



Strength Training for Runners

(can this title get any more vague?)

Coach Matt Ellis – Primal Athlete Training Center

What is Strength Training?

- Strength training is getting stronger (duh)
 - It has MASSIVE benefits for runners (sprinters, mid distance, long distance, jumpers, pole vault)
 - Obviously, when you compare higher-level sprinters to lower-level sprinters, they have more size and strength.
 - Larger hamstrings, larger glutes, larger and stronger hip flexors, etc.
 - Improves the ability to produce force into the ground at higher velocities.
 - Improves recovery and turnover
 - Injury prevention
 - Improves Overall General Physical Strength
 - i.e. the size of the athlete's gas tank
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Where Do You Strength Train?

- THE WEIGHT ROOM!
 - The weight room is for building strength and size
 - Should probably be called the STRENGTH ROOM
 - The weight room should not be used for things like:
 - Conditioning
 - Jump rope, high rep bodyweight circuits, battle ropes, high rep core work, etc.
 - Speed and Agility Training
 - Ladders, mini-hurdles, sprints, resisted running, etc.
 - Plyometrics
 - Hurdle hops, bounding, skipping (exception – box jumps)
 - Med Ball Work
 - Distance, Height, Against a Wall, Russian Twists, etc.
 - Do all that stuff outside at the track on separate days
 - Don't lump all this stuff in with weight training.
 - Salmon, Peanut M&Ms, pizza, scrambled eggs are all super tasty ingredients to delicious meals, but you'd never mix them together.
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As Coaches, What Can We Control?


- We can only really control what our runners do IN-SEASON
 - Runners typically play other sports (football, soccer, lacrosse, basketball, etc.) and have the entire summer away from school.
 - If they only run (no other sports) you can still only be with them 6 months a year.
 - Distance runners, maybe 9 months a year with XC
 - There are basically 6 months of the year when we can not be with our athletes (OFF-SEASON)
 - Assume NOTHING!
 - Coaches need to make sure they are using their time with their athletes during the season to train their runners correctly
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What Can't We Control?

- Do you even control the weight room?
 - Maybe it's you (usually not) but maybe it's the throws coach or the head coach or a strength coach at your school.
 - Do your runners train at an outside private training facility?
 - Do your runners train on their own at a big commercial gym?
 - If you write a 3-6 month off-season training plan, do they actually do it?
 - Are they football players required to do football workouts in the weight room during YOUR TRACK SEASON?
 - Can't control the daily stuff that pops up.
 - Sickness, vacations, snow days, school functions, detention, family life, bus schedules, etc.
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What You **ABSOLUTELY** Need to Start Doing!

- Create Your Perfect Training Environment
 - Music
 - Open or Closed Doors
 - Dial in the Aggression
 - Control the Intensity of the Training
 - Create an Intensity Scale
 - Create a Tradition and Culture of Weight Room Work
 - Make it well known that the weight room is part of practice, not an afterthought
 - Choose your wording wisely!
 - Increase your Knowledge of Weight Training to Become a better coach and improve the Quality of the Training
 - Write it all down – Count Every Set, Rep, and Pound Lifted
 - Record Boards?
 - Shirts?
 - Athlete of the week/month?
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**IF YOU ARE NOT WILLING TO DO WHAT WAS
JUST UP ON THIS POWERPOINT,
YOU WILL NEVER CREATE THE SUCCESSFUL
TRADITION OF BUILDING STRONG, FAST,
EXPLOSIVE RUNNERS.**

(AND IF YOU DON'T GO IN THE WEIGHT ROOM
AND THINK YOU'RE DOING FINE WITHOUT IT,
YOU'RE CHEATING YOUR KIDS OUT OF FASTER
TIMES AND HIGHER PODIUM FINISHES)

Creating Your Weight Training Program

- Exercise Selection Matters but not as much as other aspects of program design.
 - Find exercises you know and you are comfortable teaching to a large group of athletes.
 - Make sure these exercises are easily done in the space you are working in and with the equipment you have available.
 - Example – Cleans (and variations)
 - 25+ athletes, you have a 25x30 foot gym, one set of bumper plates, one platform, crowded atmosphere.
 - Better choice might be a dumbbell clean and press
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Creating Your Weight Training Program

- Another Example – Lat Pull Downs
 - 25+ kids, a bigger 30x60 foot gym, 6 squat racks that all have multi-grip pull up bars at the top, and a crowded atmosphere.
 - You program Lat Pull Downs
 - (You only have one lat pull down machine)
 - Probably should have programmed pull ups instead!
 - Use inexpensive Perform Better Superbands to give assistance under the knees or feet.
 - Feel free to substitute any machine in this example
 - Leg extension, leg curls, row machines, shoulder press machines, calf raises, chest press machines, cable machines.
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More Important Than Exercise Selection:

- Time of Year
 - Early Season, Mid Season, Championship Season
 - Weight on the Bar, Sets, and Repetitions
 - Weight - Heavy-ish, Heavier, Light
 - Sets - Medium, Medium, High
 - Reps – Medium, Low, Low
 - Speed of the Bar/DBs/Jumps/etc.
 - Medium, Slow, Fast
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I Know What You're Thinking...

