

# COMBAT GRAPPLER

## GLADIATOR TRAINING MANUAL



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**DISCLAIMER**: The author of this manual is not responsible in any way, shape or form regarding any injuries that may result from following the training programs outlined in this manual. It is advised that all readers get a full medical check up and clearance prior to performing this or any exercise program. The workouts listed may be too strenuous for some individuals and should only be done under the supervision of a trained professional.



## **CHAPTER 1**

### **WHY CREATE YOUR OWN GYM?**

First question you may be asking is, “Why create a program for us to train at home?” That is the short, unedited version of your question I bet! Ask anyone else, and they want to be at a gym with the high tech equipment, the cool machines, “the atmosphere”, and bla bla bla! Hey, I am not here to pull any punches, so pay close attention and we’re gonna get you rolling on a tough program. A program to help you kick butt and take names! That is, if you decide to stick to the programs and bust your butt with them!

Now, here are my reasons, some of them, for keeping you out of a commercial gym, and training in your own home. First of all, I do not want you training at a gym where they make you feel like an outcast because you break into a sweat every time you train! These gyms have employees who will shake you down like the Sopranos to ensure you have left no trace of sweat behind on that last pretty machine you used! Create your own world, your own atmosphere! Turn that garage or basement into a dungeon, a place where no one can steal your thunder. Pump your favorite CD and set aside a time of 30 – 45 minutes that is undisturbed. Put up your own posters and pictures that will motivate you. Remember Rocky 3 and 4, where Rocky goes away to train? Well, he needed that environment to get back the Eye of the Tiger. People look at you in a funny way in those ridiculous pretty gyms when you have The Eye of the Tiger.

Next reason is you MUST STAY AWAY FROM ALL MACHINES!!! These are the worst enemy of all athletes, especially wrestlers. A machine guides you through a predictable range of motion & limits the amount of force you can apply. As a wrestler, everything you do on the mat is ever changing. A wrestling match or practice is never absolute. We can never say that every time we hit a low single your opponent reacts the same way. Your opponent can react an infinite number of ways! Free weights help your body develop more balance, they recruit more muscles to work together and they strengthen tendons and ligaments to help reduce your chance of injuries.

I see a few wrestlers training at a gym that I used to go to when I did not have my own place. I watch them do leg extensions, shoulder presses on a machine, chest presses

on a machine, etc. I feel like shaking them and taking them through my own training regime! They do not want to listen though, as they want to train the wrong way because they feel paying for my services costs them too much. Maybe I'll hit them over the head with this book when it is finished! Training like a bodybuilder using machines and excessive cables can get you big and muscular but it will not give you functional strength! I have seen many wrestlers who look jacked but get a rude awakening from their thinner opponent. Sure, the opponent is highly skilled, but, the opponent was surely doing tons of dips, push ups and pull ups. In addition, the bodybuilding training will work against you, limiting your ability to gain strength, power & speed.

What is functional strength? Functional simply means that you are able to use it effectively for what ever endeavor you are involved in. Functional training for you might not be functional for a soccer player. The training philosophies outlined in this book will give you functional strength specifically for wrestling. Specifically, doing an exercise such as the flat bench press would not be very functional for wrestling for a number of reasons; specifically, you never lay motionless on your back in a wrestling match, and then press upwards. Even though I like the bench press and still have some of my athletes perform the exercise, it is not a popular exercise with me!

But, picking up a weight from the ground and lifting it to your chest is very functional. Try lifting a sand bag up and placing it on a barrel or a table next to you. This move has you incorporate lifting from a low level and rotating – very similar to hitting takedowns and cutting the corner. The bench press does have its place in some training programs, but I will not use it very often. I prefer dumbbells for extra balance and they allow you to turn your wrists and take excessive pressure off the shoulders.

Another reason for you to train at home is that you will have the necessary equipment that many commercial gyms do not have. And if they do have the equipment, it is not in a convenient place for you. Outfitting your home with a small make shift gym will be easy and relatively inexpensive. Training with the “right stuff” will put you on the road to the states, and hopefully, further! In addition, we need the proper mental attitude, but that is probably another book in itself!

My own experience in training at gyms has taken me literally through much of NJ, and at times, other countries! I found one place, 30 minutes away that suited me

perfectly when I began to take bodybuilding seriously. The gym was dark and dungeon like. The music was loud, very loud! Never was a radio station playing, only CD's in order to avoid the annoying commercials that came on every 5 minutes. The loud music put all the lifters in the zone. It also made it too loud for conversation so that was never a problem. Too many other gyms have people reading the newspaper and doing the same exercises using the same weights year after year. Their results speak for themselves, unfortunately. If the radio shuts off for a minute you hear everyone chatting. It sounds like a crowded coffee shop!

When I entered this gym there was a certain smell in the air. The smell of hungry gladiators pushing their mind and body to new limits. Everyone was sweating! Heavy weights were dropped on the floor constantly and no one told us to be nice to the weights. We were there to go to war. War against our training partners and war against the weights. If a CD was being changed you heard no one talking. You heard weights clanking together, weights being dropped to the floor and people grunting while pushing out those last few reps that separate the men from the boys. My training partner was a former wrestler. I knew my best training partner would have to be a wrestler for him to be able to understand & accept the intensity of the work outs. Pain was not a problem for either of us and we pushed each other to our limits and beyond. Often times I recall my partner getting nauseous and taking trips to the bathroom. We all had the eye of the tiger. The gym reminded of the gym Rocky trains at in Rocky III, it was called TOUGH Gym. When Rocky walked in he saw all the boxers had the eye of the tiger.

As years and years passed, I evolved into my own training style and left the bodybuilding scene. I grew interested in keeping the gladiator with in well and alive. I pursued mixed martial arts and learned that my strength training was truly inadequate. I suffered numerous injuries that sidelined me for more than just a few months. In turn I researched how to properly train for the sport of grappling and martial arts. I have since then completely changed my strength training program and in turn I feel healthier and more athletic. Unfortunately, during high school I read all the bodybuilding magazines. I followed the programs outlined in them and they had very little carry over to wrestling.

As you will learn through reading this manual, hopefully more than once, training like a bodybuilder is the biggest mistake you can ever make as a wrestler! The workouts

in the Combat Grappler manual will be just what you need to gain the extra edge over your opponents and will make a huge difference in your next wrestling season!

Bodybuilding moves do have their place in our programs a little bit, but not a lot. Our sets, reps, rest periods, speed of reps and choices of exercises will help you stand out from the competition. Let us delve into how you should start training for wrestling.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **HOW TO PROPERLY STRENGTH TRAIN FOR WRESTLING**

This chapter is going to give you a thorough understanding of what must be done and how it must be done to be more successful on the mat. Body weight training is a big key to improve your strength with wrestling. Especially in the beginning, I like to use a lot of bodyweight exercises to get the body alive and prepared for heavier free weight exercises in the near future. Before any of my clients touch a weight I want them to master a hand full of body weight exercises. After all, you are using your body in wrestling. Hand to hand combat it is, and so you must be able to master your own body first!

Training with your own body can be adapted in countless ways & they are convenient. Most of the exercises require no equipment. We can change the position of our hands, arms and legs to work different muscles and change the pressure we place on the body. Elevate your legs or balance on one leg and then an exercise gets changed dramatically! If you so choose, you do not have to purchase any of the equipment I recommend and you can simply do the body weight exercises and you will easily be outdistancing yourself from the competition! Make no mistake about it, body weight training can be brutal and exhausting when done properly. Still, it is only one component of a solid strength & conditioning program. I am a firm believer in using a variety of tools to make the most of a program.



Even an advanced lifter / athlete should incorporate body weight strength training in his / her routine. Every athlete I train, including myself, will use more than one bodyweight exercise each workout! The most common used exercises here are pull ups & the many variations, parallel bar dips & the many variations, push ups & the many variations and squats or lunges & their many variations. If I list each variation we can get probably over 25 exercises just by varying the 4 exercises just mentioned!

The next portion of our strength training involves free weights and bodyweight conditioning together. If you have no access to free weights, implements such as sand bags, wheel barrows, sledge hammers and buckets of sand will work very well! No machines, no cables, just good old dumbbells and barbells, & a few toys from Home Depot or the local hardware store can turn you into a modern day gladiator! Back in the 1800's and early 1900's there were no machines. Those men back in the day were called strong men. Not only did they look strong, they WERE STRONG! They had functional strength and were able to use their muscles to lift enormous weights. They could lift hundreds of pounds over their head using one arm! Functional strength will come from using unusual objects such as the Home Depot products I listed above in addition to the free weight & / or body weight strength training.

Free weights force your ligaments and tendons to get stronger as well as the muscles. The problem with machines is you are moving the resistance in a guided & predictable motion, which limits the benefit you can gain. You do not want to waste time when training. Making the most use of your time is obviously a key here. In addition, training with machines can “detrain” you as an athlete. This simply means that you are taking away the body's ability to learn simple physical stress, such as balancing a heavy weight, stabilizing a heavy weight, etc.

As a wrestler, there are injuries that plague many of us. The knees, shoulders and neck are vulnerable to injury if they are weak. Free weights allow you to load your body with heavier weights forcing your muscles, joints, ligaments & bones to get stronger & more powerful. If you want longevity in your wrestling career, avoiding injuries is key. Injuries have sidelined some of the best wrestlers their senior year in high school ending their dream of winning states.

As far as how many reps and sets to do, this is a key portion of your program. As a wrestler, we need strength, strength endurance, muscular endurance and power (there are many more such as speed – strength, strength – speed – but we will not over do it here – we will keep this simple & basic!). Let me explain these terms in English.

- **STRENGTH** is how much weight you can lift (push, pull, etc) for a low number of reps - anywhere from 1 – 3 reps usually
- **STRENGTH ENDURANCE** is the ability to stay strong for extended periods of time. This is what gives you the strength to finish your shots in the third period when your opponent is unable to finish shots due to fatigue in their strength levels. This is where you do sets for low reps (2 or 3 reps) but do a larger volume of sets – sometimes up to 10 sets, w/little rest periods, no more than 1 minute (very challenging). This way you are using heavy weights for longer periods of time. Your body becomes better at handling heavy loads for extended periods of time and in turn becomes more efficient in staying strong during the entire match! For the young athlete, I try to go no lower than 5 reps. I never say there is an absolute rule though. So experiment and perhaps try doing sets of 3 reps. See what works best for you!
- **POWER** is strength in relation to time / speed. If you can bench press 300 lbs and it takes you 15 seconds to push off your chest, and I can bench the same weight but it goes up in 5 seconds, I have more power in that exercise. Power is necessary in order to explode out of the bottom position in double over time in the region finals! Power is hitting a double and driving your opponent into the air and on his back in the blink of an eye! Power is hitting a stand up and escaping in less than 1 second! Training for power requires moderate weights, lower reps (3 – 5) and fast tempo. Training for power is an advanced method and should not be attempted until you have a solid foundation of strength, which can easily take 1 year and often times longer!

**NOTE:** many of these principles are being tweaked for young athletes (high school specifically). Young athletes are different than those in college; physically & mentally. Even though I give guidelines here, they are just that, guidelines. Change sets, reps, weights, rest, etc. as you feel necessary.

How can we train for these traits? Let me explain. It is easier than you think! Your work outs will need to change often in order to develop these traits as well. **Training for strength** requires heavy to moderately heavy weights, doing 3 – 5 sets per exercise for 5 – 10 reps per set, perhaps going as low as 3. Rest should be approximately 60 - 180 seconds between each set. You should be able to have energy left for 1 or 2 reps when finishing your last set. I call this leaving 1 or 2 left in the tank. It is not necessary to train to muscular fatigue (this is when you can no longer lift the weight under your own strength and need assistance from a partner). Training to fatigue slows you down. Notice that as a set gets more difficult, your speed becomes slower and slower. We want to avoid that type of training, which is popular with bodybuilders. In addition, training to fatigue tends to diminish your exercise technique. Doing so will put you at risk for injury. Get my point?

**Training for strength endurance** requires doing a lot of body weight exercises such as pull ups, hand stand push ups, parallel bar dips or using heavy weights for low reps & a lot of sets. Push ups, pull ups, hand stand push ups, parallel bar dips as I just mentioned are tough to do, and are some of my favorites. Doing 1 pull up might be difficult for you & we can improve strength simply by doing 1 rep at a time, aiming for a grand total of 10, or 15, etc. Do these body weight exercises with shorter rest periods in between each set (30 seconds – 1 minute) and try doing 4 – 6 sets per exercise (maybe more if you are feeling good about it) and reps will vary greatly here according to your strength levels. Pull ups you may only be able to get 5 or 6 at a time, maybe even less. Some athletes can do more. **Form is key in all exercises. If you start getting sloppy, stop your set immediately!** If you can only do lower reps, rest a bit longer and do a few extra sets. So rather than 5 sets, try doing maybe 8 sets. Dips you might be able to get 12, 20 or even more. Push ups might be 30 or more. These are just examples and we are all different so these exercises are to be done with higher reps. I like having my athletes do low reps on pull ups, sometimes 2 or 3 reps only, but they will do 6 or 7 total sets. This way they are pulling w/all their might on each rep, exerting high force each rep and the tempo of the exercise is fairly fast. When you train to muscular fatigue, your reps start slowing down a lot. I prefer to see speed in each exercise once my athletes master form

and gain appropriate strength levels. **DO NOT CONFUSE SPEED & BEING UNDER CONTROL FOR A SLOPPY, OUT OF CONTROL REPETITION!**

If you are having trouble controlling a weight, lighten up, and slow down. As you gain strength & control you will start feeling more comfortable with speeding up your rep tempo. We cover rep tempo a little later in the book.

