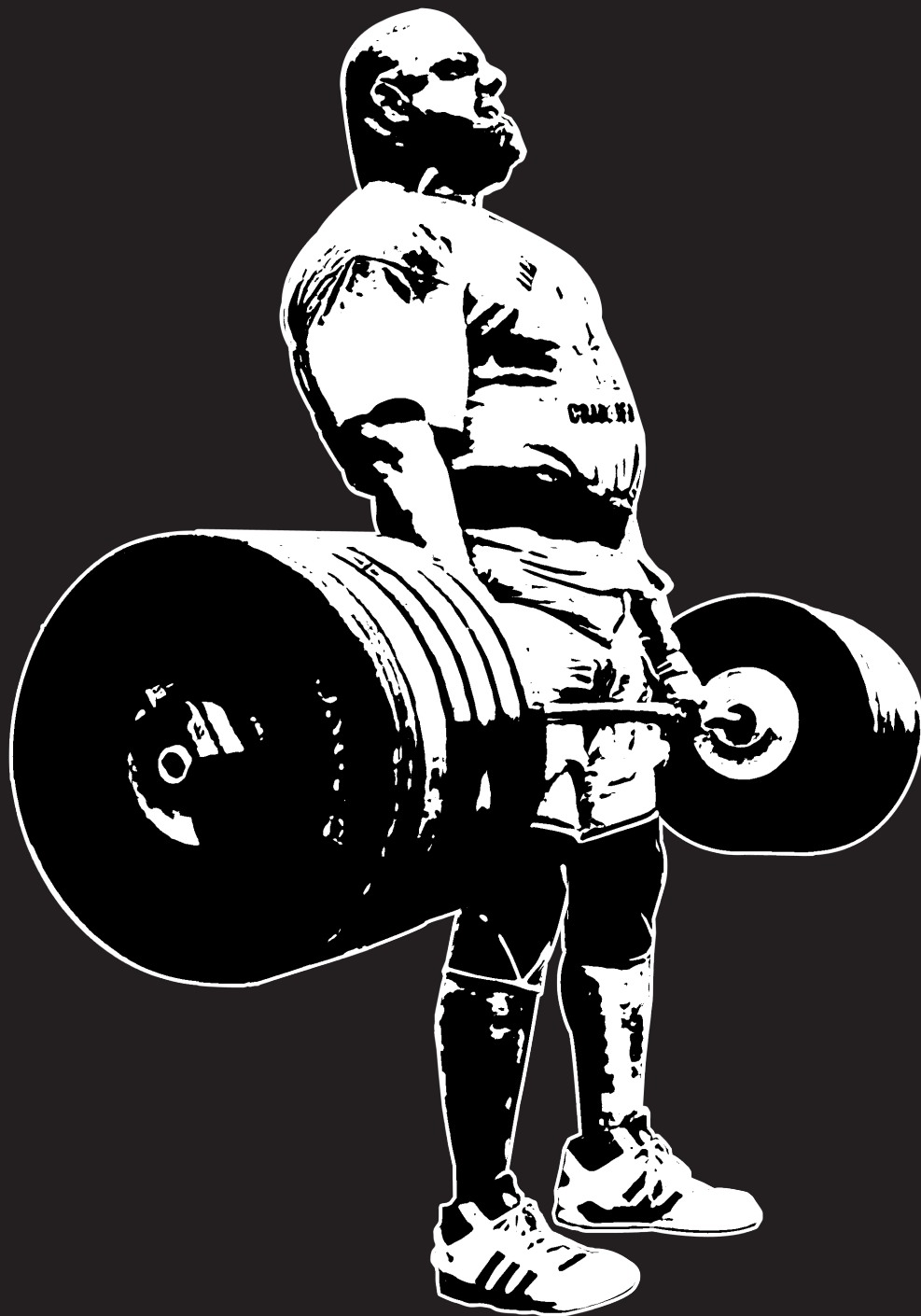


**IRON SPORT
WORKOUT #1**



IRON SPORT GYM

16-WEEK POWER PROGRAM

BY STEVE PULCINELLA

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Disclaimer: Please do NOT bother consulting your physician before embarking on this routine or any other training program. Most doctors generally don't know jack shit about strength training and could not possibly begin to fathom your burning desire to be huge and superior. Make responsible decisions in your training and your life, otherwise, it's your ass.

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Steve Pulcinella, competing in the car flip event in the 1994 World's Strongest Man Competition in Sun City, South Africa.

About The Author: Iron Sport Gym owner Steve Pulcinella has been involved in the Iron Game since he was very young. As a young boy in the 1970's, he watched the "World's Strongest Man" contest on The Wide World of Sports and it fueled and cultivated a life-long fascination with weightlifting.

