

TRAINING

RESISTANCE TRAINING

as told to POWERLIFTING USA by Louie Simmons

Only the very expensive isokinetic machines provide an eccentric contraction. Most supply only concentric work. The old isokinetic power rack of the 1970s worked with a variable speed of movement. It was suggested that a slow speed with great resistance be used about 8 weeks from a contest. As the meet drew closer, the resistance was decreased, thus increasing the speed by maintaining the amount of force displayed on the dial. Monitoring and maintaining the amount of force would enable one to move the bar known as load releasing. One way to perform this is with the Kowalczyk Weight Release device. This device is used as follows: After loading a squat bar to 500 pounds, attach the Weight Releases to the bar with additional weight, usually 20% more, in this case 100 pounds. At the bottom of the lowering phase, the

Weight Releases detach and the lifter does the concentric portion, or rises, with the original 500 pounds. One benefit of this device is developing muscle mass. Lowering, or the eccentric portion of the lift, is where muscle mass is gained. Another benefit, more importantly, is the development of explosive strength, as well as a means of developing acceleration, which is extremely important. A widely used contrast method, i.e., where weight drops off or is added to the bar, is the static/dynamic method. This is performed by going from a static mode, such as lowering oneself to a box in the squat and relaxing the hip flexors on the box, to a dynamic contraction, such as re-flexing the hip flexors to stand back up with the addition of chains. Floor presses are another method to go from yielding to a static position that is overcome by a dynamic action of the arms. The following is a prime example of the contrast method: by attaching chains to a squat or bench press bar, a load can be lessened, or deloaded, at the eccentric phase. This is accomplished by the chains being lowered onto the floor link-by-link. By raising the bar, the chain weight will reload onto the bar. In this way,

resistance is matched throughout the entire range of motion, a great way to develop accelerating strength. This system of training yields a training effect immediately, even for highly qualified lifters. A similar method is to use rubber bands, although there is some guess work as to how much added resistance the bands provide. A combination of chains and bands or Weight Releases will result in a different training effect, but all will benefit one's explosive and accelerating strength. Plyometrics are popular among track and field athletes as well as in all types of sports, from basketball to tennis. Plyometrics are a reactive method. It places great demands on the nervous system. It is my observation that plyometrics works on powerlifters only if their reaction time is slow or if they have lifted only heavy weights throughout their lifting career. A far better method, in our opinion, is to train with submaximal weights. For example, by training with 50-60% of a 1 rep max in the squat for 8-12 sets of 2 reps off a box slightly below parallel, greater bar speed can be obtained than through plyometrics. For bench pressing, doing 3 reps per set for 8-10 sets with 60% of a shirtless max

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are, of course, two-part lifts. An Olympic lifter may be able to lift 600 with correct form in the first phase of the clean, but for the second portion, or the explosive phase of the clean, the weight limit may be only 400 pounds. This is why it appears that the Olympic lifters, instead, do 2 reps for 10 sets with 480 (i.e. 60%) and can squat over 800. We pay close attention to the force/velocity curve, which is optimized by using 50-60% for 2 reps performed explosively. As you can imagine, there is much to learn about resistance training. You don't drive that old '55 Ford your grand dad drove, do you? So why train like he did? At Westside, we take a supplement that you don't think is illegal: a science course. You must apply science to exercise to succeed.

We could learn from each other's experience. For example, the 'Welder principles' are types of resistance training: forced reps, split sets, half reps, etc. We mix and match resistance through accelerating and explosive work followed by a maximum effort in partial to full ranges of motion, occasionally working to failure, known as the repetition method. Westside's whole training philosophy comes from former Soviet Olympic lifting. A lifter that made a visit to Westside said he does 480 for 10 reps in the squat. He is a 242 with a best of 635. I doubt we have a 242 that can do 480 for 10 reps. Our lifters, instead, do 2 reps for 10 sets with 480 (i.e. 60%) and can squat over 800. We pay close attention to the force/velocity curve, which is optimized by using 50-60% for 2 reps performed explosively. As you can imagine, there is much to learn about resistance training. You don't drive that old '55 Ford your grand dad drove, do you? So why train like he did? At Westside, we take a supplement that you don't think is illegal: a science course. You must apply science to exercise to succeed.

For powerlifters, the opposite must take place. At least half the work on the powerlifts should be done explosively, with weights ranging from 50 to 60% for the bench press and 60 to 75% for the deadlift. We could learn from each other's experience. For example, the 'Welder principles' are types of resistance training: forced reps, split sets, half reps, etc. We mix and match resistance through accelerating and explosive work followed by a maximum effort in partial to full ranges of motion, occasionally working to failure, known as the repetition method. Westside's whole training philosophy comes from former Soviet Olympic lifting. A lifter that made a visit to Westside said he does 480 for 10 reps in the squat. He is a 242 with a best of 635. I doubt we have a 242 that can do 480 for 10 reps. Our lifters, instead, do 2 reps for 10 sets with 480 (i.e. 60%) and can squat over 800. We pay close attention to the force/velocity curve, which is optimized by using 50-60% for 2 reps performed explosively. As you can imagine, there is much to learn about resistance training. You don't drive that old '55 Ford your grand dad drove, do you? So why train like he did? At Westside, we take a supplement that you don't think is illegal: a science course. You must apply science to exercise to succeed.

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