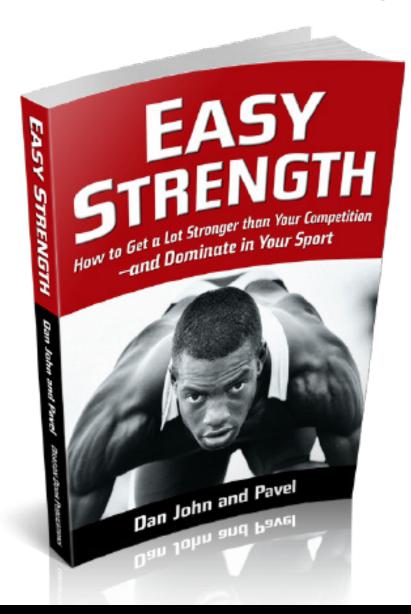
BE AT YOUR STRONGEST WHEN IT COUNTS

An Excerpt from



BY DAN JOHN AND PAVEL

BE AT YOUR STRONGEST WHEN IT COUNTS

It was 1961 and Russians were flying high. Yuri Gagarin was the first man in space. Valery Brumel was breaking world records in the high jump. Every day the latter's coach would test his grip strength. He knew that this test was the simplest way to gage the work capacity and excitability of the athlete's CNS—the single most important variable in posting great results. That day the chart showed that the sportsman's grip had suddenly spiked up. The coach shook his head; he knew that this indicated premature peaking. He did not want his star jumper to leave his best performance in the gym—to get "discharged", as Russian athletes would say. So Brumel took a harder than planned workout and the excitation came down but several days later started climbing up again. Another workout, a light one this time, brought it down once more. The coach's adjustments worked like a charm. On the day of the championship Valery Brumel's grip strength was off the charts, his nervous system in peak form, another record fell...

Soviet coaches have known for decades that the condition of the athlete's nervous system is the most important variable in posting an elite performance and breakthrough neuroscience research by their fellow countrymen had given them an undeniable advantage over the rest of the world. Simple and effective tests of the CNS tonus were developed: the grip, the standing vertical jump, the critical blinking frequency, the latent reaction time, tapping with a pencil and hitting a maximal number of dots in 5sec, etc.

You can take a page from the Russian book and use one of these tests to tweak your training when necessary, the way leading coaches in the US already do—Dan John with tapping, Louie Simmons with the grip, Chad Waterbury with the SVJ. But before getting down to the procedure you need to know that there is more to these tests that flagging overtraining. Indeed, an overtrained athlete will lose his grip strength and jump height and, as you would expect, this is a sign to take it easy. But, surprisingly, rapidly climbing numbers can also be a cause for concern, especially in the days before a competition.

For the very simple reason that a "peak", by definition, is narrow, and once you have hit it, the only way to go is down. Decades ago Ivan Pavlov discovered that nerve cells cannot stay on a "afterburner" for a long time. The scientist established that when neurons are pushed to their limit, or just way above the normal level, for too long, they experience defensive inhibition, a fancy way saying that they hit the brakes in order not to hit the wall. This sharply decreases their work capacity and tonus—and someone else takes home the trophy. So Russians learned to manipulate the CNS excitability, keeping it on an even keel for most of the training and carefully—and never too early!—bringing it up before competitions.





The desired pattern is keeping your grip strength more or less on an even keel (of course, one ought to expect a drop the day after 5x5 of deadlifts), then increasing it for several consecutive days before the competition and hitting your highest value exactly on the big day. The day after the event the grip strength along with your CNS will predictably come down.

"Several" days sounds vague and indeed it is. Everyone is different and you will have to find your sweet spot through trial and error. Months of measurements and several competitions will teach you whether your grip strength should start climbing, two, four, or some other number of days out in order to hit its max on the big day. Then you will know when and how to tweak your training load if the peaking process does not follow the best case scenario. Listen to the following recommendations by Prof. Nikolay Ozolin.

Buy a hand grip dynamometer of the kind used in physical therapy clinics and test yourself daily. Never change the testing protocol: do it at the same time of the day, with the same hand, in the same posture, with the same warm-up or lack of thereof, etc. Make only one attempt.

