

# Mike's Gym Newsletter



## ***CASEY BURGNER SNATCHES 177 KG, A NEW PERSONAL RECORD, AT THE PAN AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIPS IN GUATEMALA CITY, GUATEMALA***

### Editor's notes:

The July issue of Mikes Gym Newsletter is coming out a bit earlier than expected due to my leaving Southern California for my annual Harley trip to see Coach Steve Gough in Ennis, Montana. Collin Ito's dad, Doug, and I are leaving 29 June and riding up thru Utah and Bryce Canyon National Park where we will meet Jim Burgener, my cousin. From Bryce we plan on spending the 4th of July with Steve and wife Gayle while enjoying the fly fishing adventures along the Madison River. The festivities during the 4th include a Veteran's day parade as well as a rodeo. From what I hear Ennis hosts more WW11, Korean, Vietnam vets during the 4th than any other area of the country!! This should be fun!! I will have my computer with me however if someone wants to e-mail me.

Forgive me for featuring the lifts of Casey Burgener at the Pan American Championships the June issue as well as this July issue, but as Casey's dad I am very proud of what he is accomplishing right now and feel the readers will enjoy the pix.

## **IRON GRAPE-VINE:**

After putting out the request for information on the GoHeavy.com website, new individuals started Sending information. Nick Curry and Regis Becker send their news for the first time. Thanks Nick and Regis.

### **Mikes Gym:**

**Connor Ito** is preparing for the School Age Nationals in that will be held in Detroit the end of June. Connor a just graduated 8th grader is Collin Ito's little brother. **Aimee Anaya** is rapidly improving where she recently did a snatch balance with 88 kg and a rack jerk with 102 kg. **Sage Burgener** is not going to the school age due to a wrist injury that is now approaching 4 months!! X-rays are negative, yet we cannot get a handle on the injury. The wrist has been injected with cortisone but did not work. Suggestions are appreciated. **Evelyn Hernandez**, 69 kg lifter, is working hard and is trying to qualify for the national championships to be held in Shreveport. Evelyn and a host of Mikes gym lifters will be going to the Calif. Games to try and qualify. **Gretchen Schumer**, a 2001 graduate of Notre Dame, is training at Mikes Gym and is showing great promise as a 69 kg lifter. The rumor re **Collin Ito** is that he snatched 141 in training!! Way to go Collin!

### **From CJ Stockel**

The Georgia State Games will be held on July 15th at Flowery Branch High-School, the new home Team Georgia Weightlifting. Below is the web page for the Olympic Weightlifting info and registration. There will NOT be a late registration fee, however there will be an out of state charge of \$5.00 added onto the entry fee. If you have not registered by July 10th but plan on competing please email Coach Stockel or call 770-827-8183 to let us know. This will help us organize the session better. If you have any questions email Coach Stockel or call us at the number above. See ya at the State Championships.

### **From Nick Curry:**

I thought I might update you on the training happenings at **Fairleigh Dickinson University** in Madison

New Jersey. All athletes are welcomed at our facility which includes 8 platforms, and plenty of bumpers plates. Also we have 7 Eleiko men's training bars, 2 competition & one women's comp bar. 2 Chapman bars for the ladies and a York bar round out our equipment. But I am not here to talk about the facility.

Currently 3 Team New Jersey members are training for the upcoming Nationals. 69 kg **Lou Mangiacinia** has been training like a demon hitting 220+ total in training during a heavy pulling preparation stage. Our two 77 kg lifters, **Michael Tiritto** and **Dave Boffa** have also been training well snatching over 110 & C&J'ing in the 130 – 140 range. Both are also in a heavy preparation phase building up a solid foundation for an aggressive competition phase to follow in order to peak for August.

**Joe Nissim** and **Chris Oakley** are 2 dynamic young competitors seen regularly giving it their all in practice and on the competition platforms. Both will qualify this summer for this years American Open.

Also training hard for the Americans is FDU Devil lifter Anthony Testa, our resident ATC who keeps us all healthy! Tony recently did 105/135 in a control competition as a very light 94 on his way to the 262 total he needs for December.

Also working hard is newcomer **John Vitale** in preparation for the 2006 Garden State Games. He is planned for a 235 total that will qualify him for the 2007 National Juniors. John is a current student at FDU.

Olympian **Bob Giordano** has started his preparation for his assault on the Masters record books come November at the American Masters championships.

Thank you for the opportunity to brag a bit about my training partners. Feel free to adjust the content as necessary if you feel it would be a good addition to your newsletter.

Nick Curry.

From Regis Becker in Pa.

Mike,

I saw your solicitation for grass roots w/ info and wasn't sure this qualified but I forward it nonetheless. As you well know this is where the rubber meets the road in US Weightlifting - small clubs relying on each other; helping out at every turn to promote the sport and make it enjoyable for all. Feel free to use any or none of it. Keep up the great work -we're enjoying your newsletter out here in Steeler Country!