Since the early 1980's, Steve has been a student of strength building and has competed in just about every strength sport there is. After winning many Powerlifting titles as a teenager Steve went on to win the 1993 North American Strongman Championships. He then got a chance to live out a lifelong dream in 1994 when Steve was invited as the sole competitor from the United States in the World's Strongest Man contest in Sun City, South Africa.

Steve has also had a twenty-year run as a professional in the Scottish Highland games and has tossed weights and cabers all over the world on his way to winning over 40 professional titles. Now retired from competition, Steve can be found training hard in his gym and helping others get stronger.

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IRON SPORT 16-WEEK POWER PROGRAM

BY

STEVE PULCINELLA



*Steve Pulcinella on a typical Sunday
~ does your gym have a Viking Press?*



Back in my Highland Games days.

In 1995, my brother and I founded Iron Sport Gym as a haven for weightlifters, Powerlifters, and other strength athletes. We knew enough people who were tired of the lame “health club” scene and wanted a serious gym to build serious strength.

The premise since day one was a really great facility “by the lifter and for the lifter” and we still remain true to this ideal over three decades later.

There is nothing like being in a serious gym if your goal is to become as strong and powerful as you possibly can. Whether it’s the strongman posters on the walls, the right music playing on the radio, being around other people who are just as motivated as you are, or our selection of unique and heavy duty equipment, Iron Sport has the right atmosphere to help you make it happen.

Speaking of equipment, Iron Sport Gym is fully stocked for all types of strength training including Powerlifting, Olympic Weightlifting, Strongman and even Highland Games training.

We currently have Four EliteFTS power racks, four Olympic platforms each with portable squat stands and a set of Werk San competition bumper plates, one monolift, four EliteFTS competition benches, EliteFTS combo rack (for USAPL lifters), EliteFTS monster Glute/Ham Raise, EliteFTS belt squat, reverse hyper machine, dumbbells up to 160 pounds, just about every specialty bar you can get, Hammer Strength and Lifefitness machines, and many thousands of pounds in York plates.

To put it bluntly, Iron Sport is the type of gym that every lifter dreams about and if you ever anywhere close to the eastern Pennsylvania area, you owe it to yourself to stop by for a workout. (As of December, 2017, Iron Sport gym is now open 24 hours, see the website for details: www.ironsport.com).

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Come train at Iron Sport.

Iron Sport has built a reputation as one of the finest gyms in the country, if not the world, but I know that not everyone is in a position to visit our facility. It occurred to me that a simple way to help many serious lifters is by sharing some of the workouts and training methods that we use here at Iron Sport. I've been training athletes for decades and training myself for even longer and have many things to share. If you can't make it out to Pennsylvania, at least you'll be able to have a little piece of Iron Sport in your own gym or weight room.

For the following program, my goal is to provide you with all the important details that I can think of and erase any confusion so that you can put all your efforts into your training and not end up frustrated over not knowing what to do. If you are truly serious, I'm going to just come right out and say that the best option would be to come and train with me at Iron Sport but if that isn't possible, this workout will be the next best thing.

Now, many different athletes train at Iron Sport: We have high school and college football players, amateur and professional strongmen, pro wrestlers, law enforcement personnel, mixed martial artists and plenty of others. This list includes many of the World Champion Philadelphia Eagle football players and players from other Superbowl winning teams. In due time, I plan to have programs available for many types of athletes and pursuits.

We are going to start things off with a "brute strength" kind of program that I like to use with many of our beginner lifters. This program is not specifically designed for competitive Powerlifting but I have little doubt that many

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Powerlifters would get a lot out of it. This routine would be a very good choice for anyone else looking to gain some high quality muscle. As you might guess, this routine will focus on the three Powerlifts: the squat, bench press and deadlift. At Iron Sport, we believe that increasing your total in these three lifts is one of the most important things that any strength athlete can do regardless of his or her discipline. I'm sure you are already somewhat familiar with these movements already but just so everyone is on the same page, I'd like to take a moment and go over a few important points for how we coach these lifts at Iron Sport:

SQUATTING TIPS:

- 1.) This goes out to anyone actually preparing to lift in a Powerlifting meet. Learn where actual parallel is and train by squatting below it for every rep you squat. Don't take your gym buddy's word that you are squatting low enough because I have seen so many gym bros blow smoke up each other's asses and then watch the lifter fail miserably come meet time. Be sure to read the rules and standards of the particular federation you are competing in well beforehand and learn what is expected of you as a lifter. You need to be honest with your lifts even if it means scaling back your training weight.
- 2.) When squatting, always start the lift by breaking the hips before the knees. This simple cue usually cures 90% of people's squatting issues when first learning to squat. This will set your hips back as you lower into the squat and keep your knees from going out too far ahead of your ankles.
- 3.) When asked what is the best assistance for the squat I will always say "Front squats". Front squats will teach and strengthen everything you need to become a strong and successful squatter. This movement provides added core stability, builds a strong upper back, and also allows for deeper squatting.
- 4.) Don't let anyone tell you there is "one right way to squat". Everyone's body is slightly different which means a short lifter may squat differently than a tall lifter, also take in consideration genetic components such as femur length, torso length, and personal strengths and weaknesses that will all change technique. I have seen world record holders squat with the bar high on the traps, the bar down low, close stance, wide stance etc. I always look to help the lifter find his or her individual "sweet spot" at the bottom of the lift meaning the position where the lifter feels they can get the maximum drive out of the hole. To find the sweet spot, it takes some tinkering with bar position, head position, foot position, etc. Also, what your squat looks like now may look totally different in five years and again in ten years. As you grow stronger and your body changes, your leverages may vary slightly.
- 5.) Don't arbitrarily go out and buy \$200 lifting shoes. One of the things I observe about people (usually newer lifters) that come to me for a "form check" is that they whip out their lifting shoes with a big, high heel and it causes them to pitch forward terribly. They are literally fighting the shoes throughout the lift. I will then have them take the shoes off and teach them to sit back, feel the weight more on the heels, and instruct them how to squat using the stronger hip and hamstring muscles. The difference is like night and day.

BENCH PRESS TIPS:

- 1.) Don't think of the bench press as a chest exercise. A good bencher tries to keep his pecs out the lift entirely. Back drive and triceps should be doing the brunt of the work. Most times when you see a champion bencher they don't always have great pecs, they will almost always have a huge barrel chest and massive triceps though.
- 2.) If you plan on competing don't do things like throw your butt way off the bench trying to "belly whomp" big weights. Don't get used to wearing elbow sleeves or wraps on your elbows and don't kick your feet all over if the lift gets stalled. All these things develop bad habits that are hard to break.
- 3.) Learn to stay tight on the bench so your body isn't fidgeting all over during the course of the lift. Make it a habit to keep your feet driving into the floor, your glutes set tight, squeeze your scapula together and drive your traps into the bench.
- 4.) When driving the bar, picture driving yourself away from the bar not the bar away from you.
- 5.) Hand placement is one of the keys to a big bench. You need to find your particular grip where you get the maximum drive off your chest. Don't think because you are tall or short that your grip should be a certain way. That's not always the case.

DEADLIFTING TIPS:

- 1.) Always keep the bar in close, every inch that bar gets out in front of you adds fifty pounds to the lift. Plus, keeping the lift in close keeps all the weight on your hips and saves your lower back from disaster.
- 2.) Start the lift with the slack pulled out of the bar. Yes, you see some big deadlifters go ape shit at meets and totally just approach the bar and beast it up without much set-up at all, but I don't recommend that. I like to see a nice controlled set-up, get your core tight, lower your hips by pulling against the bar and drive it off of the floor.
- 3.) Think of the start of a deadlift as a push with the legs and not a pull with the back. You don't want the initial pull off the floor to happen by hinging the hips, rather you want your back locked down tight, shoulders pulled down and back then smoothly push the bar off the floor with the legs.
- 4.) How do you know if sumo deadlifts are for you? A lot of times I see people who think they are pulling sumo but it's really them doing a sloppy, wide stance conventional deadlift. To know if you are suited for it just give it a try, if it turns out that you magically just did 115% of your best conventional pull you are one of the lucky ones that is TRULY suited for sumo deadlifting.
- 5.) The deadlift is way more technique intensive than other lifts. Because you don't have the luxury of the eccentric part of the lift to set your body up in the proper position for the concentric push, it forces you to

be in a perfect mechanical position when starting off the floor. That is why some weeks you come to the gym to deadlift and it seems that for some reason your deadlift is off by 50-100lbs. You didn't get weaker, for some reason or another your start position is a little off and that's what it throwing you off.

To give you a good example, I have noticed that sometimes when I'm not paying attention I will drop my head and look down when I start my pull — and things don't go so well from there. I pull much more effectively if I keep my head facing forward like I'm looking at the floor about 15 feet out in front of me. Your hip position changes when you look up or down at the start so that is also something you can play with and work on.

GETTING STARTED:

At the Iron Sport, since this is a very high percentage program, we have had the greatest success by focusing on one specific lift per day, for example, Monday: Squat, Wednesday: Bench Press, Friday: Deadlift.

