

# Training Advice

## First 4-Week Block – Strength and Conditioning

Overall Objective of this training block is to raise strength and fitness levels to prepare for high intensity strength training in the second block (weeks 5-8). This first training block has increased focus on strength development exercises and reduced content of full movement Olympic lifts. Nonetheless, great attention must be paid to “technique” and range of movement in all exercises.

There is a prodigious amount of work on Power Lifts (Power Snatch, Power Clean and Power Jerk) in this training block and every effort must be made to perform these lifts with excellence of technique. This includes stability in receiving positions, accuracy of foot placement and speed under the bar. Work on Power Snatch and Power Clean will continue in next training block at a high level.

Though some percentages may seem modest, the amount of work in this training block is high. This includes performing multiple sets at the target percentages. It is important therefore for athletes not to underestimate the overall toughness of the program or overestimate their own capability. The goal is to be in a good state of health, training exceptionally well and hopefully free from injury at the end of this block.

The training program only provides a prescription of work at the target percentage, for example:

3 x 5, 65% (this means 3 sets of 5 reps at 65%).

Athletes should be absolutely sure to warm-up carefully and slowly from a low weight. Warm-up sets are extremely important for the skill development, mobility and coordination. In general, there should be not less than 5 warm-up sets, and the weight increments between each set should be reasonably even. Therefore, in the majority of exercises, the total number of sets will be 8 or 9.

An athlete’s potential to improve is largely determined by their capacity to train and, in turn, this is dependant on their fitness and resilience. It is important, therefore, that athletes approach this training block with the intention of raising their fitness levels. The pace of training should be fast and the sets should begin at 2 minute intervals. Thus, a total of 8 or 9 sets should be completed in 16-18 minutes. Training at this pace allows more work to be done in the training period, and the total training volume will have a significant effect on athlete’s capacity to improve.

It should be noted that “Pyramid” type training has been introduced into this training block in a small number of “strength” related exercises. Weightlifters are often averse to high repetition sets but there is a rationale based on developing hypertrophy and fitness. The “Pyramid” type training offers the best of both worlds as it allows for both high and low repetitions in an exercise, and the total of work done will not be excessive. For example:

Front Squat: P7-1, 50 - 80% = 50%/7, 55%/6, 60%/5, 65%/4, 70%/3, 75%/2, 80%/1

Good Mornings: P9-4, 30 - 55% = 30%/0, 35%/8, 40%/7, 45%/6, 50%/5, 55%/5,

Under coaching guidance, there will be opportunities to go minimally beyond the prescribed percentages. However, athletes should avoid thinking that this possibility applies to any exercise, on any day. Some discipline and attention to detail is therefore required.

In the next training block, there will be a significant step up in training intensity with the intent that athletes will frequently record new personal bests in a range of strength/power exercises. Athletes should therefore be patient with training in this block.