Regis Becker

Pittsburgh Barbell Club

## Subject: Steel City Open Results

Attached are the results of the **Steel City Open**, held last Sunday at MASC. It was, as expected, a slightly smaller turnout due to vacations, graduations, proms and general summer distractions but we still had plenty of great lifting! A few highlights;

- In the Novice Division, **Tim McIntyre** made new PR's and took Best Lifter honors in spite of nursing a sore hip. It was a good performance for someone who does most of his training in non optimal conditions. Well done, Tim! Young **Nick Carr** had a good debut, going 5 for 6 in his first outing and showing good speed and determination. Massive and powerful newcomer **Robert Busick** had some trouble with the lockout in the snatch but came back strong with 3 successes in the C & J.
- In the Open Division, 69 Kilo **Kevin Sofka** won Best Lifter in a competitive group. Kevin had a PR C & J of 132 and narrow misses with a 102 snatch and 135 C & J (which he cleaned easily!). Already qualified for the US National Championships, Kevin is going to continue to improve as he is still nearly 3 kilos under the 69 kilo limit!
- Chris Gilman had a great day with a PR snatch and total and making the 240 American Open qualifying total for 77's. Chris just missed qualifying for the US Nationals and may be able to take another crack at that milestone before the mid July deadline.

- Always ferocious **Mike Nackoul** went 5 for 6 with 3 PR's in a tune-up for his appearance at the US School- Age Nationals later this month in Detroit. Mike has put on so much muscle this year that School-Age will almost certainly be his last competition as a 77! He smoked 111 kilos for his last C&J and will be good for more in Detroit.

As always we had great support from our friends at Columbus Weightlifting and Pendragon. A number of teammates who didn't lift were a great help throughout the day and I must give special recognition to heavyweight **Dave Nackoul** who loaded more barbells on Sunday than he has in his whole life! BTW, Dave is back in heavy training and I look for him to post some big numbers this summer before reporting for football camp at MIT.

If anyone has good digital pictures from the meet please send them to me. One of these days we'll get our website up and running and I'll need some good shots to post.

I looking to go to one or two more local meets this summer and I'll send info as I get it. Keep training hard and I'll see you in the gym!

Rege

*Editor note:*

*As this goes to press this the information people have sent for the newsletter--not bad, but could be better. Do not be shy, get your kids some publicity. Everyone likes to see their names in print.*

*Great Joe Dube part 2 interview this month!! Enjoy! The much requested article from Mike Conroy regarding the jerk is in this issue. I have made this July Issue larger than most but I had to had the humorous note from Major Bull Termus to his "fellow citizen's!!" Bull and I share the same philosophy!! Enjoy!!*



An Interview with Joe Dube; Part Two

Joe shares his thoughts on technique, training (including examples of his programs), contest preparation and even his comments on the new 1 kilo rule.

This is 'great stuff' and Mike's Gym Newsletter is honored to have Joe's contribution

**During your career the Press was still competed in and I would like to include that in this question. Did one movement come easier to you than that of another and, of course, which lift was the most difficult to achieve success at and which the easiest? (As if any of the competition lifts are easy)**

Answer: I would say that the Press was the easiest for me when I started doing the Olympic Lifts. Also, the Clean & Jerk was except for the Jerk. I had some difficulty getting the jerk back and in a solid position overhead. The Snatch was the most difficult to master. I started out doing the split, but realized that I would be able to do much more in the squat if I got my technique right. The first time I started doing the squat snatch, I would miss one right after another. I finally raised my heels up some and I started making successes. So, a little adjustment made a whole new world of difference.

As a matter of fact, my snatch started catching my press before I moved up in heavier weight classes.

When I was at my best, my snatch was actually lagging. So I had to make some more adjustments with the help of an old friend and teammate Walter Imahara. I thought that in order for me to make my presence felt, I had to do something and do it quick. He introduced me to the "Frog Style" footing for the snatch. In this position I could keep the bar closer to my body and bring it in and higher at the top of my thighs for my upward explosion with the weight. I could use more of my leg strength in my jump that propelled the bar much higher. Sometimes I had to be very careful because of the bar hitting so hard at arms length that my elbows would unlock. But with practice in training I started hitting the groove and my snatch started sky rocketing.

Later on I widened my feet some but kept my feet and knees outward so I wouldn't have to swing the bar around my knees on my pull.

**You hear so much about "periodization" and "cycling" as a part of training for today's weightlifters. With that in mind could you explain "HOW" your training was set up and, if possible, what a 'typical' week looked like?**

Answer: I set up my own training schedules during my lifting career. I did have plenty of help with my brother who was very knowledgeable giving me advice and watching my technique for any mistakes. I constantly studied other lifters and how they trained. What assistance exercises, sets, reps, etc? I read every magazine I could and also did a lot of observing and taking notes.