Often times when I am short on time I do chin ups, followed by dips with no rest in between exercises. I will do this for maybe 10 minutes straight. I will do 6 – 10 pulls ups or chin ups, then 10 – 20 dips. The body gets stronger and endurance is built up because I am barely resting. After 10 minutes of chins & dips, I'll go and knock out push ups ranging anywhere from 25 – 50 at a time, followed by 1 minute of jumping rope or some form of lower body work (walking lunges, squat jumps, split squat jumps). I will do this push up – jump rope circuit for 5 – 6 minutes and then after 15 minutes of total exercise I am done! Talk about an awesome work out! As always, my hand spacing and grip changes on pull ups, push ups and dips. Constantly add variation to your workouts to keep your muscles worked from all angles! I bet you if every wrestler on your team did this workout twice a week he / she would be in awesome shape. Problem is, many young athletes do not take strength training seriously. Wrestlers especially are not tuned in yet to the importance of strength training. Most wrestlers attend camps and clubs and leave out strength training. This can explain to the high incidence of injuries many wrestlers are attacked with.

**Strength endurance with free weights** is more advanced so this should be reserved for the athlete who has been working out for at least 1 year under the guidance of a qualified & experienced strength coach. An example of training for strength endurance would be if I took the barbell squat & I loaded the bar with 315 lbs. – I would do sets of 2 – 5 reps, rest 1 minute, and repeat – totaling 5 sets at first, then building up to 10 sets perhaps for future workouts! Very advanced lifters will do even more sets! The lower reps require extra volume in sets to have the desired effect.

Notice how I always emphasize variety & experimentation. I much prefer you see what works best for you. Young athletes are all so different, some kids are age 14 but look 18, and vice versa. This will change the way they train. A young athlete can improve

athletic performance on almost any strength training program b/s it is a new stimulus! After some time training through, the program should be solid and well planned.

For the high school athlete, I am not a big fan of training below 5 reps with free weights. You can still become strong by doing sets of 5. So remember, there is **NO REASON FOR YOU TO MAX OUT ON 1 OR 2 REPS. YOUNG ATHLETES SHOULD DO AT LEAST 5 REPS IN FREE WEIGHT EXERCISES.** Notice I said free weight exercises. Body weight exercises might be different. Pull ups you may only be able to do 1 or 2 reps. No problem, that is a body weight exercise and is not dangerous to do low reps. Free weights add extra load to your body, so do not max out. It does nothing for wrestling! So, for bodyweight exercises, you are safe if doing reps below 5 if you can only accomplish that many reps. **For free weights, choose a load that allows you to complete at least 5 reps. Perhaps experiment with 3 reps.**

**Training for power** requires lower repetitions anywhere from 3 – 5 reps. As I keep mentioning, bodyweight exercises can get lower reps, free weights at least 5 reps due to the safety factor. Your sets will increase here and be around 4 sets per exercise. Rest longer in between power exercises (2 – 4 minutes), and at other times rest only long enough to allow your partner to do a set. I know that sounds like a lot of rest at times, but in order to develop power, we are looking for you to explode the weight or your body which means move it as fast as possible. The extra rest allows the central nervous system to recuperate adequately.

Power will mostly be achieved with moderate or light weights, or bodyweight exercises that are plyometric in nature. If the weight is TOO heavy you will not be able to move it quickly enough. When you get to the exercise photo / description portion of the manual, you will see exercises with body weight and free weights that lend themselves towards power development. Referring to the DVD, The Ultimate Guide to Sport Specific Training will give you the visual you need to see exactly how these exercises are performed. Some of my favorites are plyo push ups, jump squats & their variations, medicine ball throws & tosses and light weight free weight exercises with higher speed. The DVD allows you to see the exercises in real life, and of course I prefer you to see them that way.

## **REPETITION TEMPO**

One more thing I want you to understand when training for wrestling is the **tempo** of your exercises. This simply means how fast should you move your body or the weights. When training with free weights, first of all, I want to see perfect form. Some exercises lend themselves to some body motion and you will feel your way through them. Notice I said **SOME BODY MOTION**. Being too strict is not what we want because as a wrestler you want to involve as much of your body as possible when wrestling. During a match, if you are the in the top position you are not going to turn your opponent using your arms, rather you will drive with your legs and upper body, working together as one unit. We never use only our arms or only our legs during a match. The body has to use all the muscles together in order for you to be as successful as possible.

Move the weights under control yet with speed at the same time. Lower the weights under control and NEVER let them drop. For those of you just starting with the weights, you need to move down slowly and under control. This allows you to keep proper posture during the exercise. An athlete who is more experienced with strength training can vary rep tempo more so than a beginner obviously. **If you can not control the weight, it's too heavy.** Dropping the weights on the downward portion of the rep eliminates half of the rep, which then makes half your set a waste of time. Take the dumbbell curl – press combo. When I curl the bells' up I use a little body swing to explode the weights up to my shoulders quickly. Then with no rest I press them quickly upward & give a slight push from the legs. I lower the weights under control down to my shoulders and once again slowly lower the weights down to my side. As you become more advanced, you can begin lowering the weights quickly, NOT SLOPPILY! **Lowering the weights quickly yet still under control and then quickly reversing the process builds up a lot of kinetic energy which is key in wrestling. It forces you to reverse an excess load with greater force and lends itself better for wrestling, or any sport for that matter!** **Lowering the weights quickly is an advanced way of training and should only be performed by the advanced trainee!**

I know what you are saying now, “Quickly, slowly, what in the world does that mean?” It should take you 1 or 2 seconds during the exertion portion of an exercise (probably faster with body weight) and 3 - 5 seconds to lower the weight. When using

body weight exercises like push ups you will be moving much faster. Still, control is key. Moving quickly is much different than moving quickly and sloppy. Control the movement of your body or the free weights. As your strength & control improves, you can lower the weight quickly. The quick lowering will take a lot of time & experience, and I can easily say that even after a year of strength training you will still be working on lowering weights slowly.

In addition, I have found that many young athletes benefit greatly from switching the speed of the exercise. Sometimes I have an athlete move the weights slowly on the upward & downward phase, sometimes the complete opposite. I use a lot of variety when training athletes! Vary the sets, weights, rest periods, the repetition temp, the position of their body, etc.

### **Tempo Contrast Method**

This is an interesting method of varying your training. You will be varying the speed of the exercise during the same set of an exercise. For example, on the barbell squat, let's say you have a weight where you can complete 10 perfect reps. On reps 1 and 2 you lower yourself slowly, taking 8 seconds, and up slowly, taking 5 seconds, then on reps 3 and 4 you move quicker, 4 seconds down, and maybe 2 or 3 seconds up. This allows the athlete to work the muscles differently, and keeps the body responding to a new stimulus. In fact, as a beginner, before you increase your weights, try using the tempo contrast method for 3 weeks. This is a safer way to intensify your workouts as a beginner as opposed to lading the weights on. It also gives you more time to master your exercise technique. If you are doing an exercise incorrectly, it doesn't matter how heavy of a weight you are moving! Do not worry about what your friends are doing in the gym. Focus on your own progress.

**Rest Periods** are next when determining how to move through a work out. When using body weight exercises you can rest very little between exercises or simply perform one exercise after another in circuit style. Here are the various names given to performing more than one exercise at a time.

- **Super sets** – this is when you perform two exercises in a row with no rest after the first exercise. Perfect example is doing chin ups and dips. Do 10 chin ups then immediately do 15 dips. After the dips you can rest anywhere from

30 – 90 seconds. The more advanced you get, you can go non stop with no rest and go for a certain time (5 – 10 minutes non stop) or 5 sets of each non stop (this non stop training for time is a CIRCUIT, explained below)

Another example would be to do dumbbell chest presses on the stability ball immediately followed by the curl – press combo.

Last example, medium grip flat bench press immediately followed by a few reps of plyo push ups.

- **Circuit Training** – this is when you perform more than 2 exercises in a row non stop. You can do this using free weights or body weight or a combination of both. Here is a sample circuit.

1. chin ups - 8 reps
2. dips - 8 reps
3. knee tucks on stability ball – 12 reps
4. trap bar deadlift – 8 reps
5. squat jumps – 8 reps
6. push ups – 12 reps
7. walking lunges with body weight – 30 seconds
8. dumbbell curl – press combo – 8 reps

No doubt a circuit like that will kick your body into high gear and get your heart beating faster than a steam train! You can rest 1 – 3 minutes after a circuit and then repeat it once or twice or even more depending on your energy level as well as how long you have been training for. A circuit is more for an intermediate or advanced trainee. They are also highly beneficial in the practice room – picking all bodyweight exercises and performing them in circuit fashion helps the body get used to higher fatigue levels in the muscle. Your body then becomes better trained at performing in a higher state of fatigue. This is a key factor in tough matches where 3<sup>rd</sup> period is neck to neck – who is the better conditioned athlete?

- **Straight sets** – this is when you perform a set of one exercise, rest the appropriate time period, then perform the same exercise again, etc. until you complete the correct amount of sets. I like to use straight sets when I work on power & strength in order to give the central nervous system ample time to



recover. Often times the first exercise of the day is going to be straight sets where you are performing max effort lifts and shooting for heavy weights and reps of 5 or 6. Make no mistake about it though, power & strength training can still be brutal and exhausting. Yes, you rest longer, but you NEED to rest after you exert yourself so intensely to move the heavy weights with proper form.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **General Physical Preparedness (GPP)**

This is when you need to get your body prepared for the difficult strength training workouts, many of which will involve free weights. How long does this time last? It varies according to the physical maturity of the athlete. Some 14 year olds are developed like 18 year olds and vice versa. **The GPP lifts / training should not just last one month. It should be done all year! This is a time where I actually will implement bodybuilding type training as well as farm boy type training.** I will have the athlete perform 3 – 4 sets per exercises with rep ranges that can go anywhere from 6 – 50 reps. Putting muscle on a young athlete is important! A bigger muscle has greater potential for that muscle to gain more strength & power. Just like a larger engine has a greater ability to develop more horse power so to speak. As a young athlete it is not expected for you to peak with strength or athletic ability in high school. It is the goal to develop a strong foundation and give you a better chance to optimize your true potential. Hopefully seeing you move on through college athletics and perhaps even further!

Think of your athletic potential as a triangle. The foundation of your athletic potential is the base of the triangle. The larger and wider the base is, the greater the peak will have the potential to be higher. This is why I emphasize GPP days so often to

my athletes. You can address your weak spots with bodybuilding type training as well as farm boy type training. In the DVD, you will see all the forms of sled dragging along with GPP ideas explained as I comment during the DVD.

A typical GPP workout might be doing high rep push ups for 3 sets, high rep dead lifting or high rep barbell squats, and then doing 5 – 10 minutes of sled dragging or sand bag carries. This would last 20 minutes, and then you are done! Often times, GPP training can last less than 20 minutes.

**GPP workouts should last 20 minutes maximum, no longer!** That being said, a GPP workout can simply be sled dragging for 10 - 15 minutes, or farmers walk / carry with either a sand bag, heavy dumbbells, or buckets filled with sand. I am a BIG PROPONENT of training with these implements and they have a great overall conditioning effect on our wrestlers!

Even in the winter time, put on your gloves and do the sled dragging. Maybe your GPP day could be doing pull ups until you reach a maximum of 40 reps or doing a circuit of bodyweight exercises non stop for 10 minutes. Just imagine the edge you would have over your competition by training smart & hard! How many kids on your team perform strength training all year, or the entire off season? I bet less than 25 %. That is a generous percentage as well!

Another key here is to make sure you do not avoid training your legs. Especially key here is training your hamstrings and lower back – and in addition, the entire rear portion of your body, called the posterior chain.

For most young athletes, the weakest part of their body is everything they can not see when looking in the mirror. Strengthening the posterior chain makes an athlete stronger, more powerful, less likely to become injured and balances the strength from the front of the body as well. Sled dragging with a rope attached around a weight belt is awesome for the posterior chain. Take big steps and walk for 10 minutes or so. You will gain a ton of strength in your hamstrings, calves and lower back! I LOVE these!

Regarding GPP workouts, make sure you are not over doing it. If you over do it, you'll know. How will you know? You will feel like you need to rest or take the day off

the following day. If you follow my guidelines of light weights, short duration, sled training, etc., you will benefit from these extra GPP workouts. If you feel wiped out the next day after a GPP workout, it was too strenuous (time, load, volume, etc.).

Here is a few sample GPP workouts for a better understanding:

1. Sled drag, strapped around weight belt – 8 minutes
2. Pull ups – 5 x 5 reps
3. push ups, hands on med ball 2 x max reps

here is another one:

1. Recline pull ups – 3 x max reps
2. sit ups using a medicine ball in pull over fashion – 3 x 10 – 20 reps
3. Push ups, 3 x max reps using various positions on a stability ball
4. walking lunges with bodyweight, perform a two sets walking 15 – 25 steps

## **Chapter 4**

### **HOW TO CYCLE YOUR TRAINING**

Cycling your training means changing the focus of your work outs and thus changing the previously mentioned principles (strength, power, muscular endurance, etc.). You will change the sets, reps, rest periods and amount of weight used. The body easily adapts to an exercise program. Keep doing the same work out with the same weight and the same reps, same exercises and the same rest periods, the body simply stops responding!

There are scientific ways to do this, but before talking about the science of periodization, (a fancy word for cycling your training program) let's talk about you! What I mean by this is to listen to your body and react accordingly. On high energy days you can train heavier and push yourself more. On low energy days you can do a circuit and use lighter weights or simply take the day off. On days you feel middle of the road, perhaps do a light circuit to get warmed up and some

chins and dips for low reps. This will get your mind and body warmed up and then you can decide after 5 – 7 minutes which direction you want to take that day.

