



Advanced **Power** **Rep Range Shock**

Variations and Techniques
for the Brave, Experienced Bodybuilder

by Eric Broser Photography by Michael Neveux

Ladies and gentleman reading this article, please forgive me if any of the following text seems incoherent, has misspelled words or only make sense in the Twilight Zone, in the Bizarro World or after eating some of those funny brownies you and your buddies used to make in college. I am wrecked...hammered...spent...crushed...destroyed...nauseous...massively oxygen deprived. I can barely lift my fingers to the keyboard to type, let alone put together an intelligent and well-thought-out article on training.

So why the heck am I trying to write an article in such condition? Because I just got home from the gym after performing an outrageous Shock workout for legs, and I figured, What better time to write about Shock training?

I want to get down on paper the exact experience I just lived, but, unfortunately, I kind of feel like I only have two semifunctioning brain cells left, and they're arguing over whether I should have white rice or a potato with my post workout shake.

Okay, maybe it's best if I have some food, take a shower and smack these cobwebs out of my head be-

fore I go on? Nah, scrap that idea! My legs are too tired and wobbly to get me from here to the kitchen anyway, so I might as well sit and write.

In my first feature on variations and advanced techniques for Power/Rep Range/Shock [February '06] I gave a quick review of the basic principles behind the original P/RR/S protocol, and then I upped the ante by revealing ways to make the Power and Rep Range weeks even more intense and growth promoting. Now I'm going to show you how to rev the intensity of Shock week into the stratosphere.

Knowing that I was going to be writing this article today, I decided to use *all* of the Shock techniques I would be discussing—you know, just for the fun of it. Yeah, right. I figured it would help me be more colorful in my description of the techniques. And speaking of color, I'm just lucky that I didn't throw up my fruit punch-flavored creatine halfway through the torture session. So, if you just ate a big meal, you might want to take some time for it to digest before reading this, because I don't want you ruin your new *IRON MAN* issue. So grab a bucket and read on, if you dare. The following is not for the meek.