- GIMME THE PROGRAM ALREADY!
 - Beginners
 - Younger athletes, very little weight room experience, bad technique, weak, poor flexibility, need to put on muscle or lose their mushiness.
 - Intermediates
 - Typical Sophomores or newer/smaller Juniors, one year weight room experience, ok form, not really strong yet, don't get in great positions, need to add strength and muscle.
 - Advanced
 - Juniors and Seniors that have been with you for a while, good form, stronger athletes on the team, good size already, need to be pushed.
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Create a 2 Day Training Split

- Day 1 – Lower Body Strength and Explosion
 - Explosive Lift
 - Squats/Hex Bar Deadlift
 - Lunges
 - Rows
 - Day 2 – Upper Body Strength
 - Bench Press
 - Pull Up/Pull Down
 - Triceps
 - Upper Back
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Day 1 – Choose 1 Beginner and 1 Advanced Exercise Per Movement

- Beginner Explosive Lifts
 - DB Jumping Squats
 - DB or KB Seated Box Jump
 - DB Clean (and Jerk)
 - Beginner Squats
 - Bodyweight to a Box
 - Goblet to a Box
 - Goblet Pause Squat
 - Beginner Lunges
 - Bodyweight Reverse Lunges
 - Goblet Reverse Lunges
 - Dumbbell Reverse Lunges
 - Beginner Rows
 - TRX Row
 - Recline Row (Under the Bar)
 - Chest Supported DB Row
 - Advanced Explosive Lifts
 - DB Clean and Jerk
 - Hex Bar Jumps
 - Olympic Variations
 - Advanced Squats/Deadlifts
 - Barbell Back Squat to a Box
 - Hex Bar Deadlift
 - Barbell Pause Squat
 - Advanced Lunges
 - Heavy DB Reverse Lunge
 - Barbell Reverse Lunge
 - Split Squat Holding Dumbbells
 - Advanced Rows
 - DB Bent Over Row
 - Heavy Chest Supported Rows
 - Barbell Bent Over Rows
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Day 2 – Choose 1 Beginner and 1 Advanced Exercises Per Movement

- Beginner Bench Press
 - Push Ups
 - Dumbbell Bench Press
 - Dumbbell Pause Bench Press
 - Beginner Pull Up/Pull Down
 - Negative Chin Up
 - Partner Assisted Negative PU
 - Band Assisted Pull Up
 - Beginner Triceps
 - Band Pressdowns
 - Machine Pressdowns
 - Close Grip Push Up
 - Beginner Upper Back
 - Light Band Face Pull
 - Band Pull Apart
 - Tricep Rope Face Pull
 - Advanced Bench Press
 - Barbell Bench Press
 - Barbell Paused Bench Press
 - Wide Grip Bench Press
 - Advanced Pull Up/Pull Down
 - Band Assisted Pull Up
 - Regular Pull Up
 - Weighted Pull Up
 - Advanced Triceps
 - Heavy Machine Pressdown
 - Lying Tricep Extension
 - Squeeze Press
 - Advanced Upper Back
 - Heavier Band Face Pull
 - Heavier Tricep Rope Face Pull
 - Reverse Dumbbell Flyes
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Beginner Sets and Repetitions

- Explosive Movement of the Day (Squat Day Only)
 - 5 sets of 5 repetitions – First 4 Week Block
 - 6 sets of 4 repetitions – Second 4 Week Block
 - 8 sets of 3 repetitions – Third 3-4 Week Block
 - First Strength Exercise of the Day (Squat and Bench Press)
 - 3 sets of 12 repetitions – First 4 Week Block (Set Baselines)
 - 5 sets of 8 repetitions – Second 4 Week Block (beat weeks 1-4)
 - 6 sets of 6 repetitions – Third 3-4 Week Block (beat weeks 5-8)
 - Goal: Always trying to increase weight when necessary or use a harder exercise if necessary.
 - Assistance Movements (Everything Else)
 - 4 sets of 10 repetitions – Trying to go heavier each 4 week block or move on to a harder exercise if necessary
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Intermed/Advanced Sets and Repetitions

- Explosive Movement of the Day (Squat Day Only)
 - 5 sets of 5 repetitions – First 4 Week Block
 - 6 sets of 4 repetitions – Second 4 Week Block
 - 8 sets of 3 repetitions – Third 3-4 Week Block
 - First Strength Exercise of the Day (Squat and Bench Press)
 - 4 sets of 8 repetitions – First 4 Week Block (Set Baselines)
 - 6 sets of 2-5 repetitions – Second 4 Week Block (beat weeks 1-4)
 - 10 sets of 1-3 repetitions – Third 3-4 Week Block (beat weeks 5-8)
 - First Block medium, second block heavy, third block light and fast.
 - Assistance Movements (Everything Else)
 - 4 sets of 10 repetitions – Trying to go heavier each 4 week block or move on to a harder exercise if necessary
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Take Out a Pen and Write a 4 Week Workout

- Step 1 – Write Beginner at the Top of Your Sheets
 - Step 2 – Write Week 1, Week 2, Week 3, Week 4 at the top
 - Step 3 – Go to the Beginner Exercise Slide and Write In The Exercises Under Explosive, Squat, Lunge, and Rows
 - Step 4 – Do this for Weeks 2, 3, and 4 as well
 - Step 5 – Fill Out Beginner Sets and Repetitions
 - Step 6 – Make this MANDATORY!
 - All athletes must fill this out and hand it back in to you completed.
 - Have them sign it and date it.
 - Holds the athlete accountable
 - Make it easy for them
 - Have pens available
 - Keep all papers in a folder with you
 - Assign Training Times During the Week and STICK TO IT!
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