

THE GLADIATOR PROJECT

PRIMITIVE
TRAINING FOR
MAXIMUM
MUSCLE &
STRENGTH



ZACH EVEN-ESH

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THE GLADIATOR TRAINING COURSE

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Disclaimer:

You must get your physician's approval before beginning this exercise program. These recommendations are not medical guidelines but are for educational purposes only. You must consult your physician prior to starting this program or if you have any medical condition or injury that contraindicates physical activity. This program is designed for healthy individuals 18 years and older only.

The information in this e manual is meant to supplement, not replace, proper exercise training. All forms of exercise pose some inherent risks. The editors and publishers advise readers to take full responsibility for their safety and know their limits. Before practicing the exercises in this e manual, be sure that your equipment is well-maintained, and do not take risks beyond your level of experience, aptitude, training and fitness. The exercises and dietary programs in this book are not intended as a substitute for any exercise routine or treatment or dietary regimen that may have been prescribed by your physician.

See your physician before starting any exercise or nutrition program. If you are taking any medications, you must talk to your physician before starting any exercise program, including any exercise or demonstration performed in The Diesel Underground Combat Seminar. If you experience any light headedness, dizziness, or shortness of breath while exercising, stop the movement and consult a physician.

Don't perform any exercise unless you have been shown the proper technique by a certified personal trainer or certified strength and conditioning specialist. Always ask for instruction and assistance when lifting. Don't perform any exercise without proper instruction. Always do a warm-up prior to strength training and interval training. You must have a complete physical examination if you are sedentary, if you have high cholesterol, high blood pressure, or diabetes, if you are overweight, or if you are over 30 years of age.

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GREAT! Now that I've gotten all the legal mumbo jumbo out of the way, it's time to get ON with The Gladiator Program. This all started when I first ditched the regular gym and began training in my garage, when I still lived with my parents. I believe I was 26 years old, maybe 25.

I'll also be taking you back in time slightly before my garage days, bringing you inside my world of old school bodybuilding and experimental nutrition methods. These workouts are not meant for preparing you for a specific sport, although they will get you strong as hell.

If you've been at the iron game for a long time like I have, you may want to set aside 8 - 12 weeks to give yourself the opportunity to do something different. The Gladiator Program would be that "Different" thing :)

After well over 20 + years in the iron game, I sometimes like to step outside my own mind and pull up an old school strength program to follow from an expert like Pavel, Marty Gallagher, Dan John or Louie Simmons.

How did The Gladiator Program originate?

I was a busy guy, teaching Health & Physical Education full time at a middle school (which was the shittiest gig I ever held in my life), teaching fitness courses in a community college, finishing up graduate school and coaching Middle School Wrestling. Time was NOT on my side.

I was slammed busy! I was bummed out because after a good 7 or 8 year stint at one of the most hard core gyms in the country, I could no longer afford the time behind the wheel, commuting 30 minutes each way would not allow me to complete the endless hours of studying and work I needed to apply to graduate school.

I needed every minute of my day to get my work done for Graduate school and it was quite stressful trying to fit everything in while pushing myself to get through each day of work inside a school that cared little to nothing about doing anything good with regards to Physical Education. The stress was brutal for me and missing my hardcore gym didn't help one bit.

I had been to all the local gyms near and far and they ALL sucked, BAD, except for Diamond Gym, located in Maplewood, NJ. The music at all these other gyms was shitty, even on their best days! I was in serious debt at the time so getting my little garage gym together would be tough as my pockets were empty to say the least. My parents garage was VERY small and the ceiling was extremely low. This was a limiting factor and I had to make it work. I had NO choice.

The other issue was winter was fast approaching and our garage was NOT heated. In fact, the freakin' garage seemed colder than the weather outside! 30 degrees outside made our garage feel like 20 degrees inside.

I decided I would bundle up, just as I did back when I was a high school wrestler and would run 4 miles every other night wearing 4 or 5 sweat shirts, a winter hat, gloves, shorts underneath my sweat pants and 2 pairs of socks!

Fk it, it was GO time, time to be a Gladiator. Time to train NO frills.**

I used my knowledge of old school bodybuilding to help me design this simplistic yet highly effective program. It was a hybrid of old school bodybuilding and powerlifting. I was most influenced by the bodybuilders of the Golden Era and these bodybuilders truly trained like Gladiators. They performed heavy powerlifts and olympic lifts and lots of ground based lifting. Machines were kept to a minimum and heavy weights were the norm. Golden Era bodybuilders did NOT train for the pump. They trained to build brute strength and granite hard muscles. I was on the same path.

But, for YOU, I will be making some slight changes so you can have better athleticism as well as getting a better fat burning effect than what I had back when I put this program together. I will also include prehab and rehab methods to ensure long term health while training at high intensity.

The First thing I did was scour the newspaper classifieds. I wanted to get some used gym equipment and I knew I would find some gems that were being sold used for dirt cheap. I also remember seeing a 300 lb barbell set being sold at CostCo for \$99, that would be a definite on my check list.

I found a few gems being sold through the classified ads, so I took a trip to Newark, NJ, where some dude had a storage space selling some equipment from a little studio gym he had which went out of business. Money was tight and he wouldn't budge on the adjustable incline bench I was eyeing, so I snagged the little stuff I could afford and only what could fit into the back of my SUV. Here's what I got:

- A pair of 50 and 100 lb Hex Dumbbells
- A Flat Utility Bench
- A Dip Bar

I would place a tool box under the utility bench for my incline work so not being able to afford the adjustable bench worked out fine for me. Besides, that's really all I could afford from what he had but I knew it would be perfect. Heck, I was excited for this new journey. I was REALLY excited for the fact that I could play loud music! I'm still confused why gyms nowadays play shitty music that you can barely hear as if you're in a library! Don't they realize this hurts their business? Don't they realize the people training want GOOD music??!!

Back to my garage gym.....

My mind was running a hundred miles a minute. I began to envision my training and my new "gym." I had read about Dave Draper training in "The Dungeon" back when he would train at 5 AM in Venice, Ca.

In the Dungeon, the benches were put together by several boards of wood and a few nuts and bolts. Beer would drip through the ceilings as it trickled through the floor of the above pub, located on top of The Dungeon. The Dungeon was a basement gym, an Underground if you will, separate from modern civilization where "normal people" were roaming the streets.

The Dungeon was anything but normal. The Dungeon had heavy dumbbells, heavier than 150s, the only lights were a few light bulbs hanging from the ceiling, which was awesome, as this is what I had, a few light bulbs.



In my mind, I pictured myself as a Golden Era Bodybuilder, a throwback, a BadAss who marched to the beat of my own drummer, compared to all the other metrosexuals who were training in their cozy gym environment with NO intensity or passion. Those f**in' wimps made me sick!



I knew I could use the 50 lb DBs for warming up on pressing and rowing, the 100s reserved for the heavy stuff. I'd used 150 + lb dumbbells when I had access to Diamond Gym, but those days were behind me and I had to make due with whatever I had. NO excuses. If 100 lbs was too light, screw it, I was gonna crank up the reps!

I snagged a few lighter hex dumbbells off of e bay so I could do the bodybuilding stuff such as triceps work and various shoulder raises and lunges. Hey, come on, I was still a bodybuilder and hand't ditched the little stuff just yet. Besides, those "little exercises" are still good to do. They use them at Westside Barbell to help pack on muscle and improve the 3 powerlifts: the squat, bench press and deadlift.



I wanted to make sure I could squat, as squats was an exercise I excelled at. I knew the importance of squatting, it wasn't an exercise I shied away from either, so I purchased a "gun rack" for dirt cheap from an old web site. A gun rack is simply a pair of upright stands for squatting. I was also able to slide my flat bench between these uprights for some heavy benching as well. The Dungeon was coming along.....

I already had a loud stereo so now I was golden. All systems were GO! Loud music and heavy weights would give me all the thunder I needed. There would no one in my way to steal my thunder, no gym rules telling me I can't use chalk or drop the weights. F**K that, this was my world now, and I was born to do this!

The garage was quickly becoming a freezing cold Dungeon so I snagged a small space heater from CostCo, which did little to help the cold, even when I placed it 2 feet away from my body. So, I bought a 2nd space heater. Problem was, if I turned on BOTH space heaters it would short the entire house as our house was old and did not have the capacity to power all the electricity at once. I remember my Dad screaming the first time the house went dark.

