. I started by mapping backwards... That is important, never

map forwards, trace backwards. Since I squatted 800, and would resume training almost immediately I based my numbers off of 780, because I feel that I could replicate a 780 at any time, and I wanted to keep my weights in check so this is what I did.

WEEK 1

Rep Week- With wraps 510 (65%) x 5 for 5 sets

Pause Squats- 500 x 3 x 2

WEEK 2

Explosion Week- 430 (55%) x 2 for 10 sets

420 x 20

WEEK 3

Heavy Week- No wraps up to 475 (60%) x 3, then add knee wraps and work up to 625 (80%) x 2, 665 (85%) x 1, add reverse mini band to 705 (90%) x 1

600 x 5

WEEK 4

Rep Week- No wraps up to 475 (60%) x 3, then add knee wraps up to 550 (70%) for 3 sets of 3

WEEK 5

Explosion Week- 510 (65%) no wraps, 3 sets of 2.

Pause Squats- 420 x 8 x 2

WEEK 6

Heavy Week- Work Up to 475 (60%) x 3, then add wraps and worked up to 740 (95%) x 2, then add Reverse Mini Bands 800 (102.5%).x 1, 820 (105%) x 1
500 x 15

WEEK 7

Rep Week- No wraps up to 475 (60%) x 3, then add wraps and work up to 625 (80%) for 2 sets of 2
Pause Squats- 500 x 5

WEEK 8

Explosion Week- 550 (70%) for 3 sets of 2.
500 x 8 x 3 sets

WEEK 9

Heavy Week- Work up to 720 lbs. Add Reverse Mini Bands, 805 x 1, 825 x 1, 840 x 1

WEEK 10

Rep Week- 665 (85%) x 5
600 x 8

WEEK 11

Explosion Week- No Wraps to 475 (60%) x 3, 525 x 2 x 2 sets with wraps

420 x 3 x 5

WEEK 12 MEET WEEK

Monday and Tuesday I always do Full Body Workouts. These take about 15-30 minutes, allow me to break a good sweat. I do a plate on squats for very deep reps, and bench just to stay flexible. I do lots of push ups, band good-mornings. Anything I feel will loosen me up.

Thursday- (If lifting Saturday, I do this on Friday if lifting Sunday)
Work up to 50% of opening squat for 3, 50% of opening bench for 3, and repeat full body workout. *If you don't have the ability to do reverse bands, just make small jumps in weight when indicated, 15-30 lbs. at most.

This squat cycle allowed me to compete at the XPC Semi Final and achieve a 3 for 3 day in squats going 727.5, 788, 804.5. The very next weekend I was able to go 760.5, 810, and 826.5 at the SPF Backyard Meet of The Century, and my totals were 2138.6, and 2204 lbs. I believe this method of rotating my lifts over the course of 3 weeks, and doing the specialty work on my second movement really made it possible for me to improve, but also build the ability to repeat the effort within seven days after flying across the country.



VANILLA GORILLA SQUATTING

BY BLAINE SUMNER

This cycle is what I have used numerous times and has helped my raw squat more than any other. I have tried many programs and variations out there and this has been the most beneficial to me. I would say it is “closest” to Western or Linear Periodization, but has evolved into something of its own through my years of tweaking it. Here is the concept of why this works:

WEEKS 1-4: “HYPERTROPHY”

This builds the base for the cycle. The first week will probably make you excruciatingly sore but it’s important to break through this and

have your muscles conditioned for the high rep, high volume work that will follow.

WEEKS 5-8: "STRENGTH"

This 5 X 5 block is the ultimate pursuit of high volume. The body will be conditioned for it after the Hypertrophy block. The 5 X 5 will be lots of reps and allows you to hone and nail down your technique.

WEEKS 9-12: "POWER"

This 3 X 3 push has always been key for increasing the weight and this is the money maker in terms of using the results from the first two blocks and transitioning those hypertrophy and strength gains into serious squats leading up to the meet. This block is a major taper in volume from the previous block but the intensity increases.

