



The Strongpoint Scoop

August 2014

ELITE FITNESS IS OUR GOAL.

IN THIS ISSUE

August Training Highlights

by Ryan Miller

The July heat is finally making way for the August... um... heat I guess. Strongpoint had an awesome month in July hosting our second competition, No Baby Leave the Socks On, on July 12th. We had 48 competitors, from around Jacksonville and St. Augustine, throwdown in three workouts for everyone, a fourth for the top five in each division, and a fifth challenging workout to break ties in both the Scaled and Prescribed divisions. We had a total of ten participants from the gym throw their hats in the ring this time around including Jessica Schacht, Enza Lobusta, Taylor Troedson, Liz Gard, Melanie Jacobs, Denise Perrigo, Whitney Beisiegel, Michelle Knight, Amanda Larson, and Caitlin Hoover. The latter three all represented on the podium at the end of the day after five grueling workouts that tested the mettle of each. Thanks to all of our volunteers. Our judging and volunteer staff included the one and only head judge extraordinaire, Petey Boz, Jill Heyse, Mike Eddins, Cassie Peterinelli, Brad Feit, Mike Cummings, Ken Hall, Kevin Perrigo, Chi Kwong, Sara Willin, Parker Gilbert, Justin Sallas, and Rhett Butler. And of course, no Jax CrossFit event would have been complete without the musical styling of DJ JDoll! We truly owe the success of the event to this group of individuals that sacrificed the better part of a Saturday to make the event run so smoothly. Aside from one minor exception (blowout), the event went off without a hitch and I think that a good time was had by all of the spectators and participants (except for one). Coach Laura Davie also teamed up with Regional Competitor Brooke Haas to take on the team competition at the Central Florida Games the same weekend where they placed second. Congratulations to all our competitors on a job well done!

We had a total of six individuals complete the monthly challenge in July. Congratulations to Steven Fuata, Cathy Miller, Jason Doll, Connie Garland, Caitlin Hoover, and Stephen Baker for accumulating all 1,200 points! Not coincidentally, congratulations to Connie on being selected as our Spotlight Athlete this month and you can read her profile on pages 2 and 3. We may have had a Personal Record (PR) month for PRs in July as we entered into a testing phase that saw numerous records go down in the back squat, clean, shoulder press, Fight Gone Bad, Fran, Jackie, and Diane. We will continue testing through the first half or so of August before we roll into our next program. Please see the article on Conjugate Programming on pages 3 and 4 for more details on what to expect in the next phase of training moving forward.

We have several events on the calendar in August starting right away with 31 Heroes on August 2nd. The 31 Heroes workout is a fairly brutal 31 minute AMRAP of running with a sandbag, rope climbs, heavy thrusters, and high box jumps. Grab a partner or get one at the door and get ready for one of the toughest workouts of your life! The doors are open for all members whether you register or not, but you may register to donate to the 31 Heroes Project [here](#). We will shift gears to something a little slower paced in the afternoon as we host Coach Joey Lippo for one last Olympic lifting clinic focused on developing the Jerk. Coach Lippo will be assisted by Laura and I and we will work "soup to nuts" on improving the Power/Push Jerk and Split Jerk. We still have slots available and you may register to participate [here](#).

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There are several events on the competition slate in the coming months including the Masters Functional Fitness League 7-11 August, Vero Beach Open Olympic weightlifting meet on August 23rd, League of Shadows CrossFit Total Competition on August 30th, Southeast Weightlifting Classic September 6th, Directors Cut partner competition at CrossFit 904 on October 4th, and the Fall Festivus Games at Strongpoint on October 18th.

We welcomed aboard several new members in July including Kendall, Brian, Kimberlee, Jessica Skapetis, Dylan, Shanna, and Jay. We will bid farewell to Anthony this month as he heads back to New Jersey to pursue a career in law enforcement. And please keep our deployed members in your thoughts as Tyler, Chris P., and Ryan J. carry out their missions abroad.

Now let's train safe, train hard, and get better in August!

