

DRAGON DOOR PUBLICATIONS PRESENTS

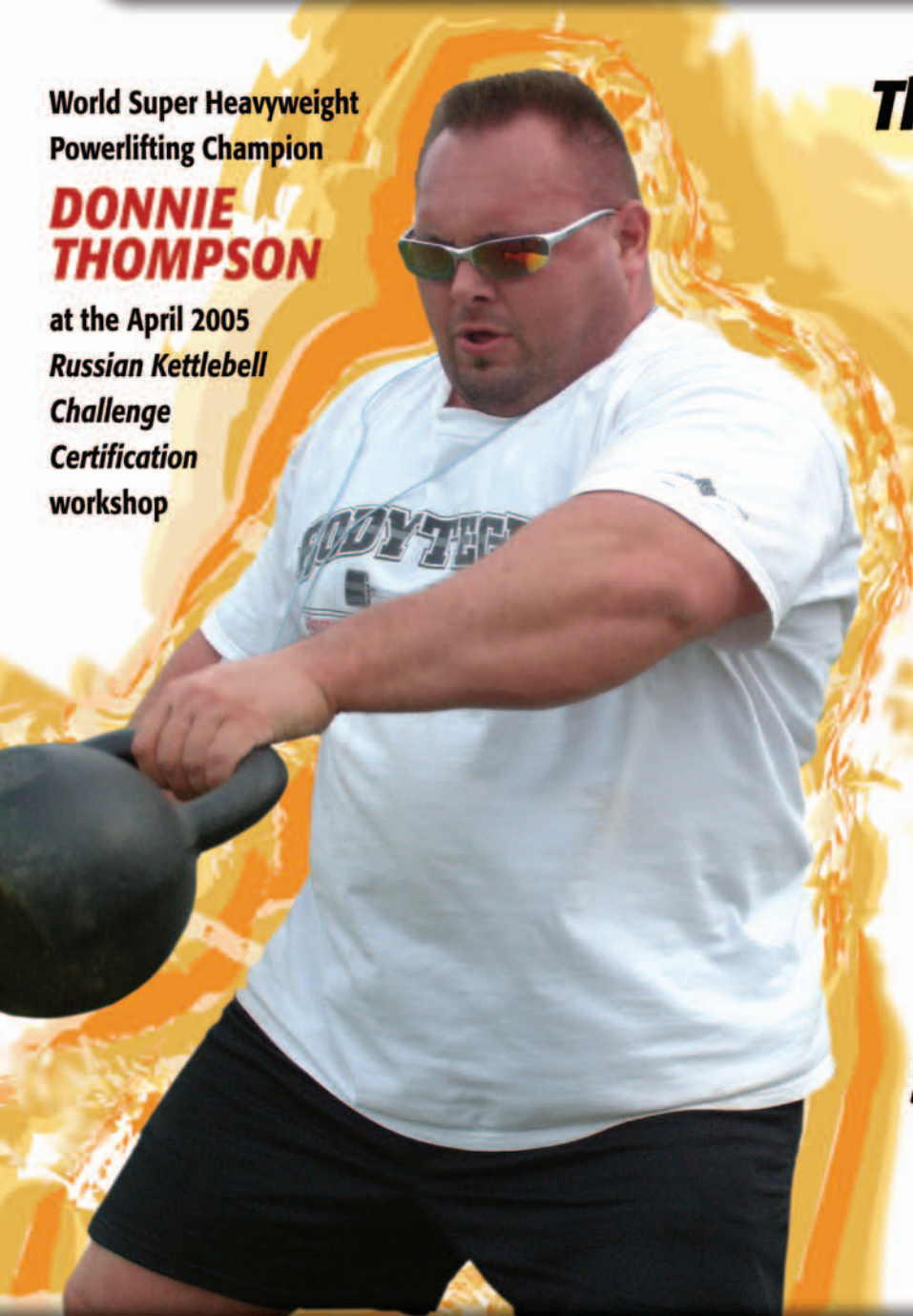
# HARD-STYLE

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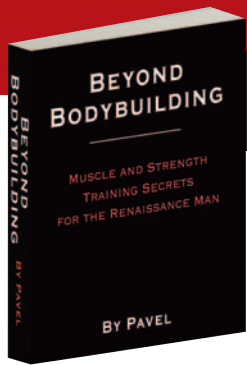
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## Excerpts from *Beyond Bodybuilding* by PAVEL

# IS THE TRAP BAR SUPERIOR TO THE STRAIGHT BAR?

**Question:** *My gym got a trap bar. Should I replace the straight bar with it for my shrugs and deadlifts?*

The trap or Gerard bar projects the weight right over your feet rather than in front of you. It is ergonomically better designed for shrugs than a straight bar. The movement is 'cleaner'. Besides, the fact that your hands face each other enables you to go heavier before resorting to straps.

The problem you are likely to face is getting the bar into position. You can load up a straight bar in a power rack; a Gerard bar needs to be deadlifted first. After a few months you are certain to shrug more than you can pull off the floor.

The trap bar deadlift is more of a squat than a dead. Therefore it will work your legs more and your back less, than a straight bar DL, so treat it as a leg exercise. Consider using twenty-five pound plates rather than forty-fives to further increase the leg stress.

If you are trying to build up your classic deadlift the trap bar will help to strengthen your start while doing nothing for the lockout. So do your Gerard pulls in addition to, rather than instead of, conventional deads. If the start is your weakness you may want to start a Power to

the People! type deadlift cycle with the trap bar and then switch to the straight bar closer to the peak.

Whether you deadlift or shrug, do not ever lean back! While dangerous with a straight barbell, it can be a disaster for your lower back with the diamond shaped bar. Flex your abs and glutes a la Janda situp when you are locking out, this will help.

The bottom line on the trap bar: a valuable piece of equipment but not a substitute for the classic barbell.



## MAX OUT YOUR PULLUP TEST

**Question:** *I am a Marine and I want to max the PFT pullup test but I have a hard time clearing the bar with my chin towards the end of the set. Please help.*

Many Soviet spec ops units required their personnel to touch the bar with their necks on the top of each pullup. Although the USMC test does not require you to do that, tactical pullups will dramatically improve your ability to do regulation pullups. Powerlifters help their competition pull by practicing deadlifts off a platform or by using twenty-five pound plates. The tactical pullup works the same way. When you are used to an exaggeratedly long movement, the 'regular' one feels short and easy.

You will have to cut your reps in the beginning; do not do any more pullups if you cannot touch the bar with your neck or upper chest. Increase your sets accordingly to keep the volume. For instance, if you used to do 5 sets of 10, do 10 sets of 5.

A couple of months later 'just' clearing the bar with your chin will feel like a piece of cake. Smoke your test, Marine!

Pulling high at the Tactical Kettlebell/S.P.E.A.R. course at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego.

Photo courtesy TonyBlauer.com

# KETTLEBELL TRAINING FOR POWER ENDURANCE

BY STEVE MAXWELL, MS, SENIOR RKC

**PUSH YOUR POWER ENDURANCE TRAINING TO THE NEXT LEVEL WITH THIS RUSSIAN KETTLEBELL ROUTINE DEVELOPED BY RENOWNED STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING COACH STEVE MAXWELL.**

If you are a competitive grappler or mixed martial artist, you already know that it's important to develop endurance, as well as strength.

But how?

Not knowing what the different types of endurance are—and how to train them—will at best waste a good portion of your training time, and at worst make the difference between winning and losing.

At Team Maxercise I have spent years developing strength and conditioning programs for elite Judo, Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, Submission Wrestling and MMA competitors. Most of them arrive with the same concept of endurance training: long periods of time devoted to biking, swimming, or running. This type of aerobic endurance training would be fine if they were triathletes, but it won't do much to develop their strength endurance for fighting.

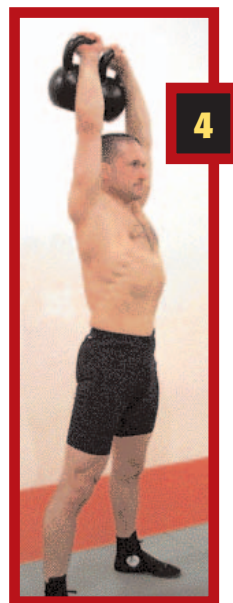
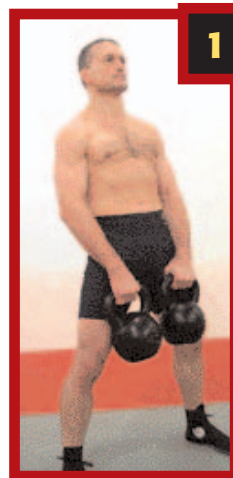
*Strength endurance* is anaerobic in nature. It is the ability to repeatedly execute at a high percentage of one's maximum capacity, which is exactly what competitive grappling is all about. Combat competition, especially MMA, is incredibly grueling, recruiting every muscle of the body to perform multiple explosive efforts, separated by intervals of holding, over extended periods of time, sometimes as long as 30 minutes.

Strength endurance can be broken down into three basic categories: *general* strength endurance, power strength endurance, and *static* strength endurance. And since most of my combat athletes arrive for training weakest in the area of power strength endurance, I'll start there.

*Power strength endurance* is the capacity to perform repeated explosive movements near the level of a single maximal exertion. It is the ability to shoot in for that 20th takedown attempt with the same speed as the 1st one. It is the secret weapon that you need when the match is so close, the judges' decision will go to the fighter who doesn't stop. It is the competitive psychological edge that puts you on top during the final seconds of a match as your disheartened opponent realizes that he is getting slower and weaker and you are not.

The Russian kettlebell is tailor-made for power endurance training because of its versatility and safety. This double kettlebell circuit has only five exercises, but don't be fooled. If you can get through it the first time without quitting, mentally you've got what it takes to be a champion.

This is a timed workout with a one-to-one work to rest ratio. Perform each exercise for 30 seconds and rest for 30 seconds between exercises. Go at your own pace. Go through the circuit up to 5 times, resting for one minute between circuits.



