

VITALICS

DRAGON DOOR PUBLICATIONS PRESENTS

Resources to Renew, Recharge and Rejuvenate

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AMBER
DORNFELD, RKC
performs a drill at
the June 2005
Kettlebells for
Combat
Applications
workshop

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July 7, 2005 • St. Paul, MN

Women becoming the major users of kettlebells

You wouldn't know it yet from visiting the *dragondoor.com Strength and Conditioning forum*, which is still heavily dominated by men, but there is a seismic shift occurring in the kettlebell world:

Many of our most active RKC's are reporting that anywhere up to eighty percent of their trainees are now women, predominantly in the age range of 35-60.

Moreover, the RKC's are reporting that by and large these women are outperforming their male counterparts, when it comes to endurance, conditioning and sheer physical grit...

Interesting that an exercise tool that was originally slated as the winners'-weapon-of-choice by elite athletes and Special Forces hardmen, has now been embraced by a new breed of powerful women.

What's going on?

It's clear that women have gravitated to kettlebells because they simply give you more bang for the back, way faster than any other exercise modality on the planet.

This issue really highlights the rising power of the women's kettlebell movement. I am sure you didn't miss Amber Dornfeld's amazingly ripped figure on our front cover — and the photos of her in Brad Nelson's article on Pages 14-16. That's the fat-burning, muscle-toning impact of kettlebells at its finest!

The there's former Russian swimming standout Svetlana Writtle, another amazing body honed by kettlebells. When I interviewed Svetlana (Pages 68-69) at the April 2005 RKC, she made a quip that didn't make it into the official interview but bears repeating in this context...

I had asked Svetlana why she thought kettlebells are so popular with women. What I won't forget in her response went something like this: "Well, if a woman doesn't have a butt, kettlebells will give her the kind of butt she's been wanting. And if her butt is too big, kettlebells will tone it down to a firmer, smaller size."

It's no secret that women's biggest problem areas are the butt and thighs. Not anymore, if they use kettlebells.

But I would be doing women a huge disservice if I made you think they're only into kettlebells for a cuter shape. The teenage phenom **Samantha Young** (see her interview on Pages 20-21) is a case in point. Here's a young woman who is using kettlebells to bust state diving records and to prepare herself for an Olympic Gold Medal bid. And her performances at the Las Vegas Convention had to be seen to be believed!

On a professional level, **Dr. Wendy Schauer** gives us a highly inspiring piece (Pages 70-71) on how kettlebells helped her recover from an injury that was seriously affecting her chiropractic performance — and on kettlebells have helped numerous of her clients also recover from injury.

Then check out **Lisa Shaffer's** terrific new kettlebell manual, *Get Into The Best Shape of Your Life* (Pages 22-23) which is a superb and highly practical complement to Pavel's kettlebell books. Lisa used kettlebells during and after her third pregnancy — and by the look of her it's hard to believe she ever went through pregnancy even once! I strongly recommend her manual to anyone at any level of kettlebell proficiency.

Announcing two new kettlebell sizes

Many of you, particularly women, have asked us for an intermediate weight between the 4kg and 8kg. Well, here it is, the 6kg! Check it out on Page 17.

I saw a tee at the last Arnold that cracked me up. The front said: "No, I'm not on steroids." And the back said: "But thanks for asking."

So for those of you mutant creatures out there who rip your shirts if you inhale too quickly...

We have uncaged **THE BEAST**, a very nasty 48kg (106lb) monster that has our liability insurance agent cowering in terror.

Can you tame **THE BEAST**? We know you're out there... we've heard the rumors.

VITALICS

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To qualify as a fully-fledged BEAST-TAMER, you need to be able to Press, Pistol and Pullup the thing. This is more of a *Hard-Style* than *Vitalics* thing but I can't resist slipping out the news (and the challenge to you mutants out there.)



All the Best,

John Du Cane

John Du Cane
Publisher

THE RUSSIAN KETTLEBELL IS THE ANSWER!

By Brad Nelson, RKC



Everywhere you look in the United States, whether at the local health club or the newsstand, you will see the stronghold of a “bodybuilding” mentality that has permeated our society for decades. Until September 2003 I had fallen victim to that type of thinking and did not know any better until I stumbled upon Pavel. He took America by storm with his simple yet effective training methods that have been used extensively in Eastern Bloc countries for years. Now I state: Russian kettlebells are THE ANSWER to American health issues!

Have you ever had a friend throw their back out by tying his/her shoe or by picking up a box or a child? Everyone one of us have either experienced that ourselves or vicariously through a friend or relative. Could you have ‘trained’ to prevent that particular injury? I don’t necessarily have the answer to that specific question, but as general rule I have found it to be true with trainees in the kettlebell world including friends, clients, colleagues and also myself.