-rm



2. **What results have you seen or goals have you achieved?** I wouldn't say I had any specific goals, just to be in better shape. I have improved my cardio, gone from 1 strict pull up to 5, gotten 8-10 kipping pull-ups connected, and improved steadily in weight lifting. My endurance is immeasurably better. It is so great to feel strong and fit.

3. **What do you like best about the gym?** I like the "constantly varied activity". In CrossFit every day is a new and different challenge. The friends I have made in the last 2 years are the greatest. The Strongpoint family is always available to cheer you on and share in the successes.

I also have to say the coaches, especially Ryan, are very knowledgeable, helpful, and involved. The actual skill training/instruction is awesome. Ryan's programming is carefully thought out, and comprehensive. Just show up, do the work and you will improve.

4. **What is your favorite exercise or WOD?** I like Tabatas, and anything with the gymnastic moves: HSPU, PU, pull ups, T2B, sit ups, ring dips, etc. Bring 'em on!

5. **What is your least favorite exercise or WOD?** I consider anything with wallballs the worst. I can't throw a heavy ball, can't hit the line with a lighter one, and sometimes the ball hits me in the face, aaargh! Note to self-- don't say can't and work on it, you will improve!

6. **What motivates you to show up day after day?** The awful fun I have at each WOD. Haha I love how I can check all the troubles and minor annoyances of the day at the door, and leave an hour later with a smile on my face and a sense of accomplishment. There is always a challenge and a way to get stronger and better.

Most challenges in my life have been relatively easy to meet. CrossFit is endeavor that required me to push really hard over time to meet multiple challenges. It encourages you to work very hard to make small improvements that finally come together as new skills and a better you. It's a great feeling, made even better with friends to work with you and cheer you on.



Image courtesy of Anthony Duran from 904 Fitness

Spotlight Athlete: August 2014

by Connie Garland

1. **What made you decide to start CrossFit?** My youngest brother, who is in the military, was talking about it, so I researched a little online, and tried out some sample WODS at home for a while. When I saw Strongpoint open near our warehouse, I decided to give it a try. It was intimidating, but I kept coming back.

7. **What negative thoughts hold you back from being your best?** I try to ignore any tiny thoughts about keeping up with the “kids” during a workout. Those kids are always the ones cheering me on and helping me to finish strong.
8. **What has been your most memorable moment at Strongpoint CrossFit?** Each and every one of the Rx WODs I have completed, all of my PR’s, getting 5 strict pull-ups, competing in Festivus.
9. **What has been your least favorite moment at Strongpoint CrossFit?** This would be many moments - - - of fighting the barbell the first few months when I started. It was terrible, and I just didn’t get the idea of lifting, it was sooo complicated. Also, my mishaps with box jumps were not good either.
10. **What’s one thing that no one at the gym knows about you?** The only organized athletic endeavor of my youth was as a barrel racer on the rodeo circuit.
11. **What is your favorite quote from Strongpoint CrossFit?** That has to be the time Ryan said that he went home at night and cried when we didn’t listen closely and follow every one of his instructions.
12. **What do you want to accomplish with your training in the next year?** My primary goal is to increase my max weights on lifting. I definitely will (finally) master double unders!! I plan to participate in the 2015 CrossFit masters open.
13. **What advice would you give to someone who just started out?** Keep after it, persevere, it gets easier. Come as often as possible, let your coaches help you out, and work at your own level so that you can get it done. You will surprise yourself with how fast you will improve. Make friends here at Strongpoint and have fun. You will be so proud of your accomplishments and improvement in fitness. You too can be a BAMF.
14. **What advice would you give to someone who was on the fence about starting?** Anyone can do this, starting at your own fitness level and you WILL see results. Commit to four months of hard work and you won’t be sorry.