**NOTE:** Photo numbers do not show a sequence of just one drill. 1.) Start of squat thrust. 2.) Beginning of push press. 3.) Bottom of squat position. 4.) Top of snatch or press. 5.) Rack position.

## 1. DOUBLE SNATCH.

This exercise is first because The Double Snatch is the most physically and technically difficult movement. The hip thrust that is central to the snatch involves primarily the muscles of the hips, lower back, and hamstrings. These are the muscles that are central to all explosive body movements. Make sure that your legs are far enough apart that you don't hit them with the backswing of the bells. Inhale during the backswing and exhale during the upswing. Don't try to muscle the bells up, the secret to the double snatch is the forceful hip-thrust that is essential to drive the bells upwards. Lower the kettlebells to your chest before dropping them between your knees.

## 2. DOUBLE CLEAN-&-PUSH PRESS.

The Double Clean-&-Push Press uses the arms and shoulders in combination with the hips and thighs in an exercise that is slightly less difficult than the Double Snatch. The Double Clean-&-Push Press will connect your hips to the shoulders, coordinating forceful leg drive with powerful triceps and shoulders, for explosive strikes. The hip thrust helps you clean the bells into the rack position and an additional leg thrust will help you push press the bells up. Breathe during the back swing and again in the rack position, if needed. If you have to rest for a second or two, do it in either the rack position or the fully extended position.

## 3. FRONT SQUAT/PUSH PRESS.

I call this one 'the Thruster' and you can see why. Your arms are more tired than your hips and thighs, so I'm letting them rest for a few seconds during each repetition while you squat. I'm also taking the emphasis off your lower back because it's fairly fatigued by this point, but don't let it round. Breathe at the bottom of the squat and don't forget to maintain total body tension. Fire out of the bottom of the squat.

## 4. CLEAN-&-SQUAT.

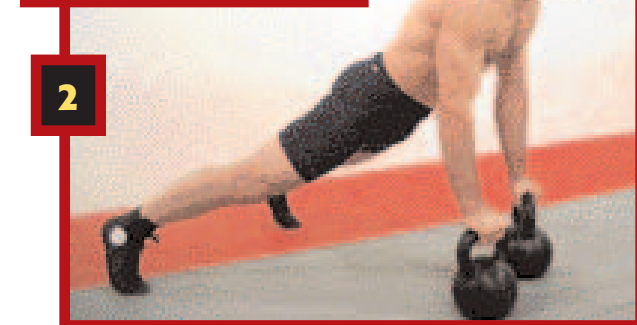
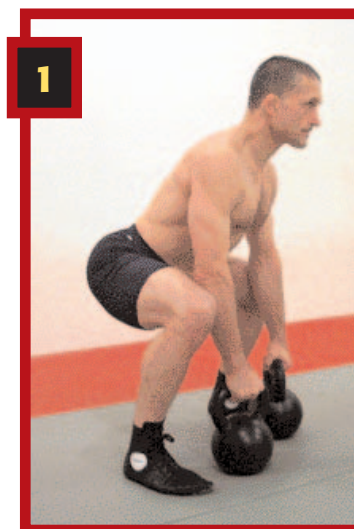
I put the Clean-&-Squat here to let your hips catch up to your triceps and shoulders, which should be screaming for mercy by now. If they aren't, you need heavier kettlebells. Any brief rests should be taken at the top, with the kettlebells in the rack position.

## 5. DEADLIFT SQUAT THRUSTS.

This movement is 'a finisher'. It punishes practically every muscle group in your body equally. Putting it at the end will help develop your general strength endurance. The Deadlift Squat Thrust is basically a burpee performed with a kettlebell:

1. Deadlift two kettlebells.
2. Squat down and rest the kettlebells on the floor
3. Thrust your legs back into a locked pushup position while holding on to the kettlebell handles. Watch your balance and make sure to use fairly heavy kettlebells with large bases! You could get seriously injured if a kettlebell tips.
4. Execute a pushup between the KB handles.
5. Recover to the squat position.
6. Perform a squat style deadlift.
7. Repeat for reps. Pay special attention to maintaining the abdominal tension necessary to protect your lower back.

This kind of power endurance workout is very strenuous. To avoid overtraining, I recommend that you do it only two times a week.



### Positions of the Squat/Push Press or the 'Thruster'

- 1.) Position 1 and 5 of squat thrust. 2.) Position 2 and 4 of squat thrust. 3.) Position 3 of squat thrust.

Steve Maxwell is recognized as one of the most creative strength and conditioning coaches in America today. He holds a Masters in Exercise Science, a Senior Russian Kettlebell Challenge Instructor's Certification and a Black Belt in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. Steve is also a world champion Jiu-Jitsu competitor. Find out more at [www.stevemaxwell.com](http://www.stevemaxwell.com)



**“If Pain is Fear Leaving the Body...**



Then **THE BEAST**  
Will Have You Retching  
in Terror...”

Are You **MAN** Enough to Tame  
**THE BEAST?**

**106 LBS.**

Trust Senior RKC and standout strength trainer Mike Mahler to be one of the first to Press **THE BEAST**

**In Love With Pleasurable Pain? We Are Here To Help!**

Those of you who lurk or openly engage with dragondoor.com’s strength and conditioning forum know our Party includes some seriously strong Comrades, who are always looking to up the ante on their physical prowess... and to up their levels of unmitigated pain.

So in their honor (and because we fear their wrath) we’ve uncaged “THE BEAST”, a monstrous 48kg (106lb) of solid iron, for the ultimate in hardstyle training. Swing it, clean it, snatch it — and, if you dare, try pistols, pullups and presses!

**P.S. And For Those Animals Who Wish to Strengthen Their Pinkies... And For Those Simply Needing A Handy, Smaller KB to Bounce Around:**

Many of you have asked for an intermediate kettlebell between the 4kg and 8kg. So here it is... the 6kg (13lb), which like its sisters has a steel handle and core with rubber casing. Great for weighted joint mobility drills, for hand-to-hand and for beginners wishing to finesse the Windmill and similar drills.



**We Invite You to Step Up to Dragon Door’s “BEAST TAMER CHALLENGE”:**

To be inducted into **THE BEAST TAMER Hall of Fame**, you need to be able to perform:

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The first BEAST TAMER CHALLENGE will be held at *Pavel’s* September 30—October 2, 2005 RKC.

**BEAST TAMER** Hall of Fame inductees will be published, with photos in upcoming issues of *HardStyle*.

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**#P10K** 6kg (approx. 13lb) — .50 poods

<b>Price</b>	<b>MAIN USA</b>	<b>AK&amp;HI</b>	<b>CAN</b>
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**THE BEAST: KETTLEBELLS (SOLID CAST IRON)**

**#P10L** 48kg (approx. 106lb) — 3 poods

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# Are Kettlebells Too Expensive?

BY VICTOR HOLTREMAN—DRAGON DOOR'S LEADING AFFILIATE

I find it funny how people react to the price of a kettlebell. Their eyes usually get wide and their mouth opens a bit, as if to say "Are you kidding?"

I think their reaction is due to the fact that they just don't realize what a simple kettlebell can do for one's physical fitness, strength building and fat loss. I mean hey, it's just a simple little sphere with a handle, right? Where are the gears, the cables, the springs and pulleys that are a hallmark of a real piece of fitness equipment?

I'll tell you a secret: You don't need all that complicated (and really expensive!) stuff.

The same folks who balk at paying \$90 for a kettlebell would have no problem whatsoever dropping \$300 or more on some "total gym" that uses rubber bands to give them a "full body workout" and maybe \$100 a month in expensive (and unnecessary) dietary supplements.

Don't forget those exercise machines that are advertised on TV during those two-minute long commercials... They're so expensive that they don't even mention the price, just the monthly payment! (BTW, I researched some of those Bowflex and Nordictrack gadgets: they cost as much as \$1,500 and UP.)

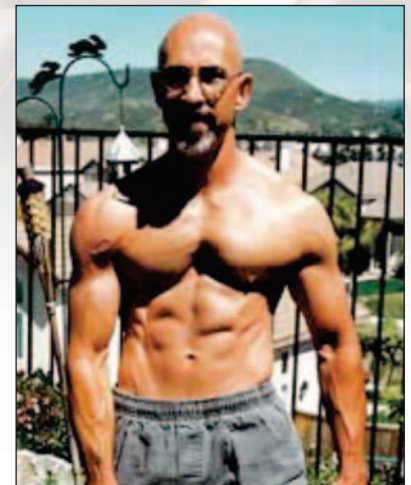
With a kettlebell you can get both an aerobic and anaerobic (strength building) workout in just a few minutes a day that (if you're so inclined) can leave you feeling like you went three rounds with Mike Tyson.

You can work your arms, shoulders, legs, abs, chest and back... all with that little iron cannonball. Also, anyone who knows anything about weight training will tell you that working out with a free weight is far superior to using a motion that moves along a track.

Using Pavel Tsatsouline's techniques (Pavel is a former physical training instructor for the Soviet Special Forces) and a common sense diet you will see your strength increase rapidly and the fat come off quickly by using kettlebells. Both my wife and I are amazed at how quickly our strength increases when using this tool 5-6 times a week.

Another benefit is the small size of kettlebells... no hunting for a spare room or extra closet space to store them, or having an eyesore like a treadmill or universal gym (soon to be used as a clothing rack) in the middle of your bedroom.

So if you think that kettlebells are too expensive, think again.



Vic Before (January 24, 2003, right) and After (March 29, 2003, above) using diet and kettlebells

Victor Holtreman is the author of *The Last 10 Pounds*, an eBook which chronicled his 2-month journey from 13% to 9% body fat using kettlebells. He is also the author of the [www.Kettlebell-Training.com](http://www.Kettlebell-Training.com) site and a number of other fitness related sites.

# HOW TO MAXIMIZE YOUR AGILITY WITH RUSSIAN KETTLEBELL DRILLS

BY KENNETH JAY, RKC

**N**o matter how good you are, there is always room for improvement. Even some of the best athletes are lacking proficiency in their running technique and cutting actions (abrupt changes of direction). This article is about honing your agility with kettlebell strength and power exercises. They will improve your ability in martial arts, contact ball games, and in other sports.