So much for my ideas on staying warm, ha ha

Here's how I broke down my workouts back then:

Day 1: Shoulders, Arms, Forearms

Day 2: Calves, Legs (Quads / Hams)

Day 3: Chest, Back

I would hit an ab circuit as part of my warm up before every workout, and, more often than not, I trained my calves before every workout as well. Remember, I was still a bodybuilder at the time :)

My calf work consisted of 1 legged calf raises holding the 50 or 100 lb DB. I bought a 2 x 4 from Home Depot, cut it and bolted it together so I could create a small calf block. I would perform sets with the 50 and 100 lb dumbbell being held in my hand on the same side as the working calf. Usually 4 or 5 sets of 10-20 reps per leg did the trick.

My ab circuit was a mixture of:

- crunches
- reverse crunches
- seated knee tucks
- russian twists holding a 15-25 lb dumbbell
- leg raises while upright on the dip bar



I'm first going to outline some of my workouts exactly as they were back then, afterwards, I will create a Gladiator Program for you, with tweaks that are more in line with what I have learned to work best today for developing strength and packing on serious muscle.

Assume that calf and ab work were performed before every workout as part of my warm up, sometimes a quick run around the block as well, which was a 400 meter run.

REMEMBER: Warm Up properly before ANY of these workouts, regardless of which Gladiator Program you choose to utilize. Follow [M-Wod](#) Daily.

The sets / reps listed are the “work” sets, often times I would perform 1 or 2 warm up sets before getting to my work sets, and, if this was a BIG lift, I would perform several warm up sets prior to my “work” sets as should you.

SAMPLE GLADIATOR WORKOUTS CIRCA 2001-2002

Day 1: Shoulders, Arms

1A) Bent Over DB raises: 3 x 6-12 reps

1B) Seated DB Shoulder Press (No Back support) 3 x 4 - 8 reps

2) Barbell Upright Rows 3 x 6 - 8 reps

3) DB Side Raises 3 x 8 - 12 reps (last set would be a triple drop set, i.e.: 40 x 10, 30 x 10, 20 x 10)

4) Barbell Shrugs 3 x 6-10 reps

5A) BB Cheat Curls 2 x 6-8 reps

5B) Lying DB Extensions 2 x 10-15 reps

6A) Close Grip Bench Press 2 x 5-8 reps

6B) DB Curl Variations (hammer, zottman, etc) 2 x 6-8 reps

7) DB or BB wrist curls + reverse wrist curls 4 x 15-25 reps

Day 2: Lower Body

1) Back Squats 3 x 8 - 15 reps

2) Deadlift 3 x 8 - 15 reps

3) DB Lunge Variations 3 x 6-10 ea. leg

4) BB or DB RDL 3 x 10-15 reps

** Notice the reps on all squats and deadlifts were in the 10-15 range. This was because I had only 300 lbs, nothing heavier. The high rep workouts were intense though and they packed on a helluva lot of muscle on my lower body and my lower back! If I had access to more weights I would have had reps ranging in the 5 - 15 rep range with the squats and deads.

When I would lift in a globo gym before my Garage days, I would often squat 405 - 455 for 1 or 2 heavy sets, then, go down to 315 for an all out, ass kicker of a set in the 15-20 rep range. The higher reps with squats and deadlifts are reserved for advanced lifters, NOT beginners or intermediates.

A beginner / intermediate needs to keep reps on squats and deads in the 5 x 3 - 5 rep range and NOT train to failure as it will hold back your gains in strength. **In fact, as an advanced lifter, you will find that NOT training to failure on your BIG lifts will keep you healthy and will help you get stronger on a steady, regular basis.**

Day 3: Chest & Back

- 1) Bench Press: 2 heavy sets in the 3 - 6 rep range, 1 lighter set in the 10-15 rep range, often times a drop set of 275 x 3 - 6 reps, 225 x 5 - 8 reps, 135 x max reps
- 2) BB Muscle Clean (If you can perform proper hang cleans, DO it) 3 x 3-5 reps

3A) Incline DB Bench 3 x 6 - 15 reps

3B) Bent Over BB Rows 3 x 6 - 10 reps

4A) 1 Arm DB Row 2 x 15 - 25 reps

4B) Parallel Bar Dips 2 x max reps (25-30 reps each set)

5A) Incline DB Flys 2 x 8 - 12

5B) DB Shrugs 2 x 10 - 15

THE GLADIATOR PROGRAM.... TODAY!!

Knowing what I know now, things would be different if I was cranking away in my garage on The Gladiator Program. Below are some of the key elements I would change while still adhering to the fact that this program is based purely on adding muscle / gaining strength, and, only using a barbell / dumbbells.

- **Find heavier weights.** I would pick up some used olympic plates in order to utilize a progressive system, especially with the core lifts such as: squats, deadlifts, bench press, hang cleans and power cleans
- The garage I was training in had extremely low ceilings. I could do NO overhead work while standing. **Today, I would simply take the dumbbells or barbell outside to enable me to perform heavy overhead lifts.** The seated dumbbell presses are OK for bodybuilding purposes, but, my preference would be standing nowadays, utilizing the push press or strict press.
- Rather than utilize a 3 way bodybuilder split, I would train with the split I use today. **Upper Body, Lower Body and Full Body Workouts.** You'll see I add in a 4 way split for you to give you some extra recovery yet still utilizing an aggressive powerlift almost every workout.
- I would incorporate athletic type events on 2 other days of the week, most preferably various running / sprinting intervals, swimming and mountain biking. Anything outdoors is great for the mind AND body.

Here Would be a sample week, Below, Focused on Strength + Muscle Building:

*** Note the higher rep ranges for muscle growth ***

Day 1: Lower Body

- 1) Run 1/2 Mile
- 2) Squats 1 x 20, 1 x 15, 1 x 10, 1 x 5, 1 x 3, 1 x 15 - 20 (this final set will be performed with your 10 rep weight)
- 3) Deadlift (Sumo or Traditional) 1 x 5 warm up, 3 x 3 -5 reps heavy (leave 1 rep in tank)
- 4) DB Bulgarian Split Squats 3 x 10, 8, 6 reps each leg

* If ankle weights or bands are available, perform several high rep sets of leg curls. Ankle weight leg curls are performed standing one leg at a time or lying on a bench, angled downward to increase pull of ankle weights *

Day 2: Upper Body

- 1) Barbell Floor Press: 1 x 10, 1 x 8, 3 x 3 - 6 reps. Last 2 sets are heaviest while leaving 1 rep in the tank
- 2A) Mixed Grip Pull Ups 4 sets. 2 x submax reps, last 2 x max reps
- 2B) Neutral Incline DB Press x 12, 8, 6, 6 reps (first set is warm up)

- 3A) Weighted Push Ups with hands on dumbbells (mix grip every set) 3 x submax reps on sets 1 & 2, max reps on final set (add weight with plates on back, weighted back pack, etc)
- 3B) Barbell or 1 Arm DB Rows 3 x 6 - 12 reps

- 4A) Close Grip Bench Press 2 x 6 - 10 reps
- 4B) Barbell / DB Curl Variation 2 x 6 - 10 reps
- 5) Grip Work + Abs 4 x each

Day 3: Full Body

- 1) Run 1/2 Mile
- 2) BB Clean & Press (from ground every rep) x 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 10, 8, 6, 4, 2 AFAP (As fast As Possible using same weight - my weight = 135 lbs)
- 3) DB Farmer Walks 4 x 150'
- 4) Burpee + Broad Jump 4 x 6 reps
- 5) Car / Truck Push 3 x 200'

Things I would do differently.....

Back in the day, I had NO knowledge of prehab / rehab work. Today, I perform longer [warm ups and soft tissue work](#) before, during and after ALL my workouts. I recommend the same to you if you want to remain healthy and active for a long time to come.

As a bodybuilder, a BIG focus was shocking the muscles, so each workout was always different. For example, if I started leg day with back squats, the next workout would

begin with front squats or zercher squats. Variety is good for the advanced lifter, but, for the beginner or intermediate lifter, I would lessen the variety.

YOU HAVE A FEW OPTIONS WHEN IT COMES TO VARIETY IN YOUR WORKOUTS.