I kept a list of goals and PR records in all the movements I did in training. But, I hardly ever had to go back and check because I could remember these in my head. I would keep the poundage's progressively moving higher on the sets

and reps from one week to another. I would not train heavy or max all the time. But, I probably did train heavier more often than most lifters would ever dream of doing.

I did not do a lot of calculating with typical “cycling” systems. Not to say they are not effective by any means. I basically used the Light, Heavy and Max System. To me, light would be somewhere around 75-80%, Heavy 90-95% and Max 100-102%. I would max out about every three weeks on the Olympic Lifts.

A typical weeks training would look something like this on the light and Heavy days. I will not include any of the Pressing movements that I did back then except for the Military Press: Please Note: This is during the time that I was using the “Force Out” rep system on my Squats. These were done every 12 days.

Also, I used my hook grip as much as possible and only used the straps on the real heavy sets on Hi-Pulls. There were occasions I would use the straps in the Power Snatches with the heavier lifts.

Monday: Power Snatch: Light Day: 60 (132)x3 reps = 2 sets, 80 (176)x2 = 2 sets, 90 (198)x1=2 sets, 100 (220)x1=2 sets, 110 (242)x1=2 sets, 120 (264)x1=1 set, 130-132.5 (286-292)x1= 3-4 sets. I would try to catch at arms length with very little dip in the legs.

Heavy Day: 60x3=3 sets, 80x2x1, 95x1=1, 105x1=1, 117.5x1=1, 130x1=1, 140x1=1, 150x1=1, 155x1=2-3 sets. Catch arms length with quarter dip in the legs.

Snatch Hi-Pulls: Light Day: all singles 120, 130, 140, 140, 140, 140, 140 Pulled about chin height.

Heavy Day: all singles 150, 160, 170, 180, 185, 190, 190 Pulled about nipple height.

Front Squats: Light Day: 100x3, 140x3, 170x1, 200x1, 230x1, 240 (529)x5=2-3 sets Some of these reps were done with a pause at the bottom.

Heavy Day: 100x3, 145x1, 180x1, 220x1, 260x1, 280 (616)x3-5 reps=2-3 sets.

Wednesday: Power Cleans: Light Day: 80x3, 100x2, 125x1, 140x1, 150x1, 160x1, 170x1=2-3 sets. Catch at shoulders with very little leg dip.

Heavy Day: 80x3, 100x2, 130x1, 145x1, 160x1, 180x1, 190x1, 200x1=2-3 sets. Catch at shoulders in quarter position.

Clean Hi-Pulls: Light Day: all singles 160, 170, 180, 190, 190, 190, 190

Heavy Day: all singles 190, 200, 210, 220, 230, 240, 240, and 240

Back Squats: Would only work up to around 330-340kgs. For a few single fast reps. did not do too many reps on the in between days as I was doing the “Force Out” system every 12 days.

Thursday: Light Speed Jerks from rack: Concentrating on speed and banging my front foot on the platform. Would work up to around 160-170x3-5 singles.

Light Speed Snatches from the hang. Work up to around 100 kgs. for 3-5 singles.

Stretching and doing some stomach crunches with light weights.

Saturday: Snatch: Light Day: 60x1=3 sets, 80x1=2 sets, 100x1=1, 110x1=1, 120x1=1, 130x1=1, 140x1=3 sets

Heavy Day: 60x1=3 sets, 80x1=2 sets, 100x1=1, 115x1=1, 130x1=1, 140x1=1, 150x1=1, 160x1=1, 165x1=2-3 sets.

Clean & Jerk: Light Day: 60x1 clean x 2 jerks=2 sets, 80x1clean x 2 jerks=2 sets, 100x1 clean x 2 jerks=1 set, 120x1x1=1, 140x1x1=1, 160x1x1=1, 177.5 x1x1=2-3 sets.

Heavy Day: 60x1 clean x 2 jerks=2 sets, 80x1x1=1 set, 100x1x1=1set, 120x1x1=1, 140x1x1=1, 160x1x1=1, 180x1x1=1, 195x1x1=1, 210x1x1=1-2 sets.

Back Squats: (Foot spacing little closer than shoulder width and all done with speed, but no bouncing at bottom) would do right after C & J's while legs are still warm: 200x3, 230x3, 260x3, 290x3, 320x3 Last rep on each set, done with pause at the bottom.

30 minute break

Snatch Olympic Pull Dead lifts: ( pull from platform to top of thighs, then lower to just before touching platform and pull again maintaining the correct pulling position. As if you were going to try snatching the weight) 3 sets of 4-5 reps, weight depending on how I felt.

Clean Olympic Pull Dead Lifts: (the same as the snatch pulls, pull to upper thigh and not touch platform during reps.) 2-3 sets of 4-5 reps, weight depending on how I felt.