Scientifically speaking, here are a few ways you can break down your work outs (there are more – but this is plenty for the young athlete)

- Strength 3 – 4 weeks
- Power 2 – 3 weeks
- Strength endurance 2 weeks
- Circuit training 1 week
- Active Rest / Restoration 3 days – 1 week

### OR

- Monday: Upper body – max effort
- Wednesday: Lower body – max effort
- Friday: full body – max repetition day
- Do 1 – 2 GPP workouts per week on “off days” according to energy levels

Which do I prefer? To be honest, the most popular cycle is where you switch from strength to power, to muscular endurance every 3 weeks or so. The problem with that program is if you focus on one phase at the expense of another (which you do for 2 – 4 weeks normally), you can lose strength or lose power or lose muscular endurance all depending on which cycle you are focusing on. So why did I show this? I like to give examples because variety is important. This type of program might work well for some athletes. It is recommended by many strength coaches as a matter of fact.

The good thing about the young athlete is that he / she can make gains relatively easily by doing the most basic of training programs! There is no need to confuse yourself and do advanced lifting programs. You don't need them and they can probably lead to injuries.

How would I prefer you to train? I like following max effort workouts and max repetition workouts. When I feel the need for change, physically & mentally, I change. Living in NJ does not allow me or my athletes to train outdoors safely year round. When weather allows, they are outside doing a lot of sled dragging, pushing & pulling. In

addition, we use a variety of techniques w/sand bags and outdoor medicine ball throwing. If you live in the southern states or out west, take advantage of these “farm boy” training methods. The other day I was in the backyard chopping wood for 10 minutes. The next day my entire abdominal region was extremely sore! I was also feeling a major workout on my entire body; legs, shoulders, arms & forearms. It was tough! Try some sledge hammer chopping for a GPP workout!

When you move sand bags or wheel barrows you are picking up and moving the object, just as you would during wrestling. This makes the exercise more “functional”, having a greater carry over to the sport of wrestling. Sled work is tremendous because it allows the wrestler to work on explosive pushing and pulling movements with out having to lower the weight. Lowering weights leads to a lot of muscle soreness. This is why sled training is great on GPP days because they do not make you feel exhausted and sore. This means if I pull the rope into me as hard as I can (rowing the sled), I do not have to return it back to position. I simply take 1 or 2 steps back and repeat the explosive motion. This allows me to turn this exercise into a true power movement. How is this possible? Let me explain.

**A true power movement** will allow you to fully exert yourself with out having to slow down the motion at any time. Medicine ball throwing is a perfect example. If I do a medicine ball granny toss, I am using all my power to release the ball from my hands behind my head. Do I need to slow down at the top? NO! If I have a dumbbell or barbell, I need to slow down at the top or else the bar or DB will fly out of my hands. This is simply not possible or safe (obviously!). My body is literally putting on the brakes at the last moment to avoid releasing the bar or DB. If I can release the object and use all my force, then it is a true power move. So when rowing or pressing the sled, I exert all the force w/out worry of the rope handles or the sled doing something dangerous (such as crashing into me). Releasing a barbell or DB sounds a bit scary!

**If you follow the max effort portion twice a week and then a max repetition day once a week, you will see gains in strength & power year round.** Why gains year round? Because you are never leaving out strength, power, strength endurance for 3 weeks or more at a time like the popular periodization method does. You address these styles of training on a weekly basis! This method is a modified method learned

from Westside Barbell – the strongest gym in the world! As mentioned before, this is the method I prefer to use due to the fact that on max effort days, you make your first exercise a heavy basic exercise and pyramid up in weight, eventually you go for a final 2 or 3 heavy sets of 5 reps with max weights after pyramiding up in weight for a few sets. After that, you perform “supplemental lifts” with sets in the 3 – 4 range and reps in the 6 – 15 range. The supplemental lifts are usually bodybuilding type lifts done with free weights.

**The reason why you can always you use max effort lifts is because every 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> workout, you change that basic compound move to something that is similar in nature.** For example, after doing 2 or 3 heavy flat bench workouts (1 a week), next time you’ll be doing 2 or 3 stability ball DB chest press workouts. Or instead of squatting, try doing trap bar dead lifts with your feet elevated slightly on 1 or 2 olympic plates. These exercises are similar in nature and work the same general area, but you will be giving your central nervous system a rest by varying the exercise selection & not repeating the same exact movement. **If you do not vary the exercise you become a candidate for over use injuries and burn out. In addition, you can not keep maxing out if you use the same max effort exercise every time. This is why you change the first exercise (the max effort lift) to an exercise similar in nature.**

On max repetition day, you do exactly what it is called, aim for max reps. Choosing light weights or bodyweight exercises you do 2 - 3 sets and do as many reps as possible in good form, but still leave 1 or 2 reps in the bank. This day gives your joints a break and allows you to work on muscular endurance as well as developing lactate tolerance. **Lactate tolerance is the ability of your body to tolerate the build up of lactic acid in the muscles.** Ever see a wrestler in the 3<sup>rd</sup> period getting weaker and weaker, no longer able to finish shots or even hold a guy down while in the top position. Often times their arms have gotten such a pump & burn from lactic acid build up they simply can not function at full steam any more. Lactic acid is defense mechanism basically. Your body works harder and harder and more lactic acid builds up in the muscles – trying to stop you from pushing further and further. If you can train at this high repetition mode you will teach your body to work more efficiently during this lactic acid build up.

Another way to improve lactate tolerance is to use heavy weights, low reps (3 – 5), and multiple sets (5 – 8) with short rest periods (30 sec. – 1 minute maximum) = here you keep moving a heavy weight with short rest for a larger number of sets. This will prep your body to handle the moving of heavy weights for longer periods of time – sounds just like a wrestling match, right?

Favorites here on max rep days are push ups, pull ups, recline pull ups, light barbell squats, light dead lifts, light bench pressing, bench dips, BW squats. Be creative, and have fun! Keep this workout well balanced. Include lifts that work lower body as well as upper body. As always, vary the exercises. Do not do high rep benching every single week!

If you decide to experiment with the popular periodization method of focusing on a specific trait for a few weeks at a time, you can change the time spent on these cycles. Two to three weeks is the average and sometimes a cycle can last 4 weeks for strength and maybe only 2 weeks for power. Everyone is different and so you really must learn to listen to your body. My last injury was the most serious injury I ever had. It occurred on a day that I truly felt exhausted and I knew I needed to rest. I had the Dan Gable philosophy of out working your future opponents. **It is important to not only work harder than your opponents, but you must work smarter as well!** **Training when you truly feel exhausted is a great way to injure yourself.** **LEARN TO REST WHEN NEEDED!**

If I knew how to listen to my body more and followed a program which included max effort, max rep & GPP training then I would have been a much healthier athlete! I went full steam year round. Light days were unheard of and I NEVER did any GPP training.

**Another point concerning variation is for your max effort day. Your max effort lift does not always have to be a conventional lift.** It can be something like a farmers carry with heavy dumbbells, or heavy wheel barrows walks. Try pushing a wheel barrow up a hill and then walking it back down for a few sets! So remember to keep variety in each portion of your workout!

The last portion I listed in your cycle is called **Active Rest**. This can be placed into your yearly training AT ANY TIME! You use active rest on the day (s) you are feeling tired, in need of change yet you still want to do something active. Here are a few examples of active rest:

- Wall / rock climbing (indoor or outdoor)
- Hiking
- Mountain Biking
- Kayaking
- Surfing
- Swimming at the beach

You can come up with more of these activities, but they simply give you a break from the daily grind and keep you fresh. I can not emphasize this enough, as the goal is for you to arrive fresh, ready and stronger than ever when the season begins and keeping you this way through the very last day of your season! Too many kids lose their first match at states due to burn out and the need to rest.

The importance of rest is truly underestimated. If you feel completely exhausted, then you need to do a few things. First, do not wrestle or strength train for at least 3 days and you may even need to take a week off. Second, cycle your training more often. Do not think that heavy strength training is needed to be done all the time. This is why I encourage you to use max effort – max rep – GPP training, it gives your body time to rest by forcing you to train light in max rep days. Strength training (using your body or free weights) can be done 2 to 3 times a week. Following the max effort – max rep – GPP style has you training 3 times a week, no more (not counting GPP workouts). This way you still have energy for your off season wrestling which you most likely will be doing another 2 – 4 times a week, and sometimes more. Add this to your daily school work and perhaps a part time job and you're a great candidate for over training. Over training means you are over worked and need a rest. If you do not listen to your body and you keep on pushing you increase chances of injury. **Learn from my mistakes, don't experience them!**



**GPP workouts** can replace normal weight training as well. Sled dragging, chest presses on the sled, sand bag carries are awesome full body exercises and they can rejuvenate the mind as well as the body. If the weather is nice, take advantage and train out doors. Very important though – GPP workouts should be short and can focus on weak areas. How short, anything more than 20 minutes is too long. How do you gauge how much effort is too much effort? **If you have to recover from your GPP workouts, then you are training too long / too hard.** GPP workouts are additional workouts that get the body acclimated to heavier work loads. Some of my GPP workouts simply include dragging the sled for 10 – 15 minutes. Sled dragging does not tax the body too much. It is strange in you do not feel it to be a killer workout, but, the results are very great!

### **Max Effort Days:**

On these days, you choose your first exercise to be the most important exercise of that day, and the heaviest. This exercise will probably be a dead lift, some form of the bench press, barbell squats (if you have access to a squat rack), Romanian Dead Lifts (RDL's). You would perform sets of 5 – 6 reps on this first exercise. Shooting for heavy weights as well, but still having 1 or 2 reps left in the bank. After the focus exercise, you would follow with supplementary exercises (bodybuilding exercises).

Here is a list of a few supplementary exercises:

- Pull ups – chin ups
- Parallel bar dips
- Close grip bench press
- Lying tricep XT using DB's, or barbell (straight or curl bar)
- Side or bent over lateral raises
- Barbell or DB curls
- Forward lunges
- Reverse lunges
- Step ups w/ a barbell or DB
- Lying leg curls using a dumbbell
- Leg raises for abdominals

- Bent over laterals (rear deltoid exercise)

## **HOW OFTEN SHOULD I STRENGTH TRAIN?**

For young athletes I try not to have them train 2 days in a row. Once again though, there is never an absolute here. I know this variety thing is getting confusing & perhaps annoying, but it all depends – some wrestlers go to a club 5 days a week for 2 hours, then train with me 3 times a week. When this is the case, I always take caution to keep workouts brief and to the point, often lasting 35 – 40 minutes. In addition, those 3 workouts will vary so as not to over stress the central nervous system (CNS). If your CNS is run down then you will not make gains!

Most of these work outs will be full body, or divided into upper body, lower body & the final day being full body w/light weights. We need to give you a chance to rest after stressing your entire body. In addition, wrestlers tend to train much more than other athletes, often times wrestling 5 nights a week in the off season. Coupled with a tough strength training program and I start getting concerned that your body does not get enough recuperation time!

Strength training tears down your muscles. They get stronger from rest and proper nutrition. If you wrestle at a club in the off season then your body is under even more stress. At the least take one day off from strength training in between each workout, and if you feel you need it, take 2 days off after you do a strength training work out. There is now law stating you must train 3 days a week. You can still strength train the days you go to the wrestling club, but that is going to be an exhausting day so experiment with how long, when and where you incorporate strength training into your daily schedule.

As I mentioned before, learn to listen to your body. You should be shooting for two days of the week where you are not wrestling OR strength training! If you have decided to take a month or two off away from the mat (which I do recommend!) then you can train a bit more often. Last note, GPP training is critical! I like to see my wrestlers performing GPP activities in the form of “farm boy” type training. It is not unlikely for me to train wrestlers with out even having them touch a barbell or dumbbell, rather

pushing and pulling sleds and wheel barrows and carrying sand bags. These workouts are awesome, I simply can not emphasize this type of training enough!

You might be thinking I'm crazy pushing you to rest, but, this keeps you fresh and rejuvenated for any upcoming workouts, whether they are strength training or wrestling. You can take advantage of active rest days by grouping together with some friends from your wrestling team and get in a fun bike ride at a state park, or find a wall climbing gym in your area and keep active that way as well.

**BOTTOM LINE:** You can work as hard as you want, harder than anyone else, but if you do not get adequate rest & nutrition then your body will always be in a state of repair. Our goal is for you to have rest days in order to reap the benefits of your strength training. In addition, the old saying of getting 8 hours of sleep EVERY DAY is key for progress! Your program of wrestling and strength training does not end when you finish a work out. It includes everything you do in addition to these workouts (rest & nutrition). Do not waste your efforts by over doing it! I encourage a daily nap when you have the time, even if it's just for 30 minutes.

Here are my favorite guidelines for strength training, and they are just that, GUIDELINES:

**In Season** – 2 - 4 days/week-15-30 mins./workout

**Post Season** – 3 - 4 days/week-45-60 mins./workout

**Pre Season** - 3 - 4 days/week-30-60 mins./workout

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **NO BS Training Tips**

**IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING DIET:** **The most important meal of the day is your POST WORK OUT MEAL.** After you finish a strength training work out, you have what is called an “Open window of opportunity.” This window lasts 30 minutes. In this time period you must eat a quality meal, balanced with protein and carbohydrates. If you do not get this meal within 30 minutes (45 minutes max!) your

muscles start to eat off other muscles to repair themselves. This is a break down process that we do not want to happen! Remember, you just tore your muscles down from strength training and now you must feed your muscles to help repair them. The benefits of strength training only occur AFTER the workout if rest and proper nutrition are taken care of.