Coach’s Comments: *We have been working with Connie for just about two years now and to say it has been a pleasure would be an understatement! She is truly a Strongpoint OG having started her time with us in the much fabled, “Old Building” down the street. I still remember her coming in for her intro on a scorching hot summer day in 2012 and proceeding to smash the baseline workout faster than many people half her age! Connie has continued to build on that fitness base and we have seen great improvements in her strength and technique since that time. She tasted her first competition during the Festivus Games in the Spring of 2014 and we are excited to see her expand into more competitions and the Open in the coming year. Always diligent, she regularly makes good use of Open Gym periods and weightlifting classes to develop technique, work on her weaknesses, and work toward new goals. Connie also referred in her husband Mike and co-worker Allison, who have also become great members of our morning sessions during the last year. It is for these reasons that Connie was an easy choice as Spotlight Athlete and we look forward to working with her in the future!*



The Conjugate Method

by Ryan Miller

The Conjugate Method is the strength and conditioning system developed by Louis Simmons at the Westside Barbell Club in Columbus, Ohio. Westside Barbell is well-known in the powerlifting world and gained some attention in CrossFit circles via the CrossFit Powerlifting Certification. I had the opportunity to complete the seminar here in Jacksonville last summer and it opened my eyes to some new and different training methods that are far and away different than the norm you see in CrossFit. While numerous methods of barbell training exist, not many can stake a claim to the success of Westside Barbell. Their methods have produced over 30 lifters that benched over 700 pounds, eight over 800#, two over 900#, 17 1000# squatters, two over 1100# squatters, and 18 Westside lifters have deadlifted over 800#. They have produced dozen of national and world record holders in powerlifting competition and trained numerous high-level amateur and professional athletes. Overall strength is probably the greatest deficit most of us face in our day-to-day pursuit to become better athletes and CrossFitters. That said, we are about to embark on a period where we will implement the Conjugate method for CrossFit. This will, of course, require a bit of a change in our daily programming and class structure.

The heart of Conjugate programming involves four strength workouts on a weekly basis. They are divided into a Maximum Effort Lower Body, Maximum Effort Upper Body, Dynamic Effort Lower Body, and Dynamic Effort Upper Body. The Max Effort Method (ME) days vary between three primary exercises and their variants: Squat, Deadlift, and Good Mornings. Upper body Max effort days will pull from the full range of upper body pressing variants (Press, Bench Press, Floor Press, Push Press, Jerk variants, etc.). So we will start maxing a different upper and lower body lift at least one time a week, which will not feel tremendously different than our standard programming except that we will typically work to a heavy single rather than doubles, threes, fives, etc. We will, however, be mixing stances (narrow and wide), adding in some box squats, and working with forms of resistance other than weight on the bar like bands & chains.

The Dynamic Effort days will require learning some new training methods. The Dynamic Effort (DE) Method involves lifting sub-maximal loads as quickly as possible. Exercises

typically involve a Squat and Deadlift variation for the lower body and the Bench Press for upper body. The DE Method is carried out in 8-12 sets of 1-3 repetitions on a strict and short time interval. We will also begin to introduce some accommodating resistance as we become more familiar with the method and implementation. Accommodating resistance involves the use of bands or chains with sub-maximal loads. The bands and/or chains are set to provide greater resistance through the movement as leverage and strength improve. In other words, tension is lowest in the bottom of the movement and greatest at the top when the band is stretched or more links of chain are off the floor. We will ease into this gradually throughout the end of summer as our members become more familiar with the methodology.

Another staple of the Conjugate Method is the special or accessory exercises. Squat, deadlift, and bench variants are essentially the “main moves” of any given workout and accessory work is designed to isolate and work on individual muscle groups. These will be programmed outside of class initially and we will start to implement more accessory work into classes as we become more efficient at getting through the prescribed workload in a class. Accessory work will typically involve additional work for muscle groups that contribute to our main lifts. On Lower Body days, accessory work will involve the hamstrings, erectors, glutes, traps, lats and abs. Upper body accessory work will focus on the upper back, triceps, shoulders, lats, abs and traps. Examples of accessory work include: glute ham raises, back extensions, reverse hypers, lighter deadlift variations, good mornings, step ups, lunges, and various tricep exercises. Specific attention should be given to lagging muscle groups when selecting accessory work. Start with your weakest area first. For instance, if you have trouble locking out your squats and deadlifts once your knees are extended, then your glutes are probably a lagging muscle group. Work your glute accessory work first!

