

PROGRAMMING FOR STRENGTH

GREG NUCKOLS & OMAR ISUF

1) Three keys: Muscle mass, technical skill, healthy joints

a) Muscle mass

i) ALWAYS a good thing

(1) Powerlifters vs. bodybuilders – not valid comparison

(2) Sarcoplasmic hypertrophy?

ii) Relationship between muscle mass and strength (from strength potential articles)

b) Technical skill

- i) Specificity
 - (1) Muscles, ROM, load, and speed

- ii) Comfort

- iii) Degree of arousal

- c) Healthy Joints

- i) Technique to avoid acute injuries

- ii) Variation to avoid overuse injuries

2) Setting up a program

- a) Has to fit into your schedule and be somewhat enjoyable so you can stick to it (consistency trumps all)

- b) Overall training volume

- i) General recommendations from Wernbom and Kreiger (40-70 reps, 4-6 sets, 2-3x/muscle/week; also Peterson and Rhea)

 - ii) Give it a shot and monitor
 - (1) HRV

 - (2) Subjective assessment (mood, fatigue, soreness, sleep quality every day. Track and look for dips)

 - iii) Simple decision tree for whether you need to increase or not (applies lift by lift)
- c) Intensity
- i) Far out from a meet (70-85% primarily; find range that lets you maximize volume while minimizing fatigue) versus peaking (more 85-95% work). Overload work and its role as well

d) Specificity

- i) Far out from a meet (depends on needs and level of proficiency) versus peaking (highly specific)

e) Frequency

- i) Dictated by per-session volume and varies per lift and per lifter

- ii) More frequent is better to a point

- (1) Positive training effects marginal increase drops off with increased volume per session

- (2) Negative training effects marginal increase is roughly linear with increased training volume

- (a) Sketch out two factor model acutely

f) Flexibility

i) For each lift during a session (RPE, bar speed, etc.)

(1) How to use RPE, and how it corresponds to %'s

(2) How to use bar speed (set up personal charts)

ii) For sessions within the week (McNamara)

iii) Overall structure of your program if you're not progressing at the pace you'd like to, or progressing faster than you'd planned

iv) If not using RPE, semi-regular testing to reset training maxes.

- v) Degree of flexibility largely dependent on how much flexibility *you* can handle and how much you want. Biology (nonlinear) vs. psychology (need for structure vs. rebelling against structure)

3) Periodization

- a) Bulk of your training: simple matter of balancing consistency and variety (keily)
 - i) DUP is not a training program
 - ii) Organized on different time scales (microcycle, mesocycle, macrocycle)
 - iii) IN GENERAL, DUP within the week, and having waves in increasing intensity on main lifts and increasing volume on accessories has tended to work best; personal experience.

b) Peaking

- i) Get into 2-factor model

- ii) $\frac{1}{3}$ - $\frac{2}{3}$ reduction in volume while maintaining or slightly increasing intensity

- iii) Length of taper depends on sex/volume/size/etc.

4) What to focus on

- a) Beginner - build skill

- b) Intermediate - build size

- c) Advanced - perfect skill, obliterate weaknesses