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“For Sport, For Life”

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Community Member of the Month...



This month's CasePerformance Community member of the month is John Giggins who comes to us from Wangaratta, Victoria, Australia. John is a fan of the iron and owner of Wangaratta Strength & Fitness. He specializes in Personal Training, HIIT, Strength and Endurance Camps, Kettle Bell Training, Power Lifting, Strong Man Training, Olympic Lifting. Without further delay, let's start picking his mind...

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First, tell us a little about your background... How did you get involved with resistance training and/or exercise in general? Did you participate in any sports while growing up?

As a kid growing up I played all the popular sports here in Australia such as Football (ie – soccer for those in the USA) & Cricket. I also went to our local gym as a teenager and did all the stuff there without really having any idea I what it was doing, lol.

I started work at a young age and gave up sports for a few years. Then, at age 21, I started to play baseball which lasted a couple of years. From there I got married, had kids and by age 32 I was overweight (122 kg/265lb), slow and in need of some serious exercise. I decided to start hitting the gym and within in 6 months I ran a half marathon. Two years later I became a fitness instructor and later a personal trainer.

Who have been your greatest influences or role models in this field?

With the amazing world of technology, I got on to Facebook a few years ago and found a few names on there with the sort of training I liked. Elliott Hulse was a big influence, as well as Ross Enamiat. I then found Phil Stevens and followed his blog for a long time. Phil really has been my mentor, because we talk on a regular basis about stuff. I'm also a big fan of Dan John as well.

When first starting off, what were the biggest mistakes you found yourself making? In other words, what would you advice people NOT to do when first starting a training program?

Program jumping. I mean there is so much info out there... Also, too many people focus to heavily on arms and chest. You must train the "big lifts" (squats, deadlifts, rows, presses) as you well know. Find a program you like and do it for the 6,9,12 weeks. Give it a chance to work, if there is 1 exercise in there you don't like, master it!

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What is the current state of exercise (resistance, aerobic, high intensity interval training, etc) like in Australia?

Very good. I think we are finally catching up with the whole "functional training" is better than the aerobic training world. (I should stress - when I say "functional" I mean training that is beneficial for everyday life; NOT the goofy stuff where you're standing one leg on unstable surfaces while doing curl to presses, etc). I tell a lot of people that if they are going away on a holiday, it would be better to take 1 kettle bell away with you than go for a jog :)

We have some great athletes here in Australia, and some awesome gyms like my own where a greater focus is on resistance work vs. 100% cardio.

Are there any particular goals or events that your personal training is currently directed at?

When I turned 40, which was 3 years ago, I decided to stop instructing gym classes, and started lifting heavier weights than ever. Last year I competed in my first Highland Games and loved it... It was time to eat and grow big!!!

A topic I always get questions about is nutrition and supplements. What are your thoughts on these topics? Any particular nutrition strategies that you have found to be effective? Ditto for supplements?

I quite easily put on nearly 40lb in 12 months from eating real food, no powders, no nothing. I don't like artificial supp's because of all the fillers and sugary crap. Pretty basic really, carb loading for size increase, cut carbs for fat loss. I always recommend fish oil, Vit.D, Vit.C, magnesium, wheat grass. I have just started taking a raw protein powder, no flavors, no nothing. I'm trying to compete with Paul Carter , hahahaha!

[Editor's Note – For those not familiar with Paul Carter, he is a well known powerlifter who is wickedly strong... kind of like John ;-)]

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Any other thoughts/advice you're willing to share with us at CasePerformance?

Some words of advice for everyone... You're never too old to start a training program. Make sure you train smarter vs. harder when you're heading to my age and beyond :). Also remember that nutrition, stretching and recovery are just as important as good technique in the gym.

Well thanks for joining us here today. Keep up the great work! For those interested in finding out more about your training philosophies, where can they find you?

Thank you Sean, your website, research, and articles which are the results of facts are a credit to you. You can find me on FB under my name, [John Giggins](#), or Wangaratta's Strength and Fitness FB page [Wangaratta Strength and Fitness](#). You can also contact me through Wangaratta's Strength and Fitness's webpage - www.wangarattastrengthandfitness.com.au

Cheers to all in the CasePerformance Community :)