The number itself does not reflect the level of your CNS excitability; it is the pattern charted over time that matters. When your training load is appropriate, there will be little daily variance: 1-2kg or 2.2-4.4 pounds. A greater decrease indicates an excessive training load, an insufficient recovery, a nervous fatigue, an early phase of overtraining, or some disturbance in your regimen or your life. A slight drop for one to three days following a competition is normal however.

"Analysis of daily values of grip strength gives the opportunity not only to objectively control changes in the nervous system excitability, but also to direct it into the right direction with the help of the daily regimen, massage, training, and pharmacology," continues Ozolin. "A reminder: a calm and long cross country run through the woods lowers excitability and brief but intense work, including strength work, increases it. Training in the pre-competition days and a warm-up the day before the competition restrains an increase in excitability while passive rest filled with thoughts about the upcoming competition sharply increases it."

The Soviet champion, scientist, coach offers more advice on fine-tuning your CNS condition in the days before the competition:

- Don't rest longer than 24 hours before the event.
- Perform a warm-up specific to your event 24 hours before the competition.
- Do a light workout if nervous on the days leading up to the competition.
- Skip the workout if don't feel like training after the warm-up.
- Don't push it in the days after an unsuccessful competition. No point in Monday morning quarterbacking; train light and do exercises that are not specific to your sport.

Once you have processed what you have just learned, review the pre-competition rituals of Tommy Kono, Marty Gallagher, and Dan John. You will find even more reason to be impressed with these men's wisdom.





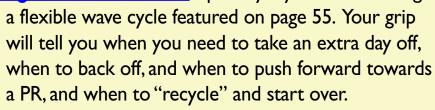
Some housekeeping details. Instead of a dynamometer you may opt for a heavy duty gripper, as long as you realize that the feedback will be subjective and a lot less accurate. Do not rep out to failure but do two to three reps with the gripper that is in the 5-10RM range for you. Write down how many reps you think you could have done if pushed all out. This method is acceptable for a fitness buff; if you are a serious competitor you need to shell out a few dollars for a dynamometer. If your sport or your training is grip intensive, the grip test is not your best method for evaluating your CNS tonus as you might get a reading on local muscular fatigue instead. Opt for the standing vertical jump instead.

Even if the "competition" you are about to enter is nothing more than testing your bench press max at the gym, follow the above recommendations and you will post your lifetime best numbers. You may have the best laid out training plan, yet still fail to get the results you are after for the very simple reason that you are alive, complex, and affected by a great many variables that you cannot possibly account for, from moon phases to the health of your cat. CNS testing will allow you to make the necessary adjustments and prevail.

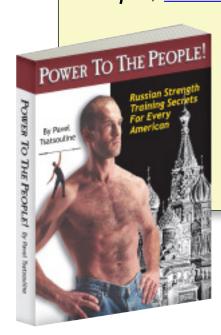
Power to you!

Power to the People! and CNS Testing

CNS testing will help you get a lot more out of *Power to the*People!, www.dragondoor.com/b10/ especially if you are following



More power to the people!

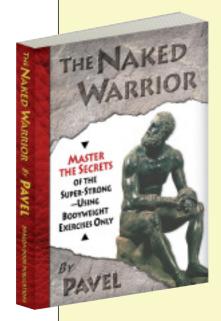






The Naked Warrior and "Tactical Peaking"

The "Grease the Groove" training regimen featured in *The Naked Warrior* www.dragondoor.com/b28 is an instinctive one. Its effectiveness will be noticeably increased by introducing a daily grip test.



Aim to keep the level even. If you see a drop, next day reduce your volume, the total number of daily reps, by 50%. If the drop is significant, take a day off, then have a 50% day, and finally bring the load back up if your CNS has rebounded.

Take advantage of the days when you see a sudden jump in your grip strength, test your one-arm pushup and pistol strength. "Grease the groove" with easy singles every 30-60min in the morning and early afternoon. Before dinner go all out—try a single rep of a more challenging variation of the drills or rep

out with a variation that keeps your repetitions low. Take the next day off, then hit a 50% day, and finally get back to your usual training.