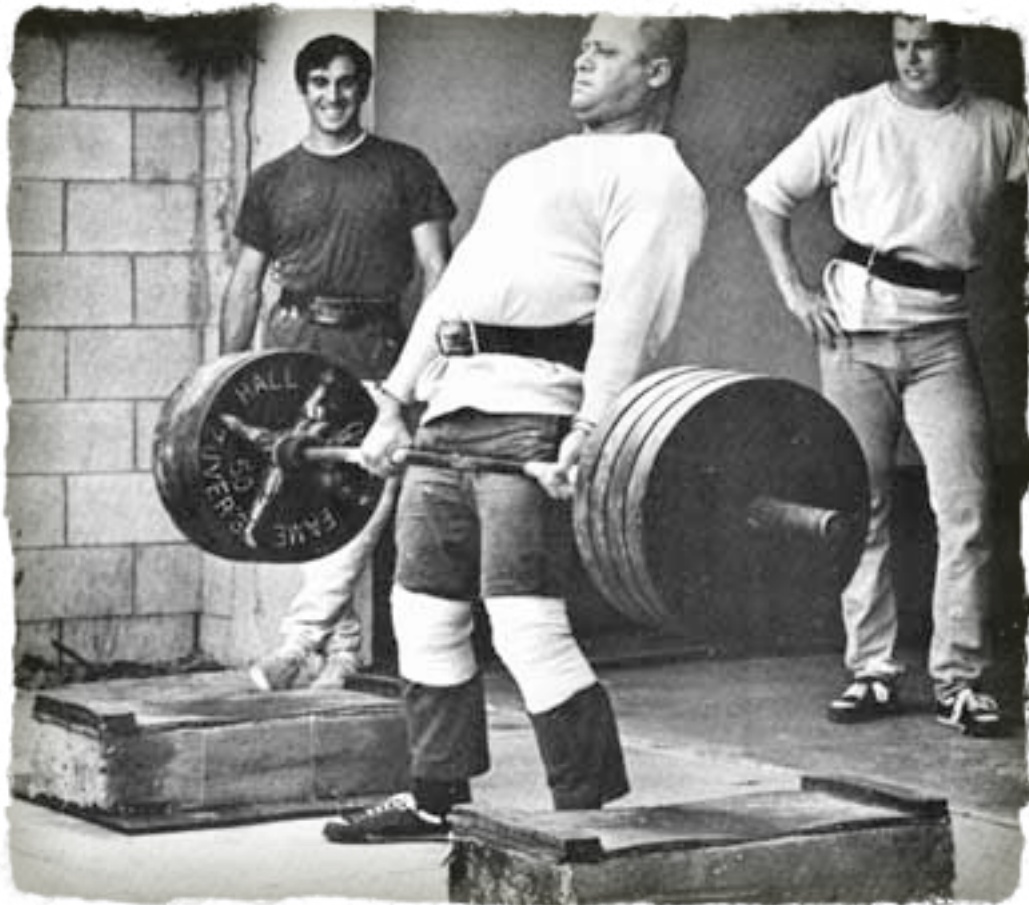
- 1) Change exercises every workout, always start with a different “core” lift and always vary your accessory work and supplemental lifts.
- 2) Perform a 2 - 3 week mini cycle where the entire workout remains the same, or, your core lift remains the same, each week you try to improve by adding some weight or adding a rep to your main lift and / or your supplemental lifts. You can also change the percentages of your main lift during each successive week as Jim Wendler does in his 5 3 1 program.

Contrary to what I have read in many popular web sites and books, I found that using variety in my exercises helped me get stronger and bigger on a regular basis and I avoided overuse injuries.

For example, on the days I trained chest, I would start each day with a heavy lift, working up to a heavy set of 5 - 6 reps and another heavy set of 3 reps. I did this with the flat and incline barbell bench press, the flat dumbbell or incline dumbbell bench. Each movement carried over to the next and I got stronger in ALL my chest pressing movements.

On leg day, when I trained at an old school bodybuilding gym I back squatted first one week, then performed heavy leg presses or hack squats the next week. The variation kept things fresh yet the goal of that first main lift was always the same, going heavier and getting stronger. Getting stronger meant getting bigger. I understood that simple concept and I hope you do as well. To get stronger and bigger, you need to add weight to the bar, it's as simple as that.

Simple, NOT Easy.



For larger muscle groups, the plan of attack was often 3 movements:

First Movement: Hit 2 heavy sets, first heavy set x 5 - 6 reps, 2nd heavy set x 3 reps

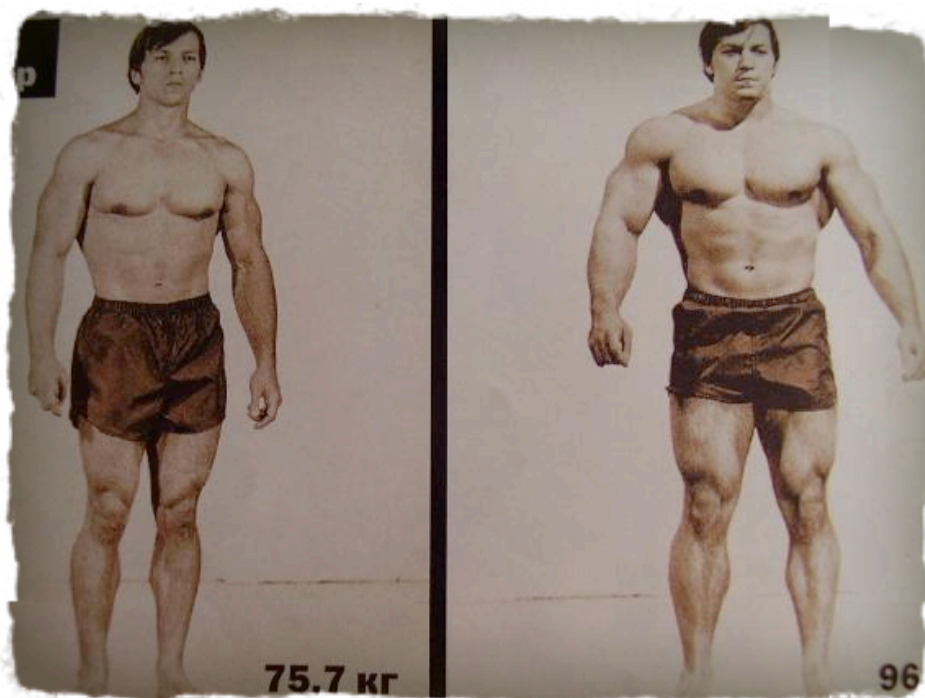
Second Movement: 2 or 3 hard sets in the 6 - 12 rep range

Third Movement: 2 or 3 hard sets in the 12 - 25 rep range

This was a similar plan of attack from the bodybuilders of The Golden Era, and, not ironically, you can see many top powerlifters training in a similar fashion. Their first lift is their strength / power lift, afterwards, they utilize moderate rep ranges to add muscle. Adding muscle is the same as building a larger car engine, ultimately allowing you to add horsepower to the engine.



THE GLADIATOR SUMMER EXPERIMENT





Last but not least, before I give you the opportunity to dive into a 12 week Gladiator Program, I wanna unleash a small experiment I performed back when I was 23 or 24, perhaps.

I was still living at home and it was summer time. I was a teacher so time was plentiful during my summer vacation. My parents had gone away on vacation for 3 weeks and I decided I would stock up on simple, basic foods to make life easy on myself.

I bought a boat load of frozen hamburger patties and grilled away every 2 or 3 days. My daily nutrition consisted of 4 meals through the day, each meal consisted of 2 grilled hamburgers with a slice of cheese, that's it, no bread or added carbs, just 2 hamburger patties + cheese. The additional 2 "meals" came from the famous EAS Myoplex Meal Replacement shake, mixed in water. 6 "meals" per day in total.

Some fruits were consumed through the day but it was minimal as I was too young and dumb to understand the importance of getting quality nutrients and fiber from fruits and veggies.

**** NOTE:** Myoplex / EAS is now under different ownership and I can NOT vouch for the quality of their supplements.

I was training every other day, often times taking TWO days off after a lower body workout. I was on a 4 way power-bodybuilding split regime while training at the infamous Diamond Gym, a hardcore gym for bodybuilders.