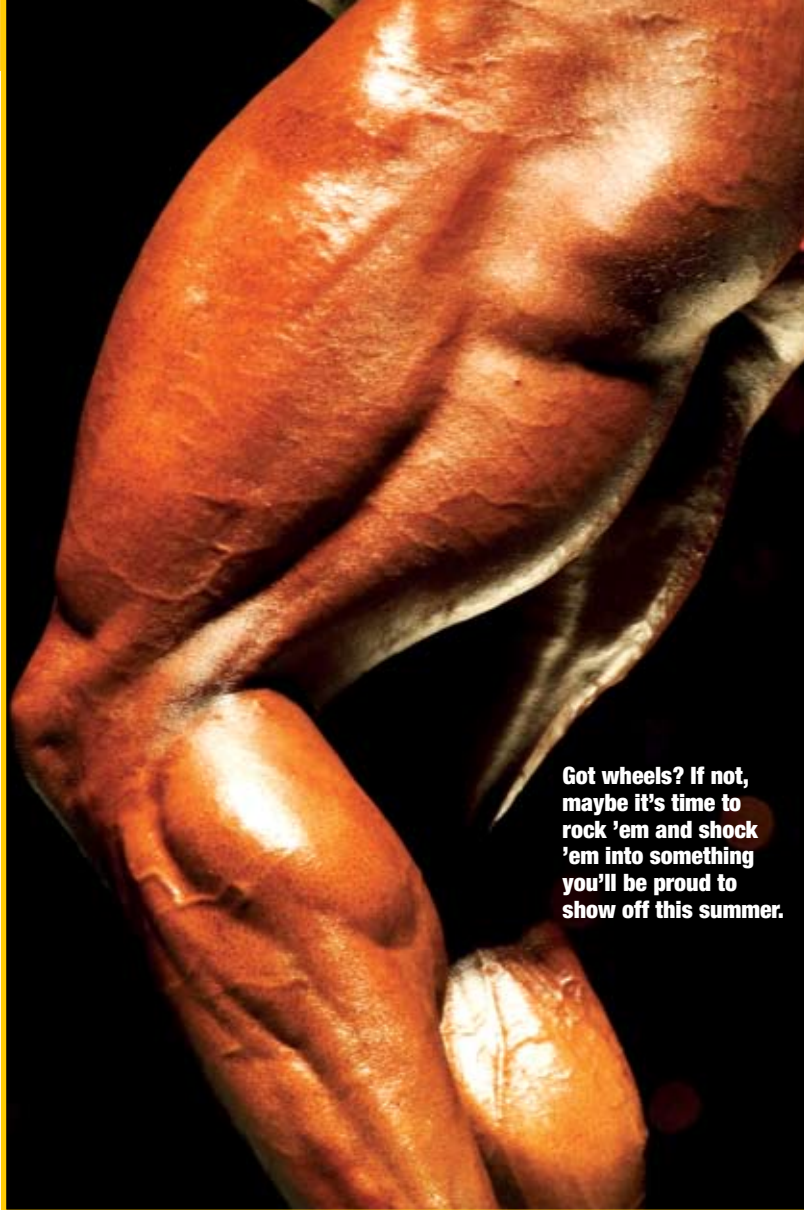
Broser's Big Leg Workout

It all started about 1 p.m., when I took my normal preworkout mixture of five grams of BCAAs, five grams of glutamine and five grams of creatine mixed in water. I waited about 30 minutes and drank a whey shake along with a tablespoon of natural peanut butter. I then threw on some gym clothes, grabbed my belt, wraps and MP3 player and headed to the gym. It was along the way that I came up with the brilliant idea of using all of the Shock techniques—something I am sure to be sorry about in the morning.

Upon arrival I said a few hellos but avoided getting into any drawn-out conversations. It was Shock—or should I say Ultra-Shock—leg day after all, and I need to focus. After a quick trip to the locker room I headed right to my first exercise—hack squats.

Advanced Shock Tactic 1: 1 and 1/2 Reps

For the first set I warmed up with one plate on each side and did eight rock-bottom reps. The second set was again a warmup, but this time it was two plates per side for six full-range reps. Now it was go



Got wheels? If not, maybe it's time to rock 'em and shock 'em into something you'll be proud to show off this summer.

time, as I threw on a third 45-pound plate per side and took a minute to contemplate the pain I was about to face. You see, I wasn't about to do a conventional set because this was not a conventional workout. It's Shock week, baby, and it's all about pushing past the pain barrier and heading into territory that only a small percentage of lifters are willing to enter.

Then it was time. On each rep I slowly sank to rock bottom, then pushed up only halfway; then I sank back to the bottom and fired myself to the top. That sequence counts as one rep, and the eventual goal was to get eight to 10 reps in that vile manner for two all-out sets. Doesn't sound so bad? Try it with a truly challenging weight, and I guarantee you'll rethink your position.

With hack squats out of the way, I made my way over to one of my

gym's five leg press machines. Since my legs felt like rubber, my first thought was to simply go to the one closest to me, but, unfortunately, that wasn't the particular machine I wanted. No, today I wanted to go vertical. Done with a truly full range of motion (where you bring your knees into your armpits), the vertical leg press is certainly the most grueling.

Advanced Shock Tactic 2: Stage Reps

To get into the groove of the movement, I started with two plates per side and did eight clean reps. After a quick sip of water I threw on another plate and did six more deep reps. At that point I started to get butterflies in my stomach, as I was keenly aware of the night-

mare I was about to bring on myself. However, my focus was solid—so much so that the incredibly hot babe doing stiff-legged deadlifts behind me couldn't even throw me off (who am I kidding? I watched her do an entire set before I started mine). With four plates loaded on each side of the machine and my feet set firmly on the platform, I said a quick prayer ("Dear God, why am I doing this?") and unlocked the safeties. I sensed that people around me were watching in confusion, probably wondering why I was using so little weight (normally, they see me using almost twice that amount). "Wait and see," I said to myself.

Slowly I began to lower the weight, but I stopped it dead only one-third of the way. One, two, three, four, five, I counted in my head before lowering it to the halfway point. Again, I counted one, two, three, four, five before finally lowering the platform to the bottom. After a one-second pause I exploded the weight back to the starting position and said, "One rep down; nine to go!" A horrifying thought for sure, but the masochist in me loved every minute of it! Two sets of this craziness, and I was toast.

