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INNOVATIVE STRENGTH TRAINING FOR ELITE ATHLETES

TOP 3



MISSING COMPONENTS IN A GOOD STRENGTH PROGRAM



Vic Magary

www.gymjunkies.com

1. Heavy Pull Ups. Anyone who knows even a little about strength training is going to hit the squat, deadlift, and bench press. And many will work the overhead press. But many will also neglect upper body pulling strength when undergoing a strength training program. And nothing is going to beat the pull up for developing upper body pulling strength. To keep things in the strength training realm, strap a few plates to a weight belt and use a weight that allows no more than 5 reps per set.

2. Stepping Out Of The Comfort Zone. Doing what you've always done, will get you what you've always gotten. For different (and improved) results, try something that you haven't done before. Maybe that's altering the resistance across the movement by using bands or chains. Maybe it's using dumbbells instead of barbells for a few weeks. Or maybe it's just cranking some different music to put a new spark in your intensity. Experiment with changing different factors of your strength program and track your results. Which leads to number three. . .

3. Detailed Training Journal. Tracking your results is the only way to know if what you are doing is really working. Sure, many record the exercises performed, the weight used, the sets, and the reps. But there are many more factors that can be tracked. Consider tracking the rest intervals between sets, the time of day, the overall time the session takes, your mood and energy before and after the session, and even the room temperature for all of you hard core garage and warehouse gym dwellers without climate control. As they say, the devil is in the details. Keep a detailed training journal and you'll always know what's working and what isn't.



Jedd Johnson

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I have tried many programs and had many goals in my strength program over the years. My workout focuses have varied between Olympic lifting, strongman, and grip strength, and while it is important to make sure your written program is polished and refined, what goes on outside the gym is equally as important, if not so. Here are three things I have found to have a powerful influence on my results over the years. When these processes are solid, my lifting is solid.

1. Proper Hydration - If I do not drink enough water over the course of the day, I feel run down when I get home and have difficulty warming up right. In order to keep my hydration status high enough, I get started in the morning by drinking a large glass upon getting up and another before leaving for work. I make it a goal to finish 3 bottles of water during the course of the day while sitting at my work station, in addition to more water during lunch. Once you establish your hydration routine, it becomes much easier to stay on it, especially when you start seeing the results in the weight room.

2. Proper Rest - Once, I get home from work, my day is not over. I train, I eat, and then I get right back onto the PC or laptop until bedtime. Often, I look up and find it is 11:30 and realize I have to retire for the night. With my mind racing, it is often 12:30 before I am calm enough, both physically and mentally, to fall asleep. This results in a tremendous loss of sleep time, which has caused me to have serious drops in energy by the end of the week. I have begun shutting the work down at 10:30 and sitting down to read a book in bed. This short amount of downtime calms me down for a good night's sleep and I get the added benefit of learning about training, marketing, or other important subject.

3. Learning from the Leaders - I am a hard headed individual and for a long time I thought I could accomplish all of my grip training goals by doing what I thought was best and working harder and harder in the gym all the time. However, recently I have begun getting input from some of the best competitors in the sport of grip and implementing their practices in my training. This has opened up new avenues in my training and thinking, and helped me to learn quite a bit in a short time! No matter what your goal is, I encourage you to find someone else who has already accomplished that goal and bug them and get all the information you can from them to improve your training methods, recuperative techniques, and more!

I've just written a new grip strength product that will have you ripping decks of cards to pieces in no time - check it out at CardTearing.com!



Mike Robertson

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1 – Too Much Volume.

If your goal is to get really strong, you can't use a ridiculous amount of volume week-in and week-out. Instead, focus on the big lifts, high quality workouts, and putting more weight on the bar whenever possible.

2 – Too Little Rest

If your goal is to get bigger/stronger, you absolutely need adequate rest. This goes for rest in-between sets, and in-between workouts. When training for strength a minimum of two minutes rest is necessary, and when maximal strength is the goal, you may need as much as 5-10 minutes rest between sets.

3 – Too Many Exercises

This goes hand-in-hand with Point #1. If you want to get strong, focus on the big, compound movements. For instance high level powerlifters will often only perform 2-3 lifts in any given session.

When developing a program, always base things around the core exercises: push-ups, pull-ups, squats, deadlifts, rows, etc. Think big, heavy, and basic, and you'll be on the right path.

Mike Robertson is the President of Robertson Training Systems (www.RobertsonTrainingSystems.com) and co-owner of Indianapolis Fitness and Sports Training (www.IFASTOnline.com). He's also the creator of Magnificent Mobility, Inside-Out, Building the Efficient Athlete and Bulletproof Knees.



Joe Hashey

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The top missing components in good strength program is tough to narrow down to just three. However, I think the biggest omissions come from program development. Here's some things that are often missing:

- 1. Individual Progressions.** Working with a lot of high school sports team, I notice coach's favor easy programs for large groups. The problem is, they will have a room full of athletes of varying strength levels and training ages. There needs to be different levels of training from baseline up to elite athletes.
- 2. Lack of Periodization.** If you don't plan, you plan to fail. This is a mistake I made when I first started. I did the same exercises, same intensity, day after day. Gets boring, and does not produce top level results. There needs to be a method to the madness!
- 3. Missing Restoration and Recovery.** Many people push it extremely hard in the gym, but miss out on gains because they don't take care of their bodies. Proper diet, sleep, hydration, warm-up/warm-down, active release techniques, contrasting, and much more needs to go into making a healthy body.