I was taking a multi vitamin during breakfast along with 1 gram of Vitamin C 3 - 4 times a day. The extra Vitamin C increased recovery.

MY ROUTINE WAS SIMPLE:

- Wake up and eat breakfast: 2 hamburger patties with cheese + water.

- Train after eating breakfast. Each workout, except legs, was finished with 20 - 25 minutes of interval work on the treadmill with an incline of 5 - 10 degrees. I would walk / run for 2 - 3 minute clips.

- Immediately after the workout I would consume my meal replacement shake.

- I would get home, eat 2 more hamburgers as well as have 2 - 3 spoons of peanut butter.

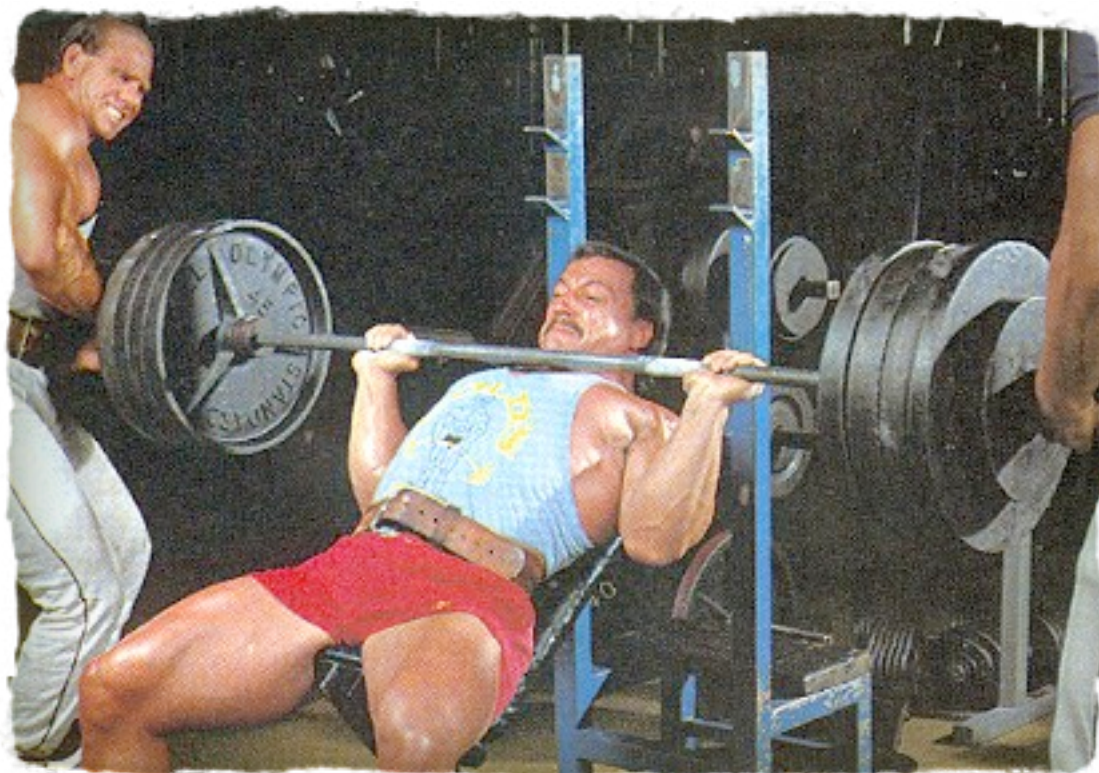
- After this 2nd “post workout meal” I would nap without an alarm clock, sleeping for another 60 - 90 minutes. Ahhhhhhh, the life of a young dude living with his parents and having summers off. Obviously, this is completely impractical for me nowadays.

- Everyday for that 2 - 3 week period my nutrition remained the same, until my Mom got home and began cooking for me. Typical meathead!!

- My training was also supplemented with 1 or 2 aggressive mountain biking trips each week with my friends, approx. 2 hrs in length each time

- My training program of every other day on a 4 way split came from intuition. I was a natural bodybuilder and I knew I felt best when I rested and always came back hungry to lift the next day. My motivation was sky high as was my energy. I didn't feel great following the typical prescription of 2 - 3 days of training in a row.

I didn't feel too fatigued or weak while training 2 days in a row, BUT, the 1 on 1 off felt awesome, plus, I had been influenced in my early days by bodybuilders such as Casey Viator, Mike Mentzer and Dorian Yates. I believed in recovery highly and respected the fact that I needed to rest to gain strength and size.



Before you begin your 4, 8 or 12 week Gladiator Program, understand that the focus of this program is to build strength and muscle. It is NOT geared towards a specific sport or for athleticism, although it certainly can be used for off season training, and, if you want to make this program better geared for athletics, I would suggest adding various lower body jumps on lower body day as well as incorporating plyos for upper body.

The Gladiator Program is created for the garage / basement lifter who has minimal equipment and wants to get strong as hell while packing on thick, rugged, dense muscle. If you expect these results, you already understand the necessity to bust your ass while training as well as committing yourself to consuming LOTS of quality nutrition.

Perform each program for 4 weeks at a time and then switch to a new program, OR, deload for one week, then follow the next 4 weeks and if you desire, the final 4 weeks.

Your equipment should consist of:

- squat stands
- olympic barbell
- dumbbells
- chin and dip bar
- utility bench (optional)

WEEKS 1 - 4: Train 3 X week on non consecutive days. Warm up properly on your own and incorporate soft tissue work before, during and after each workout as well as on your off days. Incorporate active rest as time and energy allows. Activities such as biking, hiking and swimming are excellent choices. **Train abs for 3 - 5 sets before each workout in conjunction with your warm up using movements such as leg raise variations, plank variations & sit up variations.**

Week 1

Workout 1: Lower Body

- 1) Back Squats: warm up x 20, moderate x 15, moderately heavy x 10, 3 heavy work sets x 5 reps
- 2) Walking DB Lunges 3 x 10 each leg
- 3) RDL 1 warm up x 10, 1 moderate x 6, 2 heavy x 5 reps

Workout 2: Upper Body

- 1) Bench Press: warm up x 20, moderate x 12, moderately heavy x 6, 2 heavy work sets x 3 - 6 reps. Last set, perform a triple drop set leaving 1 rep in the tank on each set
- 2A) Mixed Grip Pull Ups 4 x submax reps
- 2B) Incline DB Press 2 x 8 reps, 2 x 6 reps
- 3A) Neutral Grip Push Ups 2 x max reps
- 3B) BB Reverse Curls 2 x 8 - 12 reps

Workout 3: Full Body

- 1A) 1 Arm DB Snatch 2 - 3 warm up sets, 2 heavy sets x 5 reps
- 1B) 1 Arm DB Press 2 - 3 warm up sets, 2 heavy sets x 5 reps
- 2) Zercher Squats 3 x 10
- 3) 2 Hand Dumbbell Swings 3 x 10
- 4) Run 1/2 Mile



Week 2

Workout 1: Lower Body

- 1) Back Squats: warm up x 20, moderate x 15, moderately heavy x 10, 3 heavy work sets x 8 - 12 reps
- 2) DB Bulgarian Split Squats 3 x 6 each leg
- 3) RDL 1 warm up x 10, 1 moderate x 10, 2 heavy x 6 reps

Workout 2: Upper Body

- 1) Flat DB Bench Press: warm up x 20, moderate x 12, moderately heavy x 6, 2 heavy work sets x 3 - 6 reps. Last set, perform a triple drop set leaving 1 rep in the tank on each set
- 2A) Mixed Grip Weighted Pull Ups 4 x submax reps
- 2B) Incline DB Fly 2 x 12 reps, 2 x 8 reps
- 3A) Dips 2 x max reps
- 3B) DB Curls 2 x 8 - 12 reps

Workout 3: Full Body

- 1A) 1 Arm DB Clean & Press 2 warm up sets, then 3 x 5 heavy
- 1B) 1 Arm DB Rows 2 warm up sets, then 3 x 6 - 12 heavy

- 2) Walking DB Lunges 2 x 15 ea. leg
- 3) Push Ups x 100 Total (break sets down as needed)
- 4) Jump Rope Intervals 30 seconds work / 15 seconds rest x 6 minutes