Other assistance work can be added in as needed. I usually like to see one major assistance movement that you will change every three weeks and at least one secondary movement per workout. I'll give some examples of some of my favorite assistance and secondary movements later on in the course.

As far as equipment, for this program, what you will need is: a solid barbell, weight plates, collars, a lifting platform (or an otherwise solid place to lift), power rack, and bench press bench. Some people like to wear a belt or perhaps some knee sleeves or elbow sleeves to keep the joints warm but those will be up to you. A monolift would also probably be useful depending on how heavy you might be squatting but I wouldn't expect to find one in most gyms. A decent power rack should be all you need if you are doing this program at home.

WEEK ZERO*

Squat: Max Test	Bench Press: Max Test	Deadlift: Max Test
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Week Zero is optional but I wanted to include it in case you needed to know your specific maximum single lift in the bench press, squat, and deadlift. You should have a pretty rough idea of your max poundages anyway but if not, take this week to test your max single for the three Powerlifts. You will need to know these poundages in order to program the correct percentages for this program.

One of the best pieces of advice I can give ny lifter is to be honest and don't BS yourself or take shortcuts at this point because it'll screw everything else up going forward. Take the rest of this week off so that you are recovered fully before beginning the power program. If you already know your max, poundages you can go right into Week One.

WEEK ONE**Squat:**
78% - 5 x 5**Bench Press:**
78% - 5 x 5**Deadlift:**
78% - 5 x 5

Main assistance: work up to 5 sets of 8

WEEK TWO**Squat:**
87% - 3 x 3**Bench Press:**
87% - 3 x 3**Deadlift:**
87% - 3 x 3

Main assistance: work up to 4 sets of 5

WEEK THREE**Squat:**
87% - 10 singles**Bench Press:**
87% - 10 singles**Deadlift:**
87% - 10 singles

Main assistance: work up to 3 sets of 3

WEEK FOUR**Squat:**
80% - 5 x 5**Bench Press:**
80% - 5 x 5**Deadlift:**
80% - 5 x 5

Main assistance: work up to 5 sets of 8

WEEK FIVE**Squat:**
90% - 3 x 3**Bench Press:**
90% - 3 x 3**Deadlift:**
90% - 3 x 3

Main assistance: work up to 4 sets of 5

WEEK SIX**Squat:**
92% - 10 singles**Bench Press:**
92% - 10 singles**Deadlift:**
92% - 10 singles

Main assistance: work up to 3 sets of 3

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WEEK SEVEN

Squat: 82% - 5 x 5	Bench Press: 82% - 5 x 5	Deadlift: 82% - 5 x 5
Main assistance: work up to 5 sets of 8		

WEEK EIGHT

Squat: 92% - 3 x 3	Bench Press: 92% - 3 x 3	Deadlift: 92% - 3 x 3
Main assistance: work up to 4 sets of 5		

WEEK NINE

Squat: 95% - 10 singles	Bench Press: 95% - 10 singles	Deadlift: 95% - 10 singles
Main assistance: work up to 3 sets of 3		

WEEK TEN (DELOAD)

Squat: 70% - 3 x 5	Bench Press: 70% - 3 x 5	Deadlift: 70% - 3 x 5
No main assistance this week.		

WEEK ELEVEN

Squat: 85% - 5 x 5	Bench Press: 85% - 5 x 5	Deadlift: 85% - 5 x 5
Main assistance: work up to 5 sets of 8		

WEEK TWELVE

Squat: 95% - 3 x 3	Bench Press: 95% - 3 x 3	Deadlift: 95% - 3 x 3
Main assistance: work up to 4 sets of 5		

WEEK THIRTEEN

Squat: 87% - 5 x 5	Bench Press: 87% - 5 x 5	Deadlift: 87% - 5 x 5
Main assistance: work up to 3 sets of 3		

WEEK FOURTEEN

Squat: 98% - 5 singles	Bench Press: 98% - 5 singles	Deadlift: 98% - 5 singles
No main assistance.		

WEEK FIFTEEN TAPER

Squat: 85% x 3 x 1 set	Bench Press: 85% x 3 x 1 set	Deadlift: 85% x 3 x 1 set
No main assistance.		

WEEK SIXTEEN:

Squat: TEST	Bench Press: TEST	Deadlift: TEST
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Week Sixteen will be the culmination of all your hard work and the time to break new ground in your strength levels. Your lifts this week should be done under the exact same conditions as when you set your previous maxes. You'll want to warmup the same way, wear the same support gear, and even train at the same time of day if possible. The key difference here will be that what used to feel heavy to you should now feel pretty easy

Some adjustments may be necessary and these numbers are not set in stone. The key here is that this program is orderly and progressive and ramps up at a pace which is very reasonable to allow strength gains and muscular adaptation to occur.

