

SQUATTING

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I squatted 525 in 1970 when I started to do power meets on a continuous basis. I squatted 920 in 2000 at 52 years old. It was an uphill battle with the methods that I used up to 1983. After that I started using the sophisticated methods of the former Soviet Union. Even after a complete patella tendon rupture my squat went from 821 to 920.

How did I do it? There must be a plan. In mathematical terms, I am talking about volume and intensity. In addition, you need to determine what special exercises are needed and how much should be done.

The methods we developed at Westside are based on those of Soviet scientists, including Medvedyev, Verkhoshansky, Roman, Bompa, Kurz, and Komi, and on discussions I had with Siff, Tabachnic, and Zatsiorsky. All of these men have comprehensive yet practical books on the methodologies of strength training. I also had many useful discussions with Prof. Akita and Prof. Dellaquila (physics). These men have helped me greatly in the quest to become faster and stronger.

I discovered that math was the missing link and wrote about Newton's laws of motion, overspeed eccentrics, virtual force effects, and many other concepts. I made progress for 30 years. Chuck Vogelpohl went from a 575 to an 1150 squat at 264 for a period of 20 years. Now Matt Wenning, after joining the Club, has gone from 905 (11/05) to 953 (7/06) to 1003 (11/06) to 1055 (4/07). How does an old man make progress for 30 years, another for 20 years who is now 41 years old, and now a beginner who is 28?

Here I explain a formula for band tension and bar weight that we use to accomplish our goals. For speed work, the barbell weight is roughly 40% of your max squat. The band tension is 25% at the top, or lockout, and about 10% at the bottom. An 800 squatter with gear would use 320 in bar weight. The band tension at lockout is 200 pounds, and the band tension at the bottom is 80 pounds. At the top, with bands and bar weight, the weight is 520, and on the box, it is 400. This combination enables accommodating resistance.

A 1000-pound squatter would load the bar to 400 plus 250 pounds of band loading. On the box, with band shrinkage, the tension would be 100 pounds. This makes the top combination 750 pounds and the bottom 500 pounds.

Chuck had an 1150-pound world record squat at 264 body weight. For his speed work, he uses 575 pounds of bar weight. The band tension at the top is roughly 275 pounds. At

the bottom, the band tension adds 150 pounds. The total weight at the top is 860, and at the bottom 725.

For the above three examples, for the 800-pound squatter, the top is 65% and the bottom is 50%. For a 1000-pound squatter the top is 75% and the bottom is 50%. For an 1150-pound squatter, the ratio is 74% at the top to 63% at the bottom.

External resistance is the main factor when bar speed is considered. This means the bar and band combination is very close regardless of the amount lifted. Just use half bar weight and half band tension. This is used for the dynamic effort workout. This system is used to develop a fast rate of force development. When lighter loads are used, the influence of max strength is reduced, and this leads to a maximal rate of force development, which is the same as explosive strength.

The band tension/barbell weight ratio for a near-max, or circa-max, phase is as follows. For an 800-pound squatter, the band tension is roughly 375, and a max single on a parallel box is 515. At the top, or lockout, the combination adds up to 890 pounds.

A circa-max phase lasts 2 weeks of near-max weights. The third week is a deload. The key is to be physically prepared to do near-max sets and to be able to establish a new box squat record with the prescribed amount of bands.

Week 1: Warm up with the bar plus bands. We use a medium and a strong band on our Monolift with a 5 x 4 inch wood block attached to the bottom of the Monolift for added tension. Add weight and do doubles. After warming up, do 325 x 2 reps, 375 x 2 reps, 415 x 2 reps, and 465 x 1 rep. This is 7 lifts.

Week 2: After a warmup, do 325 x 2 reps, 375 x 2 reps, 375 x 2 reps, 415 x 1 rep, 465 x 1 rep, and if you can do a single with 515 on a parallel box, you will squat 800 at meet time. This depends on your form. If your form is good and your level of preparedness is high, you will succeed.

The ratio of box weight to band tension is 64% to 47%. A circa-max cycle uses 90-97% of a 1-rep max. With a combination of band and weight at the top, it is 10% over your top squat, and if you are worrying about the bottom weight, don't forget about the virtual force effect after the collision with the box.

Many have squatted 900 pounds with the following program. They are able to do a max box squat with 595 pounds of bar weight and 375 pounds of band tension. A 2-week circa-max phase is also used.

Week 1: After warming up with the bar and bands, do sets of 2 reps with 375, 415, 465, and 515 and a single with 565 on the box.

Week 2: After a warmup, do 375 x 2, 465 x 2, 545 x 1, and 595 x 1.

The weight is 60% and the band tension is about 37%.

A 1000-pound squatter will have to make a 600-pound box squat with 440 pounds of band tension. A 2-week wave is used.

Week 1: After a warmup with the bar plus bands, do sets of 2 reps with 415, 465, and 515. Then do 1 rep with 565.

Week 2: Do 415 x 2, 515 x 2, 565 x 1, and 595 x 1.

If your GPP is high and your form is good, you will squat 1000 on contest day. Tony Bologne made 625 plus 440 pounds of band tension and did an easy 1035 squat at 308. Matt Wenning made a strong 625 and squatted an easy 1055 at 296 body weight.

We have two 1100+ squatters: Matt Smith, SHW, did 1141, and Chuck, at 264, did 1150. Chuck's 1150 in 2007 was easy. His band tension was 600 pounds, which is 56% of 1150. His max box squat was 750 plus the bands; 750 is 65% of his 1150 world record squat. His sets looked like this:

Week 1: After a good warmup with the bar and bands, he does 505 x 2, 595 x 2, and 665 x 2.

Week 2: 505 x 2, 595 x 2, 705 x 1, and 750 x 1.

As in all other weeks, a download week is done with light weight and bands: 465 pounds of bar weight plus 250 pounds of band tension for 3 sets of 2 reps. The next week was the world record squat.

Leading up to the meet, the squat day is always Friday and the max effort day is Monday. Three days separate intense days of training. When the circa-max phase is employed, the max effort day is converted to special exercises for the glutes, hamstrings, hips, lats, and abs. This may consist of belt squats, the Reverse Hyper machine, glute/ham raises, pull-throughs, sled pulling, lat work, and ab work, along with restoration methods and ways of making weight.

We have 11 lifters who squat more than 1000 pounds. One cannot dream of squatting 1000; a dream is just a dream. You must have a plan, a proven plan. We have

established this through more than 20 years of training. I hope our plan can make your dream come true.