

Extra Workouts 2

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I write to all powerlifters, but I am always amazed to hear a drug-free lifter say that he can't train the Westside way. Although these lifters are going nowhere fast, they choose to use the progressive gradual overload method, going heavier and heavier each week. In most cases they stop making records and are stuck for years. Yet, they still choose not to use a more sophisticated method of training such as that used at Westside and presently used worldwide.

These drug-free lifters train so heavy that they can't do the special work that is required to excel at powerlifting. They do most of their training at over 90% of their max, whereas we do most of our training at 60%. Doesn't this make more sense? A drug-free lifter trains only three, sometimes two times a week. No wonder they get sore. This style of training is similar to a weekend warrior playing basketball.

A great many major college and NFL football teams train in the same manner as Westside, and guess what? They are drug-free. During spring training, 3-a-day practices are common. That is 15 workouts a week. So why do you think you should train only two or three times a week?

We are on the same side folks, so let's look at a systematic program that will start you making progress again.

First of all, you must be fast and very strong to excel at powerlifting. This requires a training program that is 50% to the development of absolute strength. The workouts must be separated by 72 hours! So, what can you do in between? You can do small workouts, 15-30 minutes per workout.

Lets look at bench pressing first.

Workout #1

Lat pull-downs, dumbbell extensions, and side delt raises, and always do ab work.

Workout #2

Barbell rows, 4 sets of dumbbell presses to failure. Use a weight where 15-20 reps can be done. Rotate from flat, incline, decline, and seated press. Also do abs.

Workout #3

Three sets of seated dumbbell power cleans. Use a weight where 20 reps can be done, but with much effort. Also do one-arm dumbbell rows, 2-4 sets, and 2 sets of pushups to failure and abs.

Workout #4

Two sets of benching for 25 reps. Use a different grip, wide, close, thumb or thumb less, or even reverse. Also do chin-ups, inverted flies, and abs.

Workout #5

One of our 198s, Sonny Kerschner, had a 410 bench and was stuck. He began doing tricep pushdowns with a pink flex band looped over a door at his house. Using strict form and a moderate tempo, he did 100 total reps 3 times a week. Six months later his bench press was an official 470.

All of the above workouts must be brisk, almost nonstop. Not only will this build substantial muscle mass in the precise area you need it, but it will also raise your work capacity.

As you can see, there are countless combinations to choose from. Remember to switch often, and always think "what do I need to raise my bench press?". Then do only that, for 15-30 minutes tops. Start by adding one small workout a week and add a second and so forth when you feel capable. For the squat and deadlift, the same exercises will work for both. It is important to do ab work in every workout. Sometimes abs can be the only muscle group worked.

Workout #1

Pull-throughs, leg raises, and dumbbell rows.

Workout #2

Reverse hypers, stability ball, and ab work.

Workout #3

Pulling a sled from a belt, rows, and standing abs.

Workout #4

Pulling a sled from the ankles and lat pull-downs.

Workout #5

Glute/ham raises, weighted leg raises, and dumbbell powercleans.

Workout #6

Walking lunges, side bends, and sit-ups.

Workout #7

Flex band good mornings and chest supported rows.

Workout #8

Box squat with a band looped through your belt and stand through both ends. Don't remove the band between sets. Then hook a band to the top of a rack and then over your head to do standing abs.

Workout #9

Choke a band around the base of a rack and do seated leg curls. Then do lying leg raises with chains draped over your ankles.

Workout #10

Good mornings with a band looped through your belt, standing in the loops, plus a second band over the neck and under the feet. Note: When using bands, contract the muscles forcefully, and beware - band work is very taxing.

I have outlined many workouts here. Use 1-3 exercises per workout. Limit the workout time to 30 minutes, including ab work. This time can also be used for flexibility work, which is important but often overlooked.

These special workouts are intended to raise the lagging muscle groups we all possess. While working almost nonstop, you will also raise your general physical preparedness (GPP), something else that is often overlooked. For sports other than powerlifting many drills can be used as well. Agility, flexibility, and dexterity can also be improved.

There are many lifters who deadlift or squat over 800 and also total 2000 drug-free. So I know it is possible for you to make great progress if you approach training in a more scientific light.

One must realize that large muscle groups recuperate in 72 hours and small ones in 24 hours or less. So it is quite possible to train many times a week. Powerlifting, even with the advances in equipment, still is light years behind all other sports. Tracks have been made for sprinting and better poles and pits have been made for pole vaulting. New advances in football equipment - helmets, pads, turf - have evolved. But powerlifters train with the I.Q. of a caveman. The

I.P.F. refuses to use a monolift, and lifters are actually lifting in what is called raw or no equipment meets. What gives? We are going backward, not forward. Take advantage of technology and a scientific approach to training and you just might succeed.