We will begin implementing the Conjugate method in August based on the following schedule: Monday – Lower Body Max Effort, Tuesday – Upper Body Max Effort, Thursday: Lower Body Dynamic Effort and Friday – Upper Body Dynamic Effort. At this point you may find yourself wondering when we'll get Olympic lifting, gymnastics skill work, and longer metabolic conditioning done. We still have Wednesday and Saturday during the training week to work on these other valuable skills. Additionally, some other gymnastics work will be added into accessory work throughout the week. For instance, 3x max reps ring dips, 2 max effort sets of kipping pull ups, or 3x max reps strict handstand pushups on an upper body day. We will also incorporate some accessory work into the metabolic conditioning for the day. And we still have Open Gym periods and Weightlifting classes available for any extra work you may feel like you need to get done in a given week. Strength work and metabolic conditioning will still be varied in nature. We are just changing our approach a bit.

You may be reading this and find yourself thinking, “Sounds great for powerlifting, but how do we know it works for CrossFit?” Well... Matt Chan used the Conjugate method to build strength before the 2012 Games season and went onto win his region and place second in the Games that year. Sam

Briggs sought out Shane Sweatt, lead instructor of the Powerlifting Certification, to help her get stronger between the 2012 and 2013 Games Seasons and found herself at the top of the podium in 2013. CrossFit Conjugate Black also won the Central East Regional and went on to a second place finish at the 2014 CrossFit Games in their first season of competition as a team. I have also read numerous testimonials from gyms that have successfully implemented Conjugate programming to the benefit of their members, gotten great results, and reduced injuries along the way. That's evidence enough for me to give it a try with the gym for a few months and see what kind of results we can produce. I think if we roll into this period with an open mind and a willingness to learn, that we too will be impressed with the results and have our own testimonial to share!

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Ask Coach

by Ryan Miller

Question: *How do I get better at _____ (insert whatever you want to get better at here)?*

Answer: I have received a lot of inquiries from members lately asking how to get better at a specific movement, series of movements, or heck... everything at once. I wanted to go ahead and share some thoughts on this. To start with, one of the great things about CrossFit is that we vary the workouts and movements so much. This is great for keeping your interest and preventing your body from accommodating to the program, but may not be the best possible way to get better at something specific you are trying to improve. Let's take Toes-to-Bar as an example. We may do Toes-to-Bar once a week. That's enough attention if you're already decent at them to maintain, but probably not enough if you're really looking to improve them. I have a few different methods I recommend for improving gymnastics movements: 1) Every Minute on the Minute (EMOM). I like EMOM for its simplicity. Figure out how much time you have to dedicate to something and then work with something that will be challenging to complete every minute on the minute for that period. Let's say you have five minutes you can dedicate after class. Pick a number (5-10) that's going to be challenging to complete with the relatively short rest period. If it feels easy, add a rep the next week. This is a great, very basic way to add some volume and practice. 2) Max Effort Sets: complete 3-5 max effort sets before or after a WOD or on an active rest day. 3) “Grease the Groove.” This is a Pavel Tsatouline thing. If you don't know who Pavel is, Google it! He refers to slipping in a “goat” movement here and there as *greasing the groove*. So for instance, say we're doing heavy squats for a strength piece and you struggle with Handstand Push Ups. Do a set of squats

and then sneak over to the wall and hit a set of HSPU a few times throughout the workout. Don't do so many that it taxes you for the squats, but just enough to give you a little extra work. You can do the same thing during commercial breaks on TV, when you head to the water cooler at work, or after you finish a chore. Work it in throughout your day and you may find that you're able to add some significant volume throughout the course of a day.

How do I get better at hip/ankle/hamstring/shoulder... mobility: Same deal. Sneak in a little at a time. Focus on one area for long enough to affect change and then move onto the next "worst" thing.

How do I get stronger? Keep showing up. Our members that are consistent regularly set new personal records on core lifts. We had over 25 squat personal records on 7/28, around 15 clean records the next day, and 22 press records on the 30th. Of those, I would offer that the majority of them attended the Wendler days and put in the work from May-July. Remember, results are not guaranteed. Results are earned.