A somewhat overlooked but absolutely critical factor in running, cutting actions and overall agility, is the involvement of the hips. The hips (along with the rest of the trunk muscles) compose the power center of your body. This is why it is so crucial to develop strong and powerful hip muscles.

If you are unfamiliar with the concept of driving with the hips when lifting weights, you

should acquire the basic kettlebell lifting skills. Train the foundational exercises like the swing, the snatch and the clean, or even the extended squat with a kettlebell held between the legs favored by the strength and conditioning legend Prof. Yuri Verkoshansky. [This squat variation is demonstrated on Pavel's *Strength Stretching* DVD. -Ed.]

If you are an experienced kettlebell lifter, deadlifter, or squatter you should already know how to integrate the hips in the forward/backward (anterior/posterior) plane. That is great, now you need to integrate your hips in lateral movements. The following two exercises are guaranteed to take your power in running and cutting actions to a new level.

## **No. 1: The Kettlebell Lunge Snatch with a Knee Drive**

This drill will improve your running skill. It will power up your stride length and push off.

You will need a kettlebell that will work you, but not so heavy it compromises your speed. Assume the starting position of the regular kettlebell snatch. The hips are pushed back, the knees are bent and the back is arched/straight. Swing the kettlebell back between the legs and snap your hips explosively. As the bell is going up you should jump forward into the lunge position (not the backward

movement of the traditional split snatch). Lunge with the leg on the side you are holding the kettlebell.

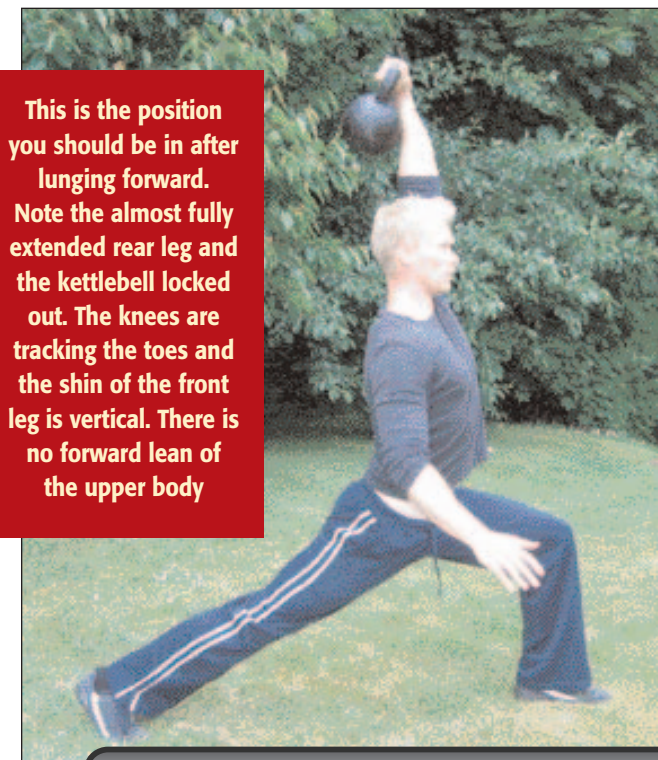
Overemphasize the spread between your legs to the point where you feel the pull in your hip flexors; this is very important! Your rear leg must be almost fully extended and your quadriceps contracted – this'll take a lot more than you think.

When you do this, a couple of cool things will happen. First of all, you get a dynamic stretch of the hip flexor, which in turn will improve your stride length. Second, when done explosively, you store a lot of potential energy in your hip flexor muscles and ligaments. This elastic recoil can be taken advantage of if you follow up with a knee drive explained later. This will make the exercise very intense and it will closely resemble a stretch-shortening cycle.

Remember to keep your torso completely upright in the lunge position. Note that you need to have a good range of motion in your hip flexors before tackling the lunge snatch. Work on your flexibility first if it is lacking. It is a matter of safety and performance.

If you are having trouble keeping your balance, focus on contracting your adductors (squeeze your knees together) and gripping the ground with your toes. It goes without saying that the knees must always track the feet.

When viewed from the front, your feet should be spaced as though they were on two parallel rails, not in one line. Lock out the arm that is supporting the kettlebell and keep your other hand free.



**This is the position you should be in after lunging forward. Note the almost fully extended rear leg and the kettlebell locked out. The knees are tracking the toes and the shin of the front leg is vertical. There is no forward lean of the upper body**

Do the exercise with maximum velocity in one big explosive move. Drive with the hips. Speed is the key factor.

Return to the starting position either by lowering the kettlebell to your chest or keeping it overhead in the locked out position and pushing off the ground with your front leg. Make sure your pelvis is completely stable during this exercise. If not, look up *Bullet-Proof Abs* and include some one-legged exercises in your workouts.

I will not go into the correct breathing patterns for strength and power exercises. The subject has been covered in detail in Pavel's *Power to the People!* and *The Naked Warrior*. Breathing correctly when strength training is essential though, so if you haven't done so already, I strongly suggest that you read these books.

When you get proficient at this exercise you can and should incorporate a knee drive. By driving your rear leg explosively forward (not up), while extending your supporting leg, you take advantage of the stretch-shortening elastic recoil I mentioned earlier. This has great carryover to running and will challenge your stability even further as you need to maintain control of the kettlebell locked out overhead.

Later experiment with jumping forward with the leg opposite of the kettlebell.

## No. 2: The Kettlebell Lateral Lunge Snatch

This cutting action drill will take your agility to the next level. I have seen this exercise transform an elite female team handball player's agility and quickness in a very short period of time. Team handball is very big in Europe and even more so in Scandinavia from where the sport originates. The game places great demands on the players' stamina, agility, and ability to absorb and redirect force. There are seven players on each team. The object of the game is to throw the 11lb. leather ball into the other team's goal. Tackling is allowed and the players don't use any protective gear. Ball speeds have been measured up to 80mph, which makes it very challenging for the goalkeeper.

Back to the exercise. It is performed in the same manner as the first one, but to the side. Again, make sure to drive with the hips. Snap them as you would for a regular snatch and step out laterally and explosively. Keep your center of gravity low and make sure to have both feet firmly planted on the ground. Do not let your foot come up on the medial (inside) edge. This requires great ankle strength and flexibility. Lock the kettlebell out overhead. Experiment with the starting position of the kettlebell. Eventually increase the length of the step.

Here is an advanced version of the drill for later. I have found that working the kettlebell in a diagonal motion from the outside of the opposite leg to that of the working arm is a great way to incorporate some rotational strength and power of the trunk, both statically and dynamically. The rectus abdominis is stabilizing statically and the obliques dynamically. *Make sure that you are folding at the hips and not flexing the spine. Simultaneous flexion and rotation of the spine can cause injury to your back. This is an advanced version of the drill and should be implemented with caution! Start out easy to get the groove going.*

Both of these exercises can also be performed with a *clean* instead of a *snatch*. For the purpose of preparing the body for impact absorption in the most vulnerable positions however, the snatch variation is preferred. For further detail on training in positions of instability I can definitely recommend Steve Cotter's articles and his *Full Contact Kettlebells* DVDs, they are well worth it!

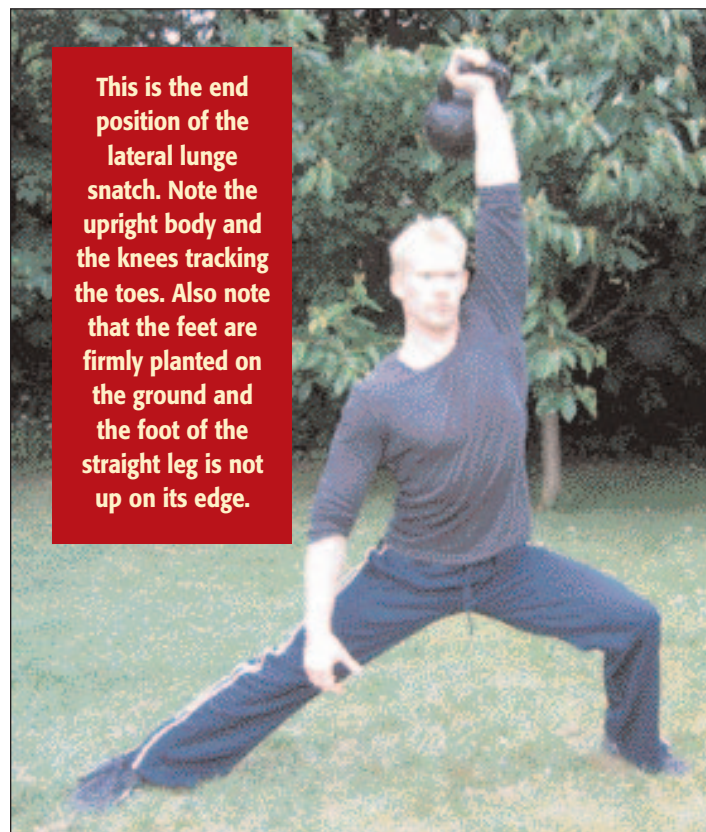


**Kenneth Jay, RKC, Combat Applications Specialist**  
**Strength & Conditioning Coach, Denmark**  
[www.Kettlebells.Dk](http://www.Kettlebells.Dk)

**Don't go to failure and emphasize quality over quantity.**

**Every repetition should be executed with tremendous explosive power as if your life depended on it!**

**Play hard!**



**This is the end position of the lateral lunge snatch. Note the upright body and the knees tracking the toes. Also note that the feet are firmly planted on the ground and the foot of the straight leg is not up on its edge.**

Enough talk! Grab a kettlebell and start doing these two exercises. I guarantee that your agility and speed will improve. Don't go to failure and emphasize quality over quantity. Every repetition should be executed with tremendous explosive power as if your life depended on it!

