



The Between Sets Newsletter
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Ian King, on behalf of Team KSI

1. Coach King, What do you think about CrossFit?

Posted Tuesday, June 17, 2014

<http://bit.ly/CoachKingonCrossFit>

I recently received another request to share my thoughts about cross-fit.

As someone who I look up to a greatly respect in the area of physical training, I am interested what your thoughts are on CrossFit as an effective training program?

Before I responded in full asked 'Tell me what you think about CrossFit'. I value the market research that consumer comments provide. The writer kindly responded in full and I will share his response in the below.

Firstly I would like to establish commonality in grounds for discussion. In any meaningful dialogue I believe it's important that meanings are clarified and defined.

To this end, CrossFit is simply a word, or a mixing of two words. So in itself, CrossFit has no more meaning than the meaning a person attaches to it. For most people, the meaning will be shaped by their experiences or perception of what this word (or two words) stands for.

According to Wikipedia, CrossFit is:

CrossFit is a strength and conditioning program with the aim of improving, among other things, cardiovascular/respiratory endurance, stamina, strength, flexibility, power, speed, coordination, agility, balance, and accuracy. It advocates a perpetually varied mix of aerobic exercise, gymnastics (body weight exercises), and Olympic weight lifting.

This source provides further clarification with:

CrossFit Inc. describes its strength and conditioning program as “constantly varied functional movements executed at high intensity across broad modal and time domains with the stated goal of improving fitness, which it defines as “work capacity across broad time and modal domains.” Hour-long classes at affiliated gyms, or “boxes”, typically include a warm-up, a skill development segment, the high-intensity “workout of the day” (or WOD), and a period of individual or group stretching. Some boxes also often have a strength focused movement prior to the WOD. Performance on each WOD is often scored and/or ranked to encourage competition and to track individual progress. Some affiliates offer additional classes, such as Olympic weightlifting, which are not centered around a WOD. (1)

Acknowledge success

Before I go any further I also want to acknowledge the success of CrossFit as measured by financial value and growth.

To his credit from a financial and organizational perspective, the founder of CrossFit Inc, founder Greg Glassman, has been able to retain control over his training concepts. In contrast, I have watched my original training concepts and methods be published extensively by various ‘authors’ without reference or credit. Take the ‘Functional Training Movement’ for example – if you took my concepts out of the books written by one of the more prolific authors in this sector, the book would fall over. Interesting when you consider this same person orchestrated a mass walkout of one of my seminar in 1999 on the basis of how terrible the content was, only to turn around and republish all the content during the next decade in complete absence of crediting or acknowledgement. So kudos to Greg. He had the business acumen I lacked in the 1990s. He has managed to date to avoid the damage caused by those who adhere to the ‘New Rules’ of publishing in strength training.

The value of CrossFit is reflected in the reported \$16 million CrossFit Inc paid his ex-wife for her share in the company.

In relation to growth, since its inception in 2000, the number of affiliated gyms globally is quoted at 9,000 or more. Glassman commercial approach deserves recognition.

Drivers

So what has driven CrossFit? I identify two main drivers of any new trend or movement (apparently it is now a ‘sport’ also). Firstly, the demand from consumers is based on the

'new' paradigm solving a problem that was not being solved by their prior solutions. The second driver is marketing forces, driven by commercial interests.

The growth and relatively longevity of the CrossFit movement or trend suggests that it is providing solutions to the unresolved needs of many people. I will leave exactly how to social researchers, however I suspect it may be the attraction of group training combined with the feeling of working hard, meeting the masses perception of what training should feel like.

The involvement of a large fitness industry company in Reebok, who around 2010 entered into a ten year agreement with CrossFit, suggests commercial marketing motivation to contribute to growing the trend. The impact in prize money alone compares a \$25,000 total prize money in CrossFit Games 2010 to \$1,000,000 in 2011. (2)

It is now in the interests of Reebok to drive this vehicle commercially.

The success to date of CrossFit is undeniable. More evidence of this is the number of my 'colleagues' who have become overnight experts on CrossFit, allowing them to jump on it's band wagon of success.

Now let's get more specific about CrossFit as a training method.

Opposite and Equal

The attraction of CrossFit to commerce and consumer has been established. So what is it actually going to create in terms of long and short term training effects?

A valuable insight into the potential short term impact of CrossFit as a training method is provided in the response I received from the person who raised the question about CrossFit with me. They wrote:

Well, I have been involved in CrossFit for about 16 months and found it to be very effective in developing all aspects of fitness. I became leaner, increased my endurance, flexibility, coordination, power, speed and strength.

As CrossFit rises in popularity the amount of what I call short term research conducted on CrossFit (1) will increase. Here's an example:

A 2010 U.S. Army study conducted during a 6-week period produced an average power output increase of 20% among participants, measured by benchmark WODs. The average one repetition maximum weight deadlift increased by 21.11%. (3)

My attitude is you can wait for the studies but you don't have to. You can reach conclusions earlier and benefit. Additionally, most studies will be short-term in nature. What may be lacking is a fuller understanding of the long-term impacts of participation in CrossFit.

To help answer that question, there's a concept that is extremely relevant – the opposite and equal concept. It's an original concept I released in 1999:

This is a very interesting principle, a concept that I have created. One that upon mastering will assist you to avoid negative outcomes from training. The concept is based on the belief

that to every action (in training) there is a positive and a negative outcome, and that often the negative outcome is equal or as powerful as the positive outcome. (4)

Strengths

The strengths of CrossFit are easy to identify. It has attracted a large and enthusiastic following in a short period of time. To achieve this it must be providing a solution that its participants had not been able to find previously.

Additionally once any belief or movement or trend reaches a percentage of market saturation it experiences a degree of self-perpetuating increase. Behavioural scientists suggest that in the same time it takes a new idea to reach 10% of the market, it shoots to 90%. So however long it takes for 10% of the market to accept and join in with an idea, it can advance another 80% in market participation in the same time.

I suggest CrossFit has or is reaching this tipping point.

