


One on One with

Ed Coan

BY MARK BELL

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Ed Coan entered his first powerlifting competition at 16 years old, he went on to become one of the best (if not THE best) powerlifters in the world. Here is my candid conversation with The Legend, Ed Coan

POWER: How did you get into powerlifting?

ED: I saw Kaz [Bill Kazmier] on TV. That was the beginning. I was in awe.

POWER: What did you lift in your first meet, and at what bodyweight?

ED: I weighed 150 lbs. I did a 485-lb. squat, a 295-lb. bench and a 495-lb. deadlift.

POWER: What were your best lifts as a teen?

Ed: At Senior Nationals in 1983, I went 699-429-727. I missed weight by a pound and had to weigh in later with the 181-pounders. Unfortunately, Mike Bridges was lifting, but I took second. I was 19.

POWER: Your first 2,400-lb. total was done with a raw deadlift, a raw bench and a single-ply squat suit.

ED: It was at the 1991 Nationals in Texas. I weighed in at 218 lbs. with two-hour weigh-ins. That's just the way it was done back then. You didn't give it a second thought.

POWER: What was the breakdown for that 2,400-lb. total?

Ed: A 959-lb. squat (I missed 986), a 545-lb. bench, a 898-lb. deadlift (weighed out to 901). I missed 920-plus.

POWER: Tell us what it's like to break the all-time total record weighing only 242 lbs. Who held the record previous and who broke yours?

ED: It was great. I had something to go after. I didn't care if it was done in a heavier weight class. The great Dave Passanella had the record at the time, and Gary Frank broke mine with a string of big meets.

POWER: Who are the top three lifters you have ever seen lift?

ED: 1, Hideaki Inaba; 2, Gene Bell; 3, Kirk Karwoski. There are many, many more great lifters I have seen lift. I was very fortunate to see Rickie Crain, Mike Bridges (but only a squat), Doug Furnas, Fred Hatfield, Wade Hooper and Brian Siders. For the multi-ply guys, I have seen Shawn Frankl, Al Caslow, Andy Bolton and a few others.

POWER: In your mind, who is the greatest lifter ever?

ED: The greatest (in my time) was Inaba, from Japan. He had a lot of world titles and longevity. The greatest ever is a toss-up. People have quite different views on this.

POWER: Who do you think are the best lifting now?

ED: Stan Efferding, raw; Siders, Balaeyv and Milanochev, single-ply; Frankl, Greg, Panora, multi-ply. I like Jeremy Frey and I can't leave out Bolton.

POWER: I'm not an old timer, but I've been in this sport since around 1991. It is my understanding that you broke the all-time total record without being able to use your signature "sumo" deadlift.

ED: I tore an adductor and a hamstring on different legs and didn't want to risk going sumo. I did conventional deadlifts in the offseason and even up to a few weeks before the competition, so it wasn't a big deal.

POWER: Let's talk shop. How did you build such explosive power that you were able to deadlift raw "sumo" so well? A 901-lb. pull at 220, 859 at 198 – the list goes on and on. What kind of training were you doing to build such strength and precise form?

ED: Raw? I had a belt on! I found a deadlift style that fit me and I worked the shit out of it. I used to try to make myself tight by grabbing the bar, taking all the slack out of it and pulling myself into the bar until I couldn't get any tighter. I did that for the squat, as well. I also did a lot of sets of five reps, experimented with what assistance work helped the most and killed it.

POWER: Give us three quick tips we can all use, regardless of what federation we prefer.

ED: 1, technique; 2, don't over-train; 3, create small goals for each training cycle. It cracks me up when a guy does a big lift and everyone says he's good for a hundred more pounds within six months.





POWER: What was the worst lifting injury you ever had?

ED: I blew out my knee at the 2002 Mountaineer Cup. The first person to contact me after that was Louie Simmons. He sent me a free sled to help me rehabilitate.

POWER: What's your take on raw training?

ED: To each his own. I like it. I do it practically all the time, anyway. Whatever makes your ass get in the gym and do some powerlifting.

POWER: Did you ever tally up an unbeaten streak?

ED: No. I only wanted to be able to lift what I thought I was capable of on that day.

POWER: Roll out a four-week bench squat dead program.

Let's say it's the first four weeks of a 12-week program.

ED: The program would depend on whether you're peaking for a meet or in the off-season. What are your strengths and weaknesses? Is your form off? I usually do more reps and conditioning at the beginning. You have to solidify your form all the time.

POWER: Did you ever crap your pants in the middle of a set of squats? If yes, what did you do afterward?

ED: Yes! I did a set of fove with 900 lbs., straps down, and on the second rep ... oops. It was like an old Playdough machine. I

finished the set, took 15 minutes to clean up and finished the workout.

POWER: Who was your greatest competition?

ED: Gravity.

POWER: When will you return to the platform? We all know you can't stay away.

ED: It is hard to stay away. I will return only when I am healthy. Pain tends to keep me away very easily. I'm getting better.

POWER: s it true there is a book that documents your outstanding career? Tell us a little bit about is, because you bet your ass it will be a www.supertraininggym.com product.

ED: Coan: The Man, The Myth, The Method takes you through a lot of competitions and some training. It documents my training exactly as I did it. No big frills, just basic hard work.

POWER: I can't thank you enough for your time, setting the bar so high and being such a bad ass. Hopefully at some point I'll do something cool in this sport and I'll have some idea of how you felt all the time.

ED: Thank you, too. You're already doing cool stuff by having a great gym and team, and starting Power! **PM**