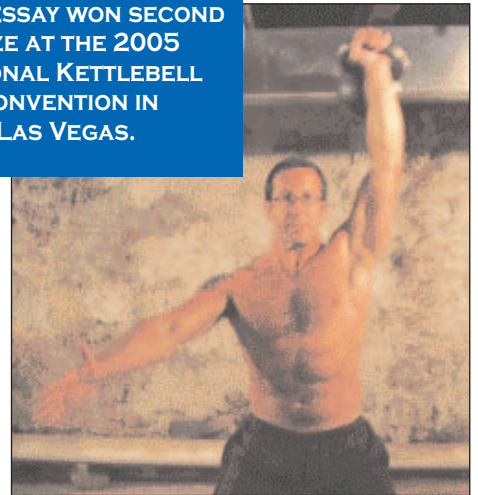
**Play hard!**



# BILL FOX: FROM SLUDGECAKE TO POUNDING POWERHOUSE...

## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A DESISSIFIED 45-YEAR OLD BIG CITY LAWYER

BILL'S ESSAY WON SECOND PRIZE AT THE 2005 NATIONAL KETTLEBELL CONVENTION IN LAS VEGAS.



**The Sissy Lawyer** - alarm rings, moans, hits the snooze, drags ass out of bed 20 minutes later

condescending grin his case won't be going on for "probably a couple hours" but "the Judge said don't leave the courtroom".

**The Kettlebellman Lawyer** - gets out of bed at 5:30, GTGs a few pull-ups and pistols then sneaks back in bed to "say good morning" to his wife since she's going away on business that day.

**The Kettlebellman Lawyer** - just smiles knowing this is the blob's pathetic version of being a tough guy.



**The Sissy Lawyer** - Gives the kid next door \$20 to dig out the car from the foot of snow overnight.



**The Sissy Lawyer** - doesn't want to deal with getting a cab in the snow so he goes to Dunkin Donuts, gets lunch, tries to get his secretary on the phone and takes the elevator back up to the courtroom.

**The Kettlebellman Lawyer** - pops outside in a sweatshirt and "shovel lifts" the snow from his car, his sidewalk and the neighbors sidewalk.

**The Kettlebellman Lawyer** - walks back to the office, makes a few calls, checks the DD forum then walks back to court.



**The Sissy Lawyer** - tells his wife he's thinking about joining the gym tomorrow or buying one of those Bowthingies, again. Eats dinner and plants himself on the couch for the duration.



**The Sissy Lawyer** - gets to the office late and loads up his rolling cart with his trial file and takes a cab the 8 blocks to the courthouse.



**The Sissy Lawyer** - starts nodding off just as the case gets called, shakes off the sugar stupor and gingerly extricates himself from the chair he's now become a part of and thinks, "Damn, I need to start working out."

**The Kettlebellman Lawyer** - gets to the office early, grabs an 8" thick file with each hand and walks to court.

**The Kettlebellman Lawyer** - starts jotting down tonight's workout in the margin of the newspaper, case gets called, pops up, greets the judge, does his thing and heads back to the office.

**The Kettlebellman Lawyer** - goes down to the basement, cranks up the "Hardness" playlist on the iPod and trains. Snatches, weighted pull-ups, bent press and the evil wheel tonight. Half an hour later - done.



**The Sissy Lawyer** - The wife gives him a little nudge to wake up so he can relocate from the couch to the bed. Goes to bed, wife falls asleep, he stays up thinking about what he didn't get done at work. Wishes he could see the bottom of the T.V. over his gut. Thinks "I gotta buy one of those Bowthingies....".



**The Sissy Lawyer** - waits in the lobby of the courthouse for 9 minutes packed in like a sardine waiting to cram onto an elevator to get sneezed on by the pasty guy next to him with the powdered donut sugar on his chin.



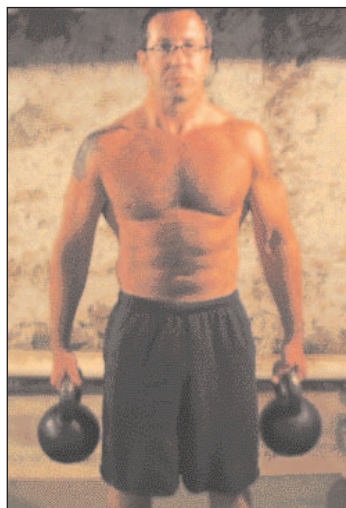
**The Sissy Lawyer** - kind of wiped out by "hassling" with getting to court in the snow and all, gets a little work done but figures he can catch up tomorrow which should be less hectic than today.

**The Kettlebellman Lawyer** - takes the steps to the 8th floor trying to figure out whether an anatomical or biomechanical breathing pattern works better. Notices the people getting off the elevator are breathing harder than he is.

**The Kettlebellman Lawyer** - goes through his emails and calls, works, stops a few times to check the forum, does a couple pistols at 3:30 and 5:00, raps up a few minutes early and takes off.



**The Sissy Lawyer** - Gets into a shouting match with the blob running the courtroom who tells him with a big



**The Kettlebellman Lawyer** - finishes watching "The Bourne Supremacy" on cable, thinks "that Kali stuff looks cool, I may have to check that out", calls his wife at her hotel to plan a nice dinner the next day and hits the sack - out like a light.

# STRENGTH IS A CHOICE: FROM GYMNASTICS TO POWERLIFTING TO KETTLEBELLS

BY MARK REIFKIND, RKC

I've trained, competed and coached in some pretty diverse sports. Gymnastics, my first endeavor, required a light bodyweight, very high relative strength, maximum joint flexibility, tons of coordination and agility, as well as the ability to see movement in your head and translate it into real time action.

You also developed quite a work ethic as well as willingness to do something wrong a thousand times before ever doing it right once. Practices were 4-5 hours per day five days to six days per week and most of the time you were *trying* to learn a skill. Progressions hadn't really been ironed out yet and most of what we did was: *go for it.*

## **Pain is forever. Glory is very temporary...**

This approach developed a strong will but also numerous (and lifelong) injuries. Don't let them kid you: Pain is forever. Glory is very temporary.

In gymnastics focus, concentration and the ability to observe and analyze very complex motor patterns are basic skills. It develops a highly tuned sense of body mechanics, spatial awareness, and the ability to see multiple actions simultaneously. Much like dance, martial arts and acrobatics, yet with a very high strength requirement.

Of course just being able to see it perfectly in your head was no easy task. For years my legs came apart on a swing half turn to handstand on parallel bars (called a Stutz) and I could not see it perfectly in my head. My legs came apart in my visualizations. When I could see it I could do it. We were using autosuggestion and intense visualization training very early on. My best friend and teammate Randy Lee was into hypnosis and we applied it to our training, realizing that if we could see it we could do it.

We also realized that you had to pay a price to gain the movement skills we were after and that meant grueling training and total devotion to the goal. Anything less was a sacrilege and would not stand. We were pretty hardcore teenagers.

But being able to totally control your body and fly at will is pretty intoxicating stuff and when you hit the sweet spot you could soar!

## **The tighter you are, the stronger you get and the tighter you can get...**

Gymnastics requires high levels of total body tension, which is to say, strength. If you can stay tight enough, you can move your body as one piece and direct it in just about any way you want, physics permitting. The tighter you are, the stronger you get and the tighter you can get. A non-vicious circle of strength! Your body acts like a kettlebell swinging around a grounded apparatus. It's no wonder gymnasts take to the bells so quickly. They know how they feel when they swing!

As with kettlebells, in gymnastics you have static movements such as the "L and V" holds on floor exercise, parallel bars, and planches and crosses on rings. Windmills, bent and side presses, squats pistols and all overhead presses require the same full body tension that gymnastics strength moves do. Back and forth between dynamics and statics.

These strength exercises build great concentration as well because they are so intimately tied to balance. Just as in gymnastics, kettlebell grind exercises can require a large amount of balance to perform them properly. Single leg deadlifts, pistols, bottom up cleans, windmills etc. demand that tension and balance go hand and hand. This develops an unusually useful, real world strength as well as increasing body awareness and control.

KB swinging is the mechanical opposite of the gymnastics swing. With a KB your feet are grounded and the arms and torso move. In gymnastics it's just the opposite. The arms are the tether and the legs and hips move freely. A great feeling and it builds a great upper body but if overdone can lead to a very serious upper body/lower body imbalance. There is just not enough hip, leg, or extension work in gymnastics. If not carefully dealt with, the body can get "stuck" in the flexed "hollow" position so prized in gymnastics. This can lead to chronic and debilitating injuries. Also not the best posture for real world strength and activities.



***Gymnastics, my first endeavor, required a light bodyweight, very high relative strength, maximum joint flexibility, tons of coordination and agility, as well as the ability to see movement in your head and translate it into real time action.***

From MSgt  
James A Coleman III, USMC

Pavel, My Friend,

A lot has changed since I seen you last. I am currently in Iraq and promoted to MSgt. I just wanted to give you a yell and let you know how much I appreciate all the help you have given me over the years.

I have transformed from a national level bodybuilder to an American record holder in powerlifting, to lastly a national champion strongman.

I have been competing for the past year in the North American Strongman Society. I have won four first place finishes and one second place, three of which were National qualifiers.

And finally I won the 2004 US Police, Fire and Military Strongman Lightweight Championship and Overall Champion. This qualified me to compete in the Pro-invitational.

I constantly used your advanced training techniques and kept a high state of fitness. The kettlebells, muscle tension, flexibility training and one-legged pistol squats were lifesavers

I also used the secret techniques that you taught me for the Stone lifts in each competition. I was the dominator; I even had better lifts with faster times than the heavyweights.

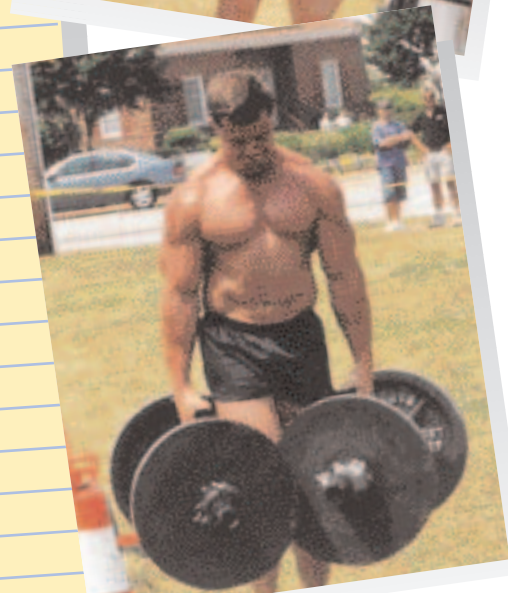
Your breathing techniques were the awesome secret to lifting big stones, 200-375 lbs, from the ground and finally placing them on a platform of 52-70 inches in height.