Note that the above template does not aim to squeeze the last drop of performance out of you as a true competition peak would (that would take some days of planning, building up, and backing off). It is a simple as can be opportunistic approach to setting PRs appropriate for a deployed military operator or any other hard living comrade with an unpredictable lifestyle.

A "tactical peak".





Praise for Pavel and Dan John's *Easy Strength*

"Easy Strength is one of the best books on strength training for sport that I've ever read (and trust me, I've read them ALL).

To be fair—it's unfair to characterize Easy Strength as a 'strength training for sport' book. It's way more than that.

It'll go down as one of the best fitness and conditioning books period.

For too long, sports strength training was just bastardized bodybuilding, powerlifting, olympic lifting or more recently—strongman training. This book goes a long way in revolutionizing the way the modern coach should be approaching sports conditioning.

The section on the 4 quadrants alone is worth your entire investment. It will really help 'laserbeam focus' your programming for your athletes."

—Alwyn Cosgrove, author of *The New Rules of Lifting* series

"Our most quoted teachers do not seek to dazzle us with their complexity. The great ones use their position to promote understanding and communication of complex material simply and easily. *Easy Strength* is just that kind of work and Pavel and Dan are those kinds of teachers. They provide useable examples and fundamental simplicity. Both men are athletes, coaches, experts, and both ask the most fundamental question of a leader:

They do not ask what is our role? They ask what is our impact on the people who depend on us?

The difference makers always dispense with titles and focus on results. *Easy Strength* is not simply a position statement about fundamentals. It is a step-by-step lesson on how, when and why to use them!"

—Gray Cook, author of *Movement*, co-founder of FMS

"I am currently reading *Easy Strength* for the second time. It is absolutely brilliant in its approach to the varying levels of athletes, as a coach for Q3 and Q4 athletes it should be read by every elite level strength coach handling that level of athlete. I am making my entire staff read the book when I am finished."

—Stan Kellers, Assistant Coach of Strength and Conditioning, Cleveland Cavaliers

"Easy Strength is difficult to stop reading because it paves a shorter, smoother path to physical prowess by giving the athlete room to develop. It's too easy to smother growth and potential. That's a lesson most coaches take decades to learn, if they learn it at all. The four quadrants that Pavel and Dan outline help you quickly determine which range of training qualities are ideal for any athlete. In most cases, that range is much narrower than you think.

You'll learn that doing a little bit of everything is a recipe for failure as you reach and require higher levels of performance. The authors effectively strip away the complexities of training that were made from novice coaches who constantly pushed their athletes to the brink.

You'll gain an incredible amount of insight for training beginner to elite athletes, and you'll discover the tricks for knowing when it's overwhelming their capacity. Plus, there's a lifetime worth of sample training regimens that give the muscles and nerves just enough of what they need."

—Chad Waterbury, neurophysiologist, author of *Huge* in a *Hurry*

"A fascinating book that challenges many established ideas about strength and power training for athletes. Must reading for champions, champions to be, and those who coach and train them."

-Brooks Kubik, author of Dinosaur Training

"While this book has broad applicability for every fitness adherent regardless of age, sex or degree of fitness, when I read *Easy Strength* my mind kept honing in on the young up-and-comers: what a spectacular learning tool this book is for the young athlete. This is the best single book imaginable for the apprentice athlete looking to excel within their chosen sport.

Regardless the sport and regardless the young athlete's current condition, capacity or capabilities, reading, absorbing and applying the strategies contained in Easy Strength will result in improvement in every aspect of the athletic equation. My feeling is that the integration of disciplines in Easy Strength is its strongest attribute: blending disciplines in a balanced, realistic, effective way is the highest expression of the art and science of performance improvement. My highest recommendation."

