

# Non-Conventional Training Part I

Jim Smith, CSCS, CFT, USAW(Club)

Jedd Johnson, CSCS

You ever walk into the gym, dreading doing the same exercises again and again. Well this article should give you a new perspective on how to incorporate some non – conventional exercises into your training regimen. These exercises will include some aspects of known supplemental powerlifting and dinosaur training exercises – with additional components. Non-Conventional exercises typically are not single joint, isolation exercises. They are multi-joint, multi-plane, closed chain complex movements that will better prepare your athletes for game time demands – ie. they are more functional. Guaranteed to get you stares – these movements will kick your training up a level and stress you metabolically.

## The Cobra

This is not a new exercise but rather a new exercise sequence. It's called the Cobra due to its Side-To-Side motion.

The sequence goes as follows:

**DB Snatch→Side Bend w/ weight overhead→DB Deadlift→DB Snatch→Military Press→Side Bend w/weight overhead→ Repeat**

This sequence targets your core (erectors, obliques), elbow and shoulder stabilization (thoracic stabilization), charges your CNS and will raise your core temperature because it is very metabolic. It has an explosive snatch component and also promote kinesthetic awareness. You better be ready for this one.



## Landmines

Landmines are not a new exercise, but are definitely an overlooked multi-joint, rotational lift that will provide some excellent stimulation. Rotational core stability is achieved and promoted with this exercise.



## One Arm Landmines

Like the typical two handed version, One Arm Landmines are explosive and great for the core. Try this cool variation. Click on the image below for a video!



## The Plow Lift

We stumbled upon a "new" type of lifting "discipline" recently in the March 2003 issue of *MILO*, A Journal for Serious Strength Athletes. The article is called Plow Lifting in the Canary Isles by Lucio Doncel, and it appears on pages 53 to 55.

Plow lifting is “a typical activity of the Canary Isles, in which strength and technique are combined” to lift a plow, starting from horizontal and ending in vertical. The plow is always lifted by the rudder. In the Isles, it is customary that once the plow is lifted, “it is maintained on the palm of the hand, to display to the audience, then returned to the ground.” Some even balance it on the chin for the audience to add effect.

“The weight of the plow is usually between 30 and 60 kilos (66 to 132 lbs), while some get up to 100 kilos.” Adding to the difficulty of the lift is the leverage the lifter works against. The lifter takes the plow by one end; at the other end is a decorated, cross-shaped harness, plus the plow is usually “between four and five meters (13 to 16.5 feet).”

This is like taking an Olympic bar by one end and leveraging it upright with weights added at the other end. Click on image below for a Diesel Crew video!



Plow lifting was begun at the beginning of the 20th century. Matias Hernandez is the first documented lifter of plows. Plow lifting events were usually held during the intermissions of canary wrestling exhibitions. As a child, José Rodriguez Franco, known to many as “El Faro” or the Lighthouse, witnessed Matias Hernandez doing plow lifting and began doing it himself, becoming famous for it.

“The plow is held by the rudder with a hand on the end (palm and fingers downward) and the other hand forward (palm and hands upward). With this grip it is possible to lift the plow into a vertical position and then lower it slowly, which constitutes the hardest phase, and deposit it on the ground. The choice of the hand that is placed in the forward position” depends on the lifter; whether he is left or right handed. The legs are important as well, as one thigh acts as the fulcrum for the lever.

In the majority of the competitions that have existed, they were conducted in a round-robin format, with the winner being the one who could lift his, as well as all other plows.

## **About the Authors**

James Smith, a NSCA – CSCS, ISSA-CFT, USAW (Club), and Jedd Johnson, a NSCA-CSCS. James and Jedd have trained many collegiate and professional athletes using the world renowned Diesel Method. Jim and Jedd are prolific speakers who travel all over the country promoting the importance of Grip strength and the Diesel Method. Creators of the US Grip Championships, they also put on the World Series of Grip at many Strongman contests each year.

## **References**

1. Doncel, Lucio, Weiss, MILO, A Journal for Serious Strength Athletes: March 2003. F.A. Davis Company, 1996.