One very important thing to keep in mind is that this routine, like ALL routines, is more like a series of guidelines rather than hard and fast rules — making adjustments is part of the game. To my mind, the main value of any routine is to provide a set of loose instructions to help you stay on track. That is to say, it is not super important that it be followed to the letter as long as you maintain the general principles. There is nothing magic about any training template, the success comes from what you put into your training.

MAIN ASSISTANCE EXERCISES:

I always suggest one main assistance exercise of your choice and perhaps a few smaller movements to work on weak points. Your main assistance should really address any major weakness you may have. The smaller movements can be done submaximally or for hypertrophy depending on what phase of your training you are in. Some examples of my favorite main assistance exercises are as follows:

- For the squat: Romanian Deadlifts or Glute/Ham raises,
- For the Bench Press: Board presses, floor press, weighted dips or heavy dumbbell bench
- For the Deadlift: front squats, snatch grip deads, deficit deadlift or pause deadlifts

As noted previously, we like to rotate the main assistance exercise every three weeks, so for example, here is an example of a schedule that you can use with the Power Program template:

Weeks 1-3

Squat: Romanian Deadlifts
Bench Press: Floor Press
Deadlift: Snatch Grip Deadlifts

Weeks 7-9

Squat: Front Squat
Bench Press: Incline Bench Press
Deadlift: Rack Pull From Below Knee

Weeks 4-6

Squat: Safety Bar Squat
Bench Press: Dumbbell Bench Press
Deadlift: Deficit Deadlifts

Weeks 10-13

Squat: Zercher Squat
Bench Press: Three Board Press
Deadlift: Hyper Bench Deadlift

I like to choose Main Assistance exercises that train the same muscles groups as the main lifts, but just in a different manner or from a slightly different angle. These are just a few examples that we like to use at the gym but there plenty more to choose from besides this list. If you have a particular favorite or there is one that addresses a particular need for your training, feel free to add it in.

SECONDARY EXERCISES:

I don't list what I call Secondary exercises on the program template because they are more of a personal preference thing. Some people like to add in some auxiliary work and some might not so I leave these it up to you to fill them in as needed. Getting your sets and reps for the Power Program should be your primary goal, but if you have any more gas in the tank, or have a few pet lifts that you like to have fun with, you can add them in as secondary lifts. These might include: chins, dips, standing press, dumbbell curls, hand grippers, dumbbell incline/decline bench press, leg press, split squats, various forms of pushups, etc.

I like to have my secondary exercise relate to my main exercise on a particular day, so, for example I might recommend doing leg press and split squats on "squat" day. You can rotate your secondary exercises every few weeks like you do the Assistance Exercises, mix and match as needed, or even not include them at all some days depending on how you feel— again, how you fit these secondary exercises in (or whether you do at all) is entirely up to you.

THE POWER PROGRAM IN ACTION

Now that you have seen the basic Power Program template, here is an example of what it will look like with actual poundages as written in the training log of someone going through it. Let's assume that we have a lifter with a 300 lb. bench press, a 400 lb. squat and a 500 lb. deadlift.

Week 1

Monday:

Squat: 312 lbs. 5 x 5

Wednesday:

Bench Press: 234 lbs. 5 x 5

Friday:

Deadlift: 390 lbs. 5 x 5

Week 2

Monday:

Squat: 348 lbs. 3 x 3

Wednesday:

Bench Press: 261 lbs. 3 x 3

Friday:

Deadlift: 435 lbs. 3 x 3

Week 3

Monday:

Squat: 348 lbs. 10 singles

Wednesday:

Bench Press: 261 lbs. x 10 singles

Friday:

Deadlift: 435 lbs. 10 singles

Week 4

Monday:

Squat: 320 lbs. 5 x 5

Wednesday:

Bench Press: 240 lbs. 5 x 5

Friday:

Deadlift: 400 lbs. 5 x 5

Week 5

Monday:

Squat: 360 lbs. 3 x 3

Wednesday:

Bench Press: 270 lbs. 3 x 3

Friday:

Deadlift: 450 lbs. 3 x 3

Week 6

Monday:

Squat: 368 lbs. x 10 singles

Wednesday:

Bench Press: 276 lbs. x 10 singles

Friday:

Deadlift: 460 lbs. x 10 singles

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Week 7**Monday:****Squat:** 328 lbs. 5 x 5**Wednesday:****Bench Press:** 246 lbs. 5 x 5**Friday:****Deadlift:** 410 lbs. 5 x 5

Week 8**Monday:****Squat:** 368 lbs. 3 x 3**Wednesday:****Bench Press:** 276 lbs. 3 x 3**Friday:****Deadlift:** 450 lbs. 3 x 3