If you reach the point where you are no longer improving through our regular programming alone, you may need some additional work to bring up lagging muscles groups. See Ryan if you are interested in some supplemental programming. However, understand that it's difficult to build a lot of strength if you are doing a lot of metabolic conditioning. You may need to dial back the CrossFit and focus on strength alone a day or two a week if that's your primary goal.

How do I get better at Olympic lifts? Practice. You probably do not need to add in a lot of heavy work, but more than likely just need more time with a barbell in your hands. In fact, that's probably the biggest mistake most people make. They try to add weight too fast before they really have the technique figured out. This leads to what blogger and Olympic lifting coach Matt Foreman calls, "Mutant CrossFit Snatches." Look at adding a couple of weightlifting classes each week or at least showing up a little early or staying late to practice lifts on your own. Use a camera if you have one as this is the next best thing to having a dedicated coach standing there to work with you. At least you can see what you are doing/not doing and work on it. I would recommend 5-10 sets of 2-3 repetitions between 60-80% after some specific drills to work on position. The nice thing about the position drills is that they serve as a great warm up for the lifts. Think about three position work, three-stop, two-stop, and one-stop drills, the Burgener Warm Up, and working form different positions. Work extra hard on mobility of the ankles, hips and shoulders.

Question: *Since I want to get better at everything at once, what order should I put things when I do a supplementary workout?*

Answer: Go in this order: 1) Power and/or High Coordination Movements (Olympic Lifts, Muscle Ups, etc.); 2) Strength; 3) Conditioning. Why you ask? The conditioning work fatigues your muscles and wears down your central nervous system. You want to be at the peak of your abilities for the day when you are practicing power movements, high coordination movements, or loading as much weight on your back as possible and squatting with it. Of course, sometimes competitions require you to do something higher coordination after a conditioning piece and there may be some value in practicing that periodically if you're interested in competition. However, the majority of your training should follow this template. If you are fortunate enough to be able to do two sessions a day, I would recommend power and/or strength in the first workout and conditioning in the second/last workout for all the same reasons.

Question: *What's with the cash outs lately?*

Answer: The cash out is programmed not as a means to punish you as some seem to think, but usually has one of three goals: 1) Initiating the recovery process; 2) Strengthening supporting muscle groups, 3) Stressing something we may have missed during the past few days of programming. Movements like banded good mornings, face pulls, and triceps pushdowns are deliberately light weight/high repetition and designed to get blood flowing to initiate/improve the recovery process. We do a wide variety of shoulder movements to strengthen the rotator cuffs, traps, and rhomboids, which basically provide some stabilization every time we hold a barbell in our hands. Things like sled drags and extra ab work are programmed to work the hips and core, which basically support everything we do in the gym. If we really wanted to punish you, we'd just program burpees or wall balls as the cash out each day, which Petey usually does when he writes the cash out.



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AUGUST 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
July 27	July 28	July 29	July 30 Yoga 10:00 am & 7:30 pm	July 31	1	2 31 Heroes Workout (9 & 10am WOD) Jerk Clinic w/Joey Lippo 11:30 – 2:30pm NO Open Gym Ken Hall Tiffany Lewers
3	4	5	6 Yoga 10:00 am No 7:30 pm Yoga Beth Norman	7 Masters Functional Fitness League	8 MFFL	9 MFFL
10 MFFL	11 Ryan Kim	12	13 Yoga 10:00 am & 7:30 pm	14 Bring a Friend	15	16 Bring a Friend
17	18 Todd Urkowitz	19	20 Yoga 10:00 am & 7:30 pm Amanda Conner Krissey Klingler	21 Jason Doll	22 Mike Valenti Kelly Vannan	23 Vero Beach Open
24	25	26 Matt Batton	27 Yoga 10:00 am & 7:30 pm	28 Martin Pena	29	30 CF Total Competition (@ CF Sovereignty)
31 Adam Clark	Sept. 1	Sept. 2	Sept. 3	Sept. 4	Sept. 5	Sept. 6 Southeast Weightlifting Classic