

PERIODIZATION: PENDULUM WAVE

Periodization simply means organizing training plans of one year or more into shorter manageable plans, i.e., weekly or monthly. At Westside, a weekly plan is used on max effort day. Each week, the lifter switches a barbell exercise, always working up to a max single in a special squat or box, rack, or band deadlift. This is the maximal effort method.

Only good mornings with an eccentric phase preceding a concentric phase are performed, for a 3-rep max. This is the method of heavy efforts. Westside has proven the max effort method is superior. Why? A new plateau is reached. This is positive not only physically but also psychologically.

The method of heavy efforts raises a problem of high volume, yet no new absolute records. A heavy effort means weights above 90% of a 1-rep max. Lifting weights at 90% or more for 3 weeks or longer will cause a negative effect on the central nervous system. To prevent this phenomenon, we switch the core lift each week. As one's special physical preparedness increases, the training effect decreases. This is why new means of training must be introduced constantly, which is why we rotate exercises each week. This is the conjugate system: using exercises that are similar to the classic exercise for either weight lifting or powerlifting. This provides unidirectional loading that highly stimulates motor potential and perfects technical skill.

The same holds true for bench pressing. The floor press, board press, rack work, incline, decline, etc., are conjugate exercises. To clarify, max effort work is done once a week. For bench pressing, it is done 72 hours after speed-strength benching. At Westside speed bench is on Sunday and max bench is on Wednesday. Speed squat and deadlift are on Friday. Max effort work is on Monday. Extreme workouts can occur every 72 hours. Max effort work is a weekly plan, but must be considered into a yearly plan.

Speed strength work is done for a 3-week cycle. The weight with bands, chains, or both is changed each week, normally increasing each week for the 3 weeks. On the fourth week, the load is decreased or changed, and again another 3-week wave is started.

Why do we start again after 3 weeks? We found that after 3 weeks, one cannot become faster or stronger. That is exactly why a 3-week wave is used. Dr. Mel Siff informed me that Vasily Alexeev used a similar wave system for his remarkable training. Remember, he was a weight lifter and used no gear. It worked because he physically got stronger.

When squatting with different bars, each has a limit weight that has been obtained. For example, I have done 805 with a regular squat bar on a parallel box, 640 with a Safety Squat bar, and 675 with a 14-inch cambered bar. I mention this because when using a 3-week wave with

one particular bar, the same percentage will be a different amount of weight. For example:

Squat bar: 50% = 402, 60% = 482

Safety Squat bar: 50% = 320, 60% = 384

Cambered bar: 50% = 337, 60% = 405

This must be closely governed. For myself, these numbers represent the weight equivalent to my max meet squat of 920. By changing bars each 3-week wave, a true max meet squat can be calculated. If one breaks a personal record on, let's say, the cambered bar, a new meet record should

be expected. The percents must be calculated off which bar one is using and the contrast method used (bands, chains, or both). If weight

releasers are used, they also must be taken into consideration. Note: use weight releasers for only a 2-week wave. Eccentrics are responsible for most muscle soreness due to damaged muscle cells.

Speed pulls are done after speed squatting. For a 3-week wave, three weight changes, one each week, can be used. The second method would be to use three different band tensions, starting with light bands and working up to a stronger tension band for the next 2 weeks. If a contest is the goal, a reverse wave must be used. Simply start with the strongest tension and reduce band tension each week for 3 weeks.

The top benchers I have talked to reduce bar weight or band weight as the meet approaches. This builds a greater rate of force

development. This is part of the delayed transmutation phase, working with the maximal effort work.

Remember, each week change bar speed by altering the amount of chain, band, or weight releasers, or a combination of all three.

I have covered speed work and max effort work, but what about GPP? For squatting, John "Chester" Stafford rotates box squats with and without added weight, sled pulling for the upper or lower body, the Reverse Hyper machine, glute/ham raises, ab work, and band work.

For band work, one or two extra workouts a week are done. The workouts are 20-30 minutes long. Band leg curls are done for about 60 reps in 2 or 3 sets. Next, good mornings (arched or rounded back), also for 2 or 3 sets, are done. Then pull-thoughts for 3 sets of 15 reps can be done. The combinations are endless. After 7-10 days start a different complex.

Remember, the conjugate system is employed for speed work, max effort work, and extra workouts for strength development or GPP. Don't forget about restoration methods. They must be included as well. Water therapy, massage, spinal adjustments, acupressure, and acupuncture can be constantly rotated throughout the year, divided into weekly and monthly plans.

When people come to Westside, they witness training for an upcoming meet: the training just preceding a meet and the training

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months before a meet and how a particular type of training is utilized.

Seventy percent of the world is covered by water. It is constantly moving in

waves. Some are just ripples; others as large as tsunamis. Yet they somehow

are coordinated together sometimes by the seasons. Just as our training

is. It is truly very natural to train in waves if one just thinks about

it in a systematic way.

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