Week 9**Monday:****Squat:** 380 lbs. x 10 singles**Wednesday:****Bench Press:** 285 lbs. x 10 singles**Friday:****Deadlift:** 476 lbs. x 10 singles

Week 10 - Deload Week**Monday:****Squat:** 280 lbs. 3 x 5**Wednesday:****Bench Press:** 210 lbs. 3 x 5**Friday:****Deadlift:** 350 lbs. 3 x 5

Week 11**Monday:****Squat:** 340 lbs. 5 x 5**Wednesday:****Bench Press:** 255 lbs. 5 x 5**Friday:****Deadlift:** 425 lbs. 5 x 5

Week 12**Monday:****Squat:** 380 lbs. 3 x 3**Wednesday:****Bench Press:** 285 lbs. 3 x 3**Friday:****Deadlift:** 475 lbs. 3 x 3

Week 13**Monday:****Squat:** 348 lbs. 5 x 5**Wednesday:****Bench Press:** 261 lbs. 5 x 5**Friday:****Deadlift:** 435 lbs. 5 x 5

Week 14**Monday:****Squat:** 392 lbs. x 5 singles**Wednesday:****Bench Press:** 294 lbs. x 5 singles**Friday:****Deadlift:** 490 lbs. x 5 singles

Week 15 - Taper**Monday:****Squat:** 340 lbs. x 3 x 1 set**Wednesday:****Bench Press:** 255 lbs. x 3 x 1 set**Friday:****Deadlift:** 425 lbs. x 3 x 1 set**Week 16 - Test****Monday:****Squat:**

1 x 390

1 x 395

1 x 400

1 x 410

1 x 415

1 x 420

1 x 425

0 x 430 (miss)

Wednesday:**Bench Press:**

1 x 285

1 x 290

1 x 295

1 x 300

1 x 305

1 x 310

1 x 315

1 x 320

0 x 325 (miss)

Friday:**Deadlift:**

1 x 490

1 x 495

1 x 500

1 x 505

1 x 510

1 x 515

1 x 520

0 x 525 (miss)

As you can see, over the course of the 16-week program, our lifter has increased his bench, squat, and deadlift total by 65 pounds which is right in line with what I would expect and which I would classify as excellent.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:**Q. “Can I substitute the Safety squat bar (or other specialty bars) or trap bars for the deadlift?”**

A. In my opinion if you are not in specific meet prep or if it is simply your personal preference, it will be fine to use different kinds of specialty bars for the main lifts. I know many lifters who can only squat with a safety squat bar because of shoulder issues and that is certainly fine. If you are focusing on meet prep, it would be a better idea to train with the actual equipment and lift in the exact way that you will be doing in the meet although some different equipment alternatives can be worked in as assistance exercises or for the sake of variety.

Q. “Does a good overhead press make a good bench press (or vice versa)?”

A. I am a fan of pressing, push-pressing, behind the neck presses Etc. Is it a good assistance for the bench press? In most cases, not really. Over the years I have seen as many great benchers that couldn't press over head as I've seen guys that were great over head that weren't good benchers. If you aren't in specific meet prep, a worthwhile idea for you to try might be to substitute overhead pressing for bench pressing in the overall program—a little extra poundage on your standing press is always a good thing for any strength athlete.

Q. “What are your favorite assistance exercises?”

A. For the squat, I like front squats. For the deadlift, I like front squats and snatch-grip deads. If I had to pick just one assistance exercise for the bench press it would be weighted dips. You don't want to go crazy with assistance exercises on this program, the bulk of your efforts needs to go towards the bench, squat, and deadlift but you can certainly work these types of lifts in a lower capacity on some days.

Q. “How much time between sets?”

A. Time between sets is one of those things that everyone seems to worry about, like there's some magic answer that will give better results than any other. My stance has always been to take as much time as is needed to get whatever the number of reps you are after. Obviously you will need to recover a lot more when squatting a set of ten reps than a after set of curls. I always say wait till you are recovered from the last set but not rested. I know it is not at all scientific but I have found that I “just know” when this is. This usually means anywhere between three and five minutes but your mileage will vary.

Q. “What is your advice on deload weeks?”

A. Deload weeks can be a two edged sword. There are times when they are necessary but I really hate to see a lifter on a hot streak jump off that streak because some program told him that it's time to hold back. I've seen a lot of lifters go to shit on deload weeks, either by doing a whole of worthless light exercises or getting very sloppy on form since the weights are lighter. In my opinion the more deloads you take the more you are going to need.

Deloading every four weeks, like a lot of programs will have you do, means that for a total of three months out of the year you're not really doing shit. But you know who is doing shit? The guy that's going to beat you.