This was done when I was making my best lifts and was preparing for the '72 Seniors and Trials. There were other Strength Movements that I would also do during this time and would alternate with other movements. Power Snatch from Blocks, Hang Cleans, Power Jerks, Jerk Drives off rack, Jerk Lockouts and Press outs, Military Presses, Stiff leg Dead lifts off blocks or 45 lb. plates, Partial Power Rack Pulls with speed. These were done at different heights on the Power Rack. Lifters take note: This is an exceptional strength building method "Isotonic" system that was used back in the '60's by Bill March. Dick "Smitty" Smith helped Bill with this system and the results he made from doing these speaks for itself. I did these at various heights in my pull and did them with explosive speed up to the pins on the power rack. I also did these with the Press, F. Squat and various positions in the Jerk.

As stated before, I was doing the "Force Out" Squat System every 12 days. This consisted of working up to a weight, doing low reps, 1 or 2, until I reached the projected weight I was scheduled to do. I would take that weight and try to get at least 15 reps or more. If I felt up to it, I would take it for another set and try to get as many as the first set with that weight. Most of the time I would come up short on hitting that many reps for that second set. I might hit 10-12 reps. When I started doing these, "Force Out" reps, I was so sore the next few days, it was very hard for me to even walk around. But, after getting used to them after several workouts, it didn't bother me as much.

The next workout doing these "Force Out" reps, 12 days, I would take the same weight and try hitting 3-5 reps more than I did the first time with that projected weight. So, after the second workout using the same weight, I would increase the weight by 7.5 – 10 kgs, for my next training on these in 12 days. I would try to hit at least 15 reps or more. Then another 12 days, take the same weight and try for 3-5 more reps. the weight would increase every other workout. When I started doing these, I could manage to do somewhere around 580 - 600 lbs. for 15 reps. I eventually got up to 17 reps with 710 lbs. Also, 23 reps with 660 lbs. This system really developed the power in my legs and hips. It also developed the stamina that I needed when coming out of a heavy clean and being able to jerk the weight without fizzling out.

Doing this system takes a tremendous amount of energy and that is one of the primary reasons why I would cut down on the reps on most of the other assistance movements, especially the pulling movements. I believed in doing single attempts on my Olympic Lifts in training. I think that doing too many reps on the actual lifts can slow the movement down and could even throw your technique off some and that is not good practice. The Snatch and Clean & Jerk are explosive movements and should be trained that way.

**We have become very "technological" at today's competitions. Some athlete has an entourage of coaches, trainers, sports psychologists, dietitians and the like. We plan, we strategize, we count, we evaluate, no "t" is left uncrossed and no "i" undotted. Would you be so kind as to take us through a competition for you? How many coaches did you have? How did you warm-up and what strategy did you use?**

**Finally, if you have been in the warm-up room of a recent competition has much changed or not? I think your insight would be valuable.**

Answer: Back during the times I competed, we, including myself and many other lifters, did not have the entourage, as you put it, of Coaches, Trainers and others assisting as they do today. I did not have a personal Coach and Trainer as most all the lifters have today. I did receive plenty of help and assistance later on when I got to a National and International level Lifter. But up to that point, my brother and other lifters who were close friends would help me during training and also during competitions. I got a lot of help from friends such as Dick "Smitty" Smith and Walter Imahara during my competition days. I will always be grateful to them and to my brother and friends that helped me along the way. I would pretty much pace myself during my warm-ups for competition as they do today, paying very close attention to the weight on the platform bar, and how many attempts were left before my attempt. I would make my last warm-up with about (3) attempts left on the platform. I would only take about 6-7 warm-ups for the Snatch and about the same on the Clean & Jerk. I would work up to about 10-12.5 kgs. from my starting weight on the platform.

I have recently been to several competitions and have noticed quiet a bit of changes. Most all the lifters these days have some outstanding coaching and this is a great asset for the lifter. There seems to be greater assistance for the lifters in all respects before and during competition.

While on the subject of competition, I would like to throw in some of my thoughts about the new 1 Kilo Rule System. I know that we are trying to do everything possible to help our lifters which should always be the case; I think that the rule has some flaws to it. I'm trying to think from a spectator's point of view. It is to time consuming because there is

constant loading and unloading of the bar. And, speaking of that, there's more of this loading and unloading going on than the actual lifting attempts on the platform. This causes the competition to last longer and can really be a possible bore to the spectator. If we want to expose our sport to the public for the betterment of the sport, I think that some serious consideration should be taken to make some changes in this respect.

I would like to see them go back to the old way that you would have to take a 5 kilo jump from first attempt to the second attempt. Then, you could jump to 1 kilo, 2, 3 or whatever you had to jump to for the third attempt. I would even be in favor of increasing the number of attempts for each lift from 3 to 4. A lifter could even start lower on his first attempt to assure that he would at least get that opener and be in a better position to get that important total.

