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Printable pdf version of this newsletter:
<http://davedraper.com/pdfs/irononline444.pdf>

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

1 - Draper here... Getting Older is a Laugh a Minute

Leap year: We have an extra day this month to get huge and ripped. Time is muscle! I shall take advantage of the cosmic windfall and do nothing but squats, deadlifts and bench presses this Friday from sunrise to sunset. No order, just random, hysterical lifting.

Have Bomber Blend, Will Blast.

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

I remember when that sort of spontaneous, combustible and delirious training was common: Sprint to the gym, dive into a pile of warm and welcoming 45s in your Speedos from atop the squat rack and thrash around jubilantly; chew on the 100-lb dumbbells like a Rottweiler on a juicy t-bone; juggle three 25-pound plates instead of your everyday lateral raises for deltoids; and dip with a greasy engine block dangling from your waist.

Bombing and blasting: What fun!

Today I park close to the gym's rear doorway (I prefer the rear access 'cuz a bright red sign reading Exit clearly points to it immediately upon entering). I need all the reassurance I can get. I'm exhausted! Eight giant steps from the parking lot tarmac to the gym floor... what does management not understand about escalators? I slither to the first non-threatening bench and take a load off my feet. There I rummage through my gym bag for the necessary items to sustain the mad workout ahead. No rush.

The bag's become heavy and worn over the years and I consider getting a new one, a larger one, on wheels, like those travelers tote about at airports. I remove and pile my vital gear at my side and take a quick inventory: Wraps aren't sufficient lately, the Handi-Splint Kit is far more effectual; injectable morphine, no easy score, beats Tylenol hands down; portable defibrillator, oxygen canister, ammonium nitrate, water and chalk... all set.

Or, all fired up and ready to go, as they say on the ole campaign trail.

I stand, hold on, stare into space and twitch several times, a quaint practice similar to divining. Messages are sent through the central nervous system, as far as I can tell, and it is clear as crystal that today is arm day. I shiver with excitement, involuntarily resume my place on the bench and have a refreshing swig of water. Show time.

I retrieve my Bomber's Bodybuilder's Manual and look up arm exercises under biceps and triceps. Do I bomb both muscles on one day, or do I blast them on separate days; how many sets and how many reps; how much effort and in what order? Gets complicated, but no one said this stuff was easy. You've gotta be tough, intuitive and highly motivated to be a true musclebuilder, serious and determined and gifted.

I jest in friendly self-mockery. I'm still at my keyboard and the first front of a fierce rainstorm has just reached our rooftop. Hope the plastic tarps secured with ten-pound plates hold fast... so far, so good. My right hand throbs and resembles a battered softball with puffy sausages protruding in various directions reaching for those tiny keys. My once-a-year gout flare-up is fading after a weeklong siege. Sweet. It's these things and the threat of losing power that has me painting ludicrous computeresque pictures this Sunday in broad-shouldered strokes.

I laugh at defeat when it dares knock on my door. "Get ye behind me, Satan. You'll find no subscribers here," is my declaration. Which reminds me; I'm writing a newsletter for a bunch of highly motivated people who want to develop muscle, discard fat, increase power and improve their health -- not read the pointless ramblings of a wet, rusting and gout-ridden ironhead. Where's the beef?

Thought you'd never ask... anyone for a teensy hotdog on a toothpick?

Here's a list of exercise alternatives and modifications I've discovered, invented and been obliged to adapt recently to accommodate limitations due to injuries and years, needs and abilities.

Yeah, they're tough subjects to breach, but somebody's gotta do it.

Believe it or not, as we grow older and reach a certain age of maturity, we (yes, even bombers) diminish in muscle and strength, joint health and flexibility, energy and endurance, resistance and that happy-go-lucky-life-is-grand-bring-it-on attitude. This is not a conspiracy, as some think, and, no, it's not a superstition; it's a cold and ruthless scientific fact.

Most folks grow old kicking and screaming, rejecting its cruel demands. Some accept aging gracefully and comply with its requests (ha); some of us, strong in heart and wide in wing, fight the good fight, defending our stronghold, reinforcing our structure, fortifying our provisions, protecting our wellbeing, mending our wounds, minimizing deterioration and preventing incursion. We rally, we choose not to submit.

The process, like building muscle and might, is done gradually and painstakingly. It's part of the great journey -- the part when the pedal-to-the-metal is removed from the gas and applied to the brakes. We're slowin' this baby down before she winds up in a ditch. One more turn like that and it's the junkyard, Buster, between the Packard and Nash Rambler. We've been where we were going; it's time now to cruise and amuse.

I'm hyperbolizing, bombers. We're all about the same age, 15 to 75, which, in the scheme of things, is just a moment. It's time we let the tricks out of the bag. Adjustments, alterations, eliminations, reductions and tuning and dialing are on-going. They are accomplished through compromise in utilized weight, modification in form (AKA standard exercise execution), focus on pain as the major guide from first to last rep, pace according to muscle exertion to achieve maximum pump and burn, order in the mind and routine to overcome irregularities (AKA sloppy, chaotic and compromised performance)... and variation and variety and volume and verve and vanity and vava vavoom.

I'm killing time 'cuz I hate to describe exercise execution... Booring. Here we go:

> Thick-bar bench, any grip that is least painful or most rewarding will do. Wide grip kills me, so I stay close and tight with the tris and delt regions benefiting most. So you can't go heavy anymore, but the action is there. Make the most of it. Overall upper torso is grateful. Smile, be happy!