From what I can see and hear, its participants enjoy the group motivation and the experience of pushing themselves. To this extent CrossFit has achieved a phenomenal job in creating this 'community' atmosphere.

Along with this level of physical effort come physical adaptations, including the ones listed by the person who wrote in with the question – effective in developing all aspects of fitness. They became leaner, increased their endurance, flexibility, co-ordination, power, speed and strength.

I would like to place this in context:

I still call this a short or medium term result, not a long term result.

I am not making any comment in this article about the effectiveness of CrossFit to transfer to any specific event or sport other than general fitness adaptations and participation in the 'sport' of CrossFit itself. The discussion of merits of CrossFit for specific occupational and or sporting outcomes is outside the context of this article, although very deserving of focus in an article dedicated to this topic.

Another strength of CrossFit is that it embraces a wide range of exercises, many of them with excellent theoretical benefits. In fact you could attribute any rise in participation numbers in strength sports (Olympic Weightlifting, powerlifting) to CrossFit.

Additionally, the characteristic of CrossFit to provide frequent variety in exercise programs may be attractive to many who require this to keep the motivation to train.

Now as my opposite and equal concepts suggests, there is an equally powerful downside to CrossFit that need to be considered.

Even the writer of the question that promoted this response recognized this, to their credit:

There are a lot of things I like about CrossFit, however, I do understand that there are negatives as well.

Weaknesses

Most of my initial concerns for CrossFit participants revolve around injury potential. I was not surprised when the question writer shared the below:

Recently I suffered an injury at training, and while it did not occur doing a typical CrossFit exercise, I wonder if the training I have been performing over the past 16 months may have contributed to it. I was in a group fitness class and was asked to perform single-leg bounding over a short distance (around 15-20 meters). This was early in the morning, and there was dew on the grass. Upon landing, my right foot slipped forwards. There was a loud noise and a sharp pain in my knee. I found out later that I had a proximal rupture of the patella tendon. Not a common injury, as you are probably aware, and I was told that it is quite likely I had a pre-disposing weakness in the tendon. I have had a bit of a history of chondromalacia patella, which I had been managing, but no real issues with the knee besides that.

1 Individualization: The concept of individualization has been a long-touted one in the physical training industry. It makes most text books. I describe this principle of training as:

This principle stresses that to optimize the training effect, it is necessary to take into account all the factors that the individual athlete presents. This suggests that each training program needs to be individualized. Modified to suit the individual, in each aspect of training – speed, strength, endurance, flexibility and so on. (5)

In group exercise, the ability to individualize training is negated, which includes CrossFit.

Now rather than single out CrossFit for this flaw, I suggest that unlike say technology in general, I have seen no advancement at all in over three decades of industry involvement in the ability of fitness ‘professionals’ to individualize training.

There are a number of reasons I propose for this incredible limitation in this industry:

The focus on research for justification of training protocols – it is difficult if not impossible to find a research study on your specific client giving you answers to stimuli (the training program) that has not been applied yet.

The complete absence of teaching of the art of training, as opposed to the science of training.

The willingness of what I certain inexperienced and incompetent individuals to position themselves as ‘experts’, write books and give seminars on how to train people. The people I refer to are very good networkers, very good marketers, will to deceive to create false perceptions of their guru-ness, yet have never coached or trained people to any level of success. In other words they are incompetent yet teaching. An excellent saying I learnt from John C. Maxwell is this:

You teach what you know but you reproduce what you are.

Therefore what they say and write about sounds great, but all that is developed in their paying audience is more of their incompetence, and no advancement occurs in average professional competencies. Unless you believe the ability to market through misleading content is an advancement – you can read more about this in my book ‘Barbells & Bullshit’ (6).

Therefore a person going to see a ‘personal trainer’ is unlikely to receive any more individualization in training than they would if they participated in group training.

2 Level of difficulty in exercise: A CrossFit class can contain a diverse range of exercises including many classics such as Olympic and power lifts. This is great in theory – total body, dynamic exercises etc. However from a finer point of view these exercises can be classed as higher level of difficulty which is associated with higher levels of risk for those whose bodies are or may never be ready for them.

In my 1998 book ‘How to Write Strength Training Programs’ (7) I provide the following guidelines for exercise selection:

Exercise selection in strength training refers to which exercise to use. Exercise selection is often presented as a difficult or confusing task, but the following should simplify this aspect of writing programs. When choosing exercises consider the following:

- *Training method.*
- *Exercise suitability.*
- *Specificity.*
- *Injury history/prevention needs.*
- *Training history.*
- *Current physical status.*
- *Strengths and weaknesses.*
- *Level of supervision.*
- *Balance. (7)*

If you have multiple individuals in the class, it is in my opinion totally improbable that advanced exercises are suitable to them all.

3 Unfamiliar exercises: CrossFit characteristically provides high levels of variety in exercise. This alone could provide a discussion of the merits of this strategy as to the whether it is optimal to train with exploitation of the variety variable, however that is a discussion again beyond the level of this article.

What I will focus on is the impact of conducting a relatively unfamiliar exercise (that is you may not have done it for a few weeks). From a muscle perspective, this ‘shock’ can provide the delayed muscle soreness that some seek to validate their training. In other words, it can feel good. My concern is that loading a relatively new exercise is not necessary or wise for the majority of people the majority of the time.

In sharing my progressive loading models in my Get Buffed! books, I wrote:

In brief, I suggest that the first week of any new training cycle be treated as an ‘exposure week’, not a maximum effort week. What is often overlooked is the adaptation that results simply from the exposure - not only is a maximum effort unnecessary, it may also be counterproductive! Additionally, this sub-maximal approach in the first week allows for greater focus on technique. (8)

4 Extreme loading and technical breakdown: CrossFit is also characterized by high intensity of effort and high loading. In essence, there is a risk most participants are exceeding their technical limit most of the time.