Sweating as if I were wearing a fur coat on the sun, I poured some cold water on my (continued on page 152)





When you finish your set of leg extensions, it should feel as if a damn has collapsed above your quads and flooded the muscles with blood.

Models: Hubert Morandell and Markus Reinhardt

(continued from page 146) head and crawled over to my final quad exercise of the day—leg extensions. The one extension machine that I really like was being used by a couple of young bodybuilders, and when I asked them how many sets they had left, I was secretly hoping they would say 20 apiece so I could lie down and take a nap. No such luck, however, as they were on their final set. Oh, joy (not)!

Advanced Shock Tactic 3: X Reps

At this point my quads were twitching and shaking uncontrollably, so I decided to do only one all-out set of extensions. Any more than that, and my legs would go on strike and force me to skip training hams. Not an option! After one six-rep warmup with 100 pounds, I stuck the pin at 180 and took a few deep breaths. I was all too aware that I was about to meet my nasty little friend lactic acid head on, and

I was not looking forward to it (gotta love him, though, as he always brings a nice supply of natural GH along with him).

Rep one was really tough. It felt as if my quads wanted to cramp up, but I fought it off and pushed out eight more reps in a pistonlike fashion. When full reps were finally out of the question, I began doing short, pulsing-type reps in the first one-third of the stroke (these are the searing **X Reps**). I'm not sure how many I got, as I began hallucinating that I was lying on a beach next to the hot stiff-legged deadlift girl, rubbing oil on her glutes (what better way to distract myself from the agony).

As soon as I got up, it felt as if a damn had broken inside my quads, releasing gallons of blood that filled my thighs to the point where I thought my skin would rip from the inside out.

X Reps are truly amazing for growth, as they enable you to push past nervous system failure, forcing

the type 2 fibers to continue firing in the semistretched position, the exact portion of an exercise where maximum-force production and tension take place. Try them—but bring a fire extinguisher.

As I rolled out of the leg extension



machine and collapsed to the floor, I felt a rush of relief knowing that I wouldn't have to face another quad workout for another week. Still, I didn't let that comforting thought distract me from the fact that I still needed to Shock my hamstrings before I could go home. So, after stretching my quads hard for a couple of minutes, I picked myself up (or should I say pulled myself up, as my thighs seemed to be temporarily boycotting any movement whatsoever), and strolled over to the lying leg curl machine with all the grace of a three-legged dog.

Advanced Shock Tactic 4: Forced Negatives

While warming up with a couple of light sets, I tried to motivate myself by thinking about the incredible hamstrings of Tom Platz, Tom Prince and Flex Wheeler. The fullness and roundness that those men possessed in their hamstrings, especially from the side, was simply awe-inspiring. Picturing myself with that kind of development had me ready and psyched to tear it up. Lucky for me, a friend of mine who has been using my Power/Rep Range/Shock training program for quite some time was at the gym. You see, in order to perform these particular Shock sets properly, I was going to need the help of an experienced trainee.

"Yo, bro, can you help me with these?"

"Sure, what do you need?"

"Some forced negatives."

"Ohhh, Shock week, huh? Yeah, I'll help!"



Forced negatives can be brutal. Beware of future soreness and hammered hamstrings.



Deep stretches can be dangerous on stiff-legged deadlifts, especially with heavy weights. Stop the bar at midshin level when going the intensity route.

Model: Edvard Van Amsterdam

"Thanks, but please wipe that smile off of your face."

"Hehehe, this is going to be fun!"

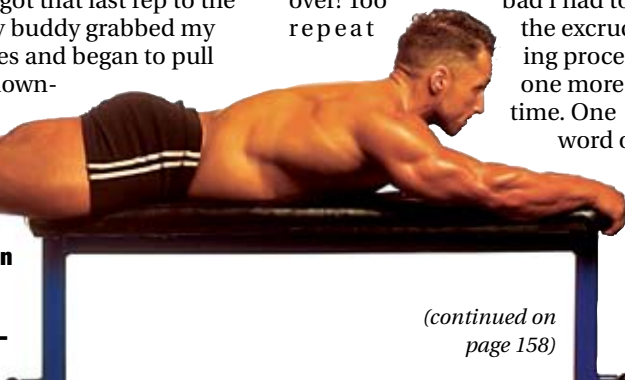
"I'm so glad the thought of my pain makes you smile, you sadist."