Next Month: The final installment, Joe's thoughts on our sport today



**The Jerk**  
**Michael Conroy**  
**Idaho Weightlifting**

**"There is no *partial* credit for a great clean and no jerk"**  
**Tom Hirtz , Two Time National Champion, American Record Holder**

While most, if not all, competitors have experienced it, there may be no worse feeling, in all of weightlifting, than missing a jerk, especially after an 'easy' clean. Even someone who, historically, had no more than 4 missed jerks in his, stellar, career, Wes Barnett can attest to the empty feeling that a missed jerk leaves behind. "It is like you let everyone down."

With that in mind and thanks to the following contributors, John Drewes (Red Wing WLC), Tom Hirtz (Heavy Athletics), Lyn Jones (AUS) Jim Schmitz (Sports Palace), Dr. Randall Strossen (Milo), John Thrush (Calpians) and both the USA Weightlifting Coaching Manuals and the Canadian Weightlifting Coaching Manuals I would like to present thoughts on the Jerk itself, Key Points, Suggest a teaching progression, Identify common errors and possible corrections and even delve into the controversial Squat or Push Style.



## I) Commonly accepted body positions for the Classical Split Jerk

### A) Body Position

- 1) Straight and 'tight'
- 2) Head is forward and 'neutral'
- 3) Feet are in alignment and in the 'pulling' position

### B) Barbell Position

- 1) Bar 'rests' on the anterior deltoids
- 2) The grip is, actually, relaxed

### C) The "Dip"

- 1) Drop Hips, as if sitting into a chair
- 2) The Dip is short, shallow, straight and quick
- 3) Maintain contact during the dip
  - a) Do not allow the bar to get 'separation' from the shoulders

### D) The "Drive"

- 1) As soon as the athlete 'dips' and feels that they are 'flat-footed' (This is often referred to as Jerking "off the heels") The athlete drives upwards right back where they came from.

### E) The Split

- 1) The feet move an equal distance fore and aft.
- 2) The front foot should move One and One half shoe lengths from the starting position
- 3) Both feet should land at the same time
- 4) The Knee of the front foot should be behind the tip of the shoe and be flat to the platform. (The shin should be perpendicular (90') to the knee joint)
- 5) The rear leg is slightly bent
- 6) The rear foot is on the 'ball' with the heel 'up'
- 7) The original 'pulling position' lateral distance is maintained. This means that the feet drive straight forward and not 'wider' or more narrow in width than their starting position

### F) Recovery

- 1) Front foot comes 'back' a half step
- 2) Rear foot comes 'forward' a half step.
- 3) Front foot comes 'back' into alignment with rear foot.

## II) Key Points

Once the lifter has recovered from the clean, they should step their feet back into line until they are approximately in their 'pulling' position. This position, sometimes referred to as the 'vertical jump' position has been found to be most efficient for exerting upward force through the body and into the barbell. The barbell should rest on the shoulders and upper chest.



It is essential that the lifter GET SET for the jerk in the most methodical manner possible. (Those of us who have been in the sport long enough to have seen USAW International Coach Steve Gough shout the words "GET SOME AIR!!!" know the importance of 'setting a platform' and the horror of 'rushing' a jerk.)

Arm position, prior to jerking is, as Lyn Jones would always comment "worthy of mention". The barbell should NOT be gripped tightly and, in fact a slack grip should be adopted (NOTE: Back in 1998 I had the pleasure of working with Junior World Championship Bronze Medalist Sally Oakes at the NACACI Championships. In our pre-competition meeting I asked her if she had any 'trigger' words that she liked to hear and Sally replied. "When you see that I am 'set' just yell out "fingers". On her first jerk I did so and right before she dipped she wiggled her fingers, to relax her grip, and then jerked the weight. She placed second to Olympic Champion Soraya Jimenez of Mexico and by only 2.5kg!)

If the lifter grips the barbell tightly the arms and shoulders may tense up and the lifter will tend to push the barbell away from their shoulders which will cause a re-action of pushing themselves away from the barbell, ending up behind it and losing the jerk out in front.

A lot of discussion has been about, exactly, where to place the elbows and without getting into all the possible variations I will defer to Lyn Jones who stated "When the grip is relaxed, the elbows will go, comfortably, to where they should anatomically. Now this will cause each lifter to look different but if the basic Bio-mechanics that govern The Jerk are adhered to it will not create any concern."

WHAT IS IMPORTANT is that the elbows do not change position when the dip occurs. This is true for both 'fingertip' Jerkers (Wes Barnett) or traditional Jerkers (Casey Burgener).

The DIP is, without question, the most important phase of the jerk. When a jerk is lost it is usually lost here. This is when the lifter exerts maximum force on the barbell before moving into the receiving position.