Donnell Boucher

<http://www.citadelsports.com/fls/9700/strength/strength.htm>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/BULLDOGPWR>

1. A progressive system that forces all those who train in it to master progressions and constantly adapt. We separate our program into 3 classifications: PUPS [mostly all 1st year players], DOGS [mostly all 2nd – 4th year players], and ELITE [usually 4th and 5th year players, but not limited to...if an athlete is gifted and experienced enough in the weight room, sometimes 3rd year guys can make it to an ELITE program]. Several factors are looked at when determining what class to place athletes in: strength to weight ratio, # of years training with us, and movement screens/evaluations all play a role. Our program doesn't have freshman using bands or jumping right into partial ROM Max Effort rotations. We feel that there is plenty to learn before the advanced techniques get introduced. I've seen quite a few programs where all 120+ guys on the football team do the same program. While this might suffice for the player's first 2 years in the program, I think the advancement is necessary at some point around year 2-3, and definitely year 4-5. We keep all our guys on the same program until they become DOGS...then we split them up into position group specific programs. The groupings are determined by where an athlete plays in relation to the line of scrimmage. This is nothing ground breaking, and I am certainly not the creator of "Block Training," but I am amazed at how many people still use the generic, "one size fits all" approach.

2. The utilization of non-traditional training means. Kegs, heavy sandbags, thick ropes, tires, implement throwing, and pushing/pulling/carrying vehicles, sleds, or whatever else you can! I believe there is a lot to gain from these methods, and we will program these types of implements directly into our training sessions. One example from this Winter's DOGS – FRONT 7 BIG program: a posterior chain combo: Glute Ham

Raise, Tire Flips on a clock, and Alternating Single Arm Dumb Bell Swings. There is also the element of surprise, and a fun-factor involved...Even though they're filled with water, our boys always seem to shift into high gear at the mere SIGHT of kegs in the weight room.

3. This last one is going to come from left field, but I'm throwing it in...I'll leave the science stuff to those better equipped. My #3 Top Missing Component of a Good Strength Program is...a capable Sound System. Say what you want about this; in my opinion, environment is a major difference maker in the effectiveness of a program. Now, I'm not condoning a zoo, where the music is cranking and no instruction ever goes on...but there is a time and a place for teaching-paced instruction, and it's NOT every 15 minutes mid-session, with the group called up in an audience. Our Strength Assistants know it's on THEM to make sure the guys on their 2-3 platforms are getting coached clearly and aggressively during the sessions. From my position, I monitor the athletes AND the coaches to make sure EVERYONE is working up to our standard. After I give the initial comments to the group, the music is turned up and stays up until the end whistle sounds. We've got a commercial sound system that you might find in small night club running off a computer set up with over 9,000 songs on it...we control the music, but I allow our athletes to bring in material as the year goes on. As long as it's clean, we'll play it. The last point I'll make is this: regardless of what some old school coaches might think, THE MUSIC MATTERS...I'm a Hatebreed/Pantera/Early 90s Rap/Rage kind of guy, so I tend to favor that stuff. But the second some Jeezy, Pastor Troy or Lil Wayne comes on, it's like game day just arrived. I try to make it so Environment is always in our favor.



AJ Roberts

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1. Technique - You can have the best freaking program out there but if you have no clue how to perform a lift correctly then you might as well not bother showing up. I have seen people instantly add a ridiculous amount of weight to their lift just by correcting the movement pattern.

2. Someone with enough balls to call bullshit on those who are slacking - Look I couldn't care less if you had a hot date with some MILF that kept you out all night, when you step in the gym you better bring your A game. Sitting there thinking about getting strong is not going to get you anywhere.

3. Mind Control - This is one of the most neglected areas of any program be it strength or anything else. If you learn to control you mind, visualize your success, control your emotions and rid yourself of negative thoughts then there really isn't anything else standing in your way.



Blair Wagner

<http://www.citadelsports.com/fls/9700/strength/strength.htm>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/BULLDOGPWR>

Assuming quality thought and effort have been put into a strength training program, all else being equal, I feel that these three components are usually lacking from the a good strength program.

1. Incorporating Daily Individual and Team Competitions – The ability for athletes to compete in an every day setting is critical to the success of team and individual sports. Anything from team relay's, to 1 on 1 tug of wars, to using a dumbbell weight heavier than the previous week. I simply make the statement to my teams, "Do something today that YOU have never done in the past." Work harder – beat your last weeks sets/reps/weight/time, COMPETE! There is competitive nature in all man kind. Sometimes it takes a little extra effort on the coaching end to see it. Fill your team with competitors and your program will take care of itself.

2. Sport Mentality Transfer – Giving each athlete specific examples of on field/on court experiences where success can either be earned or an opportunity can be lost. Being able to make athlete's understand the importance of the effort that is exerted in the weight room and how it transfers over to their sport. The pain, the physical and mental struggles they endure in each training session is setting them up for success for their competitive season. Fight for every rep just as you would for any rebound,

blocked shot, interception, or stolen base. Make references back to their closest contests that might have been decided by one play – (or one rep).

3. Positive Influential Environment – Do athletes leave the weight room looking to return for more or dreading the next time they have to mope through one of the most silent hours of their day? Each session, from the minute the first athlete walks in, to the last grueling minute they are dragging out, fill the room with ENERGY!!! Push them through their toughest moments and coach every rep. Show each and every athlete that you care about their progress. Stay vocal, provide positive feedback as well as constructive criticism, play that latest hip hop track and find away to create a positive training environment.

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