Week 3

Workout 1: Lower Body

- 1) Front Squats (Bodybuilder or Olympic Style): warm up x 10, moderate x 10, moderately heavy x 6, 3 heavy work sets x 5 reps
- 2) Walking DB Lunges 3 x 12 each leg
- 3) [Barbell Good Morning](#) 1 warm up x 10, 1 moderate x 6, 2 heavy x 5 reps

Workout 2: Upper Body

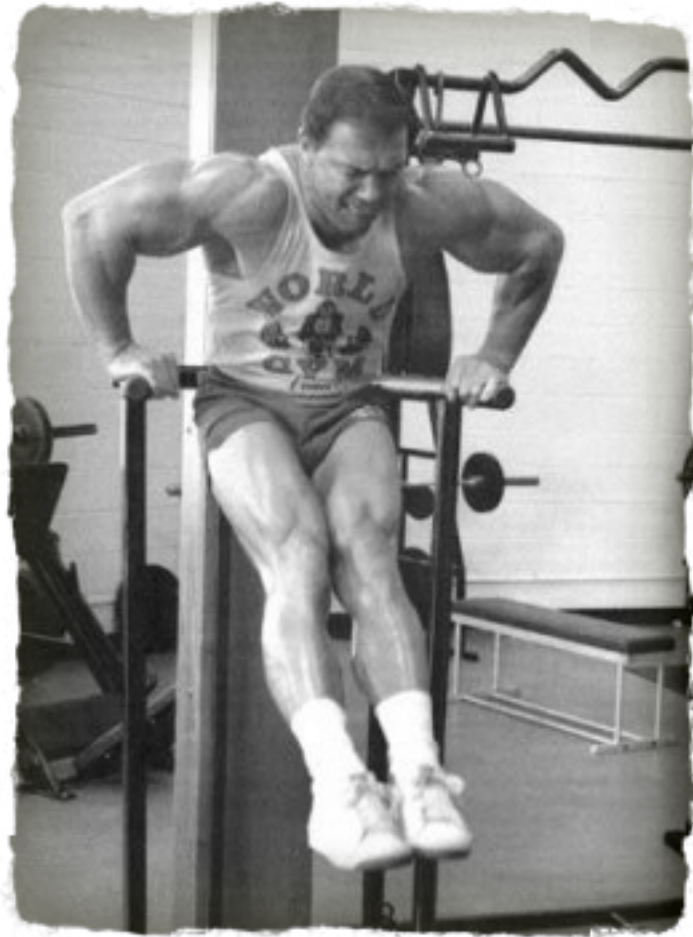
- 1) Bench Press: warm up x 20, moderate x 12, moderately heavy x 6, 2 heavy work sets x 3 - 6 reps. Last set, perform a triple drop set leaving 1 rep in the tank on each set
- 2A) Bent Over BB Row (Underhand Grip) 4 x 6 reps
- 2B) Incline DB Press 4 x 10 reps
- 3A) Flat DB Flys 2 x 10 reps
- 3B) DB hammer curls 2 x 10 reps



Workout 3: Full Body

- 1) BB Hang Clean & Press 3 x 5 reps, 2 x 3 reps
- 2) DB Farmer Walks 3 x 100'
- 3) 2 Hand Dumbbell Swings 3 x 15
- 4) Pull Ups 1 x max reps
- 5) Push Ups 1 x max reps
- 6) Run 1/2 Mile
- 7) Pull Ups 1 x max reps
- 8) Push Ups 1 x max reps

Week 4 / High Reps + Lighter Weights



Workout 1: Lower Body

- 1) Back Squats warm up x 10, moderate x 15, moderately heavy x 15, repeat same weight x 20 - 25 reps
- 2) DB Step Ups 2 x 10 ea. leg
- 3) Barbell RDL 1 x 20, 1 x 15, 1 x 10, 1 x 5

Workout 2: Upper Body

- 1A) Flat DB Bench warm up with 2 light sets, then, 2 hard sets x 20 - 25 reps
- 1B) 1 Arm DB Row: 2 light sets x 10 reps, 2 hard sets x 20 reps ea. arm

- 2A) Incline DB Bench 2 x 15 reps
- 2B) DB Shrugs 2 x 30 seconds x max reps

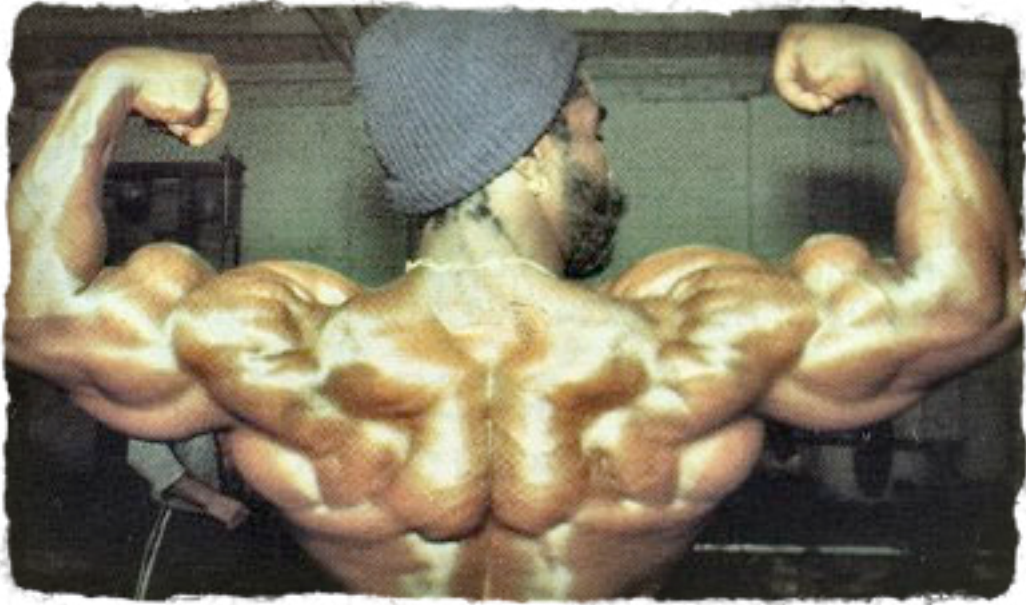
- 3A) BB Curls 2 x 20 reps
- 3B) DB Tate Press 2 x 20 reps

Workout 3: Full Body

5 Rounds of BB Complex / 90 Seconds Rest after each round

- 1A) Hang Clean & Press x 6
- 1B) Back Squats x 6
- 1C) Reverse Lunges x 6 ea. leg
- 1D) Bent Over Row x 6
- 1E) RDL x 6
- 1F) Shrugs x 6

Gladiator Program # 2 / Weeks 5 - 8: Just as you did in weeks 1 - 4, warm up thoroughly before each workout, include ab work into your warm up and perform soft tissue work regularly as well. This phase you will train every other day which equates to 3 workouts one week, 4 workouts the next week. You'll be on a 4 way body part split but with functional movements and powerlifts. Your 2nd phase of workouts are below.



Workout 1: Shoulders, Triceps

- 1) BB Hang Clean & Press: work up to 3 heavy sets x 3 reps
- 2A) DB side raises (use slight body to move heavier weights) 3 x 8 - 12 reps
- 2B) Bent Over DB raises 3 x 8 - 12 reps
- 3) BB Shrugs: 1 warm up x 12 reps, 2 heavy sets x 5 - 8 reps
- 4) [Incline DB Tate Press](#) 4 x 8 - 15 reps

Workout 2: Back

- 1) Mixed Grip Pull Ups: 1 warm up set, 3 sets with weight, last set, drop weight & continue x max reps with bodyweight
- 2) Underhand BB Row 1 x 10 reps, 3 x 6 - 8 reps
- 3) [Seated DB Cleans](#) 3 x 10 reps
- 4) Deadlifts 1 x 10 warm up, 3 x 5 reps heavy

Workout 3: Chest, Biceps

- 1) Flat DB Bench: Build up to 2 heavy sets x 6 reps, 3 reps
- 2) Incline BB Press: Build up to 2 heavy sets x 8 reps, 5 reps

- 3) Incline DB Flys 2 x 10 reps heavy
- 4) Parallel Bar Dips 2 x max reps
- 5) Standing DB Curls 2 x 6 - 8 reps
- 6) BB Cheat Curls 2 x 10 reps

Workout 4: Legs

- 1) Zercher Squat: Build up to 3 heavy sets x 6, 4, 2 reps
- 2) BB Step Ups 3 x 10, 8, 6 reps (add weight each set)
- 3) RDL: build up to 2 heavy sets x 5 reps
- 4) Walking DB Lunges 2 x 10 reps ea.

