

Rakkasan Raiders

What is the difference between a Good & Great athlete, or any person for that matter? A lot of credit is given to talent, saying that there is something inborn in a specific person that makes them better than the rest. The interesting thing is that the research tells us something different. Maybe it is experience? One would think that the longer someone is in a particular profession would mean they should be better but that is simply not the case. In fact most people get worse after being in the same field for 5 years. It boils down to deliberate/intentional practice. This is very much different from what would normally consider practice. Deliberate practice is: (1) Designed to take an athlete out of their comfort zone and stretch their abilities (2) It can be/should be repeated a lot (3) Feedback on results is continuously available-usually thru a coach (4) It is highly demanding mentally-focus & concentration are key to future success.

This is when the athlete is truly analyzing performance & fine-tuning their performance. (5) It isn't always fun-doing the things we aren't good at is going to be challenging mentally & physically. The good news is that most people simply won't do these 5 things. They are ok with being average or good. Great athletes and great teams challenge themselves & each other and will do anything to reach their truest potential.

Central Nutrition

Power Food: Oatmeal

Everyone knows that oatmeal is good for you. However, few people realize how big of a nutritional heavyweight it really is. First of all, oatmeal is high in fiber and contains both the soluble and insoluble types. The soluble fiber actually helps lower bad cholesterol levels and significantly lowers the risk of cardiovascular disease. It also "turbochargers" the immune system by activating white blood cells to attack foreign invaders like fungi and bacteria. Oatmeal has a very low glycolic load, so it will not spike your blood sugar quickly. This means it will give you a constant flow of energy without the crash associated with high glycemic grains. Also, oatmeal contains an antioxidant unique to oats that is very anti-inflammatory (that is why people take oatmeal baths). And last but not least, oatmeal is relatively high in protein. It contains 8 1/2g in a 2/3 cup serving. But here's the kicker: the oatmeal that comes in packets does not have these benefits. The stuff you are looking for is either steel cut or rolled oats. A great trick that I've learned is that oatmeal does not need to be cooked! You can just add milk like traditional cereal and go to town. Oatmeal is a wonderful food that will increase performance, but also help you feel better and live longer.

SCIENCE AND PRACTICE OF OLYMPIC WEIGHTLIFTING

What are you focused on? If you read the last two editions of this newsletter you should be focused on improving your performance in the Olympic lifts. The best place to begin this is by improving your focus during the Olympic lifts. Believe it or not but the focal point of your eyes during these movements can drastically improve the biomechanical efficiency of your body during the start, pull, catch, and recovery phases of the snatch and clean. You need to pick out one focal point and keep your eyes glued to that spot during the entire lift. Keeping one focal point will help maintain balance as well as body awareness during the lift. The best place to look is straight ahead and slightly up. How far up will be different for everyone but looking high on the wall in front of you will help to fully extend the hips and "finish the pull" as well as reduce the amount of excessive head whip during the pull. By "finishing the pull", you will pull the bar much higher, much faster, and much closer to the body (all of which will result in the ability to lift more weight which will result in greater force production against the ground). High eye focus will also result in a much more stable catch and a faster and easier recovery as well as keep you from jumping forward during the lift. In the jerk, the eye focus should be kept straight ahead at eye-level. I have seen many athletes instantly add 10-20 pounds to their Olympic lifts by simply getting focused on the platform.

Paja's Principles of Power

Central Strength 101: Part II

In the past we have talked about the importance of a reload week and allowing your body a chance to recover. This is important to give your body and mind a rest, prevent injuries and overtraining, and increase motivation and chance of progress. For most teams who are in the middle of their off-season, you are currently in your reload week. When you reload it is important to reload entirely. Meaning we must reload our lifting as well as speed work and everything else. Take football for example; the load in the weight room is obviously lightened but we are also cutting out a day of our speed work and only spending one day to test pro-agility, 10/40, and vertical jump, so the volume is cut on that as well. This will set us up for success for test week. We will lift two days during test week. The first day we will strictly test hang clean and bench press. The second day we will have a light hang snatch and then test squat. The reason we do it in this order is to have fresh legs for the more technical movement in the hang clean and still have plenty of time for our legs to recover for squatting. Hang clean is done with bench press because we now have a lower and upper body movement. Snatch is prior to the squat because the load is lighter and is less taxing than a hang clean. Our test sets will go 60%x5, 70%x4, 80%x3, 86%x2, and 92%xmax to prime our body and get ready for the top "test" set. This set to max should be x3+ reps. Depending on each athlete's performance we will re-calculate a new 1RM by taking $0.03 \times \text{the weight} \times \text{reps} + \text{the weight}$. Reload & prepare for battle!

Final Thought

Everyone has seen Winnie the Pooh & we are all too familiar with a couple of their more famous characters, Tigger & Eeyore. In life I believe you run into two types of people. #1 are Tiggers- These are people who are fire for life. They take advantage of every day and treat it as though it is going to be their last. These are the people we love to be around. They make life fun & productive. On the flip side there are Eeyores. These are the mopers of the world. Their head is typically down, no zest for life and seem to just go thru the motions. These people suck the life out of us or a team. So, which one are you? Have you ever thought of it in this way? Attitudes & behaviors are infectious whether they are good or bad. It's important that we surround ourselves with people who lift us up & challenge us to grow and be better people. Choose Tigger!

ABILITY IS WHAT YOU ARE CAPABLE OF DOING. MOTIVATION DETERMINES WHAT YOU DO. ATTITUDE DETERMINES HOW WELL YOU DO IT

CENTRAL STRENGTH: ATTACK