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Limping Into the New Millennium, Part II
The final chapter
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In case you've just stumbled onto this site, put some ice on your head while I do a quick recap of what's happening here. Australian Wunder Coach Ian King has devised a 12-week leg program that's among the most unique — and the most effective — that I've ever experienced. The first seven workouts were posted in previous issues:

- "Limping Into October" [Part I](#) and [Part II](#)
- "Limping Into November" [Part I](#) and [Part II](#)
- "Limping Into December" [Part I](#) and [Part II](#)
- "Limping Into the New Millennium" [Part I](#)

The first two parts of each workout were meant to be alternated for a period of three weeks, after which you'd progress to Parts I and II of the next three-week phase. Got it?

This particular workout is Part II of the fourth and final stage of the program. This workout, in conjunction with the one appearing last week, will take us through weeks 9 to 12, which means that we're into the home stretch. We've only got three more weeks to go, so hang in there.

This final workout centers around the deadlift. I realize that there may be a number of you who have other preferences but, hey, *I'm* calling the shots here. Okay, okay, I can be flexible.

For those of you who want to focus more specifically on power and are competent in the power clean, you could go ahead and use it (or its variations, such as the clean pull) instead with the same set and rep protocol listed below. In the event that you're going to use power cleans, consider the following refreshers:



- The starting position is similar to the deadlift in that the bar is on the shins with the shoulders vertically over the bar and the hips, spine, and head aligned.



- The movement during the first pull (from start to just above the knees) is also similar in that the bar stays on the skin. At the end of the first pull (just above the knees), the shoulders should still be vertically above bar with the hips, spine, and head aligned, which means that the hips are not to be raised faster than the shoulders.

This is where the two lifts diverge. The second pull (from above the knees to the rack position) in the power clean is *explosive*. There are many ways to teach this pull, but basically the bar stays close to the body, and arm involvement is minimized — as a teaching rule, the elbows don't bend during the lift!



- The movement finishes with the bar resting on the anterior deltoids, with the elbows up and out.

- The foot stance in this catch or rack position will be a bit wider than the stance that you started with if you do the jumping action associated with the second pull. When you go to this wider stance, return to the pull stance (start position) before lowering the bar.

Some of you may shy away from heavy deadlifts because you've got a problematic back and want to save it for when you grow old. I understand. However, there just aren't many other hip-dominant exercises that I would recommend for use with such low reps. Perhaps the only alternative may be to do front squats, leg presses, or whatever. If this is the case, however, it would be a repeat of the quad-dominant training performed in an earlier program. If you do go down this road, I suggest doing lower volume and higher reps on this training day (see the

alternative program toward the end). Still, if you can, perform the described deadlift routine — you'll find it the most conducive to your goals.

The reps and sets are similar to the squat routine presented last week and, like before, you'll be employing wave loading. Just to refresh your memory, wave loading is based on the principal of post-tetanic facilitation. You'll end up doing "waves" of two sets, using heavier weight on the second wave than you would on the first.

Remember, though, that to optimize wave loading, you'll need to be conservative in the first wave — I don't believe that the first wave should be performed at optimal load, but the second can be. I've found that if you overdose on the first wave, the second wave is performed at the same or lower loads, and this is definitely not the goal.

One issue that ultimately confronts every deadlifter concerns straps — to use them, or not to use them? That is the question. Straps can be used in the deadlift to negate grip strength limitations. The disadvantage of straps, obviously, is that your forearms won't get worked. I recommend minimizing the use of straps, but I appreciate that some of you may want to use them. What I would consider using instead of the straps, however, is the reverse-grip option used by competitive powerlifters (one hand "under" and one hand "over"). Likewise, if you're choosing to do the power clean instead of the deadlift, you may try the hook grip — as used by Olympic lifters — instead of straps. However, the straps are there as a fallback. Of course, if you're doing clean pulls or snatches as an alternative to deadlifts, you'll need the straps.

To ensure proper form in the squat and deadlift (and clean, etc.), you really do require feedback from another party. If you can still see yourself in the mirror during the set, *you aren't lifting enough*. Maximal loading should push your blood pressure up so much that you wouldn't remember *anything* during the set, let alone see yourself!



I've also included a deadlift off blocks (i.e. the weight plates sit on the blocks, raising the starting height) for the more advanced lifter. The aim is to expose yourself to greater loading than otherwise possible.



I've suggested two sets of three and then, provided that you were conservative in the first work set, suggested step-loading (going up a bit in load for the second work set). This exercise is best left to those with more training experience, though.

