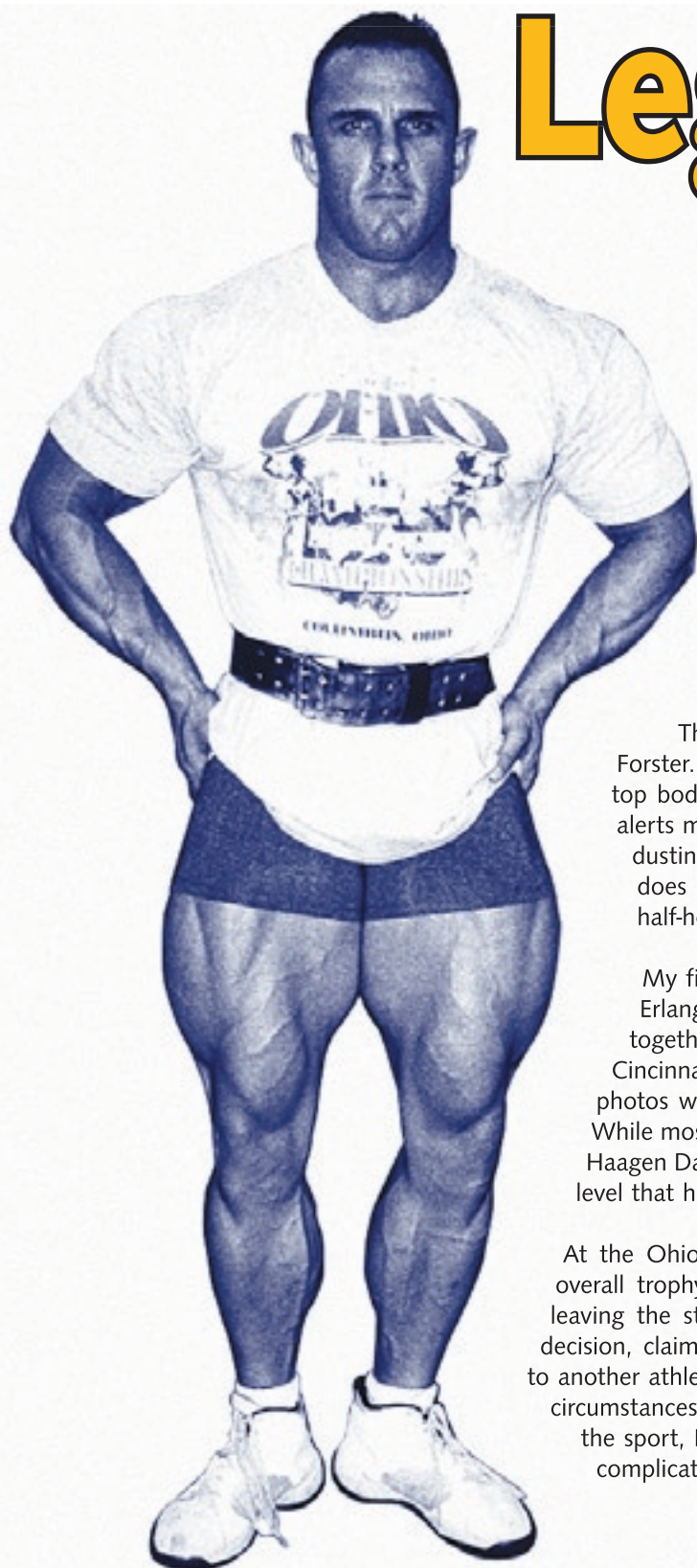


Multi-Angular Leg Training



Dave Uhlman's Strategy for Building National-Level Wheels

"He has definitely national-level potential, especially if he can bring his upper body up to the level of his legs," Jeremiah told me. "He's got awesome legs!"

The Jeremiah on the other end of the phone was my friend Jeremiah Forster. Not only is Jeremiah a top-level competitor, but he is a master at getting top bodybuilders, fitness competitors and regular civilians into shape. Jeremiah alerts me whenever he spies someone on the rise that might make me consider dusting off my camera. Since I respect Jeremiah's opinions and know that he does not tend to be easily impressed, I set up a time to make the two and a half-hour drive to Kentucky to see the wheels on his latest protégé.

My first meeting with Dave Uhlman took place at the palatial Gold's Gym in Erlanger, Kentucky a week before the Ohio state championships. We also got together later (three weeks after the Ohio) at Terry Bryan's Fitness Center in Cincinnati — where the accompanying photos were taken. That's right, these photos were taken three weeks (and one vacation to Cancun) after his contest. While most athletes would have been at least thirty pounds of water retention and Haagen Daaz heavier, Dave was still hovering around an impressive 6% bodyfat — a level that he maintains year-round.