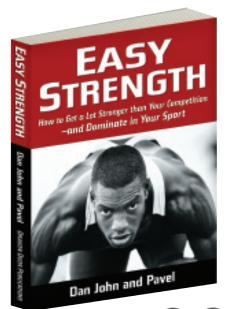
—Marty Gallagher, author of *The Purposeful Primitive*, 3-Time World Master Powerlifting Champion, former columnist for **WashingtonPost.com**

"I found Pavel and Dan's *Easy Strength* to be a very worthwhile endeavor. 'Do no harm' is very much in line with our methods ('Do all that's necessary, not all that's possible') wherein we have not had a single injury for the last 6 years which includes thousands of workouts. I will do my very best to promote Easy Strength not just because of its authors but because it is necessary for anyone who needs to be stronger for a purpose!

—Barry Ross, author of *Underground Secrets to*Faster Running

"*Easy Strength* by Pavel and Dan John is full of information on how to become a better athlete. How? By learning how to train optimally."

-Louie Simmons, Founder of Westside Barbell







Easy Strength
How to Get a Lot Stronger
Than Your Competition—
And Dominate in Your Sport
By Pavel and Dan John
#B57 \$39.95

Paperback 8.5 x 11 288 pages 77 photos, charts and illustrations





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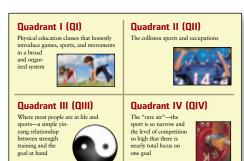
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OI: Lots of Oualities at a Low Level of Relative Max

QII: Lots of Qualities at a High Level of Relative Max

QIII: Few Qualities at a Low or Moderate Level of Relative Max

OIV: Few (or One) Qualities at the Highest Level of Relative Max



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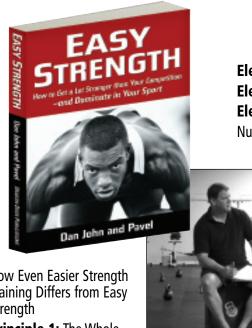
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"Easy Strength is a masterpiece from two of the best in the business of strength and conditioning. Pavel and Dan John's book will help you improve your performance— no matter what your sport. It doesn't matter whether you are a weekend gym warrior, competitive athleteor coach... you owe it to yourself to read this book. The bottom line is that it will help you become stronger, faster and more powerful in the most efficient way possible..." —Andy Bolton, 6-Time World Powerlifting Champion

How To Look Like Tarzan, Play Like Tarzan—And Win Like Tarzan

What It Takes to Stack the Strength-Deck in Your Favor

f football were played in the weight room or on the track, I could guarantee that each year, the team that won the championship would NOT be the team that won on the field of play. And that is absolutely true in every sport and every game. It's a rare track meet that you don't hear someone rhapsodize about training numbers and then see him or her lose badly. In football, we have a phrase for this: 'Looks like Tarzan, plays like Jane.'

Pavel and my goal in writing this book is to clarify the role and impact of strength training in fitness, sports, and life. We are committed to clarity, even though at times, it's impossible to navigate the sea of conflicting information regarding the lifting sports. Pavel's experience and research provides grounding and a confidence to 'Do this!' as we often joke.

What can you expect from reading this book?

- You will learn some history. You will discover that almost everything discussed in the fitness industry has been done before—and often better.
- You will reexamine the role of strength training as it applies to sport. Doing so may serve as the greatest timesaver in history!
- You will find that, like a medical doctor, a strength coach must be committed above all to 'Do no harm'—a pledge that's often disregarded.
- You will be exposed to the concept of systematic education and the need to build an athlete (or anyone!) using some kind of intelligent approach.
- You will be exposed to another educational system—along with a way to harness its powers—that will give you clarity into all the various fitness, health, and nutritional information being tossed at you daily.
- You will discover the tools for teaching an entire team to improve in a sport—and why these great tools may be of no value to you in your training!
- You will be exposed to what the best in sports do in the weight room, and you will discover why it will apply to everything you decide to do.
- You will learn many of the 'champion's secrets' and be amazed at the simplicity, as well as the insightfulness, of what the best do. "
- —Dan John, from the preface to Easy Strength.

"I made the mistake of cracking open my review copy of Easy Strength at 11pm last night. It grabbed me from the first page and the next thing I knew I had pulled an all-nighter finishing the book in one sitting. Not a common thing in a strength book! It is that good. Easy Strength is a work of art and sure to be a classic go-to book for the modern coach. The pages are so full of gold you should consider changing the title to El Dorado."



