

WESTSIDE FOR SKINNY BASTARDS, Part III

The Final Chapter

by

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When I wrote the original "Skinny Bastards" article, I had a feeling it would generate a great deal of discussion. To be honest, though, I had no idea it would become as popular as it has. At least 75 % of the hundreds of emails I received a weekly basis refer in some way to the WS4SB program. First, a bit of his tory...

After a year of answering questions about my original article and making modifications to it in the gym with my athletes, I decided to write **Part 2**. In that second installment, I discussed how to incorporate running workouts into the original training template. Another two years have passed now, and the avalanche of questions involving WS4SB continues to kill my inbox! This is a perfect opportunity to sit down and provide more answers to the most common questions people have been asking. In this, my third and final chapter, I will clarify the following:

- » A new 4-day-a-week strength training template for the off-season
- » Explanation of warmup sets
- » New ways to incorporate speed training and conditioning into the program
- » Sample in-season training templates
- » Bonus "Washed-up Meathead" template
- » The importance of including "indicator" exercises in your program

Hopefully, after you're done reading this article, most of your questions regarding the WS4SB saga will be answered. Unlike Sylvester Stallone, I will not drag this out into a 6-part series. I know when to call it quits! I'm confident that what you're about to read will end the Westside for Skinny Bastards trilogy on top! I want you to find your answers here, once and for all, so you can spend more time in the gym training and less time on the computer asking questions.



Not a good way to end a series...

So, without further ado, I present to you, **"Westside for Skinny Bastards III- The Final Chapter"**...

4-DAY STRENGTH TRAINING TEMPLATE

My original Skinny Bastard template consisted of three strength training days with an optional fourth day. Although a 3-day template is sufficient for building size and strength, I quickly realized that most people want to train more. WS4SB will now provide you with a 4-day strength training template. It's been over three years since I wrote the original article, so it's about time you skinny bastards graduated to a 4-day split that more closely resembles a "traditional" Westside split! First, I'll reveal the new and improved template. After that, I'll go over the specific details you'll need to know.

MONDAY - Max-Effort Upper Body

TUESDAY - Dynamic-Effort Lower Body

WEDNESDAY - Off

THURSDAY - Repetition Upper Body

FRI DAY - Max-Effort Lower Body

SATURDAY - Off

SUNDAY - Off

You can also split it up like this...

MONDAY - Max-Effort Lower Body

TUESDAY - Off

WEDNESDAY - Max-Effort Upper Body

THURSDAY - Off

FRI DAY - Dynamic-Effort Lower Body

SATURDAY - Off

SUNDAY - Repetition Upper Body

Now that the new template is in place, I'll reveal the changes I've made since my original article...

Max-Effort Upper Body notes:

Not much about the max-effort movement has changed since my original article was published. I still prefer 35 repmax (RM) - as opposed to a 1RM - for my skinny bastards. The one thing that has changed - you'll notice this later on in this article - is the second movement on max-effort upper body day. We recently started having our athletes perform two high-rep sets of an exercise immediately following the max-effort movement.

This high-rep movement is usually an exercise that's closely related to the max-effort movement. For example, if our athletes performed a 3RM in the bench press, their second exercise may be two sets of dumbbell benches. We don't do this all the time, but it's a new "twist" in our templates that wasn't covered in previous articles.

Dynamic-Effort Lower Body notes:

This is obviously the biggest change from my original skinny bastard program. In my absolutely no dynamic days, I didn't use them because I believed my skinny bastards needed to develop their strength. After all, you can't flex bone! Although the main focus of my modified Westside programs still to build muscle and strength, I've had tremendous success during the past year by incorporating a dynamic-effort lower body day into the program.

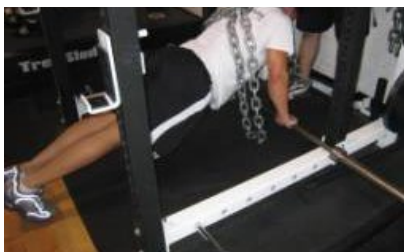
My dynamic-effort lower body day, however, is not what you think. With apologies to all the skinny bastards that were about to lace up their Duck Taylors, throw out their favorite Westside shirt, straps, bands, and chains onto the barbell and start squatting explosively -- you're not ready for that yet! Experience has shown me that skinny bastards do NOT respond well to having a barbell on their backs twice a week. It's simply too taxing on their bodies and they can't recover. Also, most skinny bastards have heard enough *controlled* tempo, so why on earth would they try to have them perform the lift quickly?

That said, how do I get my skinny bastards to start training their newfound muscle to contract explosively, yet in a safe and effective manner? The answer is simple: *basic jump training*!