Here is an example of what you want to do after your work out. Start by having a glass of juice to get some simple sugars in your body. A glass of apple, cranberry, grape, orange or raspberry juice will be perfect! This simple carbohydrate drink lets your body easily absorb some of the nutrients that have been drained from your body during the tough work out & kick starts the recovery process. Afterwards it's time to sit down and eat your post work out meal. If you are far from home, pack food with you or have a protein shake ready to go. Get plenty of water to drink right now, as this is a key part of keeping your body systems moving smoothly & transporting the nutrients.

In addition, soda is just a bunch of empty calories and does nothing good for your body. Eat a small salad, a chicken breast, and a serving of rice (or another carbohydrate rich food such as pasta or a baked potato).

For the athlete in need of gaining more weight (often the case incoming high school wrestlers at a lighter weight class), eat a calorie dense post workout meal:

Glass of grape juice

Steak

Baked potato

Salad

This meal kick starts the recovery process by replacing all the nutrients that were lost from the work out and takes care of much of the recovery process. The next portion occurs during rest / sleep. **If you skip this meal, your work out has just been wasted!!**

A sample for someone who is not close to home would be a protein shake mixed in water or juice, and having a peanut butter and jelly sandwich on rye bread plus a piece of fruit. There are no excuses if you want to improve. So take nutrition & rest as serious as you take your wrestling and watch your gains improve at a much faster rate.

Some meal replacements that you can use are Lean Body or Myoplex. Try a few others out and see which has the best quality nutrition. Do not simply buy what is the

cheapest. Many of the cheap ones have empty calories and a ton of sugar. Do not confuse a weight gainer for a protein shake or a meal replacement shake. So remember, learn to eat regularly, especially breakfast and post work out meal. These two meals are key and get you functioning at a quality level. Force yourself to rest in order to reap the benefits from strength training. Cycle the intensity of your workouts to keep your body responding as opposed to adapting to doing the same thing day in and day out. Never strength train two days in a row if you have just done a full body workout, unless you are performing a GPP day (again, lasting no more than 20 minutes). If you are still sore after a day of rest, then take another day off or perform some active rest activity which helps alleviate soreness and speeds up the recovery process.

Soreness is a sign of muscles that were torn down. This is resolved through rest, proper nutrition, and active rest. Active rest keeps the body active and moving. This helps loosen up the body and reduces soreness quicker than if you were to be a couch potato! Laying around and doing nothing can prolong the soreness. Then again, if you were a couch potato you would not have purchased this book! Swimming, bike riding, GPP work or light drilling can all be of great help.

### **Mental Preparation**

This is where many wrestlers fail to train. Perhaps I should simply say they do not know how to train their mind. Wrestling is highly psychological. I was always floored when I saw some major slackers place top 3 in the county and sometimes qualify for the states! On the flip side, I have seen some of the most dedicated, hard working wrestlers never make it out of the first round of the districts! The difference here was that one wrestler was confident in their ability and had no fear of losing. They went out on the mat and layed it all out on the line. The other wrestler placed insane amounts of pressure on him self & ultimately would perform at a level below their true potential.

Training your mind is equally important as it is to train your physical self. How can you train your mind? There are countless ways, and everyone must come up with a way that is good for them. Of major importance is letting go of your fear to lose. All the wrestlers lose, no matter how great they are. Once upon a time they lost, and sometimes

when they are ranked as the best in the world they lose as well! If you can learn to approach each match knowing that you are going to fight for every inch of that mat you increase your chances of winning greatly. If you enter a match focusing on how difficult it will be & how tough your opponent will be then you are going to have a tough time capitalizing on your own ability & strengths. Start giving it all you have no matter who stands in your way. Someone has to be the champion, why should it be someone else?

Another factor regarding your mental preparation is being able to recover from a setback, which might include a loss when you were expected to win or perhaps an injury mid way through the season. I recall Dan Gable and his athletes getting very emotional when losing. Often times they would cry and be overwhelmed with negative feelings. If you lose in a big tournament you need to let any negative emotions work to motivate you, especially if you have a chance to return and place in that tournament. Focus on the negative too much & you will bury yourself in a hole so deep that you will not be able to get out & refocus your energy towards winning again.

I have watched state champs and national champs lose to relatively unknown wrestlers. How could this happen? Someone demanded more of themselves and took a stand to bulldoze through any & all obstacles that stand in their way. First timers in the states pinning defending state champs or walk ons beating defending national champs are no longer a shocker to me. I have learned how powerful the mind can be and have witnessed some amazing feats by those who possessed a powerful attitude.

Champions have made a solid choice to become a champion. They train hard and they also believe in their ability to accomplish what so few can attain. The bottom line here is that you can train as hard as you want, harder than anyone else – go to a wrestling club all year, workout all year, etc – but, this will be of no use if you walk on the each time not believing in yourself.

Take a stand & blaze a winning trail for yourself. Only a few athletes can do this & you must have absolute belief in yourself. Confidence comes through training regularly, even daily! Visualize yourself achieving your goals every day. Put yourself on the line by competing regularly. Some athletes train very hard but avoid competition because of their fear of testing their abilities. Let fear work for you, not against you. Fear can help you perform at a higher level when you learn to control your fear. Make sure

you train with wrestlers who are successful, drill with them at high intensities and push them so that they start seeing how hungry you are. Surrounding yourself with positive, motivated people will have a likening effect on yourself. Hang out with people who dwell on the negative & complain about everything will only bring you down and literally suck out all the positive energy you once had!

Create an environment that is conducive for becoming a champion! Leave no regrets to be had! The possibilities are endless if you so choose to take the path of being a champion!

### **THE TOP 5 BASIC FREE WEIGHT EXERCISES**

The following exercises are the best for adding muscle mass, strength & power. Exercises such as the dead lift or the barbell squat may be too difficult for a beginner due to weak muscles, especially the posterior chain. This can be corrected by addressing weak muscles and bringing them up to par with the stronger muscles when you first start a training program. Once you have brought up your weaker muscles (the posterior chain) you can then begin to regularly perform the top 5 lifts.

Make sure that you include unilateral training / exercises when focusing on weaker muscles. This helps shift a greater amount of stress to those muscles, forcing them to come to life!

#### **Examples of unilateral exercises for the posterior chain can be:**

1. walking dumbbell lunges (or bodyweight)
2. barbell or dumbbell lunges (forward or reverse)
3. barbell or dumbbell step ups
4. Russian Kettlebell swings w/ 1 arm
5. sled dragging with strap around weight belt (upright or forward lean)
6. Sand bag lifting – walking on flat terrain or up stairs
7. 1 arm DB row
8. 1 leg squat w/back foot elevated

### **Here are the top 5 Lifts:**

1. **Deadlift** (trap bar, straight bar, bent leg, sumo style or stiff leg (RDL – Romanian dead lift) – trap bar DL's have shown to be easiest for young athletes to start with. Progress to a straight bar when form is perfect.
2. **Flat barbell bench**
3. **Bent over barbell row**
4. **Barbell squat**
5. **Standing over head military press**

These 5 lifts are basic and allow the athlete to attack a large number of muscles in a relatively short period of time. Training wisely means choosing exercises that allow you to get the most bang for your buck. This can also be called “training economy.” The beginner as well as the most advanced lifter can benefit greatly from these lifts. Learning to do them correctly is also a critical factor, as it is for every exercise. If you perform an exercise wrong, the benefit is wasted & you open yourself up for injury.

Once again, do not expect to start performing these exercises immediately. They will take time to build up to. I do not have my athletes perform a flat bench press until they can perform 40 perfect reps in the push up. The squat & deadlift take even longer for them to start doing because we focus big time on the posterior chain in the beginning, performing a lot of the unilateral lifts listed above.

One side not regarding the dead lift (DL); the beginner and intermediate benefit greatly by using a trap bar before using the straight bar. The trap bar will place greater emphasis on the glutes, quads, and hams – where as the straight bar places a lot of tension on the lower back. Mastering form is much easier using the trap bar and is a great alternative for the young athlete.

### **THE GOAL OF A STRENGTH PROGRAM FOR YOUNG ATHLETES**

We want to reduce injuries, strengthen tendons and increase bone density. From here, we can progress safely and correctly. It is not necessary to go below 5 reps for young athletes. Unless on a bodyweight exercise like a pull up or dip and you can only do 2 or



3, that is fine. But, doing flat benches for 1 or 2 max reps is ridiculous and a waste of time and does nothing to improve your athletic ability. Always train with safety in mind. If you are unsure, seek the help of a professional and learn to do things correctly.

Why is reducing injuries the main goal? Simple. You can not perform or participate when injured. Reducing injuries is addressed by bringing up the lagging muscles and building a balanced physique. The use of free weights & BW exercises strengthen the bones, tendons & ligaments because they force the athlete to balance the weights or their own body while simultaneously pushing against a resisting load.

As I have mentioned previously, the young athlete who is new to resistance training can make improvements by following the simplest exercise programs. Make sure each workout is short & intense enough to reap the benefits, but not so grueling where you do not want to come back for more. I like to leave my athletes wanting to train a little bit more. This keeps them coming back with great energy each workout. A strength training program is not going to make you feel like you just finished a wrestling practice. We are training for strength & power, so the workout will obviously be different! Do not approach strength training like a marathon.

### **THE OLYMPIC LIFTS**

A quick note on the Olympic lifts: they are very complex and difficult to learn. For a beginner and even an intermediate, they are not necessary. I would rather see beginners & intermediates performing the basic exercises, focusing on the top 5 lifts mentioned above as well as bodyweight strength exercises & kettlebells if you have access to them. In addition, the Olympic lifts are often done incorrectly by the young athlete and take a long time to learn. I would rather spend 45 minutes doing (dead lifts) DL's, pull ups, push ups, barbell lunges, sled dragging and sand bag carries, as opposed to having a youngster learning the clean which could take 45 minutes.

If you have a solid year of strength training under your belt and have been receiving qualified coaching from a strength coach, then I would recommend practicing one Olympic lift as a warm up using the empty Olympic bar. Practicing the hang clean for 5 – 8 minutes is a great warm up and gets you focusing on form before piling on weights.

Often times I have noticed that for a young athlete, it is easier to learn the Russian Kettlebell lifts than it is to learn the Olympic lifts. Usually, the young athlete is too weak to properly do the Olympic lifts.

College athletes can begin using Olympic lifts. Still, even at the early college level, there are many athletes performing them incorrectly. **Seek a certified Olympic lifting coach to get the best instruction here.** This is key as they are very complex to learn!

A **good warm up** can be done using the empty bar, practicing the clean & jerk, or just the cleans for 5 – 8 minutes. This raises core body temperature and allows for the athlete to focus on form. As mentioned before, the Olympic lifts are out for a beginner, use them as a warm up for the intermediate, and if you have been training with weights for a few years, you can become trained in the Olympic lifts to do them properly. Still, you should stick to the other exercises listed in the manual. Why? Because too many young athletes and even coaches, have the athlete train too heavy on the Olympic lifts sacrificing form for technique. So before you do something, know why you are doing it & have proper coaching! The Olympic lifts are better suited for the college athlete, who is more advanced, and is being trained by a professional strength & conditioning coach.

### **Russian Kettlebells**

The use of Russian Kettlebells have proven to be highly effective not only for my training my own athletes, but combat athletes world wide! The benefits of Russian Kettlebells are countless. They improve flexibility while simultaneously increasing strength & power. They also place heavy emphasis on the posterior chain which is a very weak muscle for all young athletes as I have mentioned before. Kettlebells will build what is called “functional” muscle. Often described as building “smart muscle” as opposes to beach muscles.

Anyone can learn to use Kettlebells, no matter how heavy or light, big or small you are, etc. A large factor that I love training with kettlebells is their versatility. I can take them to the park with me, the back yard or to a football field and combine them with sled training. The locking out of many of the movements help improve joint strength & stability making us wrestlers less prone to injury. And, as many of my athletes tell me,

“These are fun!” They truly are. There is so much variety available with Kettlebells in addition to the unusual movements incorporated with them that all athletes remain stimulated physically & mentally.

In my DVD I did not show these exercises but I will explain them here. These are a few favorites that give an overall conditioning effect on the body. **The Rack Walk:** Clean two Kettlebells to the shoulders, and walk with them. This exercise will put a lot of loading on the upper back and abdominal muscles. **Overhead walk:** Clean & press two Kettlebells overhead and walk with them. This exercise places you in a very vulnerable position. Vulnerable in a good way though! It strengthens the overall trunk as well as improves shoulder stability and flexibility.

The best way to see how great Russian Kettlebells are is to get your hands dirty and take a few lessons with them. It might take 2 or 3 classes to feel comfortable with them. After a few classes watch your strength, power & flexibility sky rocket!

### **No Rules Strength Training**

These are some of my favorite workouts. I call them “No Rules” b/c I set no limits on the sets, reps, rest patterns, exercise selection, frequency of training, etc I am sure you get the idea by now. I have emphasized variety often times in this manual & this certainly applies to variety. Why else do I like No Rules training? It keeps training fresh & entices the athlete to want more. The total time of these training sessions often last 10 – 30 minutes.

These workouts lend themselves very well for wrestlers b/c they aid in the development of strength endurance & power endurance. To make things easier to understand, let's jump in & talk shop. I might decide to use the double kettlebell clean, squat & push press. This can also be done one arm at a time. I will choose a moderately heavy weight, and do 2, maybe 3 reps. Put the weights down, rest approximately 30 seconds and repeat the same exercise for a total of 10 minutes, maybe even 20 minutes! Every minute my goal is to perform 2 or 3 reps. Your rest will obviously have to stay short to ensure you complete 2 or 3 reps every minute. After accomplishing your time goal, you can either finish the workout right then & there, or perform perhaps one or two exercises. An example here would be to go and do 5 non stop supersets of pull ups and

dips for max reps. Or, I might perform 5 minutes of non stop sled rowing & pressing, alternating movements after doing 8 reps per set.