I wanted to send you a few pics. I would love for you to place them on your website with what a success story your principles of training has been for me and the many other Marines and friends that I have trained.

Stay safe and healthy and keep lifting heavy!

Thanks for everything,

Jim "The Destroyer" Coleman



Visit the Hard-Style website today to take advantage of free author e-newsletters, product updates, cutting edge fitness articles and a highly-active Discussion Site. A goldmine of advice from leading experts, constantly updated!



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# GAIN STRENGTH WITH FIXED RESISTANCE

BY DAVID WHITLEY, RKC

**W**hen I talk to novices about kettlebell training one question that invariably comes up is “How do you get stronger with a fixed weight?”

In a world where gyms are full of high-tech space-age machines with incremental stacks of weight and dumbbell racks that go from ‘Barbie’ to ‘Bull Elephant’, the “low tech/high concept” logic of a few solid chunks of iron is missed by many. Ask anybody how to get stronger and no matter what training philosophy they follow, the answer will be some variation of progressive overload.

Simply put, the principle of progressive overload means increasing resistance, thereby increasing the demands on the musculoskeletal system in order to make gains in muscle size, strength, and endurance. It makes sense then to have adjustable barbells, dumbbells, machines, etc. in order to vary the weight on any given exercise.

Let’s read the definition again: the principle of progressive overload means increasing the resistance, thereby increasing the demands on the musculoskeletal system. *The resistance, but not necessarily the weight.* I am not at all opposed to incremental weight increases. I love a big ole’ barbell deadlift as much as anybody. What I am saying is that a fixed weight such as a kettlebell, a gripper or even bodyweight can provide progressive resistance, if you apply a little knowledge and imagination.

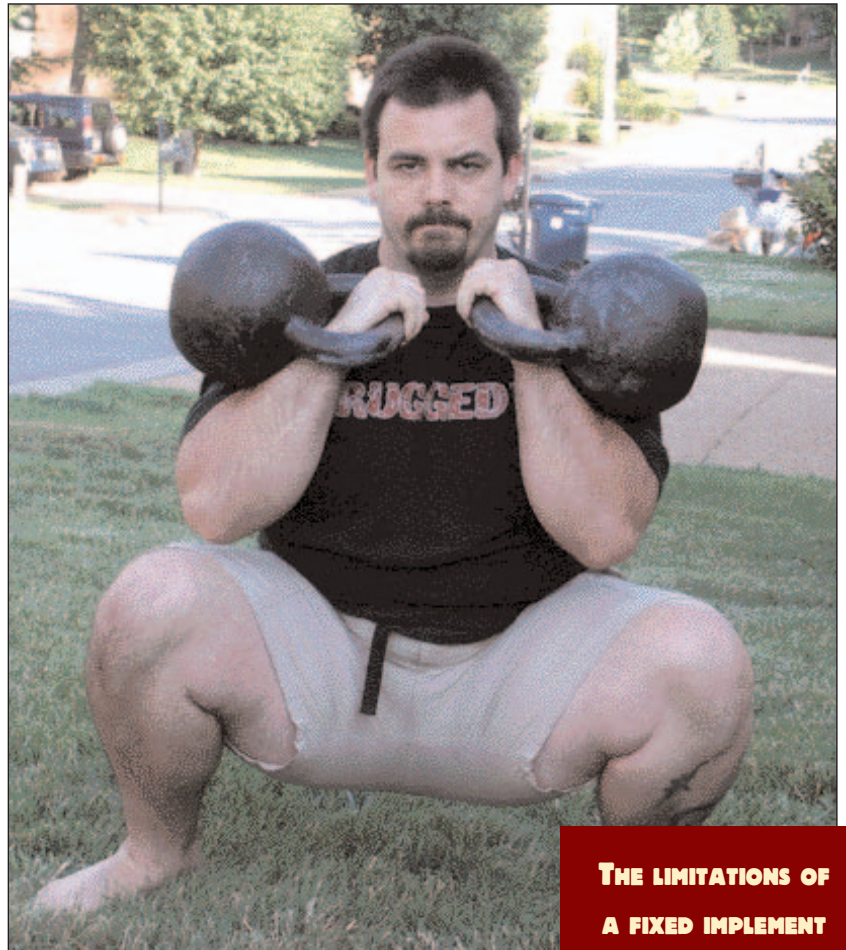
## GREASING THE GROOVE

Here is some Russian math, straight from Pavel’s *Naked Warrior*: **Specificity + frequent practice = success.** This is one of the simplest ways to become stronger. Pick one or two lifts and practice them several times throughout the day, never going close to failure. Lift a submaximal weight with high tension and in low gear and remember that fatigue is the enemy of strength.

## CHANGING LEVERAGE

The limitations of a fixed implement can be overcome by common physics. By simply changing the leverage point of an exercise you can make it easier or more difficult to suit your needs.

Let us suppose your goal is to develop leg strength. You choose the squat as your exercise. Good choice. The simplest way to use a kettlebell for added resistance in a squat is to hold it in front of your body by the “horns” with both hands, like a steering wheel. To make it more difficult, clean the kettlebell to the shoulder and hold it in the “rack” position. This puts the added resistance closer to the center and takes away the counter-balance effect it had when it was in front of you. The result? Increased resistance with a fixed weight.



**THE LIMITATIONS OF A FIXED IMPLEMENT CAN BE OVERCOME BY COMMON PHYSICS. BY SIMPLY CHANGING THE LEVERAGE POINT OF AN EXERCISE YOU CAN MAKE IT EASIER OR MORE DIFFICULT TO SUIT YOUR NEEDS.**

If you want to increase resistance even more, squat while the kettlebell is behind your back in the hack squat. Again, because of a change in leverage the resistance is increased. If your legs are stronger than average, you can always do pistols, as outlined in Pavel’s book *The Naked Warrior*. When holding a kettlebell in front during pistols gets too easy, start doing them with the ‘bell in the rack position.

If upper-body power is your goal, the military press is one of the best exercises you can have in your routine. If you can knock out several reps with one size kettlebell, but can’t quite get a single rep with the next biggest size, what do you do?

Let's apply the changing leverage principle. You can perform the military press seated on the floor—not a bench—as seen in the *More Russian Kettlebell Challenges* video. This is a real “flaw-finder” for your pressing technique because there is no way you can cheat. With the legs taken out of the equation, you eliminate the ability to push press and if you try to lean back and recruit the pecs, you fall backward. You must stay tight in the entire body (even the legs) and use only your upper body strength.

Another way you can change the leverage is the Sots press.

Clean your kettlebell to the rack position, pull yourself into bottom position of the front squat, tighten up and press the weight. If you really want cruelty, use two kettlebells. Mike Mahler calls this “the most difficult pressing exercise you can do.” Mike knows what he's talking about. If this gets too easy, do it on one leg. Good luck with that.

I have used the Sots press to improve my classic military press last summer when I went to the beach for a week on vacation. I had been working towards military pressing the 40kg kettlebell for three reps for several weeks. I could get two and the second one was shaky. Due to the limited room in the car I brought only one smaller kettlebell, a 24kg.

Going with the philosophy of “get the most out of what you have” I would do a few sets of three to five reps of the Sots press with the 24kg every day. When I got back, I was able to knock off three crisp military press reps with my left hand and four with my right with 40kg.

## PARTIALS

Another good strength builder is partial rep training. This kind of training has been used with barbells for years by some of the strongest men in the world and is a variation on the changing leverage principle. You use a weight that is too heavy to get a full range rep and do reps over a shortened range of motion. As your strength improves, increase the range of motion.

Partial rep training is a favorite of strongman Bud Jeffries. Bud has used it to work up to a 1000lb. squat with a barbell. Even if your goal is less ambitious than that, you can still reap tremendous benefit from partials. Let's look at how to use partial rep training with kettlebells.

We will use the pistol again. If your leg strength is good, but not good enough to do full, butt-to-the-ground pistols yet, practicing box pistols will help. If you can do pistols with a kettlebell, 24kg for example, but not with the next bigger 'bell, this is also a good strategy. For the box pistol, you perform a partial one-leg squat in front of a box or a step until you are sitting on it. From there simply tighten up and come up to standing. Over time, gradually lower the height of the box until you are doing full range reps.

## NEGATIVES

Negatives are a great way to build strength and pack on muscular size. A good example is the military press. Clean and jerk or push press a kettlebell that is too heavy for you to properly military press. Keeping total body tension, use your lats to actively pull the weight down to the rack position. Move slow, taking several seconds to lower the weight and

keep the precise groove of the military press. High tension and low speed are in order. This kind of training will improve your strength in a hurry.

Eat more and you will also grow. Keep your calorie intake the same to get stronger without getting bigger.

This is also a great technique to use with grippers. Use two hands to close a gripper that is too difficult for a one-hand close. Slowly allow it to force your hand open. Negatives are extremely demanding on the body so be extra mindful of recovery. Keep the reps low, no more than three per set and no more than 10-15 total reps per workout. Also limit frequency to a maximum of twice a week.

## ISOMETRICS

Isometrics involve muscular contraction against resistance without movement. This was a favorite method of the legendary Bruce Lee who was tremendously strong despite his small stature and had rippling musculature as well.

Isometrics are perfect for a weight that is too heavy to lift. Using the military press as our example again, clean your too-heavy (but not for long) kettlebell. Now begin a military press. The weight won't budge, but use full body tension, crush-grip the handle and push, push, push! After a few seconds, lower the weight to the rack, relax and do one or two more. Each time try to press it a little further.