Incorporating box jumps, vertical jumps, broad jumps, and hurdle jumps has had a profound effect on our athletes' explosiveness and performance. I also like the fact that jumping helps improve athleticism. The box jump is a perfect example of what I'm talking about here. In order to perform a box jump onto a high box, you must stick the landing. I'm a fan of any exercise that helps develop explosive power, mobility, and balance simultaneously!

Another positive aspect of jumping is that it doesn't take you as long as squatting. This is important because we don't want our dynamic-effort lower body day to take away from our max-effort lower body day. You'll also notice in the sample workouts below that I keep the volume very low on the assistance exercises during dynamic-effort lower body day. Once again, this is because we don't want to bore for the max-effort workout. This low volume "jumping" workout has complemented our athletes' heavy lower body days extremely well!

Repetition Upper Body notes:



Another change we've made is that we don't always perform sets of max reps on our main lift during Rep Upper Body Day. Sometimes, we just use a basic "bodybuilding" set/reps scheme. For example, instead of performing 3 sets of max reps in the incline dumbbell bench press, we may simply perform 4 sets of 12 reps with 2-3 minutes rest between sets. We've found that performing high reps (to almost) failure week after week has a tendency to burn athletes out. This holds true even for beginners.

Lately, I've been throwing in a 2 or 3 week cycle of a "bodybuilding" set/reps scheme on Rep Day every 4-6 weeks. For example, I may have an athlete perform barbell push-ups for 3 sets of max reps for 2 weeks. After that, I may prescribe a 2 week cycle off lat dumbbell bench presses for 3 sets of max reps. After 4 weeks of going on a "fairly" strict diet, I may then prescribe a 2 week cycle in which the athlete performs incline dumbbell bench presses with a moderate weight for 4 sets of 12. Rotating back and forth between these two "reps methods" is a great way to both build muscle and prevent the athlete from burning out.

We have not made any major modifications to our ~~Max-Effort Lower Body Day~~. Our athletes have developed incredible lower body strength and power on this program. I ~~rabig~~ believe in this axiom "If it ain't broke, don't fix it!" That said we ~~airt~~ fixn' a thing on ~~max-effort lower body day~~!

Let's move on ...

New & Improved SkinnyBastard Template

Now that you've learned some of the theory behind my new training template, it's time to see it in action. This first schedule is my basic template. It will work for most athletes during their off-season when strength training takes precedence over other forms of conditioning and technical training. You'll notice, after reading this template, that I've provided you with a variety of other templates that can be utilized during different times of the year.

MONDAY – Max-Ef fort UpperBody

A. **Max-Effort Exercise**—work upto a max set of 3-5 reps in one of the following exercises:

- » This bar or regular barbell bench press
- » Barbell floor press
- » Rack lockouts/ **Suspended chain lockouts**
- » Inclined barbell bench press (regular grip or close grip)

- » Close-grip bench press (index finger on smooth part of bar)
- » Weighted chin-ups
- » Board presses or foam presses
- » Chain bench press (*recommended for not-so-skinny bastards)
- » Band bench press (*recommended for not-so-skinny bastards)
- » **Reverse band bench press** (*recommended for not-so-skinny bastards)

B. **Supplemental Exercise**—perform a set of max reps in one of the following exercises. (Choose a weight you can perform for 15-20 reps or the heaviest set. Use the same weight for both sets and rest 3-4 minutes between sets).

- » Flat DB bench press (palms in or out)
- » Inclined DB bench press (palms in or out)
- » DB floor press (palms in)
- » Barbell push-ups (wearing weighted vest)
- » Band strappush-ups (wearing weighted vest)
- » **"Criss-cross" chain push-ups**
- » **"Triceps death"**
- » Chin-ups (don't perform these if you chose to do weighted chin-ups for your first exercise)

C. **Horizontal pulling / Rear delt superset** - Superset one exercise from "Group 1" with an exercise from "Group 2." Perform 3-4 supersets of 8-12 reps of each exercise.