With that, I jumped on the bench and was ready to rumble. My goal for the first set was 10 full reps to failure, at which point the real fun would begin. The first seven reps went up pretty easily, but the next three were quite a struggle. Once I finally got that last rep to the top, my buddy grabbed my ankles and began to pull down-

ward toward the floor. I fought him with all of my might until the very bottom—I so badly wanted to make him work almost as hard as I was working. But that was just the beginning. He helped me get back to the top and again pulled down while I resisted as hard as I could. On the first forced negative it took him about five seconds to pull me down, but by the fifth I couldn't resist at all. Set over! Too

repeat

bad I had to the excruciating process one more time. One word of



(continued on page 158)

Model: Derik Farnsworth



"I began hallucinating that I was lying next to the stiff-legged deadlift girl."

Model: Kai Meyers \ Shorts by Hungry Moth Apparel

(continued from page 154) warning about this technique: It will make you sorer than you could possibly imagine. Advil, anyone?

Now it was time for my final exercise of the day, standing single-leg leg curls. This is one of my favorite exercises for hamstrings, as it allows for a very powerful contraction and excellent isolation. It's also an exercise that I like to work heavy. Hence the inclusion of the next form of self-torture.

Advanced Shock Tactic 5: Rest/Pause

I had two choices here. One machine has you stand pretty much upright, and the other has you lean into it. Since the only way I could stand up at all at this point was to lean on something, my decision was clear. My plan of attack was to do only one balls-to-the-wall set, but I knew that with this Shock tactic it would feel like 10. I loaded on the entire weight stack and was shooting for just two clean reps, done with an explosive concentric contraction and a controlled negative. Before the first rep I made sure my whole body was tight and focused all of my energy into my hamstring, as I did not want my lower back to become involved at all. "One...two...three...up," I screamed in my head. Boom! The first rep came up easy. "Now,

slow on the way down to a count of three...two...one. Gotta get one more! Up!" Got it, but no way could I do another. Time to peek up at the clock and wait for 15 seconds to go by. "Okay, gonna try for another rep, same weight. Up!" Bam! Got another one. Rest again, this time for 20 seconds. This process went on until I completed a total of eight reps. I got two reps initially, and then I did six rest/pause reps, starting with a 15-second rest and then increasing it by five seconds before each subsequent rep. This was an absolute killer, but what a way to finish my Shock workout!

It was definitely one of the most intense training sessions I've ever performed. My clothes were drenched, my thighs were fried, and my brain was numb. Afterward, I just lay on the floor for about 10 minutes, completely motionless, before I could even muster the strength to get to the locker room. I was hoping that hot stiff-legged deadlift girl would have some sympathy and offer a massage, but I think instead that I frightened her away. That was okay, because I was in total bliss knowing that I was done.

Now, I should point out that normally I would not include all of those advanced Shock tactics in one single workout, as it's just too taxing and could lead to injury or overtraining. Instead, I would combine maybe one or two advanced techniques with the basic Shock week protocol that I outlined in my previous two P/RR/S articles. Remember, unless you've been using the basic P/RR/S format for at

least six months—eight three-week cycles—you shouldn't be using any of the advanced tactics just yet, as your muscles and central nervous system will be unable to properly deal with the stress. And if your body cannot recover from your training sessions, not only will you not make any progress, but you could actually regress.

I hope you enjoyed that little trip with me to the gym. If you were able to live vicariously through me, then just about now you probably want to lie down and take a nap. I know I do.

In a future article I'll delve further into P/RR/S variations and how the program can be used optimally for strength, mass and cutting cycles.

Lights out for now.

Editor's note: For individualized programs, online personal



Model: Joe DeAngelis

Stage reps on the leg press: Stop the descent at three different spots along the stroke for five-second pauses.

training, nutritional guidance or contest-prep coaching, contact Eric Broser at bodyfx2@aol.com. Readers are also invited to join Boser's bodybuilding and fitness discussion board at www .BuildingMass.com. **IM**