The problem is, we LIVE in a three-dimensional world but most traditional fitness methods have everyone training in ONE plane of movement. We transfer groceries from the store to car to counter to cupboards all while bending, twisting and leaning and doing it subconsciously. We pick up and hold our kids usually on our dominant side. We mow and rake the lawn, dig the hole for the new tree, move furniture and perform thousands of other daily activities that we never actually “train” for. If that is the case, then why would we stick a bunch of people on some gadget machines that have a predetermined range of motion and have them perform mindless exercise in ONE plane of movement?

Our society has been wrongfully programmed through all mediums to go after the ever-elusive BODY IMAGE instead of searching out FUNCTION. Society has willed us into a continual mission to achieve the “perfect look” vs. “functional development.” Let me define the difference between the two.

The “perfect look” is the model in the magazine that has perfect genetics, perfect tan, perfect hair, perfect eyes, etc. Now enter plastic surgery, airbrushing and a few THOUSAND dollars. That is what the average American is striving to become all in the name

of the massive marketing (or propaganda) dollars, right? When will Americans realize that every time we attempt to achieve the “perfect look” we contradict “functional development” which is the essential component needed to perform daily tasks?

The ideal development would be to blend strength, cardiovascular, and mobility/flexibility in such a way that we could MOVE through daily life with ease. A kind of ‘condensed training’ with a ‘dynamic feel’ that translates to PURE movement. Add mental concentration, remove weak links and past injuries that hinder our movement, become more durable in the process and you have found exercise in its intended form.

Kettlebells defy almost every ‘rule’ of traditional “fitness” culture where the focus is training the MUSCLE. Common rules in traditional weight training include:

- 1) Don’t use more weight, your form will suffer.
- 2) Don’t ever squat below parallel at the knee joint.
- 3) Use a weight belt to protect your back.
- 4) Wear high-top boots or shoes for ankle stability. (They go great with green sweat pants.)
- 5) Never drop the weights.
- 6) Always watch yourself in the mirror for correct form. (Or to flex your biceps.)
- 7) Break down your body into muscle groups to achieve the ‘perfect look’.
- 8) Always perform ‘Beach Muscle exercises’, such as bicep curls as much as possible.

Anyone who has spent even a couple of days at the gym can vouch for these unspoken rules of the fitness world.

Conversely, kettlebells teach the body MOVEMENT by default. Let’s examine the rules of the kettlebell world:

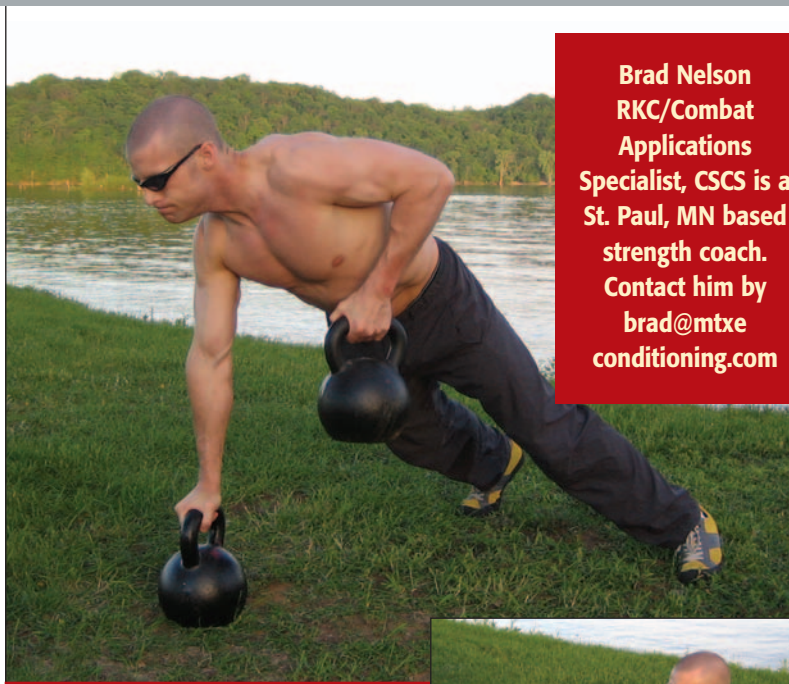
- 1) The more weight you use, the better your form. Kettlebells force you to do it right.
- 2) With kettlebell Front Squats you are encouraged to squat rock bottom thus developing a full range of motion.