You can choose the reps to be 1 per set on your “main” exercise or up to 5 per set. I prefer lower reps here b/c I will go for an extended time period. Another idea might be to keep doing pull ups and chin ups until I have completed a total of 50 reps. Finish right then & there or maybe follow this up with farmer carry holding heavy dumbbells or pushing a heavy wheel barrow for 10 minutes w/some short rest to regain grip strength and catch your breath.

These workouts can be repeated for a few days or you might want to follow “No Rules” workouts for 5 days in a row, creating a new workout every day. Make sure each workout is short in duration to keep you mentally & physically feeling the urge to do more. A long work out is not a better workout. We want a healthy combination of quality & quantity.

As you can see, “No Rules” strength training can be very creative and can be done in a large variety of ways. Setting rules for a workout can cause mental limitations that lead to physical limitations. I spoke to a college strength coach and he told me about how he had some of his football players perform 50 sets of 2 reps of the hang clean using a heavy weight. This had to be done in 50 minutes (1 set per minute)! They were not done just yet though! After that they would perform 3 sets of sled pushing using a heavy weight, somewhere around 260 lbs. This weight was chosen b/c it was the average weight of a D 1 lineman! Talk about a tough workout!

Do you need to do 50 sets? No, but, you can create your own crazy workouts that are fun and challenging and will surely lead to gains in performance! I remember that when I would travel to my Grandparent’s & spend 1 month with them during the summer, there was no gym in site. Every other day I went to the playground & did anywhere from 15 – 20 sets of pull ups and chin ups. In high school I was able to crank out 30 pull ups in perfect form even when I weighed 160 lbs.

Create a few of these ‘No Rules’ workouts and do this at least one each week. Make sure that they are different in nature. Perhaps one workout revolves around Russian Kettlebells, another workout might revolve around sled training and another revolves around bodyweight exercises. I like to leave room for my athletes to be creative enough

to do some training on their own as opposed to having me dictate every single workout and exercise selection for them.

As a coach, we do not want to run our athletes into the ground b/c this will make training a tedious task for them. Make it enjoyable, and this means finding the right balance between difficulty, duration and exercise selection so that each workout is fun for them. Remember, we want longevity with our athletes. We want them to come back and improve on a regular basis!

### **Training Like a Farm Boy**

Training like a farm boy may not be the proper title. We can call this archaic training or gladiator training. This type of training builds serious strength, power, endurance & mental toughness! A lot of these ideas have come from watching The World's Strongest Man competition as well as Larry Jusdanis, a strength coach in Canada who uses this style of training year round for his athletes.

This style of training is great for adding confidence in the wrestler, or any athlete for that matter. I encounter a lot of athletes who are very talented but lack the confidence because they know they are not physically strong. Moving heavy objects and straining yourself under tough conditions can have a dramatic increase in an athlete's confidence.

The best part is that most of this equipment can be purchased from Home Depot or you can make them yourself. The pulling sleds I own were welded by a welder. You can always improvise, as this training is not supposed to be pretty. Making sure your equipment looks cool is the last thing anyone should care for.

Here is a list of equipment you can choose from. Once again, you can buy all, some, or none of this equipment. It all depends on your goals my friend.

1. Work Gloves
2. Wheel Barrow
3. Sledge Hammer
4. Pulling Sled (welded together or improvise by using an old snow sleigh)
5. Heavy Duty Rope – 50 ft.
6. Sand Bag
7. Contractor Bag

8. Army Navy Duffel Bag
9. 2 Buckets
10. Old Car or Truck Tire

Now, a lot of this stuff can be purchased for dirt cheap or often times for free. Junk yards give tires away so they don't need to pay recycling fees. A sand bag costs about \$ 3. A 50 ft. rope from Home Depot will cost about \$ 10. I've seen guys get behind a car while it is in neutral and push it across a parking lot! This built up their legs and shoulders and triceps tremendously! Carrying a sand bag up & down stadium stairs for one minute is an awesome overall strength & conditioning exercise. Pushing a heavy wheel barrow up a slight hill for 1 minute will work your entire body. The balancing of the wheel barrow will put extra work on your abs, shoulders, upper back and grip!

Farm boy style training should be creative & fun. It's a great way to break away from the regular weight training that most people do. The movements also force the entire body to work together b/c you are involving so many movements at once: pushing, rotating, pulling, balancing, level changes, etc. Spending 10 – 20 minutes on these training methods will make you much stronger in a short period of time. So stop playing it safely, get out of the weight room, and get out to a field and tear it up! There are sample programs in the workout section as well, just to give you an idea ☺

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CREATING YOUR OWN GYM**

This is going to be great fun! This is the time where you get to create your own training area, whether it is a room, a basement, a garage or a section of your house this is where you let your own world be created!

To determine the space you need, you want a non – cluttered open area. Choose an area that will be free of distractions as well as a place that you can train in year round.

So if you do not have heat in your garage you can forget that idea! Trust me, I tried using those little space heaters and they do not work well enough to heat a room. It was mid December and my garage must have been low 30's! Steam was rising off of my face and eventually I got sick! You also want an area that has a high enough ceiling for you to do chin ups and pull ups & overhead dumbbell presses without hitting your head or the dumbbells on the ceiling.

When I first made my gym, I moved stuff from my Dad's garage and squeezed an open space in what was once a crowded and messy garage. Regardless, I was overly excited to start something that I could call my own. I was tired of training at gyms that played lousy music and the members talked more than they trained. I need my own world. A place where limits were endless and sweating was a good thing. Loud music was something I wanted so I bought a stereo from Best Buy that ran me 65 \$. You may already have a CD player so bring that into your training area.

I bought a few motivational posters of wrestlers and hung them up. The equipment I have is more than what you will need, but never the less, I snagged plenty of bargains by looking in the right places. And you are going to do the same!

Let's take a look at some of the equipment I recommend and then, it's all up to you. If you want to purchase the stuff, go for it. Or, you can simply make your entire strength and conditioning routine revolve around the body weight calisthenics shown in the training manual & the DVD.

One thing I would like to see you purchase is a **stability ball**. If you plan to be using heavy weights then you purchase a burst resistant stability ball. This ball allows you to work your core during every exercise which is a key factor in improving your wrestling performance. The large variety of exercises you can do with the ball are endless. In addition, you can do the exercises with body weight or with free weights. Use the ball and do not feel bad to avoid using the benches. You should not use the flat barbell bench press too often anyway. As mentioned before, they are not very functional for wrestling because a wrestler will never lay still or flat. In addition, the fixed hand position on a barbell places undue stress on the shoulders. So use the exercise moderately.

The environment we compete / train in is unpredictable and dynamic. Not only does a stability ball make sense to use for your program, they are scientifically proven to be more effective because they activate the nervous system more! In addition to the unstable movements, you will be working more muscles during each exercise, especially stabilizer muscles. These are the small muscles that keep joints and ligaments in place and make you less prone to injury. This is a key factor when performing any exercise because as wrestlers many injuries occur to the joints (knees & shoulders). You want to choose the exercise(s) that gives the highest benefit to you and our sport. In addition, when choosing exercises for your workout program, you do not want too many isolation exercises. The majority of your workout should comprise around compound / complex lifts. These are lifts that use more than one muscle to complete a lift. Examples are dead lifts, barbell rows, DB chest presses, all Russian Kettlebell moves, pull ups and dips. Isolation exercises are good if you need to address certain weak areas. Compound moves can make it difficult to address weak muscles since they work a variety of muscles at once.

**Regarding weak areas, GPP training can often fix these weak muscles. As mentioned before, for young athletes, the weak muscles would be all the muscles they can not see when looking in a mirror (the entire posterior chain).**

**A note on the flat barbell bench press:** I do like to use this exercise for a beginner especially so he does not have to worry about balance and learning an exercise on a stability ball. Also, sometimes it is necessary to use a bench to load the muscle enough with heavier weights. As always, experiment and see what works best for you. Regardless though, variety is key! The bench press is a great exercise when used moderately, not excessively as many young athletes tend to do.

Here is a perfect example of training the wrong way: I walked into a high school weight room. The kids in there were the football players. There were squat racks and 2 dead lift platforms. They were all EMPTY!! I saw kids doing STRICT barbell curls and another one doing one arm preacher curls. I did not see one athlete churning out any complex moves. No squats, no dead lifts, no hand stand push ups, dips or pull ups. These complex moves are gut busting and tough. The results they deliver are awesome never the less! This football team had a poor winning record as well!



A perfect example is a team near me that has a very successful team. Conditioning is never a problem with their kids. They are built with muscle and this is because they ALL DO STRENGTH TRAINING YEAR ROUND! It is a tradition in this town of course, but, bottom line, their efforts pay off.

Next thing you want to look at would be the purchase of a **chin / dip tower**. This would probably be number one on my list of things to get, but you can always find parallel bars at a playground and monkey bars or rings for pull ups at the playground as well. These can be purchased at places like Sears, Sports Authority or any other sporting good store. If this piece of equipment takes up too much room you can always purchase the **chin up door unit** where you install a bar in between your door way. Of course, you can always try to find one at the local park. This piece of equipment is one that can take up room and needs a ceiling to be a bit higher for your head to clear above the pull up bars. The two exercises – along with their many variations - (pull ups and dips) that you can perform on this unit are just awesome and very key for wrestlers! The other benefit is having access to the unit all year as opposed to being at the park, you will not be out there working on the dip and pull up bars when the weather is freezing! Or, will you? Chins & dips are great for in season strength training because you can complete a lot of work in a short 10 minute circuit using all the variations of dips and chins.

Can you build your own chin – dip equipment? I did see a guy who built his pull up & dip stations in his back yard! He installed pressure treated wood into the ground. The wood looked like thick rail road ties and was probably purchased from Home Depot. Then, he drilled a bar in between the wooden beams for pull ups. The dip apparatus looked like a set of gymnastic parallel bars. There were 4 upright beams of wood in the ground - then 2 bars for the dips – the dip bar was a bit longer, looked more like gymnastics parallel bars. These bars looked like pipes of some sort. If your or your family members are handy, then make it yourself!!

Next is a **medicine ball**. These can help you work on balance, power and strength! You will be using a medicine ball for upper and lower body exercises. I prefer to see you getting the round rubber medicine balls as opposed to the older leather style. The rubber medicine ball is more challenging to use as well as more versatile! **We use medicine ball throws & tosses to increase power. The reason being is because you**

**can RELEASE THE MEDICINE BALL.** When you are able to release an implement it turns into a power exercise. Why? Let me explain once again as a review. If I want to make the bench press a power move, no matter how fast I press the weight up, I HAVE TO SLOW IT DOWN right before the lock out or the bar will fly out of my hands! This is not smart or safe, obviously! Your body MUST put on the brakes! With a medicine ball, you do not need to put on the brakes because you are explosively throwing or tossing the ball out of your hands – there is no point in where you must slow down as opposed to barbells or dumbbells! I hope that makes sense!

One more thing for the home you need to purchase are a few pairs of **dumbbells**, & a **barbell** if you can afford it. The DB's are more versatile, but eventually you want to find a sturdy barbell (I advise paying extra \$ for a good barbell because you want this bar to last!). My first barbell was purchased from Costco, it was a 300 lb set and served me plenty well. I still use the Olympic plates but I have purchased a new, top quality barbell since then. Make sure you buy either the hexagon or pro style dumbbells. Hex dumbbells are much cheaper than pro style. DO NOT purchase adjustable dumbbells with spin collars because the collars can loosen as you perform your exercises.

As you get stronger you will obviously have to purchase heavier dumbbells, but, for now, these three items will more than suffice: **stability ball, chin / dip tower, dumbbells.** In the future as your training becomes more advanced and you have built up a solid foundation of strength and power you can look to start using **Russian Kettlebells.** Learn more about kettlebells at [www.DragonDoor.com](http://www.DragonDoor.com)

Now, I know I gave you the typical strength training equipment – now let me emphasize some stuff that can be used and purchased for a low price. I call this equipment the **Farm Boy Training Tools:**

1. **Sand bags** – 50 – 60 lbs, wrap them in a contractor bag, tape it up, then put them in a duffle bag – purchase this from an army navy store – my bag costed me \$ 18, and the sand bag was maybe \$ 2 or \$ 3. Use a lighter sand bag if necessary.
2. **Buckets** – 2 heavy duty buckets, load them with sand for farmers carry or farmers walk – wrap foam and tape it around the handles to make the handles larger, which makes gripping them tougher. A wrestler needs to work on finger and grip strength!

3. **Sledge Hammer** – go to Home Depot and buy a hammer or two. Buy a lighter one, and in a few weeks start using the heavier hammer. Make sure there are no people or animals, etc near by. I use the sledge hammer by hitting overhead, or by bringing the hammer around the body from the side similar to baseball swings. Hitting a solid object such a large tire or log of wood is great. You do not want to hit small objects, b/c if you miss, watch out! Also, change your grip. Make sure you work your non dominant side equally to your strong side or slightly more.
4. **Wheel barrow** – load them with weights or sand bags – a wheel barrow is not too expensive compared with buying a pulling sled which can run you close to \$150. Wear a pair of work gloves when pushing or pulling the wheel barrow. Pushing up hill is the best & the toughest. Don't take the easy way out, go out there and make it tough!
5. **Large Tires** – these can be FREE from a junk yard – get a large tire – get a chain and rope from Home Depot – wrap the chain around the tire – and then wrap the rope around the chain (the chain is dragging on the ground and will not break) – loop the rope around your weight lifting belt and drag it like a sled. BIG TIRES can be used for tire flipping and are awesome for developing the entire body!