I call this your technical limit – the loading limit before you lose the technical model you have chosen. This is a pretty redundant concept to most in the gym and they have no technical model – they just lift. Now this is great for some competitive lifters, who success is determined simply by whether the load goes from Point A to Point B within minimum guidelines. But if you want to selectively recruit specific muscles for sport performance or aseptic reasons – get a technical model. (9)

I have been discouraging this approach for a number of decades. I published the below nearly 25 years ago:

All individuals will have a 'technique limit' in weight selection at any given time on each exercise. The training effect will increase the limit progressively. Utilisation of loads in excess of that technique limit will result in technique breakdown and should be discouraged. (10)

The greatest concern as it relates to CrossFit participants is the injury risk:

In the case where loading exceeds technical ability, injury potential is increased, athlete's career lengths are reduced, life-time quality of life is reduced, and transfer is reduced. (11)

5 High volumes: CrossFit is also characterized by high volume, although I appreciate this relative nature of this comment. To place it in context, I share my definition of relative volume as measured in number of sets.

Generally speaking, any number of work sets exceeding a total of 12 for the workout (yes, that right, 12 sets for the total workout, not per muscle group!) should only be contemplated by those with optimal lifestyles and recovery conditions. If you have a day job and/or consider your recovery average, this rules you out. (12)

Now in fairness the above describes conventional set, rest strength training. In relation to circuit training, I allow a higher number of sets. In my *Guidelines for optimal number of sets per training session for each generalized training method* (13) I provide up to 30 sets allowance, however this is on the basis of lower intensity sets.

The risks of high volume work are the reduced ability to recovery, and the increased injury risk associated with training under residual fatigue. I believe injuries resulting from progressive build up of residual fatigue are the ones least likely to be correctly related to their cause.

The battle against ineffective, inefficient and injury creating high volume training will never be over. (14)

6 Imbalances in the training program: In 1998 I released for the first time my concept of 'Lines of Movement':

That's a concept I am sure you have never heard before because this is the first time I have really spoken about it. (15)

Now I am going to show you how I break the muscle groups up: (16)

- Lower body:
- *Quad dominant*
- *Hip dominant*

Upper body:

- *Horizontal plane push*
- *Horizontal plane pull*
- *Vertical plane push*
- *Vertical plane pull*

I taught this with the intent of helping the world of strength training reduce their injuries from muscle imbalances. This intent has not been overly successful, in part I suggest because the concept was hijacked by the industry leading plagiarists who really didn't understand it and therefore could not possibly teach it in with the impact of its intention.

From my generalized understanding CrossFit, there are potential program design imbalances e.g. more exposure to quad dominant exercises than hip dominant exercises, resulting in injury potential. This point was not lost on the question writer:

My thoughts are that CrossFit did contribute to my injury due to the large volume of jumping, squatting and running. I would love to know your thoughts on this as well.

7 Time magnifies error: I released a saying in 1998 –

Time magnifies errors in training (17).

All the above concerns will be magnified over time. Considering the extreme nature – volume, intensity, and exercise selection – I suggest you can expect some significant physical complications the longer one participates in activities such as CrossFit. There are many physical therapists and chiropractors who echo this sentiment. Additionally, I am very familiar with the impact on the body of those who participate occupationally in such training environments, especially the Special Forces military personnel.

Summary

The points I raise above in my concerns were well summarized by the question writer whose question stimulated this article:

...I do understand that there are negatives as well. The focus of the WODS is to perform a given amount of reps in as little time as possible, or to perform as many reps as possible in a given time limit. This can lead to a breakdown in form and potential injury. The volume of training also seems to be quite high and could lead to overtraining and overuse injuries if not properly managed. There is also no individualization in the training program. Though some

coaches are quite good at pointing out what you need to work on and many clients will use "open box" time to work on these

In summary, when (not if) a person comes to me and tells me of their injuries whilst participating in CrossFit, I initially ask if they plan to continue in CrossFit. If they do, I tell them I cannot help them. I have a saying that you cannot successfully solve an injury problem in the same environment that it was created in (18) and this is more applicable in any training environment that magnifies its flaws, as I suggest CrossFit does.

Conclusion

In conclusion I have been impressed with the magnitude and success of the CrossFit movement, and I am delighted to see the achievement of Greg Glassman in maintaining control of his intellectual property. There are many ways to achieve fulfilment in exercise and participation in CrossFit is an option. The power that Glassman and CrossFit have is their ability to refine and adapt their training protocols to deal with any recognition of the injury potential associated. Whether they do is unknown and their prerogative. Perhaps the masses are happy to take the injury risks in return for what their culture and environment offers.

As to you as an individual making this decision, it is yours to make. For me the body the only one we have for life, and should be treated with the utmost respect and care. I have worked with many athletes who have taken these risks in their training and competition with the potential for great reward, and I can understand why they have done this. An Olympic medal or world championship or playing professional sport comes with many financial and social rewards, and I know even as they suffer physically for the years after, most feel the sacrifice was worth it.

The question I believe you need to ask yourself is - are the rewards and benefits of CrossFit as it is currently conducted worth the risk for you? Only you can answer that, and I respect whatever decision you make.

References

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- (6) King, I., 2010, Barbells & Bullshit: Challenging your thinking.
- (7) King, I., 1998, How to write strength training programs (book), p.38

- (8) King, I., 1999, Get Buffed!TM(book), p. 23-26
 - (9) King, I., 2000, Heavy Metal #4, t-mag.com
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 - (12) King, I., 1999, Get Buffed!TM, p. 53-56
 - (13) King, I., 1999, Get Buffed!TM, p. 34
 - (14) King, I., 2011, Legacy – Ian King’s Training Innovations, p. 82
 - (15) King, I., 1998, How to Write Strength Training Programs
 - (16) King, I., 1998, Strength Specialization Series (DVD), Disc 3
 - (17) King, I., 1998, How to write strength training programs (book), p.75
 - (18) I wonder how long it will take for the industries leading plagiarists – and they are truly world champions at it - to be publishing this saying/concept one as their own... You may even hear it as soon as the upcoming ‘functional training’ seminars in the US...
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2. Ask the Master

Which product is best for me?

Hi, I was listening to Mike Mahler's podcast with Ian recently and what he had to say was very eye opening and went against some, actually most of my perceived training wisdom I have garnered over the years from the internet and other sources that Ian would probably find appalling.