Group 1

- » DB rows
- » Barbell rows
- » Seated cable rows (various bars)
- » T-bar rows
- » Chest supported rows

Group 2

- » Rear delt flyes
- » Scarecrows
- » Face pulls
- » Seated DB "power cleans"
- » Band pull-aparts

D. **Traps**—Perform 3-4 sets of 8-15 reps of one of the following exercises:

- » DB shrugs
- » Barbell shrugs
- » Safety squat bar shrugs
- » Behind the back barbell shrugs

E. **Elbow flexor exercise**—Perform 3-4 sets of 8-15 reps of one of the following exercises:

- » Barbell curls (regular or thick bar)
- » DB curls (standing)
- » Seated incline DB curls
- » Hammer curls
- » Zottman curls
- » Iso-hold DB curls

TUESDAY—Dynamic Effort Lower Body

A. **Jump training**—choose one of the following exercises and perform 8 sets of 1-3 jumps:

- » **Box jumps**
- » Vertical jumps
- » Broad jumps
- »

- » Hurdle hops (jump over hurdle and land on ground)
- » **Boxsquat into box jump**
- » **Depth jumps (onto box)**
- » **Weighted Reactive box jumps**

B. **Unilateral exercises (w/added ROM)** – choose one of the following exercises and perform 3 sets of 8-10 reps:

- » **Bulgarian split squats, front leg elevated** (hold onto DB's or with a barbell)
- » Barbell reverse lunge, front foot elevated
- » Barbell reverse lunge w/ knee lift (front foot elevated)
- » Step-ups (box height slightly above knee)

C. **Hyperextension exercises** – choose one of the following exercises and perform 3 sets of 8-12 reps:

- » 45-degree hyperextensions
- » Reverse hyperextensions
- » Pulldowns
- » Swiss ball back bridge + leg curl
- » Glute-ham raises
- » Romanian deadlift
- » Forward sled dragging, upright posture (3 sets of 30 yards)

D. **Weighted Abdominals** – choose one of the following exercises and perform 3 sets of 10-15 reps:

- » DB side bends
- » Offset barbell side bends
- » Barbell Russian twists
- » Low abductor band pulldowns
- » Hanging leg raises
- » Weighted Swiss ball crunches
- » Spread-eagle sit-ups (hold onto DB over chest)
- » Standing sit-ups (using a band or a high pull ey)

THURSDAY – Repetition Upper Body

A. **Repetition Exercise** – choose one of the following exercises and perform 3 sets of max reps **OR 4 sets of 12-15 reps:**

- » Flat DB bench press (palms in or out)
- » Inclined DB bench press (palms in or out)
- » DB bench press or Swiss ball (palms in or out)
- » DB floor press (palms in)
- » Push-up variations
- » Chin-up variations
- » **Barbell bench press (55-60% 1RM)**

B. **Vertical pulling / Rear delt superset** – Superset one exercise from "Group 1" with one exercise from "Group 2." Perform 3-4 supersets of 8-12 reps of each exercise.

Group 1

- » Lat pulldown (various bars)
- » Chin-ups (don't perform these if you chose to do chin-ups for your first exercise)
- » Straight arm pulldowns

Group 2

- » Rear delt flyes
- » Scarecrows
- » Face pulls
- » Seated DB "power cleans"
- » Band pull-aparts

C. **Medial delts** – choose one of the following exercises and perform sets of 8-12 reps:

- » DB lateral raises
- » L-lateral raises
- » Cable lateral raises
- » DB military press
- » DB side press

D. **Traps/Arms superset** – Super set one exercise from "Group1" with an exercise from Group 2. "Perform supersets."

Group1 (Perform 8-10 reps)

- » DB shrugs
- » Barbell shrugs
- » Safety squat bar shrugs
- » Behind the back barbell shrugs

Group2

- » Barbell curls (8-10 reps each set)
- » DB curls (8-10 reps each set)
- » Seated Incline DB curls (8-10 reps each set)
- » Hammer curls (8-10 reps each set)
- » Zottman curls (8-10 reps each set)
- » Iso-hold DB curls (8-10 reps each set)
- » DB triceps extensions (10-15 reps each set)
- » Triceps pushdowns (15-25 reps each set)

E. **Grip / Forearms** – choose one of the following exercises:

- » Wrist roller (2-3 sets of 2-3 reps)
- » Thick bar or heavy DB holds (2-3 sets of max time)
- » Plate pin gripping (2-3 sets of 2-3 reps)
- » Captains of Crush gripper (3 sets of max reps each hand)
- » Rice dig (3 timed sets)

**DON'T train your grip/forearms if you're planning on deadlifting the next day.*

FRI DAY – Max-Effort Lower Body

A. **MAX-EFFORT LIFT** – work up to a max set of 3-5 reps in one of the following exercises:

- » **Box squats** (regular bar, **safety squat bar**, cambered bar, buffalo bar)
- » **Free squats** (regular bar, safety squat bar, cambered bar, buffalo bar)
- » Straight bar deadlifts (traditional style, sumo style)
- » **Trap Bar deadlifts**
- » Rack pulls (partial deadlifts)
- » **Tire flip** – (remember, you're max-effort lifting so don't necessarily have the limited to just barbell exercises!)