WEEKS 13-16: "PEAKING"

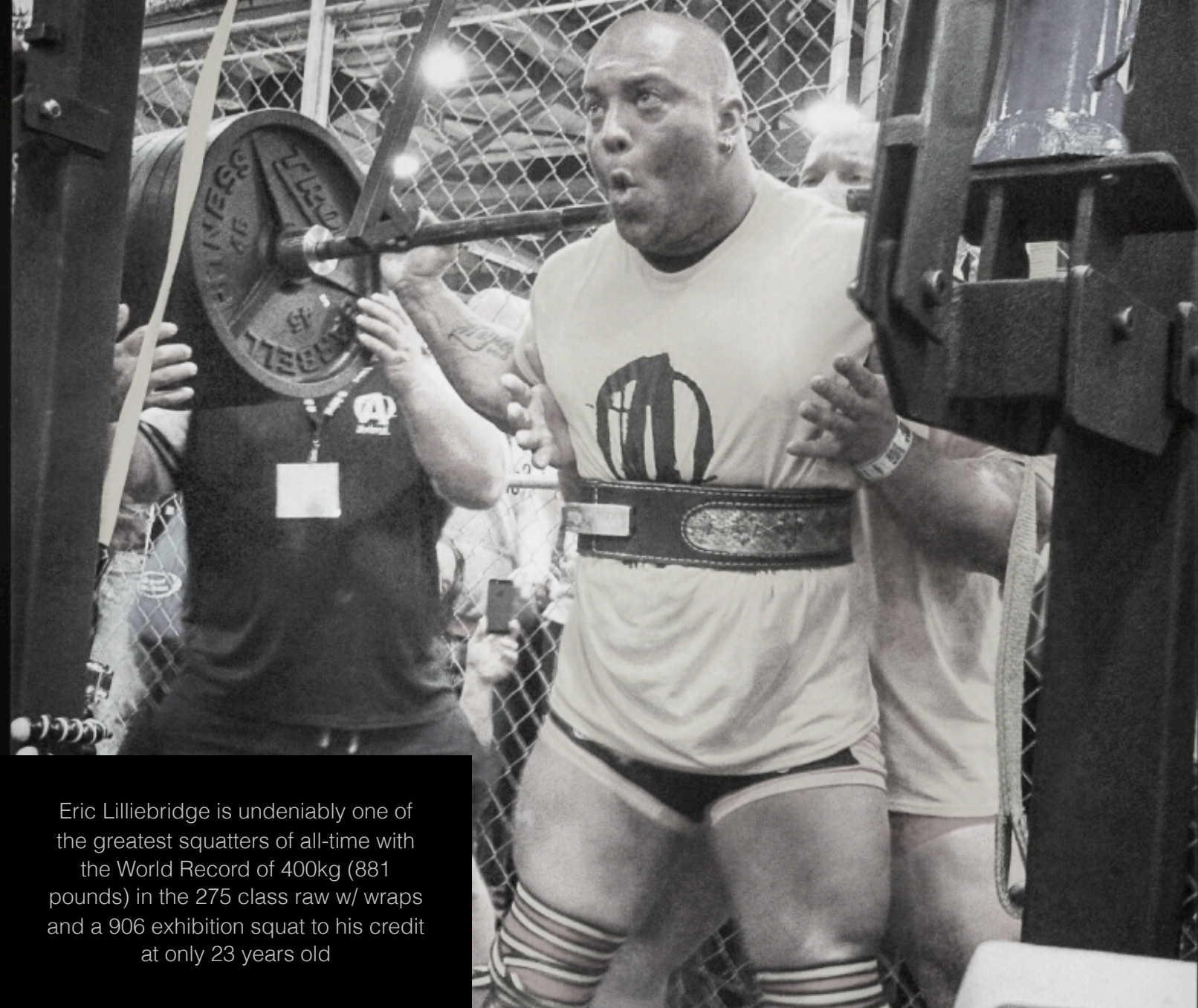
This is the final push towards the meet. The strength and technique are nailed down at this point and it becomes about acclimating your body to heavier loads and achieving the perfect taper towards into the meet. Volume comes way down and intensity peaks 2 weeks prior to the meet. Week 16 is the meet.

The overall goal of this squat cycle is to lead in with high reps to condition the muscles and prepare for the work ahead, then to increase the volume and intensity and build a solid foundation with the 5 X 5, followed by putting the hard work to good use and

increasing the intensity and dropping volume with 3 X 3, and finally peaking for the meet.

I like to hit my opener for two singles when I am two weeks out, and deload the week before. This is how I have achieved the best super-compensation heading into a meet. Some will scoff at the % numbers as they seem to be insignificant; but they have a solid purpose and are important for manipulating the Volume/Intensity curves leading into a meet. I also deload every 4th week and treat this as a speed week. Throughout the cycle the speed day intensities increase and the volumes decrease.