The more I listened and read up on Ian's concepts the more I realised maybe I have been doing everything wrong. I had walking lunges in my warmups, I didn't stretch until the end of a training session. Anyway I could gone on forever in that vein, I would say I am general population, no athlete. I know Ian doesn't coach general population. Hence I am writing this.

I am over 40 male carrying a bit to much weight. I tried to get strong over the years, but I say I did more damage than good. Never had great flexibility and probably have enough imbalances to write a book on. I injured my knee (mild cartilage damage), but recovering well with physio exercises. So range of motion has returned and I am pain free with just some minor stiffness.

Finding bodyweight and 16kg kettlebells good in my rehab and might continue in that vein for a time. So I guess it comes down what product of Ian's would be good for a 40 plus

male general population) looking to train and enhance his strength, flexibility, iron out imbalances and give longevity to his training life.

If Ian doesn't have a product that suit me, that's fine. I would assume his business is mainly built around elite athletes.

Any help with this inquiry would be greatly appreciated. Yours Sincerely,—David

David - great to hear you received value from the Mike Mahler podcast! I like the way you say perceived training wisdom. Because at the end of the day, that is all it is when we take on others thoughts. When they are truly our own, based on our own experience and analysed as objectively as we can, then they can be more than this.

Most people I talk to are little more than a collection of other peoples thoughts, and the threads are so clear to me I can typically trace their influences.

I like the way you are willing to review your current training habits. I share my conclusions to help people just like yourself, not to be right. So it's rewarding to hear you have at least paused to reflect on your choices.

I am also impressed with your realization and conclusion about your pursuit of strength that 'I did more damage than good.' This rings a bell of familiarity in my writings!

I have formed the opinion that most strength training programs do more damage than good. However it takes many years for the average person to realize this, if ever. The short-term results cause pleasure, but the long-term results inevitably pain. King, I., 2004, Get Buffed! III, p. 8-9

"In my opinion most people do more damage to their bodies and long term health than good, through their training. Amazing when you consider the aim of training generally is to improve your body." King, I., 2007, Email to clients - KSI pre-production offer, 6 June 2007

So to answer your question - which of my products would serve? I would recommend the education in the Get Buffed! book combined with the info in the GB II book. I am not suggesting that all the programs in the book are right for you right now, but they are only generic programs and I have always recommended you individualize your training. And the content in the book will help you do that.

Whilst our main focus has been elite athletes, the GB range (an extensive range of products for people just like you) is a by-product of the conclusions I reached during my many decades of training a high volume of elite athletes. The content and methods published in these books have been very well received, changing the way the world trains arguably more than any other single source. And amongst the most plagiarized books as well, so it's great if you can get the original intent from the source.

In conclusion, I like your PS - you can't afford to make many more mistakes in your training. I agree, which was my motive for publishing as extensively as I have during the last 20 years - if I can prevent as few as one person from damaging their quality of life, it's worth my effort. So I look forward to what you can change for the better in your training with my published training information!—Ian King

Shipping costs and digital options

I would love to order your get buffed series of books (I had great results with "The Book of Muscle") but it costs \$70 for shipping. Is there a digital download you could offer?
Thanks!—John, New Jersey, USA

John - Great to hear the benefits you received with the Book of Muscle! I understand the cost of shipping is not good. At 2.2 lbs per book, this does not help. At this stage we don't have a digital option. When we find a secure method of electronic distribution we will look to this. We have been so smashed by the leading industry plagiarizers we are very gun-shy about electronic distribution that is not secure.—Ian King

Shipping costs

Hey I was wanting to order "foundations of physical preparation" and live in Sydney. The shipping options seem to all refer to overseas options. Can you point me in the right direction for shipping \$\$\$ as I would be keen to order more of Coach Kings books in the future. —Ben

Ben - thanks for your email. Yes, all shipping options are for overseas. Now that we are getting some interest from Australians we are going to have to look for another solution! Anyway when the orders come in anything from within Australia gets refunded the shipping difference, which is weight dependant, but typically around \$15-20. Let us know if you have any further questions other wise we will keep an eye out for your order.—Ian King

[Want more? Order 'Ask the Master - An Anthology of Q & A's by Ian King](#)

3. Your Say

Thank you for your energy, time and passion in creating these publication

Ian & Crew, I just ordered and read four of your books. I wanted to thank you for your energy, time and passion in creating these publications. Living in North America, too many times we don't get an "international" view of sports performance, methodology, pedagogy and reference. Really love the simplicity, thought process and message. I will use your "sayings" and have been using many of your methods in practice without knowing the origins. Thanks again for your time. If your ever in Columbus, Ohio, I would love to show you our facility. -Anthony Donskov, Founder: Donskov Strength and Conditioning
www.donskovsc.com

4. Athlete preparation

I was an Australian title holder in rowing, but all this changed when my back started hurting. I was diagnosed at age 22 of bilateral stress fractures in my spine (one on each side) as well as 3 herniated discs. I was told by the leading 'specialist' in this field I would never row again and would be limited to aqua aerobics. For someone who sport and exercise has made up a huge part of their life this is relatively devastating news, physiotherapists had for

years prescribed me 'core' programs and 'functional' training but lone behold this is where I had ended up. A second and third opinion all from leading (and expensive) surgeons in this area confirmed it for me, with the final one saying I could take the strongest pain killers he could prescribe so long as I accepted my back would be completely ruined by around 30. This is when I met Peter stanton who became the first person to believe I could get better, Peter worked extensively on me and helped me survive a season of rowing but there were frequent scares where my back would give out. At the end of the season Peter and I acknowledged I needed more help than simply falling back on him every time it blew out. Peter recommended you but explained I would have to be prepared to be challenged and it took some time before he agreed to pass on your contact details.

