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Printable pdf version of this newsletter:  
<http://davedraper.com/pdfs/irononline432.pdf>

You'll also find Dave's column online at the link below.  
<http://davedraper.com/url/column.php>

1 - Draper here... Questioning One's Sanity

How crazy can we get? Pretty crazy!

I consider my habit of eating smaller meals throughout the day as I go about my tasks at home. These frequent eating events, though of substantial nutritional worth, do not earn a place at the dining table with an attractive place setting and glowing candles. Instead, I consume the fare of tuna, water and cottage cheese while standing at the kitchen counter conversing with Mugsy (world famous cat) or the redwoods outside the window, whichever will listen.

Neither does, not for very long.

Alas, eating alone can be lonely, and the neutral stance is conspicuously tiresome and unproductive. However, neutral becomes quite engaging when thrown into low gear, a groaning four-wheel-drive workhorse. I, thus, nourish and labor co-operatively.

A bite of food and I'm in slow motion. Standing four to five feet away from the waist-high counter, I lean forward with my palms on its edge and commence pushing... as if trying to jumpstart a stalled '56 Buick Roadmaster. My stocking feet slide on the hardwood surface beneath me as I control the pace and resistance by my body's positioning. I stretch the calves and hamstrings, I labor the thighs... soon my triceps and shoulders are aching. I lean, I push, I thrust, I persist.

The Buick goes nowhere, wheels still, engine silent.

It takes about six or seven supersets (chomp, plod) to complete my mission and I'm warm and breathing and aware of blood concentrating in various parts of my anatomy. The union of acts becomes a beneficial devotion, my mind tuning into a muscle-stimulating, problem-solving and stress-amending calmness.

No sweat, no pain, no burden... just invigorating motion, vitalizing action.

Give it a break, Bomber! You've been at this madness too long. Have you considered shock therapy, a lobotomy, a pitcher of Margaritas? You're exhibiting scary signs of kettlebells for brains.

You mock, but weirdness sometimes pays off. The diversion is effective and eases stiffness, soothes aches, accelerates healing, stretches, oxygenates, encourages, pacifies and, last but not least, wards off evil spirits. And it's free.

Perhaps you've noticed, we're living and striving in a day and age when we need all the help we can get... muster, create and invent, uncover, imagine and share. No stealing, lying or cheating allowed.

I entered the gym earlier today and promptly immersed myself in crunches and leg raises. The only way outta the gym is through it. Go, go... not quickly, not hurriedly, not elsewhere... but here and now, thoughtful and deliberate, like a locomotive changing cars in a freight yard, a crane loading and unloading cargo at the docks.

Hard, worthy, gratifying work... ya gotta love it. The variety of crunches I do are not like those done by others I observe, the ride-'em-cowboy, rocking-horse type. Cute. They've got crack and mangle, crush and scrunch, if you know what I mean. I lay backward on a benchpress and position my feet on the racked Oly bar before me to enable an intensified torso action -- crunch to the front, to the left and the right, lengthy stretches, tight contractions, hips raised high to meet the torso, compress, flex... hard, harder, another one and another.

The leg raises are done on a 20-degree incline with my arms extended and hands splayed under my bottom for support and low back containment. Hip flexors scream like brats and lower abdominals and obliques burn like branding irons. I break up the reps into five max-rep sets and go until I'm delirious, a grand total of 300 reps -- 150 of each exercise. I'm warm, I'm loose. I'm ready to work out.

Sadly, not a six-pack, still a keg. Oh, well, better than a barrel. However, if it were a drum I could beat it.

I noted at the outset how comfortable I felt just lying on the bench, stretching, flexing and contorting in preparation for the workout. Mugs indulges in a similar repertoire regularly, and purrs. The muscles and joints responded blissfully to the tensing and reaching and arching. If only they knew what I had in store for them, a merciless pounding, beating and thumping into shape.

I decided for the first time in my training history to ever-so-slowly simmer the concoction of muscles and bodyparts before bringing them to a full boil. Why not? I'm the head chef, after all, and preparing nutritious gourmet specialties to tantalize discerning palates is my art form. This isn't a fast food joint, Bub. Feed them right and they come back for more, that's what I always say.

I grabbed a pair of darling 10-pound dumbbells and lay flat on a bench, the cutesy weights straight overhead. With arms straight and palms forward, I extended the dumbbells behind me simulating a stiffarm pullover movement. Thoughtfully and slowly I established a 1-, 2-, 3-, 4-second count from the starting position to the return and retained it through the entire ensuing six-exercise, 36-rep set.

If you don't try this stuff, Mr. and Mrs. Stuck-in-the-mud conformist, you'll never know what you're missing. So there!

Follow my tempo and movements, my purpose and achievements -- they range from sublime to ridiculous, from warm to red-hot, from a murmur to thunder. From good, to better, to best.