As for assistance work – you should be so entirely drained that you don't have the energy to do a bunch of assistance. I do 3 assistance exercises – a squat stimuli, abs, and box jumps. For the low bar/leaning squatters, do 3 weeks of good mornings/1 week of front squats. For high bar/upright squatters, do 3 weeks of front squats/1 week of good mornings. Then do heavy abs, followed by box jumps. Keep the sets/reps in line with what the main squat protocol is. Good luck and train hard!



Eric Lilliebridge is undeniably one of the greatest squatters of all-time with the World Record of 400kg (881 pounds) in the 275 class raw w/ wraps and a 906 exhibition squat to his credit at only 23 years old

WORLD RECORD SQUATTING

BY ERIC LILLIEBRIDGE

The best training cycle I've ever had on squats was the previous one I just did back in September/October when I was training for the backyard meet of the century at Super Training gym in Sacramento, California. I did a 6 week training cycle for that meet. The first squat

workout I singled up to a max rep set of 5 reps, my previous best before that was 740lbs x 5 in belt and wraps and that first workout for the training cycle I beat it with 755lbs x 5 in belt and wraps, so at that point I knew I was a head by quite a bit from the last cycle. I went 15lbs above my previous best because I was feeling really good that day.

The next squat workout 2 weeks later I singled up to a max rep set of 3 reps, my best before that was 800lbs x 3 in belt and wraps and I beat that by doing 820lbs x 3 which was the most I've ever done for reps and was by far my best squat set ever. I was actually planning on doing 810lbs for reps that workout but again I felt really good and strong that workout so I went a little heavier on my top set. After that workout I knew I was in the right path to hitting a big PR at the meet.

2 weeks after that squat workout, I worked up to a weight I was planning on hitting for my 2nd attempt. I singled up to 850lbs in belt and wraps and hit it easy with a lot more left in me. After that I had 2 weeks to rest on my squats until the meet and my plan was to break my previous meet PR 854lbs on my 2nd attempt.

At that meet I opened up with 352.5kgs/777lbs, took 390kgs/859lbs on my 2nd for a meet PR and tried 410kgs/903lbs on my 3rd but lost my balance at the top after I finished the lift and got back on my heels a little too much. I pretty much only tried that weight because Stan Efferding tried it too and it would have been an all-time world record.

I did another meet 2 weeks after that meet because I really wanted another shot at breaking the all-time world record squat and because I knew I could keep my strength peaked for another 2 weeks. All I did between meets was light high rep accessory work and just rested up until the next meet.

At the UPA Power Weekend (2 weeks after the Super Training meet) I opened with 350kgs/771lbs, took 375kgs/826lbs on my 2nd and went for the all-time world record on my 3rd attempt. The previous all-time world record raw w/ wraps @ 275lbs was 395kgs/870lbs and I broke it with 400kgs/881lbs and had a little bit left in me too. I made a smaller jump on my 2nd attempt to save it all for my 3rd attempt squat and it felt great.

This squat training cycle is something that I have repetitively done for my squat cycles meet after meet for years. This is what has led me to my all-time world record raw squat in my weight class. Doing heavy max rep sets leading up to a meet has built my squats to where they are now and has made my squats strong all year round.

I can pretty much hit a heavy single any day of the week when I'm fresh and not peaking for a meet and still be within 93-95% of my all-time best due to the training I have put myself through to get to where I am now. The heavy max rep sets really help you develop strength in all areas of your squat because you're taking yourself to almost failure in that one set and everything is fatigued by that last rep.

I'm standing there with all that weight on my back, gasping for air and not knowing if I'm going to come back up with that last rep or not, but I fight through it and give it everything I've got and my spotters and training partners push me and yell at me to get it. That kind of training will really show what you're made of and will either make you or break you. It also builds up my confidence like crazy and I feel like I can smash heavy singles come meet day.

I have had other people try this training too and it has worked great for them, most are surprised at how much they can put on their squat by doing just one max rep set for each workout leading up to a meet.