Coming from a university research background I was startled, shocked and cynical when I learnt of the methods that were to be used to help me help myself. It was hard for KSI Coach Mitchell Kochonda I imagine to watch someone who has been conditioned their entire life to be challenged in this way but deep down I inherently felt this was going to work. All the negative feelings disappeared forever when I stretched properly for the first time, the next day waking up and for the first time in four years did not have back pain. The sad thing was I had forgotten what it was like to wake up without back pain so immediately thought something was wrong with me!

Mitchell said to me "50% of this is physical and 50% is mental" I will never forget this, so much of my back pain was related to negative thinking and other stressors in my life. Slowly we began to introduce training and once again, by doing the opposite of what I had been taught at university, I achieved far better gains than if I had continued along my "sports science researched" training program.

Having now rowed another season completely pain free at state and national level and having been elevated to leadership position in the boat I can safely say this has been the best decision I have ever made in my life. In saying this, I must acknowledge there is so much more the learn and a lot of old habits or perceived barriers that need to be worn down and broken. I am excited to continue my journey as part of the wider KSI community. — Andrew

Andrew - Thanks for taking the time to express the gratitude. You are one of the truly few lucky ones that have found Peter and through that received referral to KSI. As you know the masses don't get this opportunity and are left floundering and living life below their otential.

One could reflect on why you were so fortunate, however I suspect that you took action that others have not which may give the answers. The only question left is whether you will continue to improve along the KSI way or leave the path that is there for you in continual improvement both in training and competing and holistically in all aspects of life.—Ian King

20 Year Reunion of a Great Rugby Team

Recently I attended the 20yr Re-Union of the Qld Team that won the 1994 Super 10 Final in Durban, South Africa.

<http://subscriptions.viddler.com/kingsports/3mq37q>

It was great to catch up with this high achieving group. Here's an email I received after this event:

Hi mate, Great to see you last night and I thank you for your comment. You were and are an example of how I live life now I only wished I would have change my priorities years ago.Thanks again mate you are a great friend. Talk soon. —xxxx

xxxx - you are a great man and showing this gratitude is just more evidence of it. I have always maintained you were the most skilful big forward I have worked with and when you were selected ahead of xxxx in the Australian sevens in the early 1990s that we just more evidence of this.

It has been a pleasure guiding you through the challenges of being a young man and I'm proud of the outcome! It was just you and me sipping our waters on the night and life is far better for it!—Ian

5. Coach education – The KSI Way

Is the Level 1 right for me?

Hi there, I was recommended to look into your "Legacy" program. At present the link for further info is down. I'm told it is a very good program and so would like to explore this further. Regards--Barney

Barney ñ have you tried the links to the course registration from this page?

<http://www.kingsports.net/Coach/courses/menu.htm>

Let us know any links that are not working for you from this page, thanks!—Ian King

Hi There, Thanks, that link worked and was able to see info. Course looks good judging by the testimonials. Just have 2 questions:

1. I'm looking into getting the programming strength training book for now. As far as I can make out it's from 2000 or 2002 - is it still "up to date"? I'm not referring to fads etc but is the information contained still in line with what is taught on the KSI courses and the methods not been superseded?

2. I really like the look of the Legacy course. As I understand it really goes into the how and why of coaching and programming. Just as a point of reference how would it compare to something like this <http://elitefitnesstrainingsystems.com/> which is apparently developed by several well regarded coaches. I won't be quoting anything but would like to know how this compares (if at all). I know that these types of offers and such come around every so often if you're on certain PT information sites, and most are the product of a big name, but certainly we couldn't be buying all of them. Thanks for your time.—Barney

P.S. What are postage costs on "How to write strength training programs" to UK?

Barney - thanks for clarifying your meaning of 'up to date'. As you know, trends to us are not relevant. Additionally, unlike 'others' we don't 'change our mind' about training information. The book HTW was written after 20 years of professional experience ñ there are not too many books in the market place where an 'author' waits that long to comment. And of course, it is our works which again makes it very unique in this 'cut and paste' 'New Rules of (Writing about) Lifting' world.

With regard to your question how would it compare to something like this <http://elitefitnesstrainingsystems.com/> - we are not able to answer that as we have no knowledge of that program, and are not likely as we have really no interest in what others are doing. (unless they are breaching international and federal copyright laws or professional ethics, which appears to be somewhat standard practice in the American fitness industry loosely described as 'strength coaching'.

Our focus is on what it has been on for 34 years now ñ helping athletes be the best they can be, and sharing our conclusions about what works in training with selected coaches, specifically those who are committed to mastering the KSI way. Which we know is relatively few as most are drawn to what the majority are doing, which is not long term focus towards mastering in one direction, especially in a direction so devoid of contemporary marketing strategies.

So you are in the same position as all of us ñ choosing your influences and living with the outcomes. We wish you all the best with this, stay in touch!

You can calculate postage costs here ñ just add the weight of the product, and select destination to ship from Australia to. FYI HTW is about 0.75kgs.

<http://auspost.com.au/apps/postage-calculator.html> —Ian King

Hi and thanks for the reply. Just picked up a Men's Health guide to building muscle penned by Ian King as a go between. As far as the Legacy course goes, would this cover most of what is in the HTW.. book. Just seeing the cost including postage is about a 5th of the course so maybe would make more sense to throw my hat in all the way.

I know the focus is on training athletes (which would be fantastic) but would the principles apply to coaching everyday people too in personal and group training? I'm also very much interested in progressive bodyweight training, would the KSI approach carry over into other training styles such as this? Thanks again.—Barney

Barney- we trust you enjoy the Book of Muscle. Yes, postage costs, its not ideal.

The HTW book is focused only on strength training. The Legacy Course covers all topics relating to physical training, so a much broader content. The Legacy course is about 1500 pages, and then duplicated in audio, and then supported by a short video for each of the 34 units, and the Learning Support Tools, which is now packaged with the program, gives access to a range of otherwise not available videos on a wide range of topics, delivered electronically; the Level 1 forum; and the Bronze KSI Members forum valued at \$197/yr.

If you find a course with more life changing material for less than what we are charging, you should take that course.

Would our methods apply to training everyday people? We can only point out Ian's methods are the most copied, most plagiarized methods in the world, by fitness industry 'authors', writing for PTs and their end user clients. More people around the world use Ian's methods in their training than any other single person in modern history.