"This book kicks some SERIOUS ass!! Pavel and Dan put together a simple to understand and easy to apply training regime for athletes and for those of us who want to train AND perform like athletes. I've seen MANY books based completely on the science of training athletes, but from my own experience, when you train athletes in the real world you need to learn how to tweak

Easy Strength is what I see as the blend of science, real world experience and application blended together in an easily understood manner without needing a PhD. to understand what you're reading, You just can"t go wrong when reading what Dan and Pavel put together."

—Zach Even-Esh, Founder, Underground Strength Gym

"If you could sit at a table with two of the smartest, most experienced and most respected names in strength and listen in on their conversation, would you do it? What if they were also two of the best communicators, men who are known for taking complex info and distilling it down into easily-digestible, family-sized portions? I have had the good fortune of being able to do that very thing on more than one occasion and **Easy Strength** often reads like someone transcribed one of these conversations.

Pavel and Dan open up on the subject of strength.

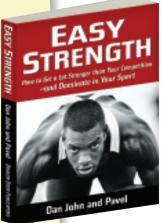
Pavel and Dan open up on the subject of strength, why it is important and how to develop it. This book is a wealth of information for anyone interested in getting stronger."

—David Whitley, Master RKC Instructor









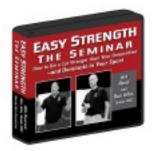
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Praise for Pavel and Dan John's EASY STRENGTH Seminar

"I now have a very clear path on how I can help the law enforcement and military community without burning them out. This workshop was like attending four years of college on how to deliver fast and simple results to your clients.

Pavel and Dan are just unbelievable and they are like training encyclopedias. I learned more in three days than I have in the last 10 years of attending other workshops, seminars and reading books."

—**JOEY WILLIAMS,** Pacifica, CA, Police Officer, Law Enforcement Weaponless Defense Instructor, Impact Weapons Defense Instructor, Police Academy Drill Instructor

"The single most comprehensive seminar in strength, the acquisition of strength, and the practice of strength that I've ever been to."

-GEOFF NEUPERT, Master RKC, Durham, NC

"I feel that I am coming away with an impressive and extensive supply of training tools and methods. Every topic felt applicable to my own practice, and the service of my clients and customers.

This workshop probably had 2 times the scope of material than any other specific course I have taken. I found all the information practical."

—SOMNATH SIKDAR, Personal Trainer, Dragon Gym Owner, Exton, PA

"There are only a few people in the world with this level and combination of scientific and real world knowledge and they rarely talk about it live. This was one of those times that you could pick up a lifetime of knowledge over a weekend. Priceless.

Quality and scope were excellent, but what will really separate this material is the practical use. It makes the training done by real professionals accessible to the average person."

—**BUD JEFFRIES,** Lakeland, FL, Performing Strongman, Author, Lifetime Drug Free World's Powerlifting Champion, Strongman champion, MMA/Grappling Fighter, Highland Games Champion, Strength Coach. "I learned more in the three days here than I learned in my life training! Pavel's straightforward way of showing the techniques and delivering his message was gold. Dan John made everything come together! The way he showed everyone the four quadrants works. It took the guessing game away and now I know if someone wants to lose weight or gain muscle, all I have to do is go for the four quadrants. Love it! Now I have the missing link to better my clients and myself."

—PETER VIEIRA, East Providence, Rhode Island, Firefighter

"I have been to numerous NSCA, Westside, RKC workshops and seminars and have never been to anything this good. I feel privileged to have participated. These two distilled a vast quality of knowledge and communicated it with a great effectiveness.

I feel like I have absorbed about two years of a college major in strength development in three days."

—ANDREW BENDER, Chelmsford MA, personal trainer

This workshop is a must if you are serious about being a successful coach or trainer. If you want to have a clear concise understanding of what it takes to be a strength coach, and how to properly approach your clients, athletes or students needs, then you will take this course!