> Leaning barbell curls are a treat for the bis and save the lower back when we find ourselves thrusting with excess oomph and pain. That lower back squeals till it's warmed up and we then tend to overuse and aggravate the region. Tomorrow we sing the blues; next year we need a laminectomy.

Try this: lean your butt against a solidly racked bar (best) or a post and curl with a thus-minimized thrusting action, and make the bis do the work. Saves the back on the eccentric and concentric, yet has no mercy on the biceps.

> Tilting dumbbell curls accomplish a similar purpose -- enable a satisfactory big-muscle thrust while saving the back, maintain balance when balance is problematic and enjoy muscle focus.

Stand before a secured bench and bend knees sufficiently to lean stably on the bench edge. Curl thumbs-up (my favorite), palms forward or alternately. It's a whole new experience to the curl and associated engaged muscles. These movements take time, experimentation, finesse and a positive approach.

> Extended sets are the three or four sets of six sets of six reps of related exercises in one set, which I've recommended in the past few months. They justify using those light dumbbells at the silly end of the rack, and they accomplish a lot of muscle work and appreciation in a short period of precious time.

<http://www.davedraper.com/url/extended-sets.php>

> Thank heaven for the Smith Press. I hate it when I see guys and gals doing cleans and presses on the platform I built. Cruel envy. But, I can still get deltoid action out of the Smith Press without collapsing into a heap. Front presses, press behind neck, inclines. Works for me. And don't give me that sissy stuff, Louie the Lug. If you're lucky, Louie, your day will come.

At this moment my eyes are crossed and I'm sticking my tongue out at ya'll in disdain. Talk about growin' up...

> Widegrip pulldowns to behind the neck, while seated with the back to the apparatus has a definite upper-back accent. Not only that, it's a relief for those poor insertions that are overly tugged upon during the ever-popular frontal approach. Try it. With a lighter weight, sit at the end of the seat, positioning you away from the overhead pulley. Stretch your legs forward, or assume a seated staggered-leg placement (my fav) and proceed. Look for full extension at the top and a tight contraction on the bottom. Wide Lat Stamp of Approval. Form counts.

> The one-hand, sidearm dumbbell raise from the back or the front of the torso is the secret alternative to the typical two-hand variation. Sidearm laterals ensure shoulder function and health and are indispensable in full deltoid construction, shape and definition.

It happens not uncommonly that one deltoid becomes traumatized and cannot sustain balanced-body movements. We work around the pain and do our best to avoid medical intervention. So what else is new? Lateral raises are particularly awkward and aggravating, the body contorting to maintain two disagreeable grooves, each at the expense of the other. Ugly... laterals go south with the wind.

Do this: Grab a ten-pounder (+ or -) with your left hand and a sturdy upright with your right. Lean away slightly from the upright -- a five-degree tilt -- and raise the dumbbell from your extended side to a tightly contracted head-high position. Lower with resistance to the starting point and repeat 6, 8, 10 times.

The starting point can be a designated place behind the hips (front delt accent), or a place from before the torso (side and rear delt accent). Focus, form and finesse required. You are wise to develop these single-arm actions, as they are exhilarating and productive. They follow their own groove painlessly (almost) and add to your lot.

I'm down to three loyal, bleary-eyed readers. Everyone else has gone home, to bed, to dinner, the movies, the john... I can take a hint. I'm winding up my bi-plane and rolling down the runway. Got a thermos full of Bomber Blend (tastes good and it's good for ya), a tank full of fuel and a wing full of wind... make that two. Gonna catch me a sunset...

Never look back. It's done.

God's Speed... da D

2 - Dave's Q&A blog

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

- [Teenager needs to gain weight](#)
- [Learning How to Squat](#)
- [Questions about Gironda and Rheo's supplements](#)
- [How do I develop the outer biceps?](#)
- [What are the chances of becoming a bodybuilding pro?](#)

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

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

3 - Laree, taking over with IronOnline news

At last weekend's Power Systems strength and conditioning workshop, Jay Dawes did a session "Developing Total Athleticism," which included about an hour on agility ladder drills. This part was an audience participation bit, and being a somewhat of a klutz I seriously considered standing to the side as the rest of the hundred or so personal trainers went through the ladder training.

Instead, I was startled to discover how fun it was, and that I wasn't quite as terrible as expected. Heck, I didn't even fall! So, after the session I popped over to the sales booth to pick up an agility ladder just for the fun of it. What's twenty bucks, right?

Wrong. Those things cost \$70 and up, and I'm not kidding. I yanked my hand back off that goodie and backed away thinking, jeez, I can make one of these. Let's take a look at how that went.

<http://www.davedraper.com/url/diy-agility-ladder.php>

Now let's figure out what to do with it: Using an Agility Ladder, a Beginner's Guide to Foot Speed and Agility Training.

<http://www.davedraper.com/url/agility-training.php>

I'm off to Florida for a long weekend with some of my IOL forum pals. I'll take my homemade ladder and see if we can create a few new tricks so I can come home with faster feet. You know, more agile right off the plane. Tell Dave to meet me on the tarmac.

Laree

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<http://davedraper.com/>

IronOnline forum:

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

Dave's Q&A Blog:

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

IronOnline blog:

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

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>

Easy access to our online store:

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