We believe this answers your question. Actually we are amazed at how many people ask this question. Understandably we are known globally for what we have done for 30+ years ñ train elite athletes to success. However we suspect that if people knew our works more intimately, and saw their impact throughout the world, they would not have to ask this question!

Progressive body weight training ñ would the KSI approach carry over into other styles such as this. Again, this is an interesting question. You see anyone in the industry from say 1995 onwards would know that Ian introduced and popularized bodyweight exercises in mainstream strength training. If you took Ian's original works out of say 'Functional Training' books, there would be very little left in the books! Every day, in every gym around the world, some one is doing one of Ian's original bodyweight exercises!

So again, we think that may have answered your question, and we believe that upon completion of the L1 course (if you do it) you will realize the redundancy of your questions!—Ian King

Hi again, Just been perusing through "Muscle - The worlds most complete guide to building your body" from 2004. (UK). I notice that isolation exercises feature quite significantly. My understanding was that the most benefit is gained from compound movements and that these should be the focus of any program, particularly in terms of time efficiency.

I'd really just like to know more about this and if these would be the same principles as applied in the Legacy course. I'm very interested in the course as I've heard it is a great resource for anyone wishing to improve their coaching. I also realise that I know very little about it's contents. Regards.—Barney

Barney- thanks for your email. In relation to your major concern - allow me to cut to the chase without wanting to seem presumptuous.

“My understanding was that the most benefit is gained from compound movements and that these should be the focus of any program, particularly in terms of time efficiency.”

I am going to guess your entrance to the industry or training, or at least the period of exposed to the most influential stage of your journey, was during the last 10 years, values:

“...compound movements and that these should be the focus of any program, particularly in terms of time efficiency.”

Have been the dominant paradigm. How is that for a guess?

Alternatively, you have applied both methods in an objective controlled manner with a large sample size, or even just yourself with objectively and enough time to make objective comparisons.

You see when you say ‘my understanding,’ my question is that really your understanding, which for me would mean an intrinsic kinaesthetic conclusion brought on by personal experience, or is that an understanding you have rationally choose to adopt under the influence of conformity to dominant paradigms of the recent times?

In relation to your question:

“I’d really just like to know more about this and if these would be the same principles as applied in the Legacy course.”

I assume again that you are referring to the ‘principle’ of

a. Are we allowed to do isolation exercises ? Vs

b. Compound movements should always dominant.

In initial response to this, I certainly hope that the legacy course, about 1500 pages covering my 35 years of conclusions, contains more than this, and that whether a or b is the preferred option, that has little or no impact on whatever other content in the course.

Again, I am presumptuous in the interests of time, assuming that you have a ‘fear’ or concern that this non-dominant trend as it applies to one concept within one area of training within one of four dominant physical qualities within one of four athletic qualities may prejudice the course content.

I am pleased to hear that you have heard great things about the course I’m very interested in the course as I’ve heard it is a great resource for anyone wishing to improve their coaching. I also realise that I know very little about it’s contents.

And I could apologise for the relatively lack of awareness about its content, however I humbly suggest that most of what you do today has been influenced in some way by my original concepts, albeit in such a diluted confused way and so encased in the marketing of the writers who actually have never coached and or cant coach, that in fairness to you, you could not be expected to know. And my approach is I don’t bother blowing my trumpet above the ‘noise’ and ‘static’ of this bogus marketing lead influence in training.

I thank you again for your email and trust you are not offended by me shortcutting the communication process with an assumption to test the values.—Ian King

[Start your KSI coach education journey here](#)

6. Get Buffed!™ Q&A

Five ways to go deeper

Mr. King, I recently read an old T-nation article by you entitled "Five Ways to Go Deeper." In it, you suggest stretching/massaging the tibialis anterior muscle in order to get rid of impingement in the front of the ankle.

Well this provided immediate results which to me was a bigger shocker. I have impingement in one ankle from an old inversion sprain & shin fracture and I have not been able to find anything similar that has provided results.

I would greatly appreciate any additional information about this or a point in the right direction. I have gotten x-rays and they show no bone spur development. I have tried mulligan techniques and am currently getting chiropractic adjustments for the ankle but have not seen any improvement. Foam rolling the tibialis anterior for a few minutes gives me improved ROM immediately. What improvements have you seen in other athletes by stretching the tibialis anterior. It seems everywhere else online they suggest stretching the posterior muscles but never mention the tibialis anterior. Thank you in advance for your help!—James

James - Great to hear you found some of my many online articles, buried amongst the ever growing pile of information on the net! Yes, I have found impingement to the front of the ankle can be caused at least in some cases by tension or tightness in the TA. Great to hear you were willing to give it a go! And thanks for providing me the results to add to my data base of information in this cause-effect hypothesis!

I am not surprised about the limited results from some of the modalities you refer to. As to stretching vs rolling, I teach that 80% of tension generally speaking is best addressed through stretching and the remaining 20% through manual tension release techniques. This may be slightly different for the TA but not that much, if I am generalizing as opposed to individualizing, which I would be loathe to do without a manual inspection and assessment.

You mention that 'everywhere else on line' they don't refer to stretching the anterior muscles of the lower leg. Firstly, I am always intrigued by those who seek justification from multiple sources. I trust what have have learnt and teach, and you can to. You don't have to get other people to agree. Now I understand that the majority will not trust what I have taught, unless of course they read it from one of the many highly proficient marketers who have never coached or can't coach (and therefore need to steal other peoples ideas). With the masses more convinced by marketing then the masses act enmasse. That's what normal or average people do ñ what everyone else is doing.

So your choice is simple - be average and wait till 'everyone else is doing it'. Or be brave, come to your own conclusions, and receive the benefits.

To some extent it's impressive 'they' suggest stretching the posterior muscles ñ for so many decades I felt alone in recommending stretching!

