

Strength Training on the Dyno - An Interview

The following is an interview with Tom Williams, whose company, The Human Condition, operates in Stowe, Vermont. Last fall Tom incorporated the DYN0 into a series of ski conditioning classes and has since expanded its use to include other personal training clients as well.

C2: Tell me about the people you work with.

TW: There are four types of clients we deal with: personal training, weight management, sport specific training, and a growing number are in for post-physical therapy rehabilitation.



C2: How about your ski training class?

TW: We have 60 people in that program ranging in age from 22 to 62. There is a wide range of abilities among participants, including some who are recovering from ski injuries last year and want to get in shape for the new season.

C2: How did you deal with the workload for each individual?

TW: I just said "work as hard as you want," and they all just went crazy. They still did it after the first time when they knew it was going to be hard. When you first get on the machine and see the last person's numbers, it puts you in this mind set. Then you sit down and if you're not reaching the last person's numbers, you try even harder. It's a human nature type of thing. I don't know why, but people like to go hard on it, even though it makes it harder.

Even people who aren't crazy about going to the limit, they will just get in there and go.



C2: Do people understand the fact that if they have all eight vents open they can get a higher score than with fewer open?

TW: I explain that before they even ask it. I say, "I am giving you the ability to move more mass if you apply more pressure, and you are going to see your numbers go up." Now, I also say that your velocity is going to be slower [with more vents open]. One of the great things about the DYN0 is that there is no other place in the health club where velocity can be part of your workout.

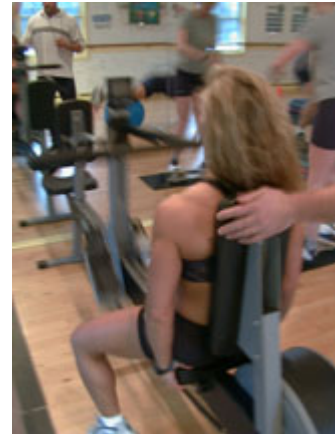
C2: So you feel that the speed/force relationship is useful to your clients?

TW: When I first have someone on the DYN0, I go into the "explosive strength lecture". You know a seventy-five-year-old woman needs explosive strength just to get out of a chair, just like you guys need to row, or go into a ski turn, or whatever, but it is a practical thing that we all use all day long. When I stand up, I will be using it.

C2: Can you put all your clients on the DYNO?

TW: (In the last 6 months) I have trained over 200 people on the DYNO, probably closer to 300. It's very nice to say to someone who has been injured, "OK, Bill, you push as hard as you are comfortable pushing with that leg," instead of saying, "Here, I have determined you are going to get 100 pounds and you need to apply enough force to move it ten times".

There is a lot of potential for another injury there if a person isn't paying attention to how they are feeling, but with the DYNO they just push a little softer. The resistance is air resistance and it is constant through the entire range of motion. If you do a leg press, at the bottom of the leg press you are at the weakest, and as you push and get your legs straight, you just get stronger and stronger. But this is different. It is constant. It's a totally different feeling than the leg press and not just dead weight pushing down on your limbs.



C2: What about the real "weight lifters" at your gym?

TW: People are there to be better at something else they do, or to rehab an injury, to be better skiers, to be stronger hikers, stronger bikers, whatever it is. And the DYNO applies to those activities more than a leg press or a bench press because of the speed you can work, because of that explosiveness that you can push with and still be safe.

Our field is very rapidly getting away from that body-building thing that you asked about and leaning towards functional training-things that improve your balance, things that improve your anaerobic threshold, things that help people in their daily lives or their athletic lives. It's not professional athletes, but people who like to go out and do a lot of things on weekends or after work, but don't have a lot of time. The DYNO fits the bill again.