**Bands and/or chains can be incorporated into all of the above exercises for the not-so-skinny bastards reading this article.*

B. **UNI LATERAL MOVEMENT** – choose one of the following exercises and perform sets of 6-12 reps:

- » Bulgarian split squat variation (holding DBs or with a barbell)
- » Reverse lunge variation
- » Step-up variation
- » Walking lunges
- » Backward sled drags (3 sets of 30 yards)
- » Forward sled drags, 45-degree angle (3 sets of 30 yards)

C. **HAMST RING/ POSTERIOR CHAIN MOVEMENT** – choose one of the following exercises and perform sets of 6-12 reps:

sets of 8-12 reps:

- » 45-degree hyperextensions
- » Reverse hyperextensions
- » Pull-throughs
- » Swiss ball backbridge + leg curl
- » Glute-ham raises
- » Romanian deadlifts
- » Forward sled dragging (upright posture)

D. **Ground-based, high-rep abdominal circuit** - Example: **sprinter sit-ups, V-ups, toe touches, hip thrusts**. Perform 10-20 reps of each exercise and go through the circuit 2-3 times. Rest 1-2 minutes between circuits.

Not es regar ding warm-ups

You'll notice that I don't list the number of warm-ups for your main lift on Max-Effort days or Repetition Upper Body days. Instead, I use the term "work up." This is because the number of warm-up sets you'll be performing is determined by *how strong you are!* The stronger you are, the more sets you'll need to reach your max weight. I favor multiple sets of low reps on warm-up Max-Effort Day and just 1 or 2 sets of 6-8 reps before your first exercise on Repetition Upper Body Day.

Before you warm up with weights, however, you should be performing a 5-15 minute general warm-up. Make sure you have a light sweat going before getting under the bar.

Here's an example of "working up" to a max set of 3 reps in the box squat. Assuming an athlete's goal is to box squat 315 lbs. for 3 reps, a sample warm-up would look something like this:

95 X 5
135 X 5
185 X 3
225 X 3
275 X 3
295 X 3
315 X 3

It should be noted that these warm-up weights are *not* engraved in stone! Some people like to take bigger jumps and some prefer smaller. YOU must figure out what works best for YOU! The one thing I will suggest is that if you are a weak, skinny bastard you must make sure you're performing at least 5 total sets for your max-effort exercise. For example, let's say you're going for a RM in the box squat and your goal is 185 lbs. Don't just do 5 X 5, 135 X 5 and 185 X 5. *Skinny bastards need more volume in order to grow*, so make sure you make smaller jumps in weight and get more sets in before your main set.

On Repetition Upper Body Day - *when you're performing 3 sets of max reps* - you won't need to perform as many warm-up sets before your first actual work set because you're not handling a maximal weight. For example, let's say a workout calls for you to perform 3 sets of max reps of DB benches on the Swiss ball. If you're using 65 lb. DB's, and your goal is 25 reps on the first set, I suggest you only perform 2 sets of 6-8 reps before your first work set. Here, you might do 45 lb. DB's for 8 reps and then 55 lb. DB's for 6 reps. Another option would be to perform just 1 set of 8 reps with 50 lb. DB's before your first work set. Again, you must decide, through trial and error, what works best for you!

Now that the basic template is in place and we're done on how to perform our warm-up sets, let's check out some other training templates...

New way to organize your speed training/conditioning



The most popular question I get regarding my WS4SB template is how to incorporate speed training and conditioning into the routine. Everyone is perpetually searching for the best way to incorporate running into their lifting program. It's hell on a Grail of training, and it seems to be whatever you are constantly after. I'm here to tell you, however, that there is no magic bullet here. Each athlete's template has to be unique to his or her

you, however, that there's *nothing* between you and your goal. Each athlete's template is unique and must be specifically scheduled and prepared for.

Nonetheless, I will provide you with one of the more popular and, more importantly, *practical* templates that I've used with my athletes. The use of this template has achieved incredible results for us. Remember, this is only one of *MANY* effective ways to organize your strength and speed/conditioning workouts.

STRENGTH & SPEED TEMPLATE

MONDAY – Max-Effort Upper Body

This workout remains the same as described in our basic template with one exception – *you're not going to work up to true max on your max-effort exercise*. Once I start incorporating more running into my athletes' workouts, I like to drop the percentages down on their "max-effort" lifts. This prevents the athlete from burning out – while simultaneously maintaining strength levels – as we ramp up the conditioning aspect of the program. I suggest working up to 2 sets of 3 reps with 80-82% of your 1RM for your max-effort lift. If you're more advanced athlete, you can work up to 2-3 singles with 90-92% of your 1RM on your max-effort lift. If you're feeling *really* good on a given day, you can work up to a true max set. The rest of this workout can remain the same as outlined in the basic template.