- 3) Discarding the weight belt will force your body to strengthen your core naturally.
- 4) When working with kettlebells you want to 'feel' the ground for maximum effect. Proper footwear includes flat-soled shoes (i.e. indoor soccer shoes, Converse Chuck Taylors, etc.) or just plain bare-foot will do.
- 5) The ideal training spot with kettlebells is outdoors on some type of surface that you don't mind damaging—grass, sand, and dirt all work well—because you are encouraged to drop them or forced to drop them (enter the first session of hand-to-hand juggling drills). That way you don't have to apologize to your spouse for putting a kettlebell-sized imprint on your living room floor or in the concrete in your garage.
- 6) Kettlebells never require the use of mirrors during a workout. The main reason is because you will be more worried about the 'feel' of the movement instead of how 'pumped up' you are.
- 7) Kettlebell exercises are rarely performed for a compartmentalized body part. Rather, they exploit movements that require several muscle groups and also multiple energy systems to work simultaneously, and therefore, reign superior as the exercise of choice.

As you can see, kettlebells successfully disobey traditional American fitness culture, but let's explore them a step further.

Kettlebells also employ your brain—challenging for some of you—for a couple of reasons. One reason is that you are slinging an off-balance weight through the air, which demands your full attention at all times. The second reason is the weight is moving through different planes of movement simultaneously requiring your ENTIRE body to command communication and awareness. Let me give you a contrasting example. In the common bench press you are using a few muscles—chest, shoulders and triceps being the main ones. I know there are others for those of you who have been correctly influenced by 'the Party', but bear with me. Now let's take the kettlebell snatch. Name one muscle that has not been affected with this movement. You probably can't. If you can, you haven't tried kettlebells.

"Name one muscle that has not been affected with the kettlebell snatch. You probably can't. If you can, you haven't tried kettlebells."



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Brad Nelson's Circuit Training Session

Day 1

Joint Mobility warm-up	
Double Military Press	x5
Double Snatch	x5
Renegade Rows	x5
Double Front Squats	x5
Turkish Get Ups	x3 l,r

Day 2

Joint Mobility warm-up	
Pistols	x5 l,r
Alternating Military Press	x5
Double Swings	x5
Windmills	x5
Bear Crawls	x10 yards



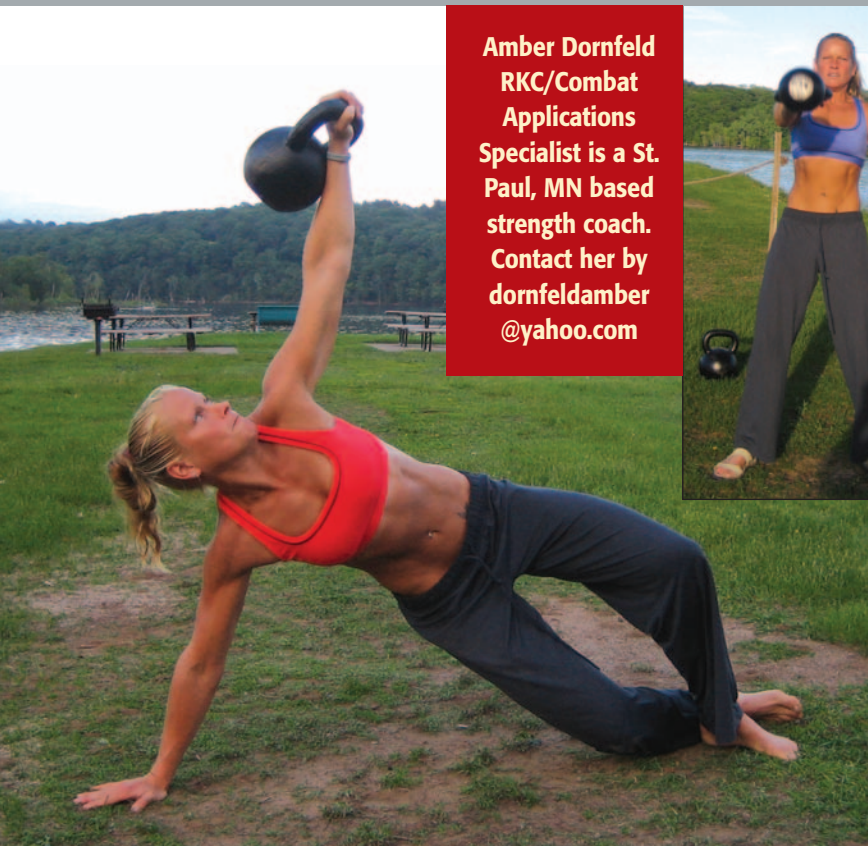
Day 3

Joint Mobility warm-up	
Turkish Get-Ups	x3 l,r
Dead Hang Snatch	x5 l,r
Walking Lunge – each leg	
Overhead Lockout Position	x5 steps
Double High Pulls	x5
Double Seated Military Press	x5