Keeping the body completely vertical the athlete bends the knees. (Former US National Coach Dragomir Cioroslan would say "Drop your hips as if you are sitting into a chair." This makes you both flatfooted and 'sets the weight back and not forward.") The athlete should feel the weight on their heels. The dip is quick and shallow. If the athlete dips too deep the weight will shift forward and a forward lean will result in a total disaster. The speed of the dip is also of importance because if it is too fast the athlete will lose contact with the shoulders. Too slow and the athlete's knees will get driven forward and the barbell will follow right along.

As soon as the athlete dips they should 'drive out of it'. The result of this is similar to the process of blocking in both the high jump and the long jump. The quick turn around of momentum will cause that force to be exerted onto the barbell and assist in the lift being successful. (In jumping blocking helps turn horizontal momentum into vertical momentum.)

Contrary to popular belief athletes do not drive the barbell up very far, nor should they try to. What they should strive to do is STEP THROUGH THE JERK. The lifter drives, with leg extension, up into the toes before splitting the legs both fore and aft. The athlete should not push with their arms against the bar (because in reality MOST athletes are jerking weights that are in excess of their body-weight) as this will result in them being pushed away from the barbell. To jerk well the athlete must drive with their legs and wedge themselves under the barbell. Once the athlete lands and is in proper position NOW they push against the barbell with their arms. This action is swift and dealt with authority and as such will accelerate the lifter's descent under the barbell into the final receiving position with the hips and shoulders in alignment and the elbows locked out.

When the feet land they should not stamp hard onto the platform. If this does occur the force is transferred back into the lead leg and causes it to straighten. This will, in the domino effect, cause the rear leg to be pushed out of its correct position and now the athlete is scrambling to try and save the lift.

The recovery should be controlled and unhurried. IT IS important the athlete recovery front foot back first. When the athlete does this it pushes the barbell back into the shoulder girdle and onto a bone support position. If the athlete recovers back foot forward, first, the jerk can be lost forward after all the work has been done.

To Quote Lyn Jones. " As can be seen jerking weights is an extremely complex skill. More and more in elite competition we are seeing vital, if not critical, jerks lost, there are many theories as to why. In my way of thinking the athletes are finding it very hard to hold weights overhead in the split with the shoulders, hips and arms in one line. Developing shoulder strength equal to the athlete's hip and leg strength is a challenge that coaches and athletes must meet".

Lyn's quote leads into the next part of the article

### III) Teaching Progressions

Here are the various types of Pressing and Jerking Movements

#### **A) IN FRONT**

1. Press
2. Push Press
3. Push Jerk
4. Split Jerk

#### **B) IN BACK**

1. Press
2. Push Press
3. Push Jerk
4. Split Jerk

#### **C) REMEDIAL**

1. Footwork
2. "Murray" cross
3. Jerk Recovery
4. "Pause"Jerks.

#### Definitions

**PRESS:** All effort is done with the arms only

**PUSH PRESS:** The athlete dips the knees at the initial Movement but drives the knees up and to an Extended position

**PUSH JERK:** The athlete dips, drives the barbell up and then Receives the barbell on a bended or flexed knee.

**SPLIT JERK:** The classical movement explained in the article

The main reason for using movements where the barbell is placed behind the athletes head is that this position causes two, hopefully, positive effects. One. The athlete's elbows will be positioned such that the athlete will be straight up and down in their alignment and Two the athlete's weight is set behind making it easier to drive the barbell upwards and not forwards. Athletes that really have problems 'pushing the jerk out front' can benefit from behind the neck movements.

Athletes and their coaches should build into their programs an overhead movement each session and should progress through the entire menu of suggested exercises and each assists the next.

Hopefully all athletes are using a form of Periodization and the Pressing Movements fit, nicely, into a Cycle One, Pushing Movements, into a Cycle Two and Split movements into a Cycle Three.

The JERK is a skill exercise and as such reps should be kept to singles, doubles, and triples and Triples should be no more than 75%. It serves little purpose and is of great risk to try and hit 90% for 5 as the risk of injury far outweighs the reward of a personal best in an assistance exercise. (NOTE: Thanks to the father of one of my athletes Idaho Weightlifting is the proud owner of a set of Jerk Blocks and these things are the 9th wonder of the world.)

(NOTE: In the 1990's, I used to watch two-Time Olympian Tim McRae, who had a personal best 195kg C&J, perform Jerks with 50kg when he was at the U.S. Olympic Training Center and I was working with the National Junior Squad. I mean jerk, after jerk, after jerk. WITH 50kg!!! Just getting the feel for it. I found that real impressive. Remember Jerking is a Skill and you can approach it the same way as you would hit a bucket of golf balls. Lots and Lots of repetition.)