Again, we offer a lot of variety in this workout. You're going to do deadlifts, and then you'll move on to the deadlift. And of course, we can't forget deadlifts.

Medium-grip deadlifts off ground



This is the same deadlift technique that I described in an earlier article. The challenge here is to maintain your form within some degree of your capabilities. Yes, I know, some of the best deadlifters who can lift the most weight have the worst technique, i.e. a rounded back. This is of no concern to you. If you want to optimize the way that you look and function, retain a focus on technique.



As far as stress to the lower back, you can't get around it. But if stress is excessive, it's more of a function of technique breakdown than anything else.

Here's a synopsis of the exercises outlined in this program:

Beginner-rep combination

Medium-grip deadlifts off ground

Warm-up sets — 1x10 at 20%, 1x8 at 40%, 1x5 at 60%, 1x3 at 80%

Work sets — 1x5, 1x4, 1x3, 1x5, 1x4, 1x3, 1x10-15

Speed — 201

Note: The loads for the warm-up sets are expressed as a percentage of the first work-set load.

After warm-ups, and using the percentages of 1RM indicated, perform two "waves." Do a set of five deadlifts using the maximum amount of weight you can use for that given number of reps — but don't overdo it on the first wave! Rest four to ten minutes. Really. Then, increase the weight and do a set of four deadlifts. After resting again for four to ten minutes, increase the weight and do a set of three reps.

Time to start the second wave. But this time, you should be able to use more weight on the first set than you did on the first set of the first wave.

Upon completing both waves, do a set of 10-15 reps using about 75% of the weight that you used for your first work set.

Intermediate-rep combination

Medium-grip deadlifts off ground

Warm-up sets — 1x10 at 20%, 1x6 at 40%, 1x4 at 60%, 1x2 at 80%

Work sets — 1x4, 1x3, 1x2, 1x4, 1x3, 1x2, 1x10-15

Speed — 201

Note: The loads for the warm-up sets are expressed as a percentage of the first work-set load.

After warm-ups, and using the percentages of 1RM indicated, perform two "waves." Do a set of four deadlifts using the maximum amount of weight you can use for that given number of reps — but don't overdo it on the first wave! Rest four to ten minutes. Really. Then, increase the weight and do a set of three deadlifts. After resting again for four to ten minutes, increase the weight and do a set of two reps.

Time to start the second wave. But this time, you should be able to use more weight on the first set than you did on the first set of the first wave.

Upon completing both waves, do a set of 10-15 reps using about 75% of the weight that you used for your first work set.

Advanced-rep combination

Medium-grip deadlifts off ground

Warm-up sets — 1x8 at 20%, 1x5 at 40%, 1x3 at 60%, 1x1 at 80%

Work sets — 1x3, 1x2, 1x1, 1x3, 1x2, 1x1

Speed — 201

Deadlifts off blocks, higher start position

Work sets — 2x3 (go up in weight for the second set)

Speed — 201

Deadlifts off ground

Work sets — 1x10

Speed — 201

Note: The loads for the warm-up sets are expressed as a percentage of the first work-set load.

After warm-ups, and using the percentages of 1RM indicated, perform two "waves." Do a set of three deadlifts using the maximum amount of weight you can use for that given number of reps — but don't overdo it on the first wave! Rest four to ten minutes. Really. Then, increase the weight and do a set of two deadlifts. After resting again for four to ten minutes, increase the weight and do a set of one rep.

Time to start the second wave. But this time, you should be able to use more weight on the first set than you did on the first set of the first wave.

Upon completing both waves, do two sets of three off blocks, and then finish up with a conventional set of ten using about 75% of the weight that you used for your first work set.

If you choose to substitute the power clean or some squat variation (as explained in the introductory paragraphs) for the deadlift, use the following workout:

The non-deadlift option

Squats, variation or alternative

Warm-up sets — 1x10 at 30%, 1x8 at 60%, 1x6 at 80%

Work sets — 2x5-6, 1x10-12, 1x15-20

Speed — 301

Secondary hip-dominant exercises (medium-grip stiff-legged deadlifts, good mornings, or back extensions)

Work sets — 1x10, 2x8-10

Speed — 311

At the end of this final three-week phase, and assuming that you followed the workouts to the letter, you should have experienced a new level of quad and hamstring growth. What's more, you'll find that your legs are probably more balanced in strength and appearance than ever before. I might have also taught you a few moves or techniques that you may incorporate into your own routines and, if that's true, I'm pleased.

Now, whenever you limp home from the gym in pain, think kindly of me.