TUESDAY – Speed Training

- A. **General Warm-up/ Movement skills (5- 15 minutes)** – The goal of this portion of the workout is to increase your core temperature by performing basic movement skills and calisthenics. (Example: bodyweight squats, jumping jacks, skipping, backpedaling, etc...)
- B. **Ground-based mobility (5-15 minutes)** – Once you've broken a sweat and your muscles are warm, I suggest performing ground-based mobility drills for 5-15 minutes. (Sample mobility drills include **roll-overs into V-sits, fire hydrant circles, mountain climbers, groiners**, etc...)
- C. **Frequency drills (23 minutes)** – I always like to conclude my warm-up with 1 or 2 drills that excite the central nervous system before beginning the speed training portion of the workout. These drills should only last 5-10 seconds, and I recommend 2-3 sets for each. (Example: low pogo jumps, **wideouts**, ankleing, etc.)
- D. **Speed training** – We always separate "speed training" from conditioning. When I refer to speed training for non-track athletes, I'm talking about distances of 60 yards or less, with complete (or close to it) recovery between sprints. *The goal of this workout is to actually get faster. That's why it's done early in the week when your legs are at their freshest.* For example, if a football player wants to incorporate some combine tests into his weekly template, today would be the ideal day to do so. A sample workout would look like this:

1. **10-yard sprints** – 8 sprints with 1 minute rest between sprints
2. **20-yard shuttle** – 5-6 reps with 1-2 minutes rest between sprints
3. **3-cone drill** – 4 reps with 2-3 minutes rest between sprints

*A football player who *isn't* concerned about incorporating combine tests into his workout could do a sample linear speed workout as follows:

1. **10-yard sprints** – 10 sprints with 1 minute rest
2. **20-yard sprints** – 6 sprints with 2 minutes rest
3. **40-yard sprints** – 4 sprints with 4 minutes rest

*I obviously can't write a hundred different sample workouts for every sport and position. I'm hoping you'll understand the goal of this Tuesday workout and design, for yourself, a plan that best suits *your* needs. Simply put, this workout should consist of short, explosive sprints or agility drills with full recovery.

WEDNESDAY- Off

THURSDAY – Max-Effort Lower Body & Conditioning

- A. **Max-effort exercise** – You will *not* work up to true max on this exercise. I suggest working up to 2 sets of 3 reps with 75-80% of your 1RM. Another option is to work up to 2-3 singles with 90% of your 1RM if you're an advanced athlete.
- B. **Hip extension exercise** – choose one of the following exercises and perform 3 sets of 10 reps
 - » 45-degree back raises
 - » Reverse hyperextensions

» Pull-throughs

C. **Sprinter sit-ups** – 3 sets of 20 reps

D. **Conditioning "finisher"** – choose one of the following exercises..

» ***Prowler sprints** – perform 4-10 30-yard sprints with about 1 minute rest between sprints (depending on your conditioning level).



**I don't endorse many pieces of equipment, but if you're a serious athlete looking to get in shape, you have to get a prowler. I've used it with all types of athletes - from professional boxers to NFL football players and rugby players. No matter what sport you play, this thing will get you in the best shape of your life. You can purchase one [HERE](#).*

» **Farmers walks** – perform 4-6 sets of 40-60 yards with 2-minute rest between sets

» **Forward or backward sled drags** – perform 4-6 sets of 30-50 yards with 2-minute rest between sets

FRI DAY – Repetition Upper Body

*Do not hesitate a way as described earlier in the new 4-day program. The only difference is that you're going to finish the workout with weighted abdominal side and grip training.

SATURDAY – Conditioning

A. **Warm-up** – Same format as Tuesday's workout (General warm-up, ground-based mobility, frequency drills)

After the warm-up, choose one of the following 3 options...

OPTION 1 – Conditioning "test"

If you're a football player or any other athlete and you have a conditioning test you'll have to perform when you get to training camp, you can train for it this day. (**NOTE:** Although I feel that most football conditioning tests suck, your coach, unfortunately, is going to evaluate you on how well you perform them. You'll therefore need to practice whichever one he uses before showing up to camp. For example, I have noticed how running 16 110-yard sprints carries over to football, but if that's your conditioning test, you should drill it on Saturday if you decide to use this template).