Below I've laid out how my squats would look over an 8 week period but technically it is only a 6 week training cycle because 2 weeks before the meet is de loading

8 WEEK ALTERNATING SQUAT CYCLE

WEEK 1

Single up to one max rep set of 5 reps (try for PR by 5lbs or more from previous cycle)

WEEK 2

Deadlifts

WEEK 3

Single up to one max rep set of 3 reps (try for PR by 5lbs or more from previous cycle)

WEEK 4

Deadlifts

WEEK 5

All singles, try a weight around a planned opener and 2nd attempt for the meet (2nd attempt is a weight usually around 94-95% of my goal 3rd attempt for the meet)

WEEK 6

Deadlifts

WEEK 7

Light Squat/Deadlifts to de load, working on speed and just to go through the movements

WEEK 8

Meet day

As you can see, I don't lift heavy at all 2 weeks before a meet. The last heavy training day is on week 6, and between weeks 6 and 8 (meet day) is all light training and de loading to be 100% recovered and peaked for competition day.

Eric Lilliebridge had a top #3 raw total ranking in world in the 275 weight class at just 19 years old. He had successfully totaled 2,065lbs raw in belt and knee wraps and deadlifted 800lbs raw in competition at only 19 years old. Now being the age of 22, he is currently ranked #2 in the world in the 275's with a 2,204lbs raw total w/ wraps. His best competition lifts up to date are an 881lbs raw squat w/ wraps (World Record at 275s), 529lbs raw bench and an 821lbs raw deadlift. He is currently chasing after the all time world record total in the 275's held by Jon Cole with a 2,259lbs raw total w/ wraps.

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JUGGERNAUT JACKED

OVERWHELM YOUR COMPETITION AND GET THICK WITH ELITE POWERLIFTER CHAD SMITH'S JUGGERNAUT TRAINING METHOD

BY ROB FITZGERALD PHOTOGRAPHY BY ERIC WILLIAMS

Smith trains with a ferocity you need to imitate.

200 POUNDS OF PR

BY CHAD WESLEY SMITH

I began training for powerlifting after finishing my track and field career in late May 2010 and experienced a meteoric rise in my strength, adding 200 pounds to my PR squat in the first 14 months of training and competing. I competed in 3 meets during this time span, squatting 800 at the USPA Central California Championships in October 2010, 865 at the SPF Ironman Pro/Am in March 2011 and 905 for the American Record in August 2011 at the SPF Powerstation Pro/Am, all in the 308 pound class.

Beginning with a high 600 pound/low 700 pound squat (raw w/ wraps) I used high volume work, heavy training and special exercises to add 200 pounds to my squat in this short time period. Training for my first meet utilized the program that became The Juggernaut Method and focused on high volume work to build size and practice technique. This is when I learned how to train hard, how to strain and began my ascent into the upper echelon of squatters in the World.

Assistance work for the squat during this training cycle was very limited and often done by feel. At most I would do 3-5 sets of 8-15 reps of GHRs, 3 sets of 8-12 reps each leg of walking lunges and 3-5 sets of 10-20 reps of weighted ab wheel. Depending on my energy levels for the day that was reduced to either less sets, less exercises or on occasion, nothing at all.

Week 1-405x4x10, 405x12

Week 2-455x4x8, 455x14

Week 3-Up to 500x14

Week 4-Deload

Week 5-445x4x8, 445x11

Week 6-495x3x8

Week 7-Up to 550x11, was extremely happy with this effort

Week 8-Unload

Week 9-490x5x5, 490x8

Week 10-545x4x5

Week 11-Up to 595x7

Week 12-Unload

Week 13-535x6x3, 535x5

Week 14-585x5x3

Week 15-Up to 635x5

Week 16-Unload

Week 17-Up to 675x3 w/ knee wraps

Week 18-405x8x2 w/ 120# of chain

Week 19-Up to 765x1 w/ knee wraps

Week 20-Unload

Week 21-Meet, Opener-725, 2nd-800, miss, 3rd-800, make

This training cycle created my strength base and work capacity for the work that still lay ahead of me. After this meet I sought out the advice of Josh Bryant, who took over my deadlift and bench programming for my next meet.

My deadlift was lagging behind my squat and I knew that more attention must be given to it. Josh created a great and extremely demanding deadlift program, which forced me to become more strategic in my squat training. I needed to allow my body recover from Monday's deadlift training while still building strength during Friday's squat training. This was done with lower volume work, accommodating resistance to allow me to still feel heavy weights without overstressing my body and CNS and further hone my technique.