Workout 5: Shoulders, Triceps

- 1) Double DB Clean & Press: work up to 3 heavy sets x 5 reps
- 2A) 1 Arm DB side raises (use slight body to move heavier weights) 3 x 6 - 8 reps
- 2B) Bent Over DB raises 3 x 8 - 12 reps

- 3) DB Shrugs: 1 warm up x 12 reps, 2 heavy sets x 5 - 8 reps
- 4) Close Grip Bench Press 3 x 6 - 10 reps
- 5) [DB Triceps Roll Backs](#) 3 x 10

Workout 6: Back

- 1) Mixed Grip Pull Ups: 1 warm up set, 3 sets with weight, last set, drop weight & continue x max reps with bodyweight
- 2) Overhand BB Row 1 x 10 reps, 3 x 6 - 8 reps
- 3) [Seated DB Cleans](#) 3 x 10 reps
- 4) [Sumo Deadlifts](#) 1 x 6 warm up, 3 x 3 reps heavy



Workout 7: Chest, Biceps

- 1) Flat Bench: Build up to 2 heavy sets x 6 reps, 3 reps
- 2) Incline Neutral DB Press: Build up to 2 heavy sets x 8 reps, 6 reps
- 3) Flat DB Flys 2 x 10 reps heavy
- 4) Weighted Parallel Bar Dips 2 x 10 - 15
- 5) Incline DB Curls 2 x 6 - 8 reps
- 6) BB Cheat Curls 2 x 6 - 8 reps

Workout 8: Legs

- 1) Back Squat: Build up to 3 heavy sets x 6, 4, 2 reps, rest 3 minutes, hit a hard set x 15 reps w/lighter weight
- 2) BB Walking Lunges 3 x 10 reps ea. leg
- 3) RDL: 1 warm up x 6 reps, 2 heavy sets x 5 reps



Workout 9: Shoulders, Tris

- 1) 1 Arm DB Push Press: Work up to 3 heavy sets x 5 reps
- 2) Close Grip Bench Press: work up to 3 heavy sets x 6 - 8 reps
- 3) DB Side Raises Run the Rack: Example: 20 x 6, 30 x 6, 40 x 6, 30 x 6, 20 x 6 reps all performed without rest
- 4A) Bent Over DB Raises 3 x 10
- 4B) DB Tate Presses 3 x 15-20



Workout 10: Back

- 1) BB Row: Build up to 3 heavy sets x 6 reps
- 2) Mixed Grip Chin Ups: 2 x with weight x 3 - 6 reps, 2 x no added weight x max reps
- 3) Deadlift: Build up to 3 heavy sets x 5 reps

Workout 11: Chest, Bis

- 1) Incline DB Bench: Build Up to 2 heavy sets x 5 reps
- 2) Flat DB Bench (Neutral Grip): Build up to 2 heavy sets x 6 reps, 4 reps
- 3) Incline DB Flys: 2 x 6 - 8 reps
- 4) Parallel Bar Dips: 1 x with added weight x 10 reps, 1 x with bodyweight x Max reps
- 5A) Reverse BB Curls 3 x 6
- 5B) DB Hammer Curls 3 x 6

Workout 12: Legs

- 1) Front Squat (Olympic or Bodybuilder Style): work up to 3 heavy sets x 5 reps
- 2) BB Reverse Lunges 3 x 8 - 10 ea. leg
- 3) Sumo Deadlift (moderate weight) 3 x 6 reps (leave 2 reps in tank ea. set)
- 4) DB Swings 2 x 15 reps

Gladiator Program # 3 OR Weeks 9 - 12

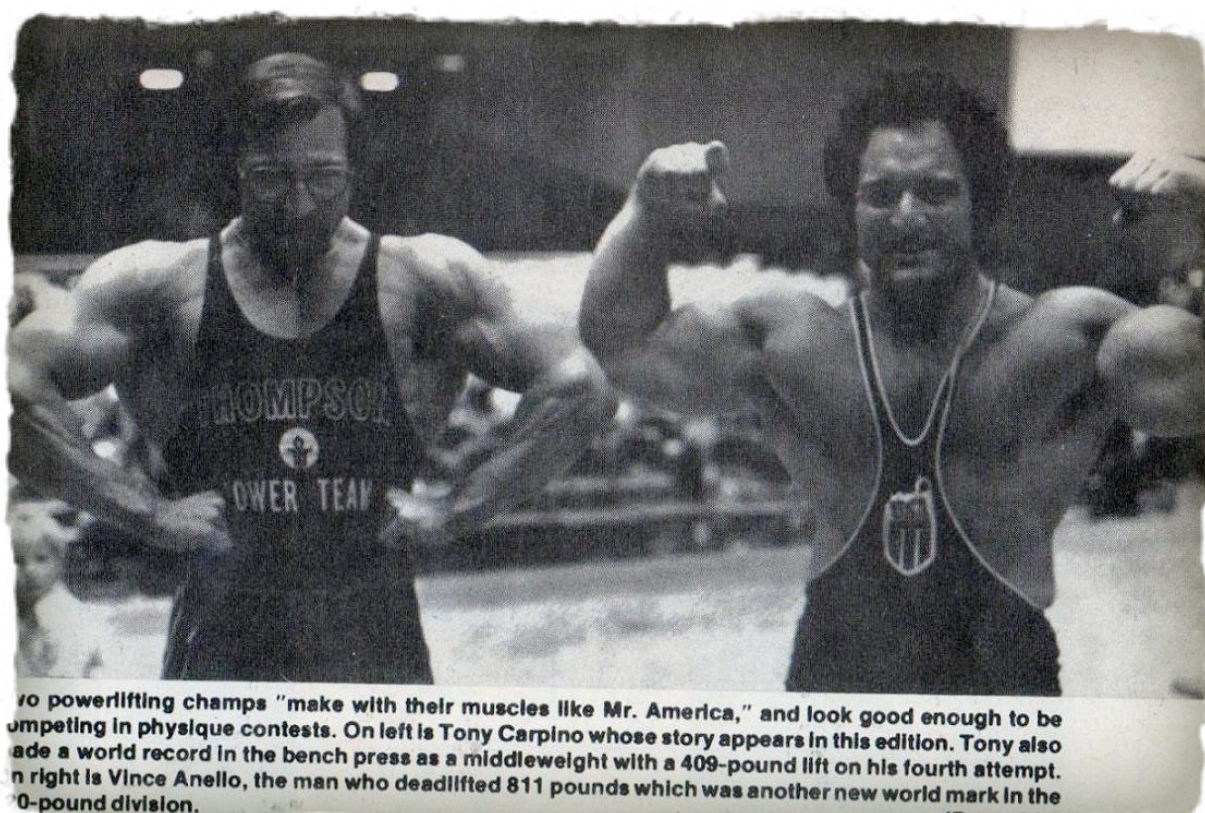
During Phase 3, you're going to train on an upper / lower split, 3 days a week. This means one week your upper body gets worked twice, the next week, lower body gets worked twice. Do NOT train 2 days in a row if your schedule allows you to organize as I recommend.

You will crank 12 workouts during Phase # 3. Repeat workout 1 - 6 again, as workouts 7 - 12, trying to break records in any of the lifts possible by adding an extra few pounds or an extra rep or two.

Once or twice a week allow yourself to engage in activities such as hill sprints, bike riding, swimming or any other movement. It NEVER hurts to be in shape, it only helps!

Being in excellent all around condition will NOT take away from your strength & muscle building workouts, in fact, they will help you.

Being conditioned allows your body to recover faster from intense strength workouts as well as allowing you to keep intensity high throughout the entire workout.