This is why I like to improvise. Saves you money first of all, and the farm boy training will make you stronger than someone who sticks to weight training only. In addition to these benefits, most farm boy training attacks the posterior chain. The posterior chain is largely responsible for giving an athlete strength, speed & power!

Here are a few places where you can purchase your equipment. Shop around, **check for quality first, best price second!** Too many people want to save ten dollars on equipment and end up buying a lesser quality item that ultimately can put the athlete at risk for injury.

1. [www.performbetter.com](http://www.performbetter.com)
2. [www.stretchwell.com](http://www.stretchwell.com)
3. [www.power-systems.com](http://www.power-systems.com)
4. Sears
5. Sports Authority
6. E Bay

## 7. Home Depot (farm boy implements)

When looking for a stability ball, perform better and stretchwell are great companies. Dumbbells should not be purchased online so you can avoid paying high shipping due to freight charges. E Bay sometimes has good sales on the chin / dip unit and often times companies will ship them for free. If you purchase the unit from a store you can always try it out first to check the sturdiness. Then again, an even better option would be to print out a photo of the chin / dip unit, then have a welder build you one out of solid steel or build it with the wood and bars that I mentioned before. Be sure to have the welder make it high / low enough to fit the height limitations of your home. As I mentioned earlier, shop around and do research. Do not rush and buy cheap equipment that will injure you in the short or long run.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **High Octane Cardio (HOC)** **&** **Combo Lifting**

High Octane Cardio is a great way to prep your self whether it is in season or off season. This includes bouts of moderate intensity exercise with bouts of anaerobic exercise. Wrestling matches simulate such an up & down energy exertion. There are times in a match where the intensity is great, other times when the intensity is a bit lower. I start my athletes doing HOC for 5 minutes or less depending on their current fitness level. In time, many have worked up to doing 20 minutes of HOC! This challenged my toughest athletes physically & mentally!

Refer to the DVD, The Ultimate Guide to Sport Specific Conditioning, for a short sample of HOC. Let me explain a few ways to use HOC though. Go to an empty basketball court. Place a pair of DB's on each side, or, perhaps just place one pair on one

side, and the other side of the basketball court will include a BW exercise or a plyo move. Jog from one side of the court to the first station, perform 20 seconds of explosive curl & press combo lifts with the DB's, skip back to the other side, perform 20 seconds worth of squat jumps, gallop to the other side, perform 20 seconds of bent over DB rows (use both DB's), jog back to the other side, perform 20 seconds of push ups, perform karaoka to the other side, when you get there, perform 20 squats holding the DB's either down at your sides or on your shoulders – try varying the movement you do when traveling across the court – this works the body to a greater extent, and will develop better coordination and body awareness, as well as improve your joint strength & stability.

**COMBO LIFTING** is a great way to get the body working as a unit. In wrestling, or any sport for that matter, we never isolate one area of the body. Wrestling involves all muscles! So, why not train your body in such a way? Combo lifts are when you combine at least 2 exercises together. An example I use often is the DB curl & press – doing 10 DB curls and then 10 presses is NOT a combo lift – the combo is when you link the moves together.

Here are some of my favorite combo lifts:

- DB curl & press
- DB squat, curl & press
- Romanian Dead Lift (RDL) & bent over barbell row
- Barbell or DB hang clean & press
- Parallel bar dip & leg raise
- DB lunge & curl
- DB lunge & press
- Squat, push, jump & pull (squat thrust combined w/ a pull up)

There are many others, you can create them on your own or do some research. A combo lift will get your heart rate elevated and can be used with heavy weights or light weights. Some combos lend them selves to heavy weights & vice versa. You can do a workout that is only combo lifts (good for max repetition day) or you can include one or

two of them into your supplementary lifts after doing a max effort exercise. The possibilities are endless!

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **THE WORKOUTS**

Here are just a few workouts for you to follow. I will tell you this much though, that NO program is the end all be all secret recipe for success. These workouts are going to help you towards the higher steps on the ladder of success. There are other programs as well though. Programs that I hope you are creative enough and dedicated enough to construct on your own. In addition, **do your own research and learn about proper strength training methods & philosophies.** This will require time on your part as well as trial & error. **Be sure to consult with your primary physician before participating in this or any other exercise program.**

After you purchase this manual please feel free to contact me via e mail if you have any questions or concerns regarding the program. I am expecting you to train two or three times a week plus extra GPP work, and as mentioned before, **listen to your body!**

Also, the number of set & reps will vary according to your individual ability as I have mentioned before. Understanding this factor, you must tailor the reps & sets to your needs and to your daily strength levels. If you feel strong, rest less and go heavier. If you feel tired that day you should focus on bodyweight exercises only and give your body a less intense workout or do some GPP work. Or, take advantage of active recovery or a complete day off. Every 6 weeks or so you need to take 3 or 4 days off completely to let your mind and body recover. This mini vacation also helps you progress faster. Remember, rest is a key portion of a solid strength training program.

Wrestling and all the training that coincides with being a top notch wrestler requires year round training. This training needs to be smart. You can work harder than

everyone else but you must also train smarter. Rest & nutrition is part of the total strength and conditioning regimen. A crucial part might I add. **Leave out the rest and nutrition portion of your program and you will have less than mediocre results at best!**

Regarding variety, this is key in many ways. Vary the sets, reps, and weights. In addition, you can vary the speed of the movement, the grip / placement of your hands, feet and overall body as well. So when you see the exercise chin ups, pull ups, push ups, etc. take initiative and vary your exercise on your own.

### **BODYWEIGHT ONLY WORKOUT (beginner)**

#### **Warm up:**

- Jump rope 2 minutes
- Skipping 30 sec.
- Galloping 30 sec.
- Hop on each foot in different directions 30 sec. Ea. foot
- Walking lunges 1 minute

#### **Work out**

1. pull ups (vary grips) 3 sets 3 – 10 reps (increase reps as you get stronger)
2. push ups 3 sets max reps
3. bodyweight squats 3 x 20 – 30 reps
4. bodyweight lunges 3 x 10 reps each leg
5. parallel bar dips 2 x 3 – 10 reps
6. knee tucks on stability ball 3 x 6 – 12 reps

### **Intermediate Bodyweight Work Out**

#### **Warm up:**

- Jump rope 2 minutes
- 20 push ups (10 w/ hands shoulder width apart, 10 w/ hands close together)
- walking lunges 1 minute

1 A) push ups (feet elevated or hand stand push ups) 3 x max reps

B) pull ups (change grip every set) 3 x max reps

2 A) parallel bar dips 3 x max reps

B) leg raises while in upright dip position 3 x 8 – 15 reps

3 A) squat jumps 3 x 30 seconds

B) walking lunges 3 x 30 seconds

4 A) push ups on stability ball (hands or feet on ball) 3 x 8 - 15

B) knee tucks on ball 3 x 8 – 12

5 A) back bridge 2 x 1 minute

B) back bridge push ups 2 x 30 seconds

\* This work out physically prepares the body for the more complex training sessions that you will be doing in the future. Always use proper form and the goal here is to keep challenging your mind & body. Keep pushing for an improvement with less rest or an extra rep or two. Do not be fooled, body weight training can be brutal, so push yourself big time and you will feel the difference! These workouts are great for building **strength & muscular endurance**. This is what a wrestler needs when third period rolls around and the match is a tie. I know you want to win, so kick some butt with this work out!

### **COMPLEX WORKOUT # 1**

#### **Warm up:**

- pummel with partner 1 minute
- butt kicks while jogging (kick your heels to your butt) 1 minute



- hip heists 45 seconds
  - 1 A) feet elevated push ups 4 x max reps
  - 2 B) chin ups 4 x max reps
  - 3 A) curl & press combo 4 x 8 - 12
  - B) plyo push / pull – hands on stability ball 4 x 6 reps
  - 3 A) 1 arm high pulls 4 x 6
  - B) lateral plyo push up on medicine ball 4 x 6
  - 4 A) Dumbbell chest press on stability ball 4 x 8 - 12
  - B) walking lunges with dumbbells 4 x 8 ea.leg
  - 5 A) partner sit up with medicine ball 2 x 30 seconds
  - B) body weight squats 2 x 30 seconds (as fast as possible!)
- This work out has moderate reps so you can focus on good form and still pushing through each movement with some speed in order to get used to feeling the muscles do the work. You do not want to go to muscle fatigue here because then your speed of the exercise slows down (something we do not want). Push through the exercise yet keep good form! Think about hitting your opponent w/ a hard double and lifting him or exploding out of the bottom in your OT match that determines if you will be in the state finals that afternoon! You know what you have to do, so DO IT!

## **COMPLEX WORKOUT # 2**

### **Warm up:**

- Curl & press 1 x 15 reps
- V up exchange with stability ball

- Body weight squats 1 minute
  - 1 A) 1 legged squats 3 x 3 – 6 reps ea. leg  
B) 1 arm high pulls 3 x 8 ea. arm
  - 2 A) push ups with feet on stability ball 3 x 10  
B) lunge and curl combo 3 x 10
  - 3 A) squat & overhead press 3 x 8  
B) plyo push ups on floor 3 x 5
  - 4 A) pull ups 5 x 3  
B) parallel bar dips 5 x 5
  - 5 A) partner sit up & medicine ball throw 2 x 10  
B) V Up exchange with stability ball 2 x 10

\*This work out combines some strength and power by changing the rep & set combos for each exercise. There are also more combo exercises that are going to send your heart beat through the roof. They will also better mimic what occurs during wrestling which is the body performing more than one motion simultaneously. You can create your own combo exercises as well. Regarding the push ups and pull ups, you can make them more difficult in a number of ways. For pull ups & dips you can purchase a weight belt with a chain to add weight to. For push ups you can vary the placement of your hands and body as mentioned before. If things are too easy, do a push up w/ only one foot on the ball! I doubt things will be easy anymore! Still too easy? Try doing one handed push ups! I guarantee you will not be cranking out sets of 20 anymore! Be creative and challenge your body with these intense variations!

### **THE CIRCUIT**

#### **Warm up:**

- Push ups x 10
- Parallel bar dips x 5
- Leg raises off dip bar x 10

- Jump rope 1 minute

This circuit is to be done non stop. In the beginning, do one circuit and then see how you feel. If it was too easy, repeat the circuit again but change the order of the exercises. Next time you will be more attuned to your physical needs and you can go slightly heavier. At the most you should 3 or 4 circuits here. If you create your own circuit, see what works best for you. You can make a circuit of 5 exercises in a row with a partner than each of you do speed drilling or live wrestling for 2 minutes. Change your training often and you will be soaring by leaps and bounds! The best work out is often the one you are NOT doing! Let's take a look at one sample circuit.

1. chin ups x 10
2. alternate lunges x 12 ea. leg
3. dumbbell squat and press x 8
4. plyo push pull on stability ball x 5
5. body weight v ups x 10
6. push ups x 12
7. dips x 8
8. 1 arm high pull x 8 ea. arm
9. sprinting up hill or on grass for 30 seconds (straight line)
10. squat jumps x 10
11. sprint back to starting point
12. squat jumps x 10
13. rest and drink water or pass out

HAVE FUN with these and all workouts! I always recommend getting at least one partner if not two of them. You can challenge one another to greater heights and will feed off of each other's energy.

### **The "No Rules" Workout**

#### **# 1**

1. Pull ups , 15 sets total, each set is going to be almost max reps (leave 1 or 2 reps in the tank)
2. Sand Bag carries walking up stairs, 3 sets, 1 minute each

**# 2**

1. Russian Kettlebell, double clean, front squat & press, 10 sets of 3, resting 30 seconds between sets
2. Sled Press , Sled Row – do 6 reps of one exercise and then alternate – continue for a total of 10 minutes, no rest at all

**# 3**

1. Standing barbell push press into a barbell back squat, do 3 reps of each, rest 45 seconds between sets, do a total of 10 sets
2. 1 arm kettlebell swings, 3 sets of 10, no rest between each arm

**THE TRACK WORKOUT (High Octane Cardio / HOC)**

Here we will incorporate sprint work with strength training. You can be creative here. You can place dumbbells on each end of the track or just use bodyweight exercises here.

**WARM UP:**

- butt kicks 30 seconds
- skipping 30 sec.
- Hopping each foot 30 sec.
- Galloping 30 sec.

**Work Out:**

1. sprint the 40 yd. Dash – followed immediately by 10 - 20 push ups (rest 1 – 3 minutes)
2. Sprint the 40 yd Dash – immediately followed by 5 - 10 squat jumps (rest 1 – 3 minutes)
3. 5 Long Jumps – immediately followed by sprinting for 20 seconds

4. sprint the ¼ mile (rest 2 minutes)
  5. sprint the ¼ mile
- 

Sometimes I have wrestlers run suicide sprints. Sometimes they run four ¼ mile sprints. The ¼ mile should be done at a very fast pace because we want to train energy systems specific for wrestling. Contrary to what many have learned, you still need to rest after you do sprints. Sometimes my athletes rest the same amount of time their sprint took to complete. (i.e. sprint took 30 seconds, so they rest 30 seconds) – other times they rest as much as 5 times as long as the sprint activity took. This longer rest is done to allow the entire nervous system to recover. This long rest will allow the body to recruit the most amount of muscle involvement and train for power more efficiently.

Be creative & use variety as I always emphasize! Tough HOC workouts are when you place the dumbbells at each end of the track and perform a combination lift when you get there. Such as sprinting to the end, doing a curl – press for 12 reps, then jog to the next set of dumbbells and doing 10 squat thrust & jump squats. It will not take long before you are running for the bucket my friend!