OPTION 2 – Skill conditioning

This involves performing a specific aspect of your sport with complete rest intervals. For example, if you're a football wide receiver, you can get a quarterback to throw to you as you **practice running pass routes** with minimal rest between repetitions. Another example would be for a basketball player to do a pick-up game of basketball. A soccer player can go to a soccer field and work on his other ball handling skills up and down the field. Hopefully, you get my point. The possibilities are endless for any sport.

OPTION 3 – General conditioning

This option entails sprinting various distances, performing core drills or other such conditioning drills - with incomplete rest periods. For example, a football player could perform sprints/drills that take 5-15 seconds to complete, resting for only 30-60 seconds between drills. Here is a sample general conditioning workout we performed with our football players this summer:

1. **Mountain climbers into 10-yard sprint** – 8 sets with 30-second rest between sets. After you complete the 8 sprints, rest 1 minute before moving onto the 2nd exercise.
2. **Wideouts into 15-yard sprint** – perform wideouts for 5 seconds and then sprint 15 yards on command. Perform 6 sets with 45-second rest between sets. After you complete the 6 sets, rest 2 minutes before moving onto the third exercise.
3. **60-yard shuttle** – perform 4 shuttles with 45-second rest between sets. After you complete the 4

sets, rest 1 minute before moving on to the final exercise.

4. **Illinois Drill** – perform sets with 1 minute rest between sets.

SUNDAY - Off

IN- SEASON TRAINING



Most athletes will work diligently to improve their strength during the off-season, only to lose it their hard-earned gains when they need them most: *during the season!* Think about what I'm saying here. What goes up for a football player to be as strong as hell in April, yet weak as a chod girl in November?

I believe most athletes lose their off-season gains during the season because they've not been properly educated on the correct way to perform their in-season training. Many athletes stop performing their off-season workouts during the season. Those who do this quickly realize that their off-season program is too demanding to maintain. As a result, they eventually become frustrated and stop training altogether! This, obviously, is the worst thing an athlete can possibly do.

Athletes need to understand that they can maintain their strength during the season on *very little work* - If they're doing the right exercises at the proper intensity. Speaking of proper intensity, it's important to get a true max on your "indicator" lifts before the season starts. This will enable you to take proper weight selections for your main lifts during the season. For example, 6 weeks before all of our high school football players started training camp, we tested their box squat and bench press. Our training weights and percentages for our in-season programs are based on those max lifts.

Another point I need to make about in-season training is that it's extremely *unpredictable*. Athletes constantly contact me in search of their in-season program and, as usual, such a program simply doesn't exist. There's no way to predict how an athlete will make it through an entire season. There are just too many variables involved - injuries, school schedule, practice time, easy games, hard games, etc...

The key is to *listen to your body*! If you've just had an easy game blowout, let's say - in which you were taken out at halftime, you can hit the weights a little harder during the week. If you're coming off a tough game in which you suffered an injury and you have another tough game the following week, your best bet is to go easy in the weight room that week and just perform some restoration exercises. Taking all this into account, I'll now give you some guidance by providing you with one (of many) sample in-season programs that I've used with my football clients.

WORKOUT #1

**This workout was performed on Monday. (Their game was on Saturday.)*

- A. **A. Max-Effort Upper Body lift** – work up to 5RM week 1 & work up to 3RM week 2. *Be somewhat conservative with your weight selections. I don't advocate forced reps during the season. The goal is to work up to a heavy weight, but you want to get all reps on your own.

**I also like performing 2-week mini-cycles during the season in which you alternate between full-range max-effort lifts and partial range lifts for the upper body. For example: Weeks 1 & 2 = bench press; Weeks 3 & 4 = 3-board press; Weeks 5 & 6 = incline bench press; Weeks 7 & 8 = floor press; Weeks 9 & 10 = close grip bench press; Weeks 11 & 12 = 4-board press*

- B. **"Bladburns"** – Perform sets of the 4 exercises that are shown in the video link. Hold each position for 10-20 seconds. Rest 1 minute between sets.
- C. **Unilateral lower body movement** – perform sets of 8 reps