Q. “What if I miss a workout?”

A. My simple answer to this is “DON'T!” Are you committed or not?

Q. “How do you approach warm-up sets?”

A. I didn't list warmup sets because I find that they are usually a personal preference thing. Some people like to do a lot of warming up, others do hardly anything at all and just jump right into the workout. Only you know where you stand with this kind of thing. My advice is for you to do whatever you need to in order to get yourself ready. The way that I like to warmup is to do a series of sets where as the percentage go up the reps go down. So, for example, if your program calls for 315 lbs. for triples I would do something like the following:

135 x 8

185 x 5

225 x 3

275 x 2

315 x 3

Q. “What else is done in a session besides the main lifts?”

A. Assistance exercises as noted earlier should round out your program on most days, but there is certainly room for some other fun lifts if you so choose. If you want to do few sets of concentration curls, pec decs or cable cross overs to look good at the beach, it is certainly fine by me.

Q. “Any recommendations on shoes for squatting?”

A. I discussed what shoes NOT to wear for squatting in an earlier section. When I get asked what shoes to wear for squatting it's hard to just rattle off the right answer because there are a lot of factors to consider. I need to see each individual person squat to recommend a heeled lifting shoe, a flat shoe or some other option. Once I see someone squatting, I can usually tell what they need almost instantly. If proper footwear is something that is super important to you, my best advise would be to stop by Iron Sport for a workout so I can help you directly.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Everything should be pretty straightforward — just put the time in, add the weight, do the reps, and you will be rewarded.

If you get great results on this program, be sure to drop me a line and let me know. If you have any other questions, please feel free to email me any time at steve@ironsport.com or better yet, stop by the gym for a workout.

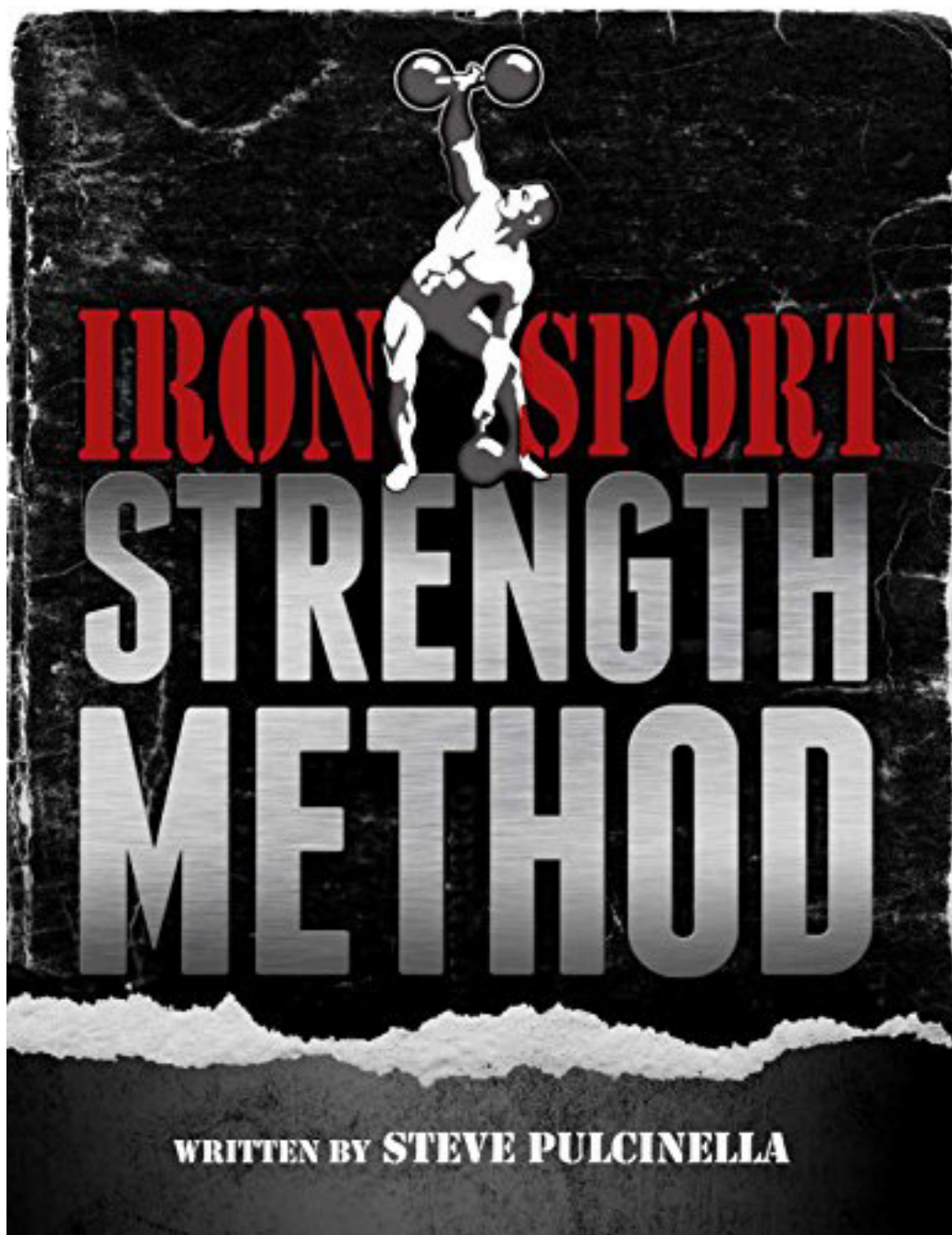
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THE JOURNEY