You can also combine isometrics with negatives. Get your kettlebell overhead again, begin lowering it slowly, and remember to pull with the lats. Now simply stop the descent of the weight. Try to press it back up for a couple of seconds. Again, it will not move, but you are building strength in the position you are holding. Lower the weight under control the rest of the way. You can stop two or three times on the way down if you like. Keep the reps low in this one as well. One or two per set is plenty.

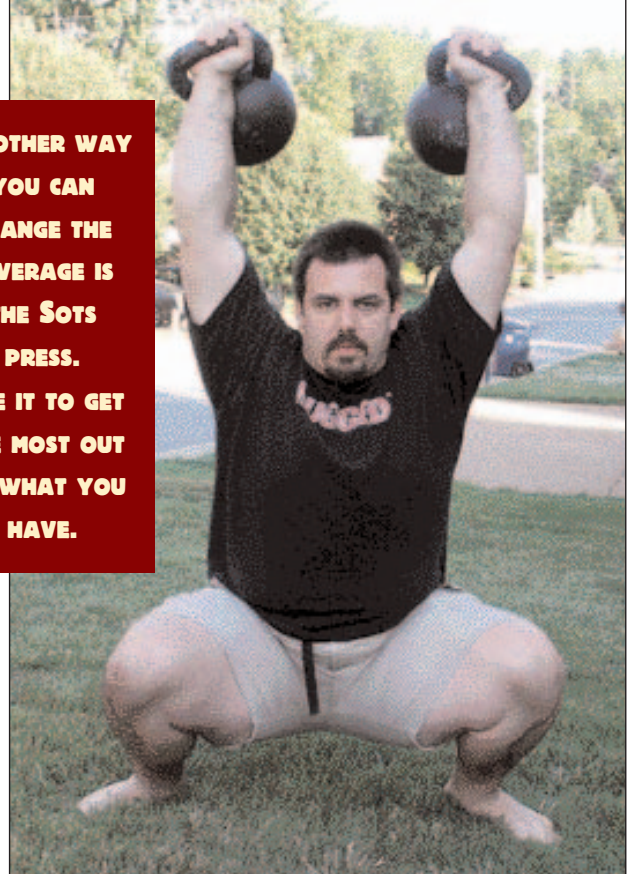
## STAGGERED REPS

That does it for manhandling too heavy a kettlebell. But what if it is not heavy enough?

You can get more mileage out of a lighter weight using the “two-steps-forward, one-step-back” method from *The Russian Kettlebell Challenge*. This is a combination of negatives, isometrics and full-range reps all in one.

Press your kettlebell up halfway. Now lower it to one-quarter the range and press it up to three-quarters. Stop there and lower to the halfway point before pressing it out

**ANOTHER WAY  
YOU CAN  
CHANGE THE  
LEVERAGE IS  
THE SOTS  
PRESS.  
USE IT TO GET  
THE MOST OUT  
OF WHAT YOU  
HAVE.**



completely. This is also a great way to increase the difficulty of pistols, rows and pullups.

You can change the increments if you like, doing more or less directional changes. Stay in a precise groove, keep full body tension and use perfect technique.

If you need to increase the resistance of some of your exercises, choose one of the principles listed here and give it a shot. Remember that the goal is to make the exercise more difficult so that you become stronger.

You don't need adjustable weights to do this in many cases. Adjustable weights are like cable television: Nice to have, but you can get along fine without it, and are sometimes better off not having it. When you can Sots press two 40kg kettlebells in the staggered-rep fashion for three full reps, or do five pistols the same way, you may have a legitimate need for adjustable weight. Of course you will officially be a mutant too.

Until then quit whining and start applying some imagination to your training.

**David Whitley, RKC** is a Russian Kettlebell instructor, strength coach and massage therapist in Nashville, TN. He earned his RKC at the June 2003 certification and was an assistant instructor at the April 2004 RKC. On December 4, 2004 he became the first American-born man to achieve the CMS rank in Girevoy Sport. In 2005 he became the Long Cycle Clean-&Jerk National Champion in his class.

David conducts Kettlebell workshops and trains clients privately in the Nashville area. He is also available for online personalized training and phone consultations. Contact him at [irontamerdave@hotmail.com](mailto:irontamerdave@hotmail.com) or visit his website, [www.irontamer.com](http://www.irontamer.com).



# Former US Marine, Will Williams, Launches Career as Personal Trainer... With Russian Kettlebells

## WE INTERVIEWED WILL WILLIAMS AT THE APRIL 2005 RKC



**Dragon Door:** Will, what is your athletic background?

**Will Williams:** Because of my size, I was heavily recruited by all of the football and most of the sports coaches in high school, but I didn't play. I was just too lazy at that age. I ended up playing lacrosse and a lot of street hockey, and just messing around for my final two years of high school. After that, I was in a really bad car wreck, and I was on the couch for six to eight months. That was after I had enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps. So there was a year-long period where there was zero activity.

I gained so much weight that the only way I could actually ship to boot camp was to drop close to 35 pounds in a span of only three months. I went to what they call "pulley runs". Before you go to recruit training, you are a pulley with a Marine Corps recruiter and your pool of people. So that meant runs every Thursday night, pull-ups and push-ups,

and a lot of other basic stuff.

Once I was actually in the fleet Marine Corps, I realized how much I loved working out. Every Marine Corps base is equipped with a pretty high-tech gym, full of a bunch of stuff that you don't need, but also a lot of stuff that you do.

I ended up playing football for a season in 2000 for the 1st Marine Regiment in Camp Pendleton, California. Actually, it was then that Pavel started appearing out of nowhere in *Muscle Media Magazine*.

**D.D.:** So that's how you got started.

**W.W.:** Yes. It was basically applying his principles and helping my buddies out with floor lifts as well and simple things like, never do cardio before a lift. Or keep your shoulders down when you do your pull-ups so you'll be able to do a bunch more for the PFT. Stuff like that. I ended up getting a kettlebell as a Christmas gift from a client, because I had spoke so many times of Pavel and all of his theories. I always made sure that my client knew where I was getting these ideas from. So getting a kettlebell for Christmas was great, because I had never set aside the funds to do it before. That was 2003.

**D.D.:** So, were you still in the Marines?

**W.W.:** No. I got out in 2002.

**D.D.:** Then you started as a personal trainer?

**W.W.:** Actually, I was kind of charged by my sergeant with being a physical trainer for some of the younger marines. He said, "You know what? I want you to take these kids on remedial P.T., which is obviously after you do your morning P.T. Take these kids out, help them out, show them how to do stuff, get them to lose weight and teach them how to eat." He had heard one way



or another that I was inspired to be a personal trainer in the civilian sector anyway. So that was how I got my feet wet.

Immediately after an honorable EAS in 2002, I got certified through the ISSA. Then I started working out of gyms wherever I was, and I happened to be in Atlanta at the time. I was applying as much of Pavel's theories as I could. I had great success with a lot of people, because the people I was working with were capable of a lot of things that they probably never thought they were before. They were really starting to outshine the other people in gym too, which was especially cool!

Then, once I brought the kettlebells to the Philadelphia area, not full-steam Maxwell Philadelphia, but into the suburbs, it kind of shot off. It was great.

**D.D.:** So what was your experience with kettlebells before coming to the certification?

**W.W.:** I was very, very lucky. One of my closest buddies came here to the RKC last summer. His name is Craig Sjoström, and he's the tall, lanky fellow that I was with at the convention. That's why the cert is so special, because a lot of the little nuances that they teach here were filtered down to me by Craig. What he was taking to his clients he was kind enough to show me, so I could show my clients. They've all been really supportive, because I've done a lot of kettlebell traveling in the last two months. I've missed a lot of sessions over the weekends...

**D.D.:** But it's worth it!

**W.W.:** It certainly is worth it. It's great. Literally everyone that I train kettlebells with, they love it. I haven't had a single complaint, except for some people who have been injured so badly that they are just afraid. They have an intrinsic fear of opening their bodies up to any kind of overhead work, which seems remotely dangerous, I guess.

**"It's a hybridization of the strength and the cardio at the same time, which is what initially turns people on and traps them..."**

But I'd say 75% of the people that I train who ever even held a kettlebell are full-on converts. They'll go to DragonDoor.com and they have their own kettlebells and everything. It's great. It's kind of cultish, actually. It's really cool.

**D.D.:** Excellent! What do you think it is about kettlebells that make them different from regular weight training?

**W.W.:** The simplest way I can put it (and I don't want to take anything away from the almighty bell) is that it's a hybridization of the strength and the cardio at the same time, which is what initially turns people on and traps them in. Because most women, they feel like they have to sweat when they work out. Otherwise it's worthless.

Everyone in America wants to be smaller. No one's happy with the body that they are in right now. Doing kettlebells, they always leave feeling that they've accomplished something, whether it was just learning a new exercise or brushing up on some older stuff. The thing is, when people see me in passing working with a client, they see these big, swinging, arcing movements and it freaks them out. But as fast as they can learn it, it surprises them and gives them a sense of confidence, too.

I tell my clients, and this is the plain truth, that if they can do kettlebell swings and Turkish getups, they can go up to any piece of equipment in the gym or any barbell or dumbbell and anything they want to do will be completely self-explanatory. And that's great. So if they do chose to get away from the bell for a day or two or for a month or two for any reason at all, anything else that they do is improved. Even home life, yard work, gardening and stuff like that.

## Why, generally, women train harder with kettlebells than men...

**D.D.:** What kind of people are you training?

**W.W.:** I train mostly women—mothers—anywhere between 18 and 40. The very few men that I train are 45 to 55 years old. I train just one young gentleman.

**D.D.:** Any thoughts about why you train the people you do?

**W.W.:** Women seem to be more willing to submit to the idea of personal training. It has been my experience that most guys feel weak after working with a trainer. They don't want to admit to themselves that they need help because they can't do it on their own. With girls, they say, "Hey, I need a personal trainer. This is probably the best way to do what I need to do." Some guys have a hard time taking instruction from other men. If you don't have a commanding presence with these guys, they just sit around and joke, whereas women...