At the Ohio, Dave dominated the super-heavyweight class and was awarded the overall trophy. Well, let me clarify. He was *awarded* the overall trophy but, after leaving the stage and getting dressed, the promoter (Mike Davies) REVERSED the decision, claiming it was a mathematical judging error, and awarded the overall title to another athlete. Most of the audience left, not knowing of the screw-up. Underlying circumstances and politics definitely caused some raised eyebrows. (For the benefit of the sport, I sincerely hope Davies will never be allowed to promote anything more complicated than a family picnic.)

Dave Uhlman, being the champion that he is, did not complain or make excuses. He was simply pleased with his condition and his super-heavyweight class victory. This stands to reason because, with Dave Uhlman's potential, trophies and titles are sure to be a regular part of his future.

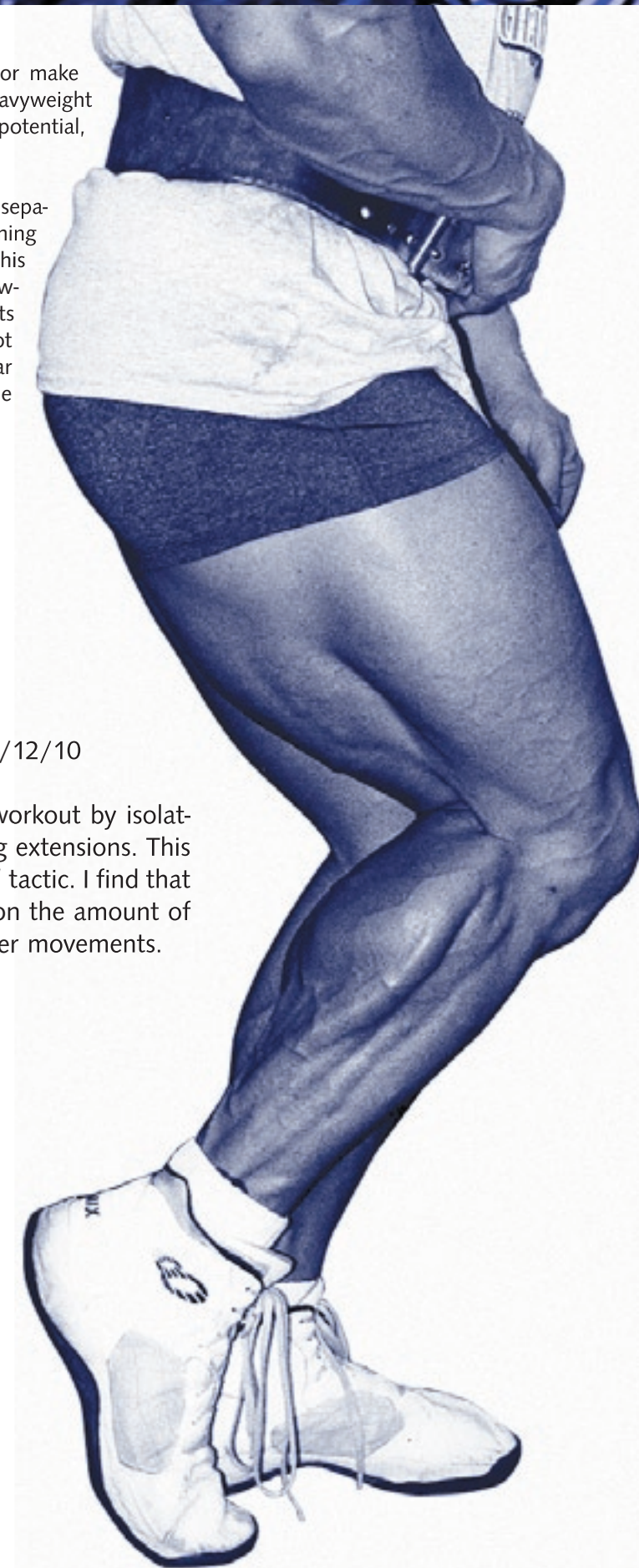
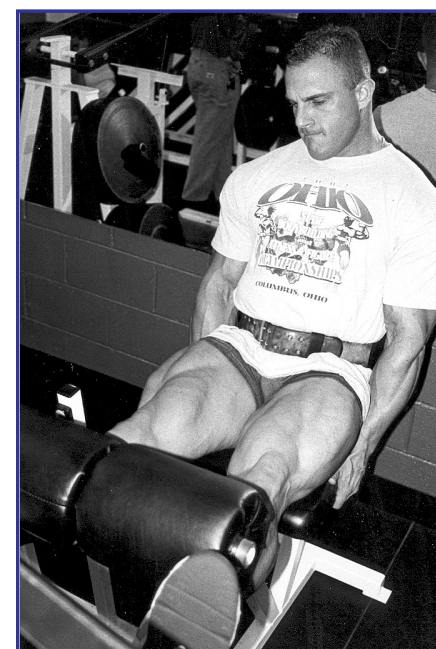
So how did he build such thick, sweeping quads balanced by full, separated hams? Two factors really differentiated Dave Uhlman leg training program from a typical athlete's. First was the fact that he split his quadriceps and hamstring workouts over separate training days, allowing him to fully direct his energies towards making these bodyparts reach their size potential. The second factor was his use of unique foot stances and exercises that facilitate these stances to work particular areas of the leg. Let's have Dave take us through the workouts, so he can describe this in detail.