D1. **Rowing variation** – 3 sets of 10-12 reps

D2. **DB Shrugs** – 3 sets of 10-12 reps

E. **High rep abdominal circuit** – perform 40 various moves through circuit 2X

C. High Rep Anatomical Circuit - perform the exercises along through circuit 2x

WORKOUT #2

**This workout was performed on Wednesday, but it can also be performed on Thursday.*

- A. **Box Jumps** - perform 3 sets of 3
- B. **Box Squats** - perform 3-week mini-cycle with the following percentages: Week 1 = 60% of 1RM for 6 sets of 2 w/ 1 minute rest between sets; Week 2 = 70% of 1RM for 5 sets of 2 w/ 1 minute rest between sets; Week 3 = workup to singles w/ 80-85% of your 1RM Rest 2-3 minutes between sets. After 3 weeks, start the cycle over. You may increase or decrease the percentages depending on how you feel. Alternate between regular barbell & **safety squat bar** every 3 weeks if you can.
- C1. **DB Bench Variation** - perform 3 sets of 8-12 reps
- C2. **Rear Delt/Upper Back exercise** - choose one of the following exercises & perform 3 sets of 8-12 reps
- » Rear delt flyes
 - » Scarecrows
 - » Face pulls
 - » Seated DB "power cleans"
 - » Band pull-aparts
- D. **DB or cable lateral raises** - perform 3 sets of 12-15 reps
- E. **Abs/Lowback superset** - perform 3 supersets of your favorite ab exercise with either 45-degree back raises or reverse hyperextensions. Perform 10-20 reps of each exercise.

Although I've unofficially published a sample in-season template, I know I'm bound to receive a thousand emails asking me, "What should I do if I can only train a week during the in-season?"



I'm well aware that sports such as basketball, baseball and soccer - among others - have multiple games per week. This certainly makes in-season training a little more complicated. One way to combat this is to simply alternate between the two in-season templates provided above. For example, perform Workout #1 on your off days during the first week of your season. During an off day on week 2, perform Workout #2. Go back to Workout #1 again during week 3, and so on. If a tight week comes up in which you only have one or two games, you can perform both workouts that week. As I've stated before, *you must use your best judgment*.

*If you know in advance that you're definitely not going to be able to train more than once a week during the season, I suggest designing one full-body workout that incorporates squat variation, bench press variation and row variation. This workout should also cover any weak points that you need to address during the season.

WASHED-UP MEATHEAD TEMPLATE



As a result of overwhelming popular demand, I've decided to devote a small section of this article to all you "washed-up meatheads" out there. Washed-up meatheads are essentially non-athletes who don't want to go to the gym and run like everyone else. Washed-up meatheads come from all walks of life - they're police officers, corporate CEOs, school teachers, coaches and small business owners. Most of them are former high school and/or

collegiate athletes who've maintained that same competitive spirit as they've gotten older. Unlike most health club members, washed-up meatheads go to the gym to *train* - not to socialize and make friends! Hey, just because you're over 40, or 50 or, in my dad's case, 60 - it doesn't mean you can't still train hard and get results!

Although washed-up meatheads don't want to do the "Average Joe" workout, they also don't need to do everything a college pro athlete does. Keeping this in mind, here are some thoughts on a very practical and productive washed-up meatheads template:

MONDAY - Max-Effort Upper Body

WEDNESDAY - Max-Effort Lower Body

FRI DAY - Repetition Upper Body

As you can see, this template is very similar to the base 4-day template I outlined earlier in this article, and your workouts can follow the exact same format I laid out there. The only day I've omitted is the dynamic-effort lower body day. I just don't feel that the dynamic-effort lower body day is necessary if you're a washed-up meathead looking to get jacked. On the other hand, if you're in your meathead infancy years (late 20s to early thirties) and you want to improve your athleticism *while you're getting jacked*, you can follow the exact 4-day template I outlined earlier in this article.

OPTIONAL WORKOUTS

To summarize, my base template for washed-up meatheads is the 3-day plan outlined above. If you're a meathead that's looking to get jacked and you want to add a fourth day of lifting to my base template, here's what I recommend:

MONDAY - Max-Effort Upper Body

WEDNESDAY - Max-Effort Lower Body

THURSDAY - Repetition Upper Body

SATURDAY - "Vanity" Day (This workout can consist of extra biceps, shoulders, calves & abs)



Thoughts on conditioning for Wasted-up Meatheads

Most of the washed-up meatheads that have contacted me aren't only concerned about getting jacked. They're also at a point in their lives where they want to be *healthy*. Believ it or not, there comes a time in some people's lives at which being healthy enough to play with their kids takes precedence over max-effort deadlifts! For these people, I recommend incorporating 2-3 days a week of "cardio" or some kind of conditioning.

Although I prefer sprints, prowler pushes, sled dragging or similar high-intensity activities, I realize that not all meatheads are healthy enough to perform these types of activities anymore. Whether it's a rolling injury that's holding you back or you've simply let yourself get out of shape, make sure you don't neglect your conditioning just because you can't do the "hardcore" things you used to do when you were an athlete. Make sure you do some form of conditioning 2-3 times a week. This can entail going for a one-mile jog, riding a stationary bike or just going for a walk. If you're in good enough condition, I highly recommend sprinting, prowler pushes, sled dragging and other forms of high-intensity movements as your best form of conditioning. These activities will simultaneously get you in kick-ass shape AND have a positive effect on your physique.