Week 1-Pause Squats 385, 455, 525×5

Week 2-Squats w/ 160# of Chain-405x10x2, Add Knee Wraps, 455/485/525×1

Week 3-Squat w/ Wraps-Up to 700×5

Week 4-Deload

Week 5-Pause Squats-425, 495, 565×3

Week 6-Squats w/ 160# of Chain-445x8x2, Add Knee Wraps, 495/545×1

Week 7-Squat w/ Wraps-Up to 765×2, planned to do 3 but knew I was going to miss 3rd

Week 8-Deload

Week 9-Pause Squats-455×5, 525×3, 585×1

Week 10-Squat w/ 160# of Chain-485x6x2, Add Knee Wraps, 585x1

Week 11-Squat w/ Wraps-Up to 805x1

Week 12-Deload

Week 13-Meet, Opener-785, 2nd-835, 3rd, 865

This was a great meet that resulted in my highest total to date, 2165 pounds. 865 felt strong and I knew there was more in me. Josh and I collaborated on my next training cycle with the singular goal of breaking the American Record in the 308s, which was 903 pounds by Troy Nash. My squat was on the rise in a hurry and the weaknesses we identified was a sticking point about 2" above parallel and a lack of upper back strength/thickness to support heavy weights without rounding over.

To squat 900+ I knew that I had to make squat training a higher priority, it couldn't be secondary to the deadlift this cycle. This led to the development of The 9 Day Work Week, in which we stretched out the normal 7 day training week to a 9 day week, deadlifting on day 1 and squatting on day 6, along with 2 bench days and a dedicated back training day.

WEEK 1

- 1) Squat, with knee wraps-Up to 675x3
- 2) Speed Squat-545x5x3, 1 minute rest

- 3) Dead Squat w/ SSB, from 1" above parallel-495x8x1, 1 minute rest
- 4) Single Leg Squats Standing on Box-3x12 with BW
- 5) Single Leg DB RDLs-3x5 w/ 80s
- 6) Hanging Leg Raises-5x15

WEEK 2

- 1) Squat, with knee wraps-Up to 705x3
- 2) Speed Squat-545x6x3, 1 minute rest
- 3) Dead Squat w/ SSB-525x8x1, 1 minute rest
- 4) Single Leg RDLs-3x3 w/ 90s
- 5) Hanging Leg Raises-5x15

WEEK 3

- 1) Squat, with knee wraps-Up to 735x3
- 2) Speed Squat-545x7x3, 1 min rest
- 3) Dead Squat w/ SSB-535x8x1, 1 min rest
- 4) Single Leg RDLs-3x5 w/ 90s
- 5) Hanging Leg Raises-5x15

WEEK 4 (DELOAD)

- 1) Squat-Up to 585x3
- 2) Hanging Leg Raises-3x15

WEEK 5

- 1) Squat, with knee wraps-Up to 765x2
- 2) Speed Squat-600x5x3, 90 seconds rest

- 3) Dead Squat w/ SSB-585x5x1, 90 seconds rest
- 4) Single Leg RDLs-3x3 w/ 100s
- 5) Hanging Leg Raises-4x15

WEEK 6

- 1) Squat, with knee wraps-Up to 785x2
- 2) Walkout and 10 Second Hold-860 for 1x10 seconds
- 3) Speed Squat-615x4x3, 90 seconds rest
- 4) Dead Squat w/ SSB-545, 575, 605x1, 90 seconds rest
- 5) Single Leg RDLs-3x4 w/ 100s
- 6) Hanging Leg Raises-4x15

WEEK 7

- 1) Squat, with knee wraps-Up to 805, missed, planned to do 2 reps
- 2) Speed Squats-635x3x3, 90 seconds rest
- 3) SSB Dead Squat-555, 585, 615x1, 90 seconds rest
- 4) Single Leg RDLs-3x5 w/ 100s
- 5) Hanging Leg Raises-4x15

WEEK 8 (DELOAD)

- 1) Squat-Up to 615x1
- 2) Hanging Leg Raises-3x15

WEEK 9

- 1) Squat, with knee wraps-Up to 825x1
- 2) Squat-675x3x2

- 3) Dead Squat w/ SSB-565, 605, 635×1
- 4) Hanging Leg Raises-3×15

WEEK 10

- 1) Squat, with knee wraps-Up to 845×1
- 2) Squat-695x2x2
- 3) Hanging Leg Raises-3×15

WEEK 11

- 1) Squat, with knee wraps-Up to 865×1
- 2) Hanging Leg Raises-3×15

WEEK 12

- 1) Squat-Up to 585×1

WEEK 13

Meet: Opener-835, 2nd-905, 3rd-935 — miss

There you go, over a years worth of my squat training that helped me add 200 pounds to my squat.

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