So let's be clear. I only teach something after I have trialled if for typically a decade and concluded it's superiority. I know that sounds weird or exaggerated but if you follow the paper trail and talked to the athletes who I have trained during the last 24 years you would know it is accurate. You will find for examples athletes who can tell you about using my 3 digit speed timing concept in the 1980s, even though I didn't publish it until the 1990s etc.

So I can't add too much more. If I taught or teach it, it has a lot of value. You can use it or not. That's the beauty about being a human. And the risks of choice!—Ian King

The Great Guns in 12 weeks program

Hi Ian, I bought BOM and your 4 GB books... they are bitter sweet. Sweet in the fact that the information is pure gold and I'm learning so much... bitter in the fact that I've wasted so much time on crappy programs in the past. Anyway I digress...

I had a 2 year plan to follow the programs as below:

-BOM intermediate 6M (currently in phase 4)

-GB1 3M

-GB2 3M

-Great guns + maintenance (chance to design my own maintenance program based on your principals) 3M

-My own program (based on GB 1 + 2 education) 3M

-GB3 Bodybuilding 3M

My problem is that the great guns program appears to have been taken down from t-nation. I'm wondering if you have a copy you can send me?

Ps. I'm loving the podcasts you've been doing lately, particularly the shelby starnes / John Meadows ones. The information is fantastic, I must have listened to them 20 times each... It takes a while to sink into this noggin. Haha! :) Anyway, thanks for these. Kind regards,—James.

Jamie ñ great to hear from you and great to hear of the value you have received from my books! And great to hear you are receiving value from the podcasts I've been doing lately! Your request for the Great Guns program has triggered a charity donation ñ I trust you have received my posts on FB and email about this? Enjoy!—Ian King

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[Order your own Get Buffed!™ material](#)

7. Book of Muscle Q&A

Where can il get a cutting program?

Dear Ian and Team KSI, Thank you for all your fine work in the world of sports and physical fitness. I would like to congratulate you for writing BOM.

From the very first time I laid eyes on it I knew it was unique from what was already out there on the market, and some 10 years later I still have not come across anything as good or better! I hope one day there will be a followup to BOM, but in the meantime it my Fitness Bible.

At the end of the advanced program weeks 25-27, one of the training options that are suggested after completing the advanced program is to do a cutting program.

Could you suggest a program or guide me to where I might acquire such a program? Thanks,
—Tony

Tony ñ we really appreciate your kind words! Its powerful to hear that the content of BOM in your eyes has stood the test of time and challenges and remained as the standout! As with all our writings and publications, we put in all our energy and time-tested original concepts, concepts that have served thousands of athletes in the real world before they find their way into print.

One consideration for you following the BOM is the Get Buffed! series of books, and yes, we do recommend beginning with GB 1, the original starting point. 'Cutting' involves more the manipulation of nutrition than training, however training variables that can be manipulated to support this goal include the shortening of rest periods.

We trust this helps, and again, thanks so much for your gratitude and support! If you ever attend one of our seminars we would love to have your BOM signed up by Ian! Actually, we are in the midst of planning an event in August where you could meet not only Ian but all our top KSI coaches. The event will occur in Park City in late August fyi.—Ian King

Clarity about speed of movement and exercise

Hi Ian, I am confused about the tempo used in the beginner program stage 1 weeks 1-3 exercise 9 pushup hold. When I attempted it felt like a plank exercise I didn't know.—Nathan

Push up hold ñ If just holding it, use an isometric duration e.g. 5-15 reps at 5-10 sec hold.

If you are also moving the opposing arm and leg up and down (in the advanced option) it is then you can apply a more specific speed of movement, and this applies to the rate at which the arm/leg are being raised and lowered Trust this answers your questions. —Ian King

Hi Ian, I Thank you in advance for taking the time out of your busy schedule and answering my email. I didn't expect a quick reply. — Nathan

[Book of Muscle Facebook Page](#)

8. 2014 KSI Seminars

Learn more about super-charging our coaching and or training results in 3 day than you would in 3 decades!

Here's an opportunity that's never been available before! In August 2014 we will be holding the 11th Annual International KSI Convention - with a difference. For those not planning to participate in the Level 3 or 4 Coaching Courses offered at this time, there is the opportunity to participate - FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER WITHOUT PRE-REQUISITES AT THIS EVENT - at the KSI 2014 Annual International Convention!

An incredible opportunity for you to spend time learning from KSI's top coaches together in the one location!

Learn more here! <http://bit.ly/KSIConvention2014>

Register / More info - <http://www.kingsports.net/ksi/seminars.htm>

PARK CITY, USA

Aug 21-23 2014 Thu - Sat Park City USA KSI Level 3 Coaching Course Thu 7-10pm / Fri-Sat all day

Aug 23-26 2014 Sat - Tue Park City USA KSI Level 4 Coaching Course Sat 7-10pm / Sun-Tue all day

Aug 21-26 2014 Thu - Tue Park City USA KSI Level 5 Coaching Course Thu 7-10pm/Fri-Tue all day

Aug 21-26 2014 Thu - Tue Park City USA KSI Athlete Train Camp Thu 7-10pm / Fri-Tue all day

Aug 27-30 2014 Wed-Sat Salt Lake City USA International Convention All day

Register / More info - <http://www.kingsports.net/ksi/seminars.htm>

I'm going to make a point of attending the next time or even in the UK.....like Ian's philosophies and ability to critically think....not too common these days!! Also I'm a big fan of the more holistic approach to performance and coaching the person rather than the player. Chat soon.--PC

9. Nutrition & Nutritional Supplementation

Here's a video with American boxing legend Tun Bradley

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XkUKnoFj7U4>

10. The KSI 90 Day Leveraged Income Challenge

We will be announcing the winner of the Leveraged Income Challenge in August 2014, and the winner of our 90 day challenge Series 1 will take home the \$1,000* prize money!

First, I want to thank you for all of your support, guidance and "mentorship" in helping me build my business. This is so completely out of my box and comfort zone but I am absolutely giving it my all, stepping out of my box and determined to make it succeed. --Nancy, USA

Not yet part of this growth? Contact us at info@kingsports.net to register your interest.