#### IV) Faults and Corrections

- 1) Barbell is lost forward in receiving position
  - a) Possible Cause: Forward lean on dip
  - b) Possible Remedy: Push Jerks with emphasis on keeping body upright in the receiving position. Focus on timing between knees being bent and arms being locked.  
Split Jerks with lighter weights and technique  
Correction
- 2) Being pushed away from barbell in split position
  - a) Cause: Athlete is 'pushed forward' at the dip position
  - b) Remedy: Pause Jerks (See Glossary)
- 3) Incomplete dip and drive
  - a) Cause: Weak body levers
  - b) Remedy: Build in pressing movements into each training session
- 4) Head "Sticks" through on receiving phase of jerk
  - a) Cause: Jerk is 'placed' out front.
  - b) Remedy: Technique re-enforcement with light weights with emphasis on keeping the head 'still'
- 5) Barbell slides down chest on dip.
  - a) Cause: Loss of Chest compression
  - b) Remedy: Have athlete take a deep breath prior to dipping and inflate chest. Also Incline pressing can help develop better chest muscles.
- 6) Athlete recovers forward
  - a) Cause: Athlete 'sticks' jerk out front
  - b) Remedy: Jerk Recoveries (See Glossary)

- 7) Lifter gets up on toes during dip.
  - a) Cause: Athlete dips to deep
  - b) Remedy: Push jerks, leaving feet in pulling position for reception phase. Emphasis on weight being on heels before jerking.
  
- 8) Lead leg (and or trail leg) is not placed properly in split
  - a) Cause: Incomplete dip and drive
  - b) Remedy: The Murray Cross (See Glossary)
  
- 9) Pressing out
  - a) Cause: Poor Timing
  - b) Remedy: Push jerks, both front and back  
Rack Jerks; Singles with 80%
  
- 10) Poor shoulder position
  - a) Cause: Poor Flexibility
  - b) Remedy: Push Jerk behind the neck
  
- 11) Front foot is short. (Knee is in front of toe)
  - a) Cause: Not stepping through the jerk
  - b) Remedy. Pause jerks and Fukada Jerks. (See Glossary)
  
- 12) Rear foot is flat (Heel on ground and or turned to the side)  
Rear Knee 'straight'
  - a) Cause: In complete extension, not stepping through.
  - b) Remedy: Murray Cross exercise and Pause Jerk.

This FINAL section is PURE JIM SCHMITZ and he gets all the accolades. While I have taught the squat jerk and understand it I do not like it as I feel that there is no place to recover if it is not performed exactly. With that in mind I did see, at the 1996 Olympics, Zhan (China) Dimas (Greece) and Kakhiaashvilis (Greece) each set amazing Olympic and World records using this style. Impressive to say the least.

The PUSH JERK (PJ) is performed with the barbell on your deltoids and clavicles and slightly wider than shoulder grip, elbows slightly up, your feet about hip to shoulder width, your body, hips and legs in line, standing at attention and your eyes looking straight ahead, not up or down or side to side.

You now lower your body straight down two to four inches by bending the knees, then you forcibly extend your legs and at the same time push with your arms the barbell around your chin and nose and over your head.; but as the barbell clears your head you rebend the knees two to four inches and catch the barbell directly overhead and ears, with the arms extended and the elbows locked. Then you stand up.

(NOTE: In my speaking with athletes that do PJ they tell me two different approaches to the depth of the receiving position. One statement is that the depth they descend to is determined by their pushing up on the barbell. The heavier the weight the deeper they catch it. The second statement is that the athlete receives the barbell in a deep, similar to a full snatch depth position, each and every time regardless of the weight on the barbell. As

a result of these discussions when I teach the PJ I have 3 points of emphasis. ONE. The athlete MUST keep their torso “perfectly” vertical in the reception phase. TWO. The timing of the feet “hitting” the platform and the elbows locking out must be simultaneous. THREE. The feet must move into the exact same position as they are in the back squat so that the athlete can descend their hips between and below their knees and be in the most balanced and powerful position possible.)

The PJ can be tricky for some people. Some have trouble getting the rebending of the knees as the barbell goes overhead and catching the barbell in a position that allows them to have the timing and balance correct. Those that wish to try the PJ need to be persistent and remember the essence of the PJ is DIP, DRIVE, DIP, and CATCH.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS.

### 1. Jerk Recovery. (A Jim Schmitz exercise)

Using a “power rack” the athlete sets the barbell at a height similar to the reception phase of the jerk. The athlete then steps into the rack and pushes up on the barbell until they are in the split position. They then practice the front foot back, rear foot forward recovery. (Traditionally very heavy weights, ie.120% are used in this exercise)

### 2. Pause Jerks. (A John Thrush Exercise)

Using weights in the 80% range the athlete ‘sets’ just as they would for a typical jerk. The difference is that when they ‘dip’ they pause at the bottom, just long enough to get the feeling of being flat-footed or feel the weight ‘on the heels’ and then perform the jerk.