When you hear people talk about getting in shape or becoming stronger as “a journey,” most people picture the wrong kind of journey. They picture the kind of journey where you get on a plane, sit in first class, fly to some exotic destination where you’re surrounded by friends, where you stay in a nice hotel, make all kinds of cool memories, drink island drinks, and post tons of Instagram photos that everyone around you will actually give a shit about.

What I usually tell people is, yes, physical training is a journey for sure but it’s a lot more of a ‘Lewis and Clark’ type of a Journey—the kind of journey where the only information you have when you start is what direction you want to go.

Every single step you take after that is into the unknown and everything is unfamiliar territory to you. Some days the traveling is easy. Some days you encounter a swamp which you’ll have to figure out a way to get through. Some days you’ll see breathtaking waterfalls and the next day you are bargaining with native savages for your very life. One day you discover a majestic mountain range, the next day you have to figure out a way to get up and over those mountains not knowing how long the range is or what might be on the other side.

One day there is an abundance of food, the next day you are forced to eat your own horse and all your candles. One day you are full of positivity that this journey will pay off in the end. The next day you are questioning if it was ever worth trying in the first place or if you even have the stamina to get through it. Some days you’ll picture the end of this journey and the rewards it will bring you. The next day you’ll realize that you are the only one who knows or cares that you are even on this journey in the first place.

Some days you’ll feel like giving up.

But then you start to notice something. With each mile you walk you pass the skeletal remains strewn about of the ones who never even made it as far as you have. Either they just quit and laid down and died or just didn’t they have the stamina, the ingenuity, the resolve, or the reason to keep going.

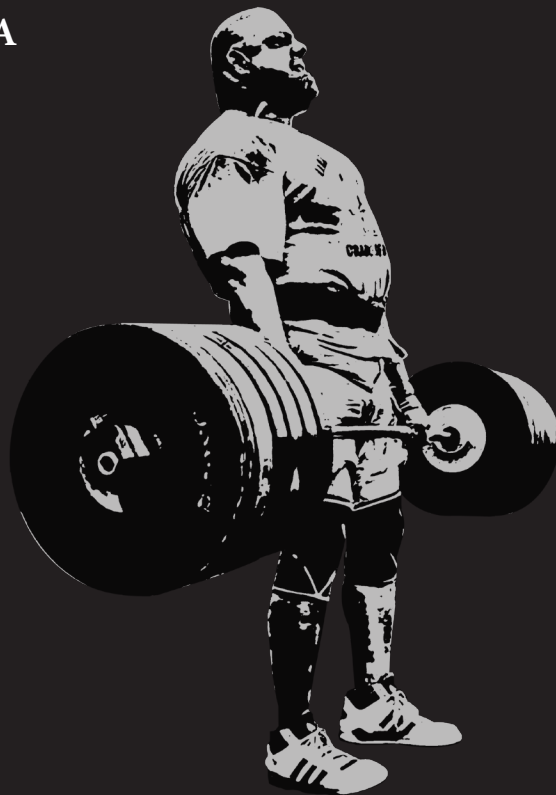
You then realize that YOU do have special something that has kept you going this whole time and that there was no way you were ever going to quit. Your confidence grows with every skeleton you pass and you start to realize that you've made it farther than these people so you must be doing something right.

When Lewis and Clark finally scratched, clawed, and climbed their way across the wilderness, came down out of the Rockies, and reached the Pacific Ocean, they had trekked across nearly 2000 miles of unknown, hostile territory on foot. Without this journey, America would be radically different in many ways, much like your life will be different in many ways during the course of your own journey.

You often hear, “the journey of a thousand miles starts with that first step,” but trust me, it really comes down to every step you take AFTER that first step that makes or breaks you.

Good luck on your journey.

STEVE PULCINELLA



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