

Peculiarities in the Training of Weightlifters of Different Qualifications

by R. A. Roman and Y. Y. Rysin from "Theory and Practice in Physical Culture" July 1987

edited by Jim O'Malley

editors note : the purpose of the article is to explain (in somewhat general terms) what is often referred to as the Path to the Attainment of Sports Mastery (PASM). Basically, it presents the general features of the five training models (beginner - low class - qualified - master of sport - and master of sport international) that lay out the training process as an evolutionary one where great emphasis is placed on laying the proper foundation of one training model before moving on to the next in order to achieve long term success. It is akin to acquiring a fundamental grasp of algebra, trigonometry, and geometry before moving onto the study of calculus and eventually to mathematical analysis. For those interested in a far more detailed explanation (including access to empirical data that permit you to actually apply the various models in practice), I would refer you to Professor Roman's outstanding text "The Training of the Weightlifter" (available from Sportivny Press).

Stage 1

The Beginning of Specialization.

This is the training of beginners and low class (class 3 and class 2) athletes. This stage is 2.5 years in length, if the athlete begins training at age 15.5 years (the average age for a beginner). The length of this stage increases somewhat if workouts have begun at a younger age. The main objective of the beginner is to learn the technique of the snatch and the clean and jerk ; therefore, the beginner employs a small range of weightlifting exercises -- the snatch, the C&J, the snatch and C&J exercises (i.e. power snatch, power clean, and push jerk Ed.), squats (front, back, and overhead), and a small quantity of presses -- bench presses and standing press behind the neck w/ snatch grip. The goal of the low class athlete is aimed at perfecting technical mastery (like the beginner) therefore, he uses the same exercises as the beginner. The aforementioned exercises are quite sufficient to obtain the special-physical-preparedness (SPP) necessary for beginners and low class athletes. The use of other resistance exercises does not permit them to master the technique of the snatch and the C&J. As a result, insufficient technique becomes a constant inhibitor to the further increase in results. So, the formation of technical mastery is the fundamental task of the first stage. General-physical-preparation (GPP) is employed during the first stage as a means of raising the functional possibilities of the organism and the expansion of the necessary motor habits and skills.

Stage 2

The In-Depth Specialization of the Base Training.

This is the training of the class one and the candidate for master of sport (CSM). The second stage is an average of four years duration. This stage begins when results reach the following :

56kg 182.5kg
62kg 205kg
69kg 225kg
77kg 242.5kg
85kg 260kg
94kg 277.5kg
105kg 290kg
105kg+ 300kg

The athlete has mastered technique to perfection, consequently, this period involves the tackling of new tasks. The main task of the second stage is the expansion of the base of SPP and the creation of the prerequisites for the achievement of high results. The athletes now include SPP exercises from the second group (i.e. snatch pulls, presses of various types, overhead squats, and "bendovers" aka hyperextensions and good mornings Ed.), the quantity of which is almost 25% greater than in the first stage. These are in addition to the SPP exercises from group one (i.e. snatch, C&J, snatch and C&J exercises, front and back squats, and clean pulls Ed.). So, the entire arsenal of SPP barbell exercises are employed during the second stage.

The GPP is NOT unidirectional in nature (i.e. high barbell loads in prep cycles are combined with low GPP loads and lower barbell loads in comp cycles are combined with larger GPP loads Ed.) because it does not determine the lifters success in his sports specialization. The means of raising the organisms functional potential are always employed at this stage of barbell exercises because one should be ready for definite, specific work with a barbell and not general work.

Stage 3

The Stage of High Sports Mastery and Maintenance of Achieved Results.

This stage begins when the lifters results are the following :

56kg 250kg
62kg 277.5kg
69kg 305kg

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77kg 330kg
85kg 355kg
94kg 377.5kg
105kg 395kg
105kg+ 407.5kg

It has an average length of 6.5 years. The results of MSIC (master of sport international class) are achieved after approximately 1.5 years at this stage ; then, after roughly three more years, maximum results are achieved. These results are maintained on average for the next two years. By the third stage the athlete has achieved a very high level of SPP ; therefore, it is not necessary to utilize a large volume of loading of the SPP exercises from group two (after the first 1.5 years when MSIC results are achieved Ed.) The volume of these exercises is reduced by approximately 1/2 relative to both the second stage and the first 1.5 years of the third stage. The volume of these exercises in the second group has a negative correlation with the biathlon total in the pre-competitive month during the third stage.

One can single out the following most characteristic features of the training which accompanies the achievement of high, record results.

1) The increase in the volume of work on the competition exercises.

2) The relative stabilization (in the first 1.5 years) and then decrease in the volume of exercises from the first group. That is to say the reduction of the number of lifts in the snatch, the C&J, the snatch and the C&J exercises with 70 to 79% weights and a stabilization of the loading with 80 to 89% and 90% and more weights. Also, a reduction in the number of lifts in the clean pulls and squats with weights equal to or in excess of the maximum C&J.

3) A significant reduction (about 1/2) of the volume of exercises in the second group. A reduction in the relative intensity of these exercises.

4) A reduction in the general volume of loading.

Well then, the third stage of training becomes very specialized. At this time, GPP is a means of active rest. Athletes achieve high sports mastery when the total volume and intensity of the loading reaches maximum. However, our data indicated that athletes achieve **record** results during a reduction in the volume, and when they employ mainly the snatch and

the C&J and the SPP exercises of the first group --- the snatch and C&J exercises, clean pulls, and squats; from which the results are directly dependent.