**D.D.:** Get right down to it.

**W.W.:** They get right to it and they are willing to work a lot harder as well, within the workout and away from it.

**D.D.:** And why older guys rather than younger ones?

**W.W.:** Probably the wisdom that comes with breaking that fear barrier.

**D.D.:** Time's running out. They better get on it.

**W.W.:** They better get on it and they see that it can do them good. I've talked about injury prevention and how the simplest thing will make a difference. Like Andrea Du Cane will say, "Just suck in your shoulder." The miracles that that can create! It helps those guys. Also, a lot of these guys have beat-up shoulders or have hurt their backs and they are just more open. In most cases they've been working out close to 25 or 30 years, or maybe as little as five, but it's something that they want to try. Whereas, young guys will grab a dumbbell and get as close to the mirror as they can and just curl away. Unfortunately, that's the way it is.

## People come in for their lunchtime workouts—30 minutes of kettlebells. They love it. They eat it up...

**D.D.:** Yeah. Are you working out of a gym or a class?

**W.W.:** Yes, I'm working out of a gym that is smack-dab in the middle of a corporate center, so we're surrounded by thousands and thousands of people who just sit at a desk all day. People come in for their lunchtime workouts—30 minutes of kettlebells. They love it. They eat it up.

**D.D.:** So do you have good group classes?

**W.W.:** I do. I teach a Tuesday-night boot camp, which is a lot of *Naked Warrior* stuff, a lot of Pistols, Deck Squats...all that really cool stuff. Russian Pump. Then I teach a Thursday-evening kettlebell class in the spinning studio. I'm actually dropping days of the week at the gym as the summer goes on, so my friend Craig and I can run classes outdoors, which he had a lot of success with last year.

**D.D.:** So, two classes a week now in the gym and then privates, also?

**W.W.:** Privates, usually 10 to 12 hour-long sessions a day, and some half hours. For the most part, it's one-on-one. The group classes that I teach are probably 75% filled by the people I work with one-on-one during the week.

## I love the group atmosphere. Anyone who touches a kettlebell regularly is like-minded with the rest of us, and it's good to get a bunch of crazy people like that together...

**D.D.:** Do you have any preference between private lessons and group classes?

**W.W.:** I love the group atmosphere. Anyone who touches a kettlebell regularly is like-minded with the rest of us, and it's good to get a bunch of crazy people like that together. I have two people on one kettlebell. Getting two people on one bell is great, to critique each other and get vocal about it. Two on one KB is one thing that I'm really into, because some people just refuse to set aside the money for a kettlebell right away. For me, it took a year to break down and buy some.

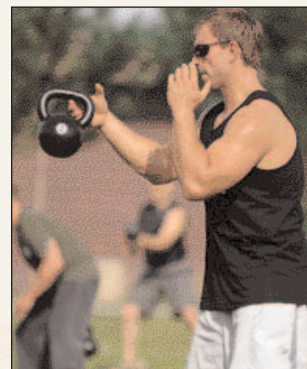
However, the one-on-one sessions are great and sometimes more appropriate for certain people.

**D.D.:** How's it been for you at the cert?

**W.W.:** Wonderful. I spoke with the girls that I came with about this last night. It seems like I was lucky enough to learn a lot of little nuances as well as the drills, but it's the enabling exercises like the Box Squat that I really think I'm going to take away from here. It's the little things. Because there are exercises that I try to teach three or four dozen different ways and for some people it just hasn't stuck. A lot of the things that I've seen here are going to make more sense to them. It seems like it's going to benefit my clients just as much as it has me. Workouts are fun, too.

**D.D.:** Great. Excellent. Any last thoughts?

**W.W.:** I am just very happy to be here and very much looking forward to the Level Two Certification in June.



Will Williams is an RKC, Combat Applications Specialist teaching kettlebells in the Philadelphia area. He can be reached at [phillywide@yahoo.com](mailto:phillywide@yahoo.com).

# WORLD SUPER HEAVYWEIGHT POWERLIFTING CHAMPION, **DONNIE THOMPSON**, SEES KETTLEBELLS AS KEY FOR GAINING PERFORMANCE EDGE IN ALL SPORTS

**WE INTERVIEWED DONNIE THOMPSON AT THE APRIL 2005 RUSSIAN  
KETTLEBELL CHALLENGE CERTIFICATION WORKSHOP**

**Dragon Door:** Tell me about your athletic background, and your accomplishments in powerlifting.

**Donnie Thompson:** I got into football during my senior year, when I started public high school. Then I got a scholarship to a small school called Shepherd College. In my junior year of college I started playing pretty good. I became a center, which is what I'd always wanted to be. My senior year I made all of the awards, you know, best lineman, All-Conference and a Conference title.

I went into the NFL after that. I got to play in the NFL's player strike in 1987. I played for Tampa Bay. We played for five weeks in three games and then they cut us off. Then my agent got me into Arena Football in 1988. I started in New England and played six years from '88 to '93.

After '93, I decided to stop playing and start my own gym. It grew and grew and after six years, I sold it. I'd had enough of the health club business and I'd been giving 110% to it, you know? I gave everything.

In 1998, I went to find Louis Simmons, of Westside Barbell. I made a pilgrimage out there for nine days and decided to learn powerlifting. He told me I was way too thin. I'd kept my body weight down—I think I weighed 257 lbs. when I met him.

I started pulling a sled, and doing bands and chains. I was training twice a day and I ended up dropping more weight. A burst of power down to a 220-lb. weight class. I was way underweight, and I was going through a lot of stress with work. I've lifted at five weight classes, and I've pretty much won something in each.

So I couldn't gain weight; I was very lean. But I was getting better and better, and I started really picking up right around the time when I finally sold my gym. I sold it to Marc Bartley, my training partner. He still runs it and he enjoys it.

Marc started training with me and a few others, but Marc and I were the only ones that lasted. My goal from the beginning was to be number one. So I kept going and finally I totaled 2,400 lbs. my first time in 2002, as a super heavyweight.

I also placed second at my first pro meet at the Show of Strength, which starred Gary Frank, the strongest guy in the world. Then in 2003, I had a really rough year. I tore my hamstring in two places, and my knees got really bad from that tear. But I worked through it and managed to qualify for an Arnold. Then, when the Arnold came, I hurt my back. I almost quit. But I set up my life to not fall back on anything.

I was in such pain that I couldn't walk. I remember being on the kitchen floor for three hours. I weighed 355 lbs. at the time, and when you weigh that much and you can't walk, it's pretty hard. You're like a turtle with no legs.

For 2004, I finally came back and I was stronger than ever. At the Show of Strength, I placed second with a total of 2,551 lbs. Then, I went to the Arnold Classic again for the WPO Championships. It was there that I won first place for the super heavyweight title and belt.

Anyway, Mr. Haney, my friend in Columbia, SC and the former track-and-field star at USC, kept preaching these kettlebells to me. He'd say, "You ought to try them. I've been doing them for the last couple of years now." His back was really bad, and he said that they were relieving his pain. So I decided to look into them.

We ordered them, but they weren't going to arrive before we left for the Arnold. So I went to Pavel and I said, "I need to get better here. I'm missing this meet because my





back's out." I told him that I deadlifted 804 at my last meet, and that I was a super heavyweight. He got all excited. He pulled me aside and he told me, "I'm going to teach you some unorthodox things that I'm not responsible for. Do you understand?" I said, "The way I train with bands and chains and stuff, everything is unorthodox!" So he showed me some things that would help my back get better.

### **Those sessions with Pavel were the best half-hours I've spent learning from anyone...**

At the Arnold, I sat and watched backstage while Spud took second place in his weight class, got on the winner's podium and got his check and his medal. I was back there just helping them. It was awful. It was the most awful experience. I was happy for him, but no one likes to sit on the bench.

Our kettlebells came in the week we got back. We started using them and I quickly adapted to them. Pavel wasn't sure what they would do for my upper body. He said they probably wouldn't help my bench, but they'd help my back.

My back is still tricky. If I wasn't doing kettlebells, it would go out about five times a year. It'd be a five-to-seven day thing where I'm walking kind of crooked. But that hasn't happened since I've been on kettlebells.

### **Kettlebells hit hamstrings where I needed them strong. They hit glutes where I needed them strong. And they do a tremendous amount of ab work. I'm not sure most people understand how much ab work kettlebells do. They are very beneficial.**

I kept with single movements for a couple of months, and then I ordered enough KBs so we have doubles now. In *Hard-Style Magazine*, there was an article that explained how I pulled 832 at...I weighed 384 lbs. I was at like, 176 kilos when I weighed in. Ridiculous! I had never weighed that much in my life and I didn't even know that I weighed that much, because my waist is smaller.

But the kettlebells put so much mass on my upper body, and I couldn't get that with conventional weights.

**DD:** Interesting!

**D.T.:** Yeah. My shoulders were weak all of my life, but the kettlebells helped me put on mass immediately.

**DD:** Which exercises did that for you?

**D.T.:** Well, I do a myriad of exercises. I did a lot of swings from the side, not just in the middle. Because the middle, for me, is a lot of lower body. And I do dual kettlebells, or with the 88-kilo, I'll do single-line kettlebells.

Then I'll take 72s and go double. I'll do pull-throughs with my legs, and that really gets my lower body. I've got to be careful with those. I do them after I squat, because if I did them the day before something, my glutes and hamstrings would be too sore to actually squat. Some of my other powerlifter friends were sore for five or six days the first time they tried double-kettlebell swings between the legs. Then I do the outside, and then I make my deadlift. I use the 72s for that.

Then I'll have two upper-body days. A lot of snatches, snatch presses, and bottoms-up presses. It really has made a difference in my shoulders. As for deltoid work, I'll hold static kettlebells like this, plopped over my arms for a ten count, and do a set of three to five. Or I'll hold them out here, and then bring them back up and then flip them over, bring them down, or I'll have them here, and bring them back up, then flip them over and bring them down. It takes about an hour and a half for a small group of us to get through it.