### 3. The Fukada Jerk.

Once again using weights in the 80% range the athlete sets as they would for a normal jerk. The difference here is that they place their lead foot HALF THE DISTANCE that it should travel and then dip and place the lead foot in the proper position. (The rear foot stays in its original position but should go up onto the ball.)

### 4. The Murray Cross

A very simple, very traditional and very effective tool for improving jerk technique. A “Cross” (+) is drawn onto the platform and the coaches watches both the starting position and receiving position of the athletes jerk. Feedback is immediate as to proper alignment and corrections become ‘easy’ to make.



An open letter to

Dear "Miss Friend",

After this morning's attempted to get me to

brakes by jumping in front of me at 70mph and then slamming on them for no obvious reason (brake check good, by the way), it occurred to me that here in the good old USofA that's apparently not considered a feux-pax (at least, judging from the sheer number of times that you and your peers have done it to me lately). It dawns on me that you're not aware of the new guidelines on interacting with us Iraq and Afghanistan vets. For instance, I feel it reasonably necessary to point out that MY first gut reaction to your otherwise normal activity was to immediately open fire and turn you and your car into swiss cheese. You see, if you'd done that while I was on one of the many convoys during my tours in Iraq or Afghanistan, I would have assumed you were attempting to wedge yourself into our lines in order to set off a Vehicle Born Improvised Explosive Device (VBIED) and kill me and my comrades. And because we frown on that in my line of work, we're trained to start shooting with everything we have until the only way to identify you is by DNA puddle swab. Don't take it personally...it's just that we've been conditioned to eliminate the dangerous and incredibly stupid (who are often, we've found, one and the same -- just like you), and, in the big scheme of things, ammo is pretty cheap so we use a heckuva lot of it. And when one of us opens up, then the rest of us are like hockey players in the Stanley Cup when the puck is dropped (as in, "it's on"). Heck, my good friends the Marines were better than FedEx when it came to immediately meeting your "I absolutely, positively have to blow a 12'x12' smoking hole in that building right this minute" needs. Now, my conversations with my friends in local law enforcement have indicated that they'd prefer we not use these SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) here. And, Lord knows I want to be a law-abiding citizen. But -- and this important -- one of the truths I discovered in those Chaotic Club Med locales that I feel compelled to share with you is that the law isn't the same thing as body armor. The former may make you feel smug and all tingly secure in the notion that I won't respond to your actions with overwhelming devastating force, but unless you're actually wearing the latter I wouldn't bet the mortgage on it.

my fellow citizens:

chance meeting with you, whereby you check out your kicky new hairdo and

Here's a few other guidelines in interacting with the recent Iraq or Afghanistan returnee/veteran:

- When we're in Starbucks, waiting for our coffee, I REALLY want that 2-foot personal space. There isn't a square-inch of personal space in Irag or Afghanistan, and, honestly, we really feel like we've earned it. If you insist on invading that space, you need to know that you are immediately eligible to have my K-bar sticking out of your chest. I'd shoot you, but you're really too close now, and I don't want an errant shot to injure innocent civilians.

- I realize that you believe that showing me your middle finger prominently is your way of indicating that you are superior in every way to me (and you probably are...), but for us it's actually the "weapons hot" signal. Really. Also, we have discovered through trial and error that one can, in fact, be beaten to death with one of their own appendages. That's handy info to have.

- I'm aware that you could conceivably sue me if I "touch you" after you talked incessant crap to me or was insulting to my wife, but I'm not sure you're aware that if they can't find your body it's a lot harder for your lawyer. And you seem to be under the mistaken impression that I have to do anything myself -- the dozens of men I fought with all understand the rule that says, "if I call you and need you visit someone for me" applies absolutely.

- You can be extricated from your vehicle a LOT easier than you think. Trust me. We do it a lot. You might give that some thought the next time you are under the impression that your Geo Metro is somehow a surrogate exoskeleton.

- No, I don't like you. I don't like anyone. That's just the way it is; get shot at by enough SOBs, watch your life flash before your eyes enough times, see enough carnage to make a Freddy 13th Marathon seem like The Sound of Music, and let me know how patient with your fellow man YOU are. Hey, it's nothing personal...I'm just cranky.

- If I wanted your damn opinion, I'd have a Special Forces ODA track it, kick it's door down, flashbang it, butt-stroke it, gag it, zip-tie it and drag it out by it's ankles and thrown into the trunk of a vehicle on it's head and then taken to Guantanamo.

So, Mr. and Ms. Friend, as you can see there's simply no reason we can't all just get along if you'll just remember these handy tips. Of course, it helps that whacking your petulant, self-indulgent ass won't lose me any sleep (mortars, now THOSE put a crimp in the rest cycle...).

Hugs and Kisses,

BULL

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