This final program is a sample for those of you who train at a gym. Perhaps your high school gym or somewhere else, and you have access to more equipment. I am going to give you a 3 day sample program here and as always, tweak the program as you prefer, but, I highly suggest you follow the parameters I list!

### **MONDAY – UPPER BODY – MAX EFFORT**

Choose one exercise from below and perform up to 5 total sets. Your last set should be for 5 reps. You should still have 1 rep left in the bank as I do not want to see you sacrifice form just so you can move the weight.

5 sets of 5 reps for one of the below exercises:

- flat / incline dumbbell chest press (sometimes the barbell)
- weighted parallel bar dips
- close grip bench press

Next are supplemental lifts, designed to balance your program and to be done with higher reps and sets of 3 – 4 for anywhere from 6 – 15 reps.

Choose 1 from the list below:

- bent over barbell rows
- 1 arm dumbbell rows

Choose 1 from the list below:

- bent over dumbbell rear delt flies
- standing side dumbbell laterals

Choose 1 from the list below:

- hanging leg raises
- inverted sit ups
- leg raise on parallel dip bar

## **DAY 2 – MAX EFFORT – LEG DAY**

Work up to a max set of 5 reps from one of the following:

- trap bar deadlift or straight bar DL
- barbell squat
- box squats

Choose one exercise from below, 3 – 4 sets of 8 – 15 reps

- walking dumbbell lunges
- split squat using barbell or dumbbells
- alternate forward or reverse lunges w/barbell or dumbbells
- 1 leg dumbbell squat (back foot elevated on bench)
- Barbell or dumbbell step ups

Choose one exercise from the list below, 3 – 4 sets, 6 – 10 reps

- Leg curl holding dumbbell between feet
- Romanian deadlift (RDL) use barbell or DB

GRIP TRAINING – choose one of the following:

- Farmers carry with dumbbells or Olympic plates
- Wrist roller
- Carry hex DB's – grip your hand around the end of the hex dumbbell – this will strengthen your fingers & grip, which must be strong!

### **FRIDAY – MAX REPETITION – FULL BODY**

Work up to 3 sets of maximum reps, resting 1 minute between sets

Choose one exercise from below:

- RDL's w/bar or regular DL's
- Barbell squats
- Walking lunges for 1 – 2 minutes per set

Choose one from the list below:

- Barbell or dumbbell bench press
- Regular push-ups, bar push-ups or suspended chain push-ups
- Bodyweight dips
- Dumbbell benches on Swiss ball, flat bench or incline bench

Choose one from below, doing 3 sets 10 – 20 reps:

- Parallel bar dips
- Close grip bench press
- Lying tricep extension

Choose one from below, doing 3 sets 10 – 20 reps:

- Standing dumbbell or barbell military press
- Barbell or dumbbell shrugs

Choose one from below, doing 3 sets max reps:

- Lat pulldowns (various bars / grips)
- Chin – Pull ups (various bars / grips)

Choose one from below, doing 3 sets 10 – 20 reps:

- Standing barbell curl
- Standing / seated alternating dumbbell curls
- Incline dumbbell curls
- Hammer curls

## **ABDOMINAL TRAINING**

Pick a variety of abdominal exercises and perform them in a circuit fashion. Do this continuously for 5 – 10 minutes.

## **FARM BOY TRAINING PROGRAM**

### **Workout # 1:**

1. **Wheel barrow carry**: Use 25 - 50 % of bodyweight in the wheel barrow at first (you can build up to more than your own bodyweight in this exercise!), walk forwards in straight line, 3 - 5 sets, 1 - 2 minutes each set (increase difficulty by pushing the wheel barrow up hill)
2. **Sled Pull**: attach a 50 ft. rope to a pulling sled, using 25 – 50% of bodyweight, pull in a hand over hand fashion until the sled reaches your feet. Body should be positioned in an athletic stance. Perform a total of 3 – 5 sets.
3. **Sand bag Carry**: use a sand bag that is 25 – 50 % of bodyweight. Squat down, clean the weight explosively, and carry in a straight line. Perform 3 – 5 sets, 1 minute each set
4. **Uphill Sprints** (3 – 5 sets for 20 – 40 seconds) followed by one of the following exercises for 3 – 5 sets, 10 – 20 reps:
  - A) squat thrust, push up & jump, B) Hindu Push ups, C) Split squat jumps, D) push ups

**\*Note:** if Kettlebells are available, perform any of the two handed ballistic movements such as the snatch or clean at the top of the hill

### **Workout # 2:**

1. **Sand bag rotational throw**: Standing next to a fairly light sand bag (begin using a bag approximately 15% of bodyweight & progress at your own ability level), squat down and rotate, grabbing the sand bag, explosively lift, rotate and throw the bag sideways. Jog to the sand bag, and repeat 5 more time in the same direction. After 5 repetitions, repeat the same procedure for the other side. Continue in this fashion going from 5 reps, to 4, then 3, then 2, then 1 repetition. This



- reverse ladder fashion of repetitions can be done with higher or lower reps, as well as starting at 1 repetition, increasing to a 5 rep max, and then back down to 1 rep (totaling 9 sets this way!)
2. **Sand Bag over head carry**: Clean & press the sand bag over head (use a weight 15 – 25 % of your bodyweight to start), lock arms out fully, slightly lean forward, and walk forwards for 1 minute. Repeat for 2 – 5 sets.
  3. **Reverse tire drag**: using a heavy tire, get a chain looped around the tire, connect a heavy duty tow strap to the chain, and loop the tow strap around your weight belt. Drag the tire while walking backwards for 3 – 5 sets, 20 – 40 seconds each set

### **Workout # 3:**

1. **Olympic plate relay**: Have a pile of Olympic plates (minimum 10) piled at one end of the gym, back yard, field, etc. Picking up one plate at a time, using both hands holding the plate in front of you (arms at 90 degree angle or held tight against body), carry the plate to the opposite end one at a time, minimum 20 ft. away. Jog, skip, or gallop back to the pile of Olympic plates, and repeat the process until all the Olympic plates have traveled across the designated area. Rest 1 minute, then repeat again for a total of 4 – 5 sets.
2. **Walking Lunges** (done using bodyweight, holding DB's, or a plate in front of body: perform 3 – 4 sets for a prescribed distance or for 1 – 2 minutes.

### **NOTES / GUIDELINES:**

- As always, perform a warm up prior to training.
- Adjust training intensity & work loads according to your own ability level.
- The exercises, as always, can be arranged in any order, or can be added to a regular weight training day.
- Make sure the equipment being used is in good working condition to ensure safety.
- Perform these workouts with less sets, lighter weights, etc. for extra GPP work.
- Getting out of the weight room and moving objects in such a fashion adds variety and improves overall physical preparedness for any sport.
- This type of training will also greatly improve mental toughness.

**Where to purchase equipment:**

- Home depot can be your best friend. Purchase rope, chains, and wheel barrow from Home Depot.
- Get a tire for free from a junk yard. If you have a pulling, use that instead.
- Sand bags can also be purchased from Home Depot or another hardware store. Wrap the sand bag in 2 heavy duty contractor bags, then tape the bag up. Go to an Army Navy Store for a duffel bag, and place the sand bag inside.

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After you have been training for a few months, and you have been incorporating the methods outlined in this book, you can progress through the workout below, which will last a few months. This workout incorporates exercises shown in the DVD and some are not shown. I did not want to only include exercises you have seen, forcing you to do some research and take your training to a new level. This 14 week plan has tons of variety and once again, is only ONE way you can train.

**The work out below can give you a specific progression to follow from day one if you prefer to have everything written out in stone. I emphasize creativity and individualizing programs so I am not one who believes in having programs written in stone.**

**Still, for some of you who like to have things written in stone, this is for you. Or, for the wrestling coach who wants to give his entire team a program to follow on their own, this makes it easy for you. Simply give them the program and have them partner up in groups of 2 or 3. The partner aspect keeps the kids consistent and less likely to skip a work out.**

### **14 WEEK STRENGTH & CONDITIONG PROGRAM FOR WRESTLERS**

**(weeks 1 - 2) workout 1 / Body Weight** (perform 3 x week for 2 weeks, keep switching the order of the exercises every workout, train on non consecutive days) - perform this program for 2 weeks (6 times)

1. BW squats 3 x 15 - 30 reps
2. floor Push ups 3 x 2 - 3 reps short of max reps
3. Recline Pull up 3 x 2 - 3 reps short of max reps
4. hanging knee up (hold onto chin up bar or moneky bars)3 x max reps

5. BW alternate lunges 3 x 10 - 12 per leg

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**(weeks 3 - 4) workout 2** (follow same parameters as above for 2 weeks - 6 workouts total)

1. BW Walking lunges 3 x 1 minute
2. staggered grip push ups 2 x max reps
3. pull up 5 x 1 - 3 reps per set
4. feet elevated push ups 2 x max reps
5. one leg squat, back foot elevated on bench 3 x 10 - 15 per leg
6. hanging knee up 3 x max reps
7. farmer's carry holding DB's 3 x 1 minute

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**(week 5 - 6) workout 3 / free weights and BW** (do 4 total workouts, twice ea. week - take 3 days off in between ea. workout, switching the order of exercises each time)

On off days, perform extra general physical preparedness (GPP) 2 x week: GPP workouts should be relatively short, 15 - 20 minutes  
preferred GPP activities:

- farmers walk w/DB's or sand bags
- wheel barrow push / pull
- tire drag (facing the tire & away from the tire) - (tie a rope around the tire, attach to your weight belt or hold in your hands)
- BW exercises in a circuit

1. Pull ups - vary grip 6 x 2 - 4 reps
2. plyo push ups w/hands elevated on bench 4 x 4 - 8 reps
3. DB step up onto bench 3 x 10 per leg
4. DB curl & press combo 3 x 15 - 20 reps
5. barbell bench press (medium grip) 4 x 8 - 12
6. knee tucks on stability ball 3 x 8 - 15
7. wheel barrow (load w/any resistance - weights) push 3 x 1 minute (loading the wheel barrow w/olympic plates makes it easy to track the loads as opposed to throwing in sand or rocks)

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**(weeks 7 - 8) workout 4 / free weight & BW combo** ( follow same parameters as workout # 3)

1. dead lift w/trap bar 5 x 12 - 5 reps (last 2 sets are 5 - 6 reps)

2. barbell lunge 3 x 8 - 12
3. Stability Ball DB chest press 3 x 10  
immediately followed by  
plyo push ups 3 x 2 - 5 reps
4. 1 arm DB row 3 x 10  
immediately followed by  
recline pull ups 3 x max reps
5. stability ball crunch (hold DB overhead for resistance) 3 x 12

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**(week 9) workout 5 / out door training** (perform 3 total workouts, varying exercise order each time)

1. walking lunges 2 x 1 minute
2. sled dragging - face away from sled, loop rope around weight belt (6 minutes non stop) - long steps, similar to speed walking
3. sand bag lift and carry - squat down, explosively lift sand bag, catch it w/both arms underneath (90 degree bend in elbows - similar to curling) - 3 x 1 minute each
4. monkey bars - walk and pull up (walk both hands to the same bar, do 1 pull up, walk both hands to next bar, 1 pull up - repeat for max reps) - do these traveling forwards or sideways on monkey bars
5. hands elevated plyo push ups (hands on park bench) 3 x 10 immediately followed by bench dips 3 x max reps
6. hanging leg raises while holding onto monkey bars 3 x max reps
7. farmers zig zag carry - hold olympic plates in each hand using a pinch grip, walk in between 5 sets of cones, repeat 3 sets for 45 seconds - 1 minute each

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**(week 10 - 13) workout 6 - max effort** (first exercise you progress up to a weight allowing you to complete 5 - 6 quality reps)

1. barbell squat or dead lift (any style - bar) 5 x 12 - 5 reps
2. barbell / DB reverse lunge 3 x 10
3. RDL w/ barbell or DB's 4 x 6 - 10
4. split squat plyos 3 x 30 seconds ea.
5. dip bar leg raises 3 x 10 - 15
6. DB farmer carry (zig zag) 2 sets holding 2 DB's, 2 sets holding 1 DB (focus on obliques) 45 sec. - 1 minute per set

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**workout 7 - max effort** (follow same parameters as workout 6)

1. medium / close grip barbell bench (flat or incline) 5 x 12 - 5 immediately followed by plyo push up 5 x 3 - 6 reps
2. bent over barbell row or 1 arm DB row 4 x 6 - 8
3. suspended chain push ups 4 x 5 - 12
4. pull ups - vary grip ea. set 5 x 3
5. 1 arm DB clean & press 3 x 6 - 8
6. back extension (using resistance) 3 x 10 - 20
7. standing rope crunch (use pulley machine or jump stretch band looped over a power rack / chin up bar) 3 x 1 minute ea.

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### **workout 8 - max repetition day**

perform 3 sets per exercise, light weights, 1 or 2 reps short of muscular fatigue. rest is 1 minute between sets - repetitions should be above 20 and as high as 50

1. barbell / DB reverse lunges
2. Stability Ball leg curl
3. stability ball push ups (hands on)
4. lat pulldown or recline pull ups
5. standing barbell military push press
6. decline tricep XT using curl or straight bar
7. DB speed curls
8. parallel bar dips
9. standing rope pulley crunches

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### **(week 14) Combo Lifting Workout**

1. DB Squat and overhead press 5 x 5 - 6 reps
2. 1 leg squat - back foot elevated and DB curl 3 x 8 - 10
3. parallel bar dip and leg raise 3 x 12 - 15
4. RDL w/ bent over barbell row 3 x 8 - 10
5. Renegade Man maker (use russian kettlebells or DB's) 3 x 1 minute each

**how to do a renegade man maker:** push up position, hands on DB's or KB's - perform 1 arm row for each side, then a push up, then jump forward w/feet outside of weights in a low squat tuck, clean the weights up, press weights overhead together or in alternate fashion - that equals 1 rep!