11. Strength coaches and personal trainers don't need to be broke

Recently we offered to share some interesting economic predictions with our database, and this is one of the responses we received:

Ian, I guess in forecasted times like this the old saying "Cash is King" will be something to fall back on? I don't have real estate investments other than the house I live in, so I'll be sitting tight with that one. Other than that, moving other investments into cash would probably be the safest thing to do. From a business point of view I don't really know what strategy would be the correct one as I don't have experience in this area. The thing to consider is that if other people are affected by this, they won't have the cash to spend.... and this will impact on business.

As much as I am passionate about fitness I don't think the fitness industry will whether this too well. There is already an oversupply of personal trainers out there with a fickle customer base. Once these customers lose their money I don't see the fitness industry surviving this. I was considering getting into PT but I don't think it would be a sensible move, so I'm not sure what move to make in regards to that.--xxxx

xxxx - great to receive you response, and to see you engaging in dialogue on this very important topic. I share some of my thoughts below in response to your well thought out response. Cash flow is definitely more important moving forward as the more traditional investment classes either lack capital gain or lack consistent capital gain. As to whether cash itself is king, that may depend on the conditions in which we find ourselves, an unknown to be exact at this stage.

"I don't have real estate investments other than the house I live in, so I'll be sitting tight with that one."

I personally teach my inner circle that there is still opportunity in real estate, and am not as bearish as Harry Dent in this area. What I do stress is the need to be very, very careful and wise in your real estate moves.

"Other than that, moving other investments into cash would probably be the safest thing to do."

Harry Dent would agree I suspect, but personally I believe it is not that simple. So it really comes down to whose guidance you are going to rely on.

"From a business point of view I don't really know what strategy would be the correct one as I don't have experience in this area."

I have a little bit of this experience you acknowledge you lack - 34 years in the industry actually. And I have reached certain conclusions about how to invest my time and money, and teach these to my inner circle. I have experienced a level of success in this that allows me to live life on my terms and have watched my inner circle successfully model this.

"The thing to consider is that if other people are affected by this, they won't have the cash to spend.... and this will impact on business."

This is a critical point. Another aspect to this is that money never really disappears, it just changes the way it moves and to some extent who holds it. So if these predictions pan out there are many whose cash flow will dry up and place them at risk of financial collapse. This is why a plan to not only survive but to thrive in the years ahead is critical. Following the old world popular strategies will not provide this, in my opinion.

"As much as I am passionate about fitness I don't think the fitness industry will whether this too well."

Now you are really showing your astuteness. I am impressed. There is too much old world thinking in this industry, which will leave many in the predicament you envisage. There is upside in the industry however - the key is knowing what that is.

"There is already an oversupply of personal trainers out there with a fickle customer base. Once these customers lose their money I don't see the fitness industry surviving this."

Again you continue to impress me. I predict the PT industry is going to go through massive upheaval and change. Ultimately for the better, but there will be pain for many in the interim. I see little future in this scarcity mentality group struggling day by day with no certainly or adequate income.

The interesting thing is watching all the service providers in the PT educational space continuing to take money from prospective personal trainers and in return give them skills that will not support them moving into the new economy.

"I was considering getting into PT but I don't think it would be a sensible move, so I'm not sure what move to make in regards to that."

I am again impressed with your candidness. I have been building up a group of physical preparation coaches (as I call them) globally who work together to support and mentor, yet are independent in their distributor roles. I have been developing this for nearly 15 years, which means we have refined it and got it flying, and I believe it gives people in the fitness industry the best chance of coming through the impending economic challenges with prosperity.

As you know the physical training industry is growing rapidly, however few really achieve financial comfort from this industry, let alone become financially independent. I know what I have developed and refined will be a welcome lifeline to so many in this industry. For the most part, those who are willing to acknowledge that times are changing, that they need to open their eyes to new possibilities, and be willing to take on and develop new habits of mind and habits of the body.

I will be running a webinar about this next Tuesday night (US date) if you would like to join in. Let me know. And again, I am happy for you that you took the time to review the material I offered, and that you have the courage to dialogue with me openly and honestly. I trust our exchange will serve you well into the future.-- Ian King

Here's some income statistics for physical preparation coach income:

The average income in for a gym instructor is \$14-\$55 per hour or \$23,000-\$50,000 per annum...

The average income for a personal trainer is \$40-\$80 per hour or \$10,000-\$136,000 per annum...

"The average annual salary for strength and conditioning coaches was \$37,000 as of 2013..."

These kinds of incomes may suit a young single person early in their working life. However what about older married professionals with children? If this is something that concerns you, you may be interested in hearing more about this.

Opt in below if you would like to learn more about why I believe you don't need to be broke through a short video presentation.....

Learn more - <http://www.kingsports.net/Coach/money/interest.htm>

12. KSI Global Network

I have completed this course and I am very impressed with the contents especially the topics that involved planning a training and injury prevention. As a soft tissue therapist/personal trainer, I have witnessed many of my clients who went through poorly planned training and ended up with muscular imbalances. The methods prescribed in the course was easy to implement and my clients were surprised with the results too. The course was also presented in a way that a lot of common sense was involved which clicks with my personal philosophies as well. I will definitely be signing up for the level 2 cert to improve myself as a therapist and a personal trainer. --Chee (Singapore)

Hello All, I have just finished the Legacy Course. I was very impressed with the materials and how they relate to my personal training and also to my coaching of athletes. Particularly useful for me was the injury prevention and the technique before loading information. I realize now that my own training and some of my coaching techniques were not optimal in achieving the desired results. I am looking forward to continuing on to the next level in the KSI training.--Phil, USA

Hi Ian, Hope all is good with you and that are you are enjoying continued success. My name is Paul and I recently completed the KSI Legacy 1. I found it a most rewarding and enjoyable course. It helped me join some of the many dots that existed after 10 years of reading and studying a variety of things health and fitness, I intend to undertake Level 2 in the near future.--Paul

Join the KSI Global Network of Coaches – the original global network of physical preparation coaches!

Learn more: <http://www.kingsports.net/Coach/courses/menu.htm>

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