#1 QUADS

LEG EXTENSIONS

Warm-up of 20, then 3 x 15/12/10

I like to start out my quad workout by isolating my frontal thighs with leg extensions. This is the classic "pre-exhaustion" tactic. I find that this allows me to cut down on the amount of weight needed on later movements.





SUMO SQUATS ON THE SMITH MACHINE

Warm-up of fifteen, then 3 x 12/10/8

#2
QUADS

I take advantage of the fixed track of the Smith machine to direct the focus of the movement to hit the areas of my leg that I wish to concentrate on. For me, this involves using a wide, toes-out stance to work the muscles in my inner thigh. Using the smith machine also allows me to keep my hips positioned forward more to concentrate the stress on my quads rather than having my butt and lower back coming into play.

I used to do free weight squats until about two years ago. At the time, I used around 450 to 550 for sets of moderate reps. I built up enough size that way. Now I find I build more quality muscle by manipulating my stance to work the harder to hit parts of my leg.



CALF

TRAINING

I train calves three days a week, either on off-days or in addition to a major bodypart. Two of these workouts are heavy days. For these I do four sets of ten to fifteen reps of a standing calf or a calf press. I then do another four sets of ten to fifteen reps in a seated calf movement.

The third workout is a high-rep calf day. For this session, I do five sets seated and five sets of either standing calf raise or calf press for a total of 300-400 reps per movement. The key on this workout is going for a burn with a minimum of 50-60 reps per set. By using these two different weight load/rep schemes, I feel I get complete development and a greater activation of different muscle fibers.



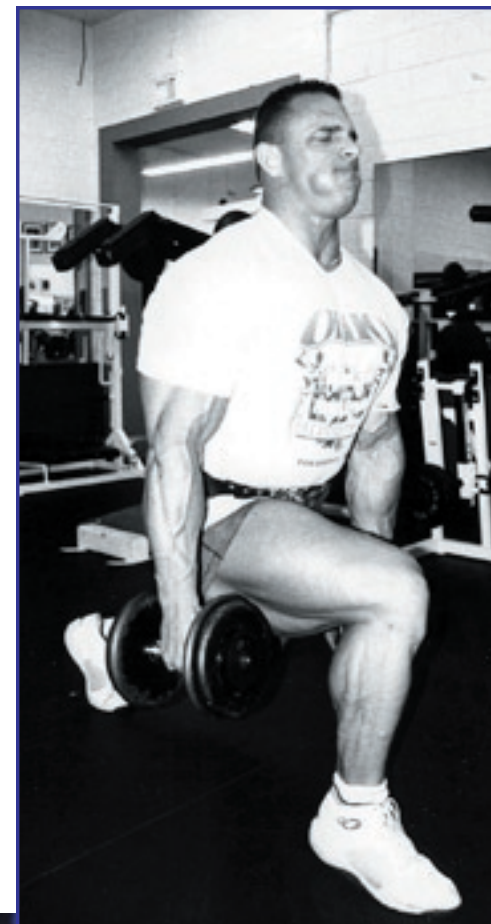
#3
QUADS

LEG PRESS

Warm-up of twenty, then 4-5 sets of 10-15

For the leg press, I typically use the 45° version. On these, I place my heels close together with toes slightly pointed out, in a "mid to upper" position on the platform.

Occasionally, I will do these on a vertical (overhead) leg press. When I use that machine, I tend to use a wide sumo-stance.



#4
QUADS

DUMBBELL LