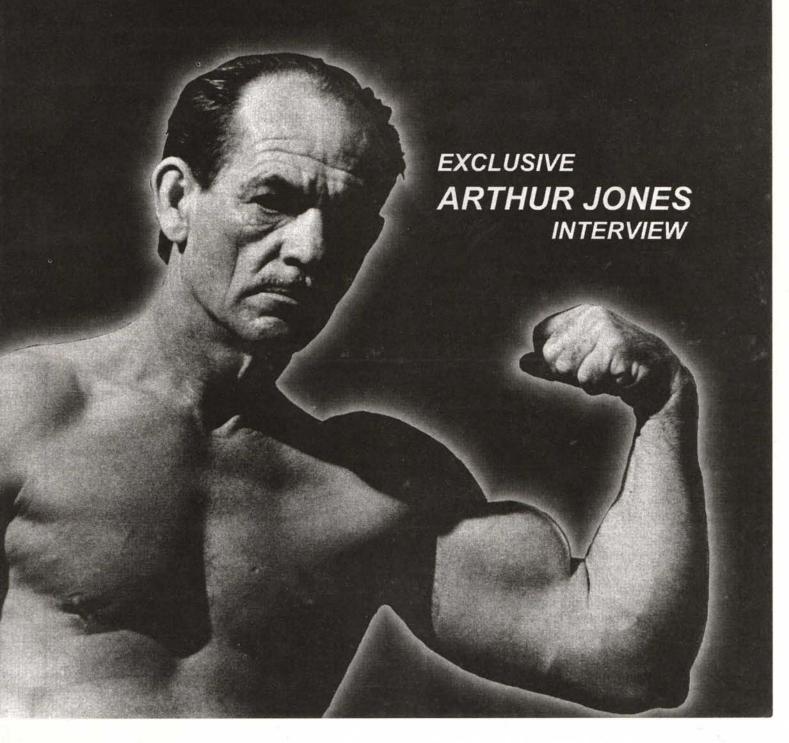
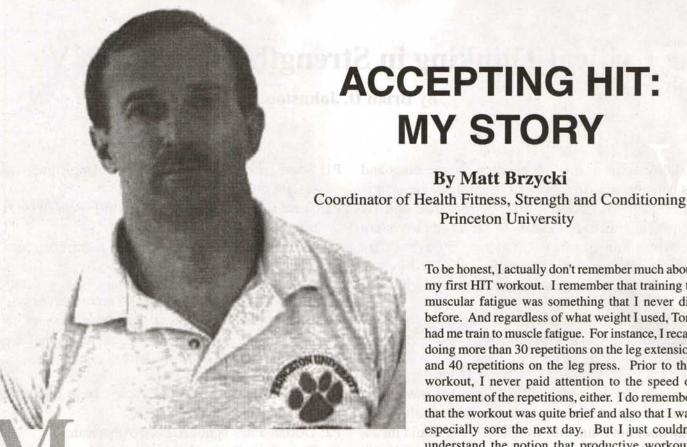
LEAVY DUTY BULLETIN

WINTER 1998





My 4-year enlistment in the Marine Corps ended in August 1979 and I immediately enrolled at the Penn State Wilkes-Barre branch campus as a 22-year-old freshman. In March 1980, I was a few months away from completing my freshman year when I saw an advertisement on television for a new fitness center -- called the 4F Club -- located across the Susquehanna River in Forty Fort, Pennsylvania. The club was advertising for memberships but I figured that if they're looking for members then they just might be looking for people to show the members how to exercise. I called the club and was asked to come in for an interview. So, I squeezed into a pair of chocolate-brown polyester pants, slid on my two-toned shoes, threw on the tightest banlon shirt in my closet and drove my clunker 1976 Plymouth Volare to the club for my interview.

I was interviewed by the club's general manager, Tom Laputka -- a large guy in his early 30s with a grip that'd bring an adult gorilla to its knees. Tom was an ex-lineman in the Canadian Football League and the short-lived World Football League. He weighed as much as 287 pounds and was one of the world's first 500-pound bench pressers. As it turned out, it wasn't a typical interview. Tom spent at least an hour lecturing me on strength curves, muscular friction, percentage of momentary ability and numerous other stuff that I never heard about before. He also told me about workouts that were brief, progressive, intense, efficient, comprehensive, practical, safe and -one of his favorite adjectives -- productive. Tom told me about how, in the early 1970s, he and another guy named Casey Viator were trained by someone named Arthur Jones. All this was foreign to me as I had never heard or read of workouts like this before. I had always equated more with better. At the end of the "interview," Tom said, "The way I really get to know a person is to train with him." I said, "Fine. When do ya wanna train?" and we agreed to meet the next day at the club. Little did I know that this would be my first HIT workout. (In fact, it wasn't even referred to as HIT until the mid 1980s.)

To be honest, I actually don't remember much about my first HIT workout. I remember that training to muscular fatigue was something that I never did before. And regardless of what weight I used, Tom had me train to muscle fatigue. For instance, I recall doing more than 30 repetitions on the leg extension and 40 repetitions on the leg press. Prior to this workout, I never paid attention to the speed of movement of the repetitions, either. I do remember that the workout was quite brief and also that I was especially sore the next day. But I just couldn't understand the notion that productive workouts could be done in less than one hour. It just sounded too wacky. Hell, I was an ex-Marine dammit!

By Matt Brzycki

Princeton University

When you have a more-is-better mentality like I did, it's difficult to buy into the idea that HIT is productive. At any rate, Tom hired me for the position. He also hired Mark Travis -- who, at the time, was my training partner at the Wilkes-Barre YMCA. Mark was also an ex-Marine and competed on the Marine Corps Wrestling Team. I remember Mark called me one Saturday and asked what I thought of the brief, intense workouts that Tom was endorsing. I said, "I'm not sure yet. What do you think?" He said, "Well, I just put one-half inch on my arms in two weeks." He was sold on HIT. I was still struggling.

HIT made enough sense to me such that I would train members of the 4F Club this way. However, I didn't think that this type of training was appropriate for me. It was just so hard to believe that such brief workouts were better than the lengthy workouts I had been doing for years.

Fast forward to the early part of 1984. I had graduated from Penn State in 1983 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Health and Physical Education and was working part-time at Princeton University as a Health Fitness Supervisor. Dick Anderson -an Assistant Football Coach at Penn State -- was named Head Football Coach at Rutgers University which was about 30 minutes up the road from Princeton. I figured that a new football coach must need a new strength coach so I took a shot in the dark and applied for the job. Dick hired Dr. Paul Kennedy for the position. Paul was the Assistant Strength Coach at Penn State and I did an internship with him during my senior year. I called up Paul and asked him if he could use an Assistant Strength Coach at Rutgers. To make a long story short, Paul convinced the "powers that be" that he needed help and I was hired as his assistant.

By this time, there was no question in my mind that HIT was the way that athletes should train. At Rutgers, we trained all varsity athletes with a very aggressive, HIT program for the six years we were there -- everyone from male football players and baseball players to female gymnasts and golfers. However, I thought these workouts were suitable for our athletes but not for me. So, I continued to perform lengthy sessions in the weight room.

That first year at Rutgers (1984-85), my work week was Monday through Friday from 4:00-10:00pm and another 3-6 hours on Sundays -- depending upon what part of the football season we were in. I usually went to the weight room after breakfast and lifted for 4 hours until it was time for lunch. After lunch, I'd kill time at the library or somewhere else until it was 4:00. On March 15, 1985, I was sitting on a bench between sets of chest exercises and I said to myself, "This is ridiculous." On this particular Friday morning, for whatever reason, I began to think about the amount of time that I'd spent in my weight training. I did some quick math: 4 hours a day times 3 days a week is 12 hours a week times 52 weeks in a year is 624 hours of lifting weights in a year. This is the equivalent of lifting weights for 24 hours a day for 26 straight days -- almost an entire month out of a year. And multiplying that by the 7-plus years I had been doing these marathon workouts was pretty sobering.

It wasn't until that Friday in March 1985 that I realized maybe brief, intense training was indeed for me. Two days later on March 17 -- almost exactly 3 years to the date of my last powerlifting

competition -- I finally gave HIT a sincere shot and I haven't trained any other way since then. Sure, I've made numerous adjustments and changes since 1985 but the basic concepts of HIT have remained the same.

Even though my genetic destiny is as a so-called "hardgainer" -- at a height of just under 5'11" I've never weighed more than 178.75 pounds -- I've been able to increase my strength significantly using HIT. These are some of my personal bests in exercises using conventional equipment with which most readers will be familiar. Also given are the month and year achieved along with my bodyweight at the time.

EXERCISE PERFORMANCE

Deadlift (trap bar) 252.5 x 15 Aug 93 168

Deadlift (trap bar) 285 x 15 Jan 98 171 Dip BW+130 x 7 Sep 92 unknown Negative-only Dip BW+250 x 6 Dec 86 166

Chin BW+42.5 x 6 Jul 90 166 Negative-only Chin BW+156.25 x 7 Mar 90 165.5

Lat Pulldown (Universal) 220 x 8 Oct 88 173.25

Wrist Flexion (barbell) 150 x 7 Apr 89 171.75

NOTES:

- The trap bar deadlifts that were done in August 1993 were performed immediately after the Hammer leg press in which I did 427.5 x 15.
- The trap bar deadlifts that were done in January 1998 were performed as the first exercise in my routine. (By the way, I sometimes go one or two years without doing trap bar deadlifts.)
- The negative-only dips in December 1986 were done after performing 2 other chest exercises.
- In no case did I perform any warm-up set with a lighter weight prior to these efforts.

One final comment: HIT isn't just for young athletes. In a few months I'll be 42 years old and have no intentions of ever using any system of training other than HIT.

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