The six purposeful reps were a treat and I savored the good feelings within the lats, the grip and bis and tris, the pecs and about the shoulders. The abs were not without stabilizing contraction, and the buttocks and thighs hugged the bench for support. We don't often notice this favorable multiplicity of activity, or appreciate it, or tally it as a valuable part of our musclebuilding experience or progress.

This style of training was proving to be a lesson in muscle engagement, extension and contraction, action and response, and exercise groove, while revisiting pump and burn with a side trip to in-depth focus. You'll say, "This complex and varied activity is occurring at once, and I thought I was merely working my serratus. I have renewed incentive, refreshed purpose, more complete training understanding. I'm rich."

Shame on us: We grab, go and power through; we chase the sets, reps and action away, rather than pursue them; we endure the pain, we suffer the burn, we groan with exhaustion as the iron crashes to the floor. Great set... let's do it again.

Listen Bizzy Lizzy and Murry-in-a-Hurry: Be encouraged, don't stop, but learn to observe and be aware along the way. It is a learning process. And it is very colorful, amusing and profitable.

We've just begun. Continuing the action with devotion and discovery, direct the iron singlets to a 45-degree spread-arm reach. This action shifts the resistance enough to complement its predecessor while furthering its torso and upper-chest developing advantage. The burn builds; the pump takes its cue.

After six smooth, slowly paced and highly gratifying reps, we slip into an authentic dumbbell fly, the preferred exercise for shaping and defining the pecs. The overload on the insertions is noticeable and straight-arm control and pec-isolation grab our attention... some serious pec development and torso building in the works. After six reps, a total of 24, the 10s seem hefty. Hmmm...

Now here's a less-than-ordinary movement to keep us alert: the forward and downward flat bench sorta dumbbell curl and fly, one of my favorite combination exercises for tying together unvisited regions of the biceps and shoulders and pectorals, while making me feel like I'm gonna burst with muscle engagement and go to heaven before I expected. Six reps and stimulation hisses all around me.

Are you still with me, crew? We are about to specifically exert the triceps by performing a standard variation of the lying dumbbell French press. From a palms-facing-each-other, overhead position, lower those now-bulging 10-pounders to the shoulders and beyond while retaining an elbow-upward position. Feel that? Swell! "Returneth thou the irons to the tidy places from whence they came so mightily," said Shakes Bear. Anyone who shakes bear can say whatever he wants.

Oh, boy! Ready or not, stand tall (literally), take a deep breath and curl the dumbbells in a thrusting thumbs-up action. These final six reps are well-earned and smoothly engage the upper body in a variation of a hammer curl and dumbbell clean and press. Lots of stuff happening all over the place with this personalized, improvised, customized frenzy to the enzy. Wun dun, Charlie!

Now, captains, we continue our sweep by going up the rack to the next pair of weights suitable to our scheme. This was my sequence: 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 pounds X 6 reps per 6 successive movements.

After 20 pounds the weight felt significantly heavier, and painful struggle replaced delectable stimulation... but the trade-off was worth every bit of muscle and might recruited. As I approached the final sets and reps, I was soaring and gliding and diving simultaneously... out-of-control while in control.

You've gotta go there.

Think skyward... DD

2 – Dave's Q&A blog

This week's updates in Dave's Q&A blog:

- [Thinking about entering a bodybuilding contest](#)
- [Experiencing elbow pain](#)
- [Chest followed by triceps](#)
- [Training with a heart condition](#)
- [Growth Hormone Products](#)

... where you'll find tidbits from Dave's email outbox, a one-liner to clarify something that's been nagging at you.

<http://www.davedraper.com/dd/index.php>

2 - Laree, taking over with IronOnline news

Last week I promised we'd make good use of the new forum software's YouTube capabilities in time for this week's newsletter, and man, did we dig up some classics. These'll keep you happily occupied at least through lunch; I suggest you shake up your protein drink before you click on over.

These are our favorite fitness and strength videos:

<http://www.davedraper.com/url/favorite-videos.php>

And this is our new exercise instruction video section, where you'll be able to return whenever you need a handy and trusted video demonstration.

<http://www.davedraper.com/url/exercise-instruction.php>

Have fun -- this is great stuff!

Laree

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IronOnline forum:

<http://www.davedraper.com/url/iol.php>

Dave's Q&A Blog:

<http://davedraper.com/dd/>

IronOnline blog:

<http://davedraper.com/blog/>

IOL One-on-One Personal Training:

<http://www.davedraper.com/url/trainers.php>

IronOnline health and fitness database:

<http://healthandfitnesswiki.com/>

Dave's Bomber Blend whey protein powder:

<http://davedraper.com/url/blend.php>

Pearl/Draper seminar dvd:

<http://davedraper.com/url/seminar-dvd.php>

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