This was by far the most in depth, informative course that I have ever attended!

—JUSTIN "TRUSTY" GARFIELD, Waianae, HI, Strength & Conditioning Coach, Gym Owner

"This seminar has been incredibly eye opening for me. The knowledge I have gained will significantly alter the course of all of my future training. This was truly life changing.

This seminar has been the greatest 3 days of my training career. It will significantly alter how I train myself and my students."

—CHRIS LINDQUIST, East Fallowfield, PA, Veterinarian

"It has linked together every aspect of training and every Dragon Door related training program in such a way as to make someone almost unstoppable when the scientific strength secrets are not over thought, but simply applied.

Pavel and Dan have taken exercise science and effectively applied it to real world scenarios. Every other training course I have had outside of the RKC system has revolved around a lot of text book knowledge with little-to-no real world application."

—ANDREW LYONS, Columbus, OH, Physical Therapist

"Outstanding! Excellent course that must be repeated, it would be a shame if we were to be the only group to have had the privilege.

These men obviously have much more to give. And even though I was able to learn some incredible information this week I am looking forward to what is next. In the meantime I will spend my time practicing the knowledge I take home. These are professional of the utmost quality.

This course has been by far the most comprehensive highest quality and useful course I have ever taken."

—K.C. REITER, Chico, CA, Fitness Trainer

"Pavel and Dan have managed to cram a lifetime of strength coaching experience into 3 days. The incredibly complex problems of human performance were distilled, in typical Dragon Door/Pavel style into simple and easy to understand frame works.

Pavel and Dan John are as advertised. World Class experts on strength training who can make the complex single. As with every event I have attended – magnificent. The cost of

the trip and course \$6000 AUD) will easily be earned back."

—ANDREW READ,

Melbourne, Australia, RKC Team Leader



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How To Look Like Tarzan, Play Like Tarzan—

And Win Like Tarzan

What It Takes to Stack the Strength-Deck in Your Favor

f football were played in the weight room or on the track, I could guarantee that each year, the team that won the championship would NOT be the team that won on the field of play. And that is absolutely true in every sport and every game. It's a rare track meet that you don't hear someone rhapsodize about training numbers and then see him or her lose badly. In football, we have a phrase for this: 'Looks like Tarzan, plays like Jane.'—Dan John

Pavel and Dan John's landmark 3-Day *Easy Strength* seminar delves deeply into the role and impact of strength training in fitness, sports, and life. Whatever your chosen physical activity and whoever you are, there are proven methods that can get your to whole goal faster and more effectively. Discover those performance secrets within *Easy Strength*—and begin to look, play and win like Tarzan...

Highlights:

- The role and impact of the strength and conditioning coach
- The quadrants and their qualities how to always use the right tool for the job
- "Absolute strength"—and how to get it
- The 6 secrets for effective General Strength preparation
- The #1 key to improving team performance
- The relationship between strength and power
- The championship ladder
- How to organize your training toolkit
- How to program and organize group strength workouts
- Hypertrophy training: the elephant in the room
- How the role of joint mobility changes over an athlete's career
- The secrets of armor building—to survive and conquer
- "Easy strength"—why it works and how to use it
- How to guarantee getting stronger year after year
- How to "steal strength" with this 40-day workout
- How and when to deal with your weaknesses
- The truth about periodization what you really need to know
- Specificity demystified







Easy Strength: The Seminar

How to Get a Lot Stronger than Your Competition—And Dominate in Your Sport With Pavel and Dan John #DVS032 \$197.00 14-DVD set





How to stay informed of the latest advances in strength and conditioning Visit http://kbforum.dragondoor.com/



Visit <u>www.dragondoor.com</u> for late-breaking news and tips on how to stay ahead of the fitness pack.

Visit http://kbforum.dragondoor.com/ and participate in Dragon Door's stimulating and informative Strength and Conditioning Forum. Post your fitness questions or comments and get quick feedback from Pavel Tsatsouline and other leading fitness experts.

Visit <u>www.dragondoor.com</u> and browse the Articles section and other pages for groundbreaking theories and products for improving your health and well being.