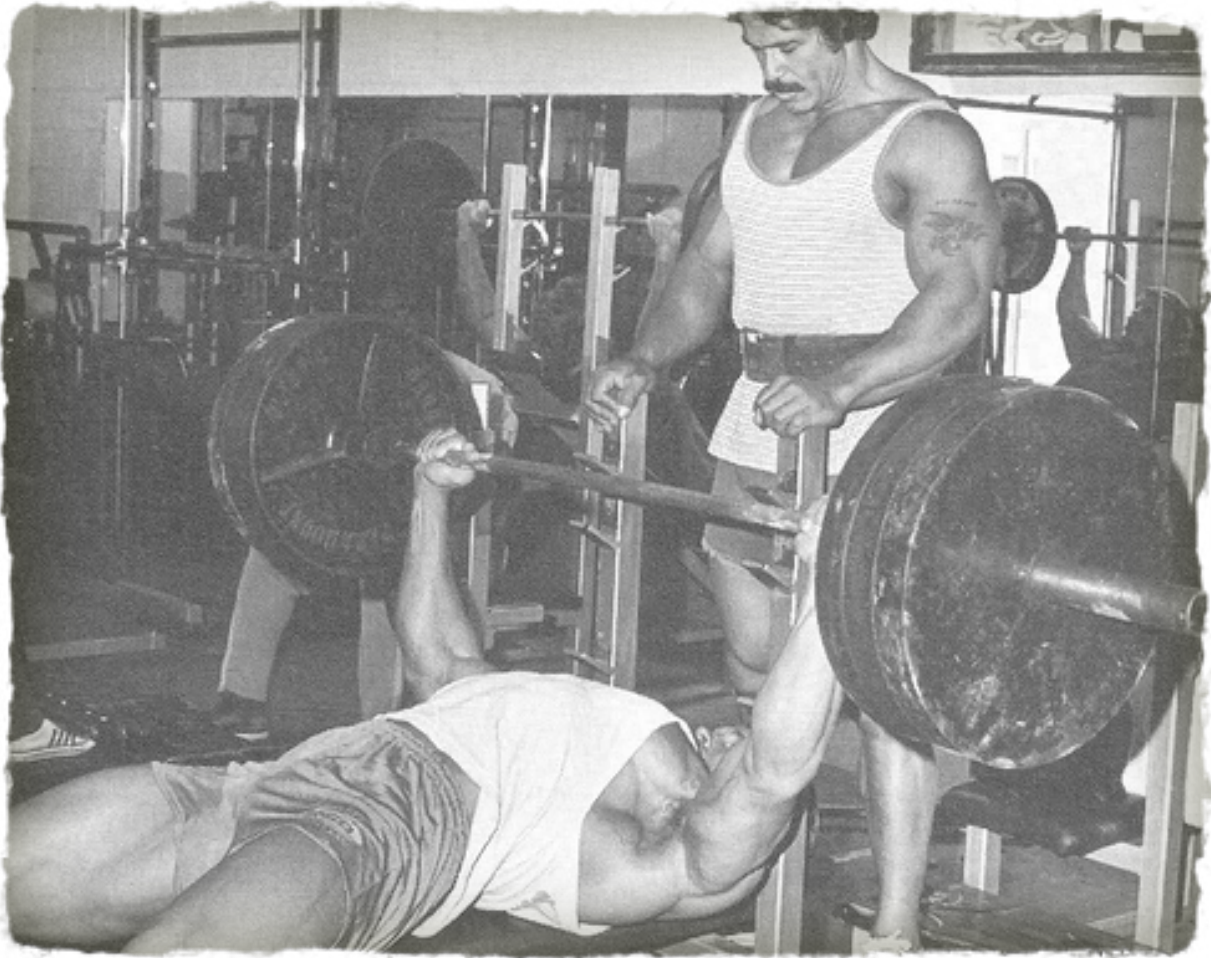


Workout 1 & 7: Upper Body

- 1) Bench Press (shoulder width grip): Build Up to Heavy x 6, heavy x 4, heavy x 2
- 2) Reverse Grip BB Row: Build up to 3 heavy x 5 - 8 reps
- 3) Feet Elevated Push Ups: max reps x 60 seconds, max reps x 45 seconds, max reps x 30 seconds, max reps x 15 seconds
- 4) [Seated DB Cleans](#) 2 x 8-12 reps
- 5A) DB Side Raises 2 x 10-15
- 5B) DB Lying Triceps Extensions 2 x 10-15
- 5C) DB Hammer Curls 2 x 6-10

Workout 2 & 8: Lower Body

- 1) Squats: Build up to heavy 2 x 5 reps
- 2) Deadlift 5 x 2 reps @ 75% of your 1 rep max (1RM)
- 3) Barbell Step Ups (step up on bench) 3 x 10, 8, 6 reps each leg (add weight ea. set)

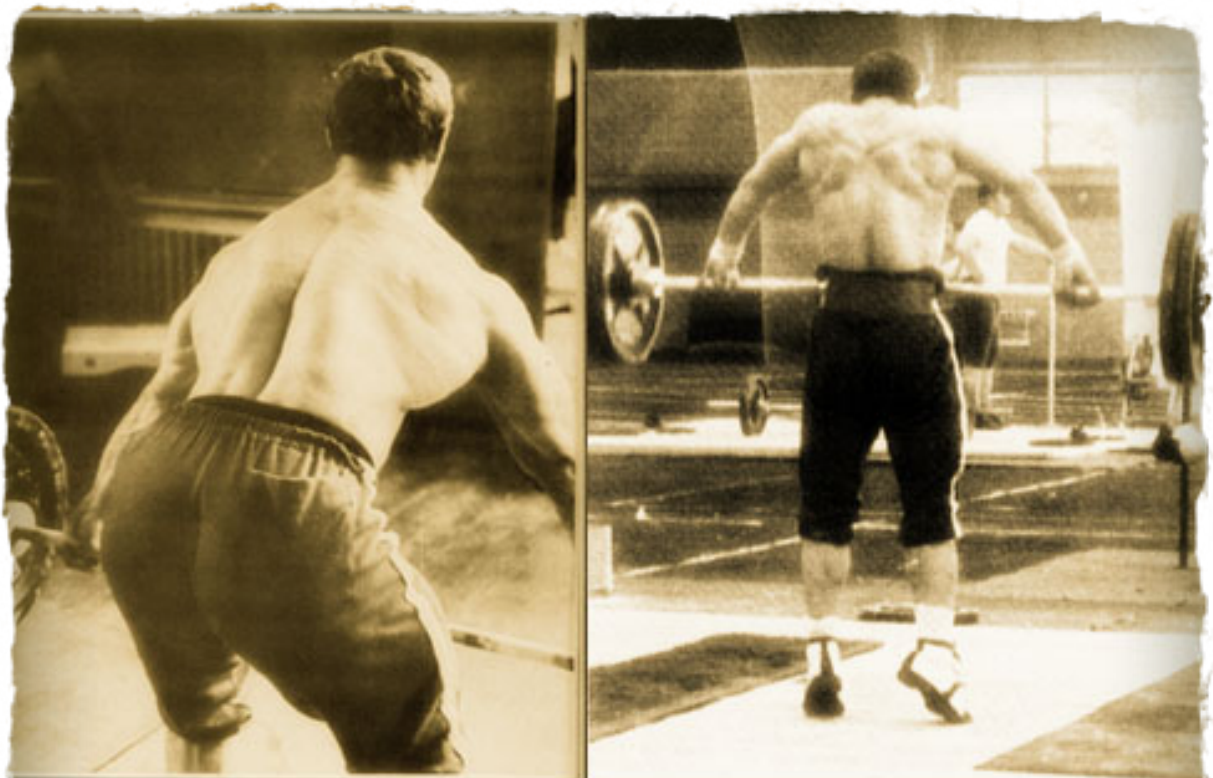


Workout 3 & 9: Upper Body

- 1) BB Power Clean & Press (from floor each rep): work up to 3 heavy x 3 reps
- 2A) Incline DB Bench w/Palms Neutral 2 x 8-12
- 2B) Mixed Grip Pull Ups 2 x max reps
- 3A) DB Tate Press 3 x 8-15 reps
- 3B) BB Reverse Curls 3 x 6-10 reps
- 3C) Bent Over DB Raises 3 x 6-10 reps

Workout 4 & 10: Lower Body

- 1) Box Squat (squat onto your utility bench or make a box from wood): work up to 3 heavy x 3 reps
- 2) Partial Deadlifts (Place extra rubber mats or plates under each plate so you are starting each rep with the bar just below the knees): 5 x 2 reps @ 60% 1RM
- 3) DB Reverse Lunges 3 x 8 ea. leg
- 4) DB Swings 3 x 10 reps



Ivanchenko training pics from 1970 and 1971.
Gennady Ivanchenko, legendary weightlifter, knew developing a strong posterior chain was the key to a strong core!