To summarize, I don't care what form of conditioning you choose just do *some* thing 2-3 times per week. If you need to perform how intense activities like kettlebell training, it doesn't matter how you do them. You can

need to perform them every day. In fact, things like jogging or doing a moderate intensity cardio workout can engage in your "cardio" movement(s) as a warmup before our workouts. You can also do some light activity after your workouts. Another option is to get the work in on your non-lifting days.

If you're able to perform high intensity movements I've discussed I recommend doing them after your two upper body workouts. Coupling your high intensity cardio with your upper body days will enable you to have more day off and more time to recover. If performing your high intensity conditioning on the same days as your upper body workouts isn't practical, you can try conditioning your off days. See how you feel after the first week and then make the necessary adjustments. Whether you're a washed-up meathead or an elite athlete, you must *listen to your body* !

INDICATOR EXERCISES

Now that I've provided you with my templates, I'd like to wrap things up by discussing the importance of having *indicator* exercises in your program.

Firmly believe that every strength program must include indicator exercises. Your indicator exercises are, essentially, your "money" exercises. They're the exercises that I'll tell you whether your programs are working or not. There are no rules to what your indicator exercises should be. I recommend simply choosing 5 exercises that you feel are the most important movements in your strength program in terms of determining your progress. You must then figure out which exercises help strengthen your indicator exercises, as well as which exercises *don't* carry over to your indicator exercises. Keep the exercises in your program that strengthen your indicator exercises. Eliminate the ones that don't carry over.

Generally speaking, in our strength program we have four indicator exercises - two upper body and two lower. Our indicator exercises are:

- #1 - Box Squat
- #2 - Vertical jump and/or box jump
- #3 - Bench Press
- #4 - Chinups

For the majority of our athletes, all of the other exercises we perform in our program are intended to build our four indicator exercises. If we can simultaneously improve these four exercises, we know we're developing many different aspects of strength. For example, the box squat and bench press require absolute strength for the lower and upper body, respectively. The vertical jump (or box jump) requires an athlete to display his/her strength rapidly explosive power and we've also found that jump height directly correlates with an athlete's sprinting speed. The chin-up test requires tremendous *relative body strength* which we've also found to correlate with an athlete's sprinting speed. As you can see, if we can improve our four *indicator* exercises, we know our clients are developing "balanced" strength and power. This builds a terrific foundation for all athletes.

By contrast, if an athlete's bench press and box squat numbers have improved, but their vertical jump and chin-up performance have deteriorated, we know we need to alter their program and re-evaluate the athlete's nutritional habits, etc. If an athlete increases only his/her absolute strength, without improvement in relative strength or explosive power, he/she may become slow and clumsy. This is why we place a huge emphasis on improving ALL FOUR of our *indicator* exercises.

To summarize:

If you determine what your *indicator* exercises are, you'll be better able to design a productive program for yourself. Every couple of weeks (or months), test yourself in your indicator exercises. If they improve, *no one* can tell you that your program sucks! If your indicator exercises do not improve, you'll then know that you have to make changes to your exercises, technique, training volume, diet, or any other training variables that may be hindering your progress. By having *indicator* exercises, you'll constantly be able to monitor your progress and make adjustments along the way. This will improve your results dramatically, as well as your training knowledge and your ability to design a program that best suits *your* needs!

FORMER SKINNY BASTARDS

Before I conduct this article, I want to show you the results this program produces with our athletes on a daily basis. After all, it wouldn't be a "skinny bastard" article without a couple of motivational, *real-world* before and after pictures. Here are just a few of our most recent athlete transformations:

Mile Guadagno - baseball

Before



After





178lb



202lb

Mile Perchia - track/football

Before



171lb

After



193lb

Kelly - soccer

Before



109lb

After



139lb

Dan Murray - football

Before



241lb

After



258lb

Ross Krautman - football (kicker)**Before****118lb****After****143lb****Corey Smith - baseball****Before****205lb****After****241lb****CONCLUSION**

I would now like to address the 2007 class of skinny bastards...

I have held your skinny, weak hands and guided you for the past three years. It is now time to take the tools I have provided you with and figure things out for yourself! Once you're able to experiment and draw your own conclusions, you'll make the most rewarding gain of your life. This is when you'll become truly strong and capable of athletic excellence beyond your wildest dreams. Now make me proud by spreading your not-so-skinny lats and flying to a bigger, stronger - and more independent - future.



Good luck, my skinny bastards.

Yours in strength,
Joe D.