

# Rowing

Building Size, Strength and Symmetry

# If You're Doing It Right

- Lats are wide and traps are thick
- Commanding posture
- Upper back doesn't dump on big squats or deads
- Pecs and delts don't pull shoulders forward
- Limited joint pain
- Turn Heads When You Row or Chin

# If You're Doing It Wrong

- Stringy lats, neck goes straight into collar bone
  - *(at least your arms look big by comparison)*
- Posture says to everyone, "I'm not a threat"
- Back folds like a lawn chair on big lifts
- Shoulders forward like you're wearing a slingshot
- And they move like a rusty barn door
- You have to do your rows in the corner so not to be judged

# I'm Not Here to Tell You

- How to optimize shoulder hygiene
  - If your shoulders are junky, consult a physio
  
- How to isolate specific parts
  - If you are really interested in your lower lat development, there are better resources than I
  
- How to 'feel' the muscle
  - Mind/Muscle < Compound Movements w/ Progressive Overload

# I Am Here to Tell You

- How to thicken your back and increase strength
  - In a way that will IMMEDIATELY carry over to your main lifts
  - While also making you look like a brick shithouse
- How to focus on things that give biggest return
  - 80/20 rule
- How to move weight and accumulate fatigue
  - More weight + High effort = a big damn back

# Reason #1 Your Back Won't Grow

- Focus is on developing the muscle
  - A lot of effort is spent on small movements with limited load
  - Work gets skipped/not taken seriously
  
- Fix: Treat Rows Like a Strength Movement
  - Limit variations to a few proven compound movements
  - Use progressive overload to get some weight on the bar
  - Assume that every lb you gain on your row = more mass on your posterior

# Reason #2 Your Back Won't Grow

- Fixation on 'feeling it' (i.e. not working hard)
  - Weight continuously kept down
  - Fatigue limited because you're a form Nazi
  - Endless search for 'THE movement'
- Fix: Row with a lot of effort for multiple sets
  - Yes, it's ok to use body english, yes it's ok to use your biceps
  - Effort is king
  - (Volume + Effort) x Progressive Overload = You are going to f\*\*\*ing feel it

# Reason #3 Your Back Won't Grow

- Lack of priority
  - Think you prioritize back just fine?
    - No, you don't
    - Count how many sets of rows you do vs sets of pressing
    - Have you ever gotten nauseous from a back workout?
    - Consider where you schedule back work (end of workout?)
- Fix: Row first or on an entirely separate day
  - Before deads is a great option
  - Superset w/ pressing exercises
  - or keep your split exactly the same and add a day for a 'Back Bloodbath'

# Rule #1: Exercise Selection

- Big Compounds

- Pull movements at a variety of angles
- Mix of barbells, dbs and machines

- Prioritize long ROM

- Stretch at end range is ideal
  - Close Grip Variations, One Arm DB Rows

# Rule #2: Technique

- Use body english on barbell/db movements
  - Don't flop around like a fish, control is still important
  - A bit of sway allows more weight, reps, ROM and fatigue
    - Back's primary role is to stabilize you
  - Biggest backs in the world were NOT built off strict reps
  
- Save strict work for machines
  - Strict work is still very valuable but should come after your power work
  - Controlled cable or machine rows after heavy free weight work should light up your lats

# Rule #3: Sets, Reps and Effort

- Use a variety of reps, including low ones
  - Can use a reverse pyramid on individual exercise
  - Can prioritize heavier work on early exercises, lighter work on later ones
  
- Aim to build up a shit ton of fatigue
  - No reason not to get close to failure
  - Use advanced fatigue techniques
    - Drop sets, rest pause, etc.

# Sample Upper Back Protocol

<b>Day 1</b>	<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Week 5</b>
Bent Row (body English)	Top 5 @ 7 -10% x F (2x)	Top 5 @ 8 -10% x F (2x)	Top 5 @ 9 -10% x F (2x)	reset w/ Top 3
T-Bar Row	4x8	4x8	4x8	reset w/ 6s
Cable Row	5x12 (:30)	5x12 (:30)	5x12 (:30)	reset w/ 10s
<b>Day 2</b>				
Underhand Row	4x6	4x6	4x6	reset w/ 5s
Wide Row (strict)	4x12	4x12	4x12	reset w/ 10s
Kroc Row	3x25	3x25	3x25	reset w/ 30s