Workout 5 & 11: Upper Body

- 1A) Flat DB Bench: 3 heavy x 4 - 8 reps
- 1B) Weighted Pull Ups 3 heavy x 3 - 6 reps

- 2A) Incline DB Flys 3 heavy x 6-8 reps
- 2B) 1 Arm DB Rows 3 heavy x 10-15 reps

- 3A) Seated DB Cleans 3 x 12
- 3B) Close Grip Bench Press 3 x 6-8 reps

- 4A) BB Cheat Curls 2 x 6 reps
- 4B) Dips 2 x max reps

- 5) Grip Training 4 x

Workout 6 & 12: Lower Body:

- 1) Run 1/2 Mile
- 2) Walking BB Lunges 3 x 10 ea. leg
- 3) RDL 3 x 6-8 reps
- 4) DB Step Ups 4 x 6 ea. leg
- 5) Run 1/2 Mile

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- **Listen to your body.** If the program proves too intense for you, then take a few days to recover fully, come back and lower the volume slightly.
- **Do NOT neglect grip, abs and conditioning work.** Do these on your own. Being in shape is always critical. Strength & muscle without conditioning is NOT the goal of this program.
- **Do NOT take long rest periods** between sets. 60 seconds is plenty for a rest period.

- **If you are an athlete and want to tweak The Gladiator Program** for your sport, make sure you add athletic skill work, various jumps for lower / upper body, sled work for conditioning and any specifics you need to make this program more well rounded for athleticism.
- **Perform prehab / rehab / mobility work before, during and after your workouts.** I also encourage you to do so on your off days. We devote an entire DVD for this in [**The Diesel Underground Combat Seminar HERE.**](#)

The results I gained during my time of training in the garage and ditching the gym was shocking to me and others. I remember in the heart of winter taking a trip to a Gold's Gym and the kid at the front desk was shocked when I told him I train in my garage and not at a public gym.

The benefits of The Gladiator Program were tested in the realm of strength and muscle gains. I was Coaching Wrestling during the winter so I used this time to drill and live wrestle which added conditioning to my overall program, something I can't encourage enough of.

To truly test the program, you must follow it for 8 weeks or the entire 12 weeks as prescribed unless, as mentioned before, it proves too much work for you. If it is too much work for you, this is a message your body is sending you, telling you that you are not physically prepared for this type of training. If this is the case, I would recommend limiting your workouts to no more than 4 exercises as you practice your skills in the basic powerlifts and improve your work capacity.

I've provided you with the outline, you must provide the commitment and the effort!

Good Luck!

Zach Even - Esh

[**http://ZachEven-Esh.com**](http://ZachEven-Esh.com)

[**http://UndergroundInnerCircle.com**](http://UndergroundInnerCircle.com)

[**https://www.undergroundstrengthcoach.com/public/540.cfm**](https://www.undergroundstrengthcoach.com/public/540.cfm)

THE UNDERGROUND STRENGTH COACH CATALOG



Zach Even - Esh is a Strength & Performance Specialist located in NJ. Zach is the Founder of The Underground Strength Gym, a private warehouse gym for athletes and hardcore strength addicts. You can gain insider access as to how Zach trains his athletes and operates his business via the resources below.

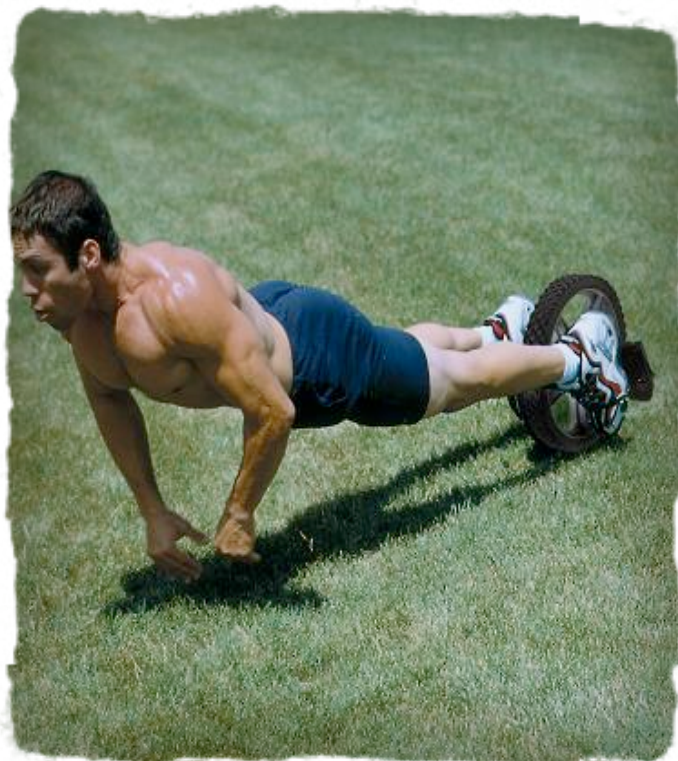


For a 30 Day Trial to my Underground Strength Inner Circle, [Click HERE](#).

<https://www.undergroundstrengthcoach.com/public/540.cfm>

The Power Wheel

<http://ThePowerWheel.com>



The Power Wheel is one of the most powerful training tools I have ever used for wrestlers. It allows us to walk on our hands, perform animal movements, abdominal / core exercises, hamstring exercises and much more. You can use them on grass, cement or a wrestling mat. If you use them on cement wear work gloves or cooking mits to protect your hands from sharp objects. This is a **MUST** have tool for ALL serious wrestlers.

Get one of the best upper body and core training devices on the planet at www.ThePowerWheel.com

Underground Kettlebells
www.UndergroundKettlebells.com



Kettlebells will help you will develop tremendous grip strength, athleticism, speed / power and full body strength.

Kettlebells are the ultimate anywhere / anytime training: They can be thrown on grass fields, carried, pressed, rowed, pushed and pulled from all angles. Tie thick ropes or towels through them and perform curls, carries, rows, swings and more for the ultimate tool to develop full body strength, power, fat loss and mental toughness.

Get your Kettlebells at www.UndergroundKettlebells.com

<https://www.undergroundstrengthcoach.com/public/540.cfm>

The Underground SandBag

www.UndergroundSandBag.com



Sandbags are one of the most effective training tools for serious strength addicts. They are, literally, an all in one gym. You can perform movements for lower body & upper body as well as full body movements. You can throw your bag for power and carry your bag for conditioning. The sandbag is extremely versatile, allowing you to perform complexes where you combine 2 - 5 exercises in a row using the sandbag without having to change the weight or even put the sandbag down. **Get your FREE Underground Sandbag Assault Course [HERE](#)**

Get Your Sandbag at www.UndergroundSandbag.com

<https://www.undergroundstrengthcoach.com/public/540.cfm>

Gymnastics Rings

Get Your Rings at <http://CombatRings.com>



These Rings are straight up AWESOME! They are easy to set up and easy to travel with. I have them in my gym as well as in my garage. I often take them down from my garage beam and travel with them to the park for my playground workouts. You can perform push ups, core / abdominal training, muscle ups, flexibility work, gymnastics drills, ab training and more. These are a MUST have in your bodybuilding, strength and conditioning arsenal! The wooden rings are bar none the best rings I have ever used.

Get your Rings at <http://CombatRings.com>



For a 30 Day Trial to my Underground Strength Inner Circle, go to <https://www.undergroundstrengthcoach.com/public/540.cfm> or [Click HERE](#).

You'll get ALL the following PLUS Tons More:

- The Underground Workout of the Month
- A Monthly Underground Movie with insider access to my Underground Strength Gym
- Our Exact Underground Strength workouts posted almost daily
- Daily updates on the forum with other Strength Fanatics sharing their secrets of strength, conditioning, power training and renegade muscle building tactics
- The exact sets, reps and program design methods behind our athlete training sessions so you too can learn why our athletes transform themselves and dominate the competition
- There is a collection of over one thousand Underground Strength Movies and articles showing you uncut footage and never seen before articles, videos and audio interrogations from The Underground Strength Gym as well as other world renown Strength Coaches that no one else has access to except our members PLUS tons more.

[Click HERE for your 30 Day Trial.](#)

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