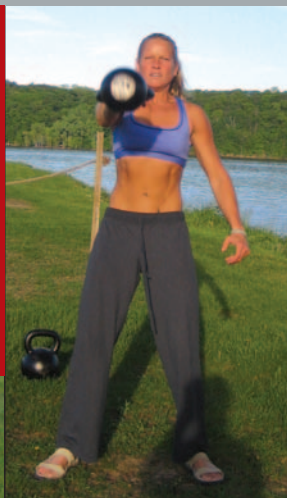
This workout was based on the 'same but different' philosophy. Each day is done circuit style. The length of the circuit and the length of the rest periods will be determined by your individual goals.

Goal: Size & Strength. Perform this workout as a circuit. Do 5 reps of the first exercise, rest, perform 5 reps of the next exercise and so on. Rest 50 seconds between exercises and 50 seconds between sets. **Progression:** When you can complete 5 rounds of all 5 exercises with only 50 seconds rest, drop the rest intervals to 40 seconds. Repeat until you can do rest intervals of 30 seconds between exercises and circuits, then increase the weight and start back at 50-second rest intervals.

Goal: Weight Loss & Conditioning. Do the same as the size and strength workout. However, keep the rest intervals to 30 seconds between exercises and also between circuits. Repeat the circuit 4-8 times depending on your level. **Progression:** When you can complete 5 rounds with 30-second rest intervals, add at least one complete circuit. When you can do all 8 circuits with 30-second rest intervals, start over at 5 circuits with 20 second rest intervals. Start this new program by easing into it. It may take a training session or two in order for you to decide what weight is best for you.



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Your body must be CONNECTED from finger to toe in order to avoid dropping the weight on your head and also control a pendulum-driven weight dynamically swinging through the air. This is not only re-programming muscles but also the nervous system. Our nerves are responsible for our body's balance, awareness and operating the coordination of our muscles. A good analogy would be a fish in the water vs. out. A fish blends into water, its natural environment, and ebbs and flows with the current and its surroundings. If we catch the fish and bring it on land it flops around mindlessly until it dies. Translate that to humans

and movement. If you study toddlers between the ages of one to three years old, they are not afraid to fall. However, fairly early on in life kids are constantly being programmed "Watch yourself, don't fall" and "Be careful."

Our bodies want to mold and adapt to our environment. The American way is to avoid hurting ourselves in what 'they' think is protection when it's exactly the opposite of training your body to handle the bumps and bruises of 'life.' Look at the geriatric population and tell me if they move the way the two year-old does. They do in the eastern world because they've discovered BREATH AND MOVEMENT prolongs life. Big muscle bodybuilding collection of body-parts type of training shortens life.

Kettlebells are not the 'end-all' exercise answer. However, they address more than any other single exercise tool on the market and they won't become the traditional American coat rack for two reasons. One reason is they are too close to the floor and you don't want your coat on the floor. And the second reason is they are ADDICTING! Once you pick one up and understand the principles you will be hard-pressed to end your workouts. Go ahead, purchase one. You won't be disappointed. Now it's your turn to experience the Kettlebell Revolution.

Amber Dornfeld's Kettlebell Class Workout

- Joint Mobility Warm-Up
- 20 DARC Swings
- 14 Swing and Squats
- 20 Bodyweight Squats
- 4 High Pulls—4 Snatches—4 Cleans (Repeat 2x each arm)
- 2 Cleans—2 Push Press—4 Windmills (Repeat 2x each arm)
- 14 Swing and Squats
- 20 Snatch Right— DARC Swing—Snatch Left (you will end up doing 10 snatches each arm)
- Last Snatch keep the KB in the Overhead lockout position...20 alternating Front Snap kicks
- Repeat snatch—DARC swing—snatch—ending with the other arm overhead and continuing the kicks
- 14 Swing and Squats
- 20 Bodyweight Squats
- One hand on the kettlebell/one hand on the floor: 8 pushups then switch hands on top of the bell and do 8 more pushups
- One hand on the ground or on a step in the renegade row position (but with only one bell): 8 rows right and 8 rows left
- Repeat this sequence of pushups and rows 3 times

Rest as needed. REPEAT the Entire sequence from top to bottom as desired. When you can complete this workout two times through with minimal rest grab a heavier kettlebell.

Brad Nelson and Amber Dornfeld both teach classes, workshops, and individual lessons at Victory Fitness in Woodbury, MN.

For more information visit www.mtxeconditioning.com