### **Marc and I will tell you the same thing, because we are pretty much at the same level of powerlifting: We honestly have not seen anything that 100% transferred over to a sport like kettlebells. I mean there is nothing about KBs that doesn't transfer over to powerlifting.**

I'm happy, because now I have something that I can do when I'm done powerlifting. I can do kettlebells all the way into my twilight years.

I'm tickled to death about that and I only have to buy KBs one time! [Laughter] Nothing is going to happen to them, because those little iron balls, they are indestructible. It's like finding a treasure or something.

Kettlebells will never be easy. When you get stronger, your reward is to do a harder task. But I'll keep doing them to stay ahead of my powerlifting competition.

I've got a large group in South Carolina that has been doing kettlebells. I have to bring the KBs from where I work to my gym, because I don't have my own set for the gym yet. And if I don't bring them, everybody's mad. "How come you didn't bring those kettlebells from work?"

We are all going to do doubles for powerlifting. The doubles have been the best thing for a load. Mostly, everything is doubles. I teach single arm, but for me, I do doubles.

**DD:** Excellent! So how has the certification been for you?

**D.T.:** It's been exciting to do stuff that I haven't done in so long. I haven't been out in a field like that barefooted, training. Not since football practice ten years ago. It's really fun!

Also, being around people with different backgrounds is nice, because I'm only exposed to top-level powerlifters right now. It's nice for a change to see the regular world out there. Seeing people with basic needs, who represent the kind of clients that we teach kettlebells to. But my biggest reason for coming out here and doing this is that I want to be a strength coach after my powerlifting career. That transition will happen in one or two years.

### **As a strength coach for football players that specialize in offensive and defensive line, the key is kettlebells. My kids train with bands and chains and stuff, but when we put the kettlebells on top of that, you are talking about a turbo-type of training. In four to five years, these kids are going to**

### **be dominating their opponents. They'll dominate to the point where other teams are afraid to play them.**

That's my goal. Because the strength coaches are going to have to change in big-time college football and in the NFL, because we are on the way up. People like me are coming into the business now.

I went to my hometown college, USC in South Carolina. In the state paper, they showed how the strength coach has the team doing full squats. They haven't done this since the 1980s. Now that's a crying shame! But how do you discover full squats? I mean, they've been around forever.

They're a major S.E.C. football team that is just now discovering full squats? I would love to be a coach in another S.E.C. school that plays them, because my kids would have been doing squats with bands, box squats, sled pulling, and we'd add kettlebell work on top of that. I'd go to South Carolina licking my chops. I don't care if Steve Spurrier is the coach or not. My guys would kill their guys! We are coming. We are on the way! We are going to break into this, and then everybody's going to wonder how it's happening.

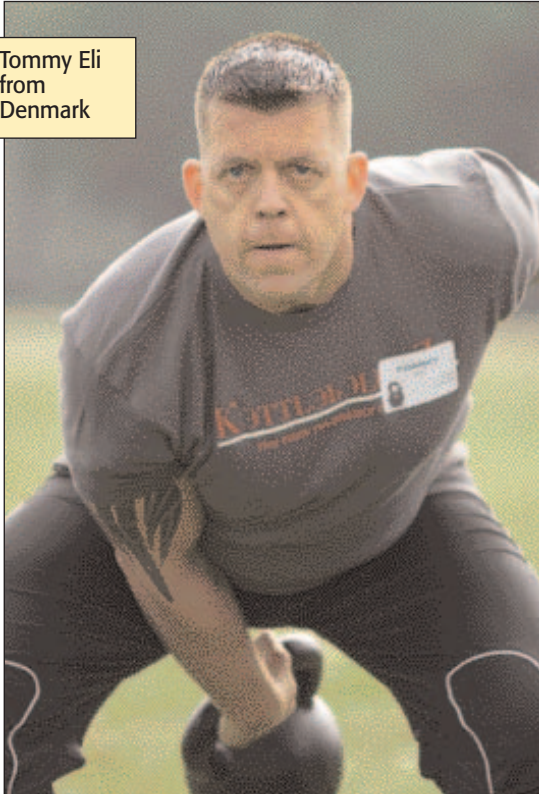
Just like Pavel said, "It's growing. Kettlebells are just growing." He was the first. Your organization, Dragon Door, was the first organization to push this ahead. You pioneered it.

**You can contact Donnie at [caycejunglegym@aol.com](mailto:caycejunglegym@aol.com)**



# Elite RKC's Take Training to a New Level at the *Kettlebells for Combat Applications* Workshop

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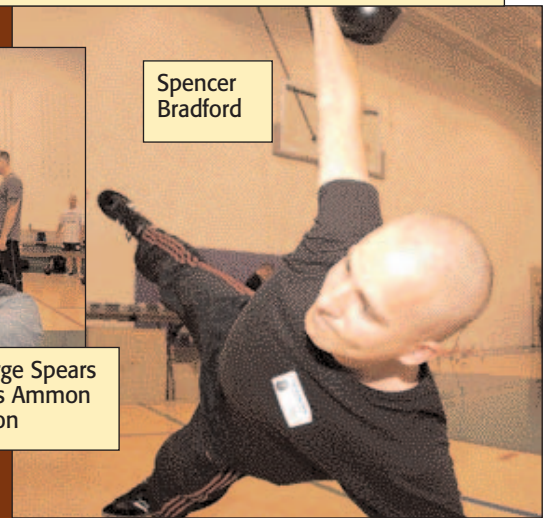
**Dragon Door Publications**, in association with Pavel's company Tactical Strength, Inc., is introducing a series of "closed door", specialist trainings to advance and enhance our RKC's skills and knowledge base. The first such training, *Kettlebells for Combat Applications* attracted over forty of Dragon Door's most active and accomplished RKC's for two days of specialized techniques from Pavel—and Senior Instructors **Steve Cotter, Nate Morrison, Steve Maxwell, Jeff Martone and Mike Mahler.**

The next RKC-only training will focus on broadening and deepening the skills and knowledge base for RKC's active as personal trainers. Watch the [www.dragondoor.com](http://www.dragondoor.com) strength and conditioning forum for further details.

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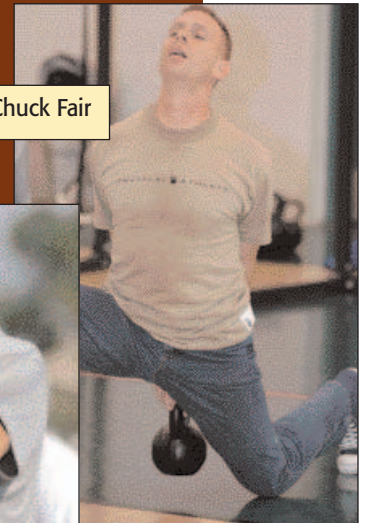
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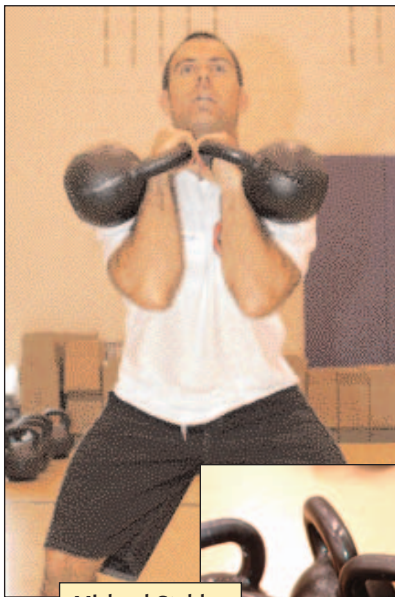
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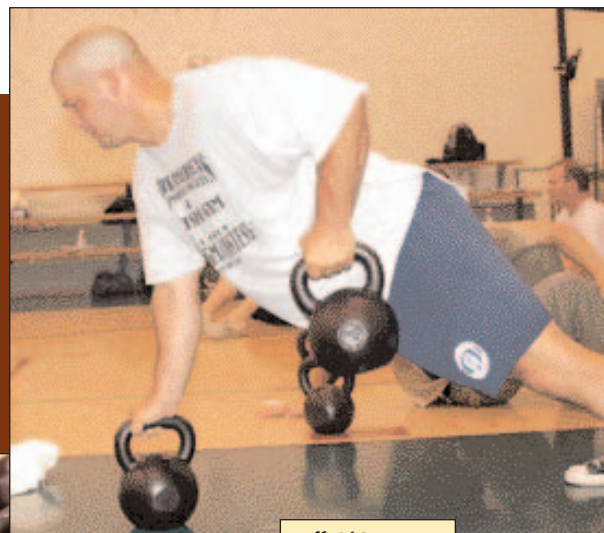
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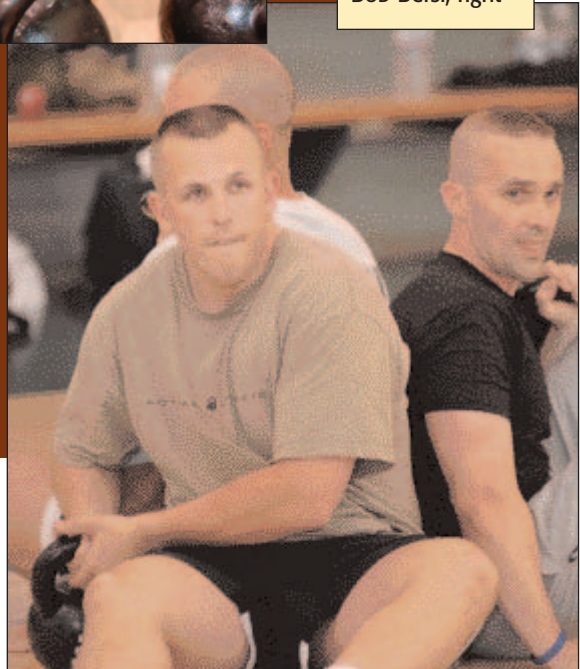


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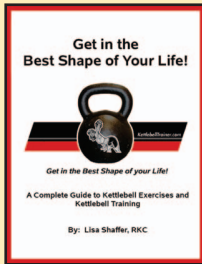
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