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notes regarding the workouts - the renegade man maker was inspired by mike mahler! very tough for the entire body, and very effective

the workouts regarding max effort / max reps were inspired by a great program from joe defranco - westside for skinny bastards

the combo lifting has always been a favorite of mine, and is very useful for wrestlers - alwyn cosgrove opened up my mind more so to all the wonderful combos that can be created

the bodyweight programs are an excellent place to start - the guidelines of 2 weeks or 6 workouts, etc. are just that, only guidelines - according to how you are progressing, the time spent on each program must change accordingly

In essence, no workout is the same, in some form or another, things should be changed - the set - rep - rest - tempo - order of exercises are just a few variables you can manipulate

DB exercises can be substituted w/ barbells or russian kettlebells. supersets and circuits can be thrown into the mix as well.

On a note from Louie Simmons - perform extra GPP (general physical preparedness) workouts often & year round - do them to address weak points as well as to increase your ability to tolerate difficult workouts. GPP days do not necessarily need to be sled dragging and sand bag carries, etc. - they can be high rep days where you perform more BW exercises, light stability ball and med ball exercises, or high reps on the basic movements - bench press, squatting, dead lifting, etc.

The breakdown of performing particular workouts for a few weeks or one week are also general guidelines. The max effort - max rep workouts require you to continuously change your main exercises, and replace them w/exercises that are similar in nature. For example, replace the squat w/feel elevated deadlifts, replace the RDL w/ a good morning variation. Do not use the same exercise for more than 3 weeks at a time. Change the exercise to give the central nervous system time to recuperate.

**Improving your lactate tolerance levels:** perform basic exercises with high reps. Squatting and dead lifting for sets of 20 will challenge you physically as well as mentally. In addition, the variety increases your response rate to strength training.

**Strength Endurance:** this is key in wrestling - you must be able to stay strong for the entire duration of the match. This is why some exercises have low reps and high sets - pull ups for 6 - 10 sets of 2 - 5 reps with short rest intervals are great for strength endurance.

**Energy System Training:** wrestlers will not benefit too much from distance jogging. High Octane cardio and sprinting are much more appropriate training methods for wrestlers.

**High Octane cardio** has been address by Jason Brown here on Sport Specific.

In a nut shell, set up 2 stations at opposite ends of a tennis court, basketball court, track, empty field, etc.

Jog from one station to the next. Perform an explosive movement for 20 - 30 seconds, jog to the next station and perform a new explosive movement.

here are a few exercise options to choose from:

- DB curl & press
- 1 arm DB clean & press
- Squat thrust, push up & jump
- squat jumps
- KB or DB snatch
- push ups or plyo push ups
- DB speed curls

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**conclusion:** this program does not need to be followed in stone. There are infinite variations you can use in addition to what is outlined here. variety is a key component in every quality program so this is a large reason as to why workouts are broken down into 1 - 3 weeks sections.

Research other training methods & nutrition and put together a program that works best for you. Nothing beats hands on experimentation and experience. These workouts will do nothing if effort is not put forth and a quality nutrition program must be followed.

Good luck & let me know how you do with the program!

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These are enough workouts to get you started!! The rest is up to you and requires research & experimentation. It does not cost a lot to purchase this equipment and as I mentioned before, if you do not want to purchase all of the items, then make due with just your body. After all, you are using your body during wrestling in hand to hand combat. Before you start a program with free weights you should be able to master your own body. Exercises such as pull ups, dips, push ups, squats and one legged squats should be mastered first! Train like a gladiator and you will be tough like a gladiator. Take time to train your mind as well. The mind is the key to everything. You can work harder than anyone in the state, but if you do not believe in yourself then you are going to have nothing more than a mediocre season at best. I have watched some not so hard workers qualify for the states while some of the hardest workers did not believe in their ability and never made it out of the district.

Will you wake up 15 years from now and talk about everything you could have or should have accomplished? Or, will you look back and know that you left it all out on the mat each and every time?

My older brother was in the military for two countries and in more than one elite fighting unit. The training they went through was brutal on the easiest of days. Some of the training was so brutal that it was known to be deadly as well. To enable themselves to make it through this hell, they had to mentally be in a state of which they felt they were indomitable. One of their mottos was:

*“Today I have given all I have. That which I have kept is lost forever.”*

This motto says a lot for wrestlers and all gladiators to learn from. If you did not give your all during a certain practice or match, there is no turning back in time and getting a second chance. You have a chance to do something great in this life. Be a leader and clear a path for others to always look up to and follow!

Please be sure to contact me & let me know how your training and wrestling is going. Perhaps one day we will meet, and I look forward to that as well.

Until then, I wish you all the best!

Sincerely,

Zach Even-Esh  
President, Combat Grappler  
[www.CombatGrappler.com](http://www.CombatGrappler.com)  
[www.NJstrength.com](http://www.NJstrength.com)  
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## Appendix A

### Body Weight Exercises

#### Push Up Variations

##### Traditional



##### Staggered Hands



Feet Elevated



Stability Ball Push Ups



One Hand Elevated



Medicine Ball Walkovers



One Hand Push Ups



Suspended Chain Push Ups



Plyometric Push Ups



Pull Ups  
Wide Grip





Reverse Grip



Dips



Dip Bar Leg Raises



Single Leg Squat



Alternate Lunges

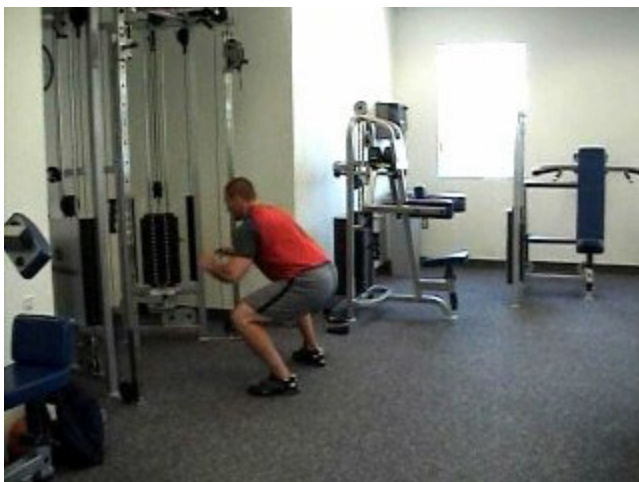


Walking Lunges





Squat Push Pull



## Appendix B

### Russian Kettlebell Exercises

#### Swings



#### Juggling Swings



Cleans to Press



Snatch





Alternate Press



Renegade Man Maker



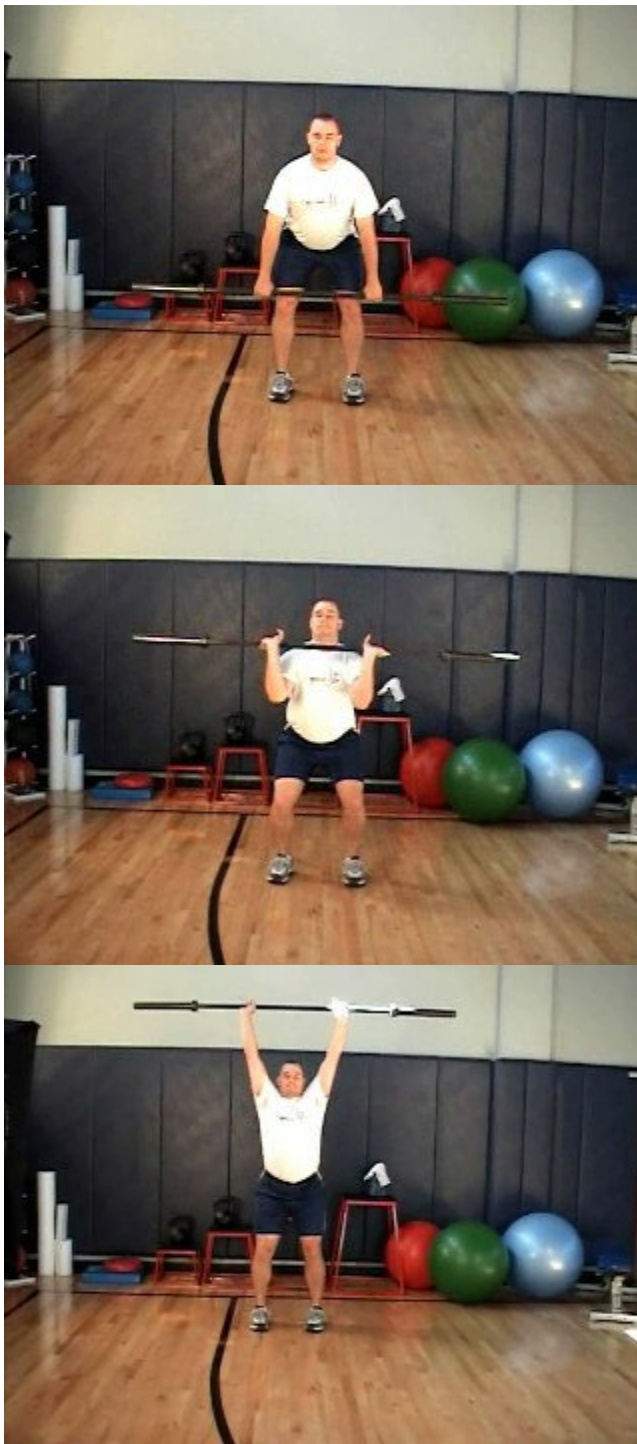




## Appendix C

### Free Weight Exercises

#### Hang Clean (& Jerk)



#### Dumbbell Clean (& Jerk)



Dumbbell Row Variations







Barbell Row Variations





Dumbbell Bench Press Variations









Shoulder Press



Bicep Curl Variations

EZ Curl



Dumbbell Curl



Dumbbell Hammer Curl



Balance Curls





Dumbbell Curl to Press



Dumbbell Squat to Press





Walking Lunge



Walking Lunge to Press



Weight Plate Squat



Weight Plate Wood Chop



Weight Plate Rotational Lift & Press



## Appendix D

### Plyometric Exercises

#### Tuck Jumps



#### Squat Tuck Jumps





Split Squat Jumps



Long Jumps





Plyometric Push Ups



## Appendix E

## Medicine Ball Throws

## Squat &amp; Throw



## Granny Throw

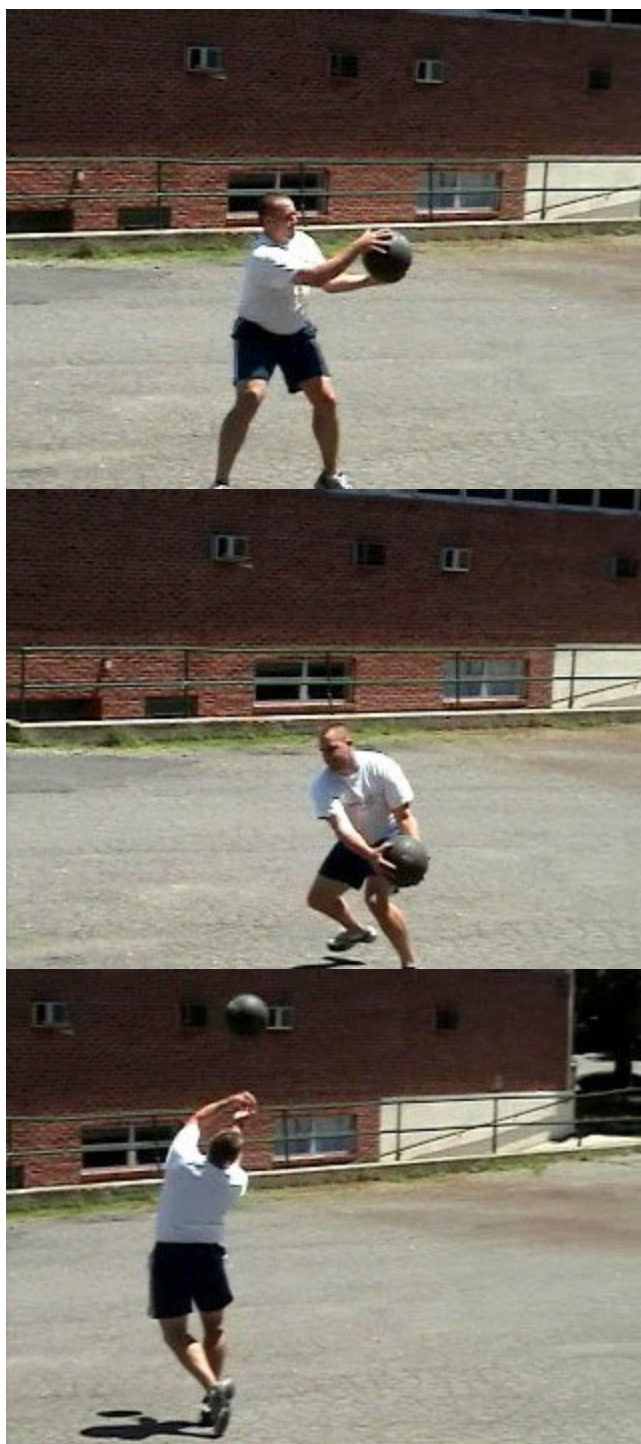


Partner Side Toss



Full Rotation Throw





## Appendix F

### Sled Drills

#### Power Walks



#### Backward Power Walks



#### Sprints



Forward Drags



Backward Drags



Lunges





Sumo Walks



Sumo Pull Through



Chest Press



Row



I,Y,T,A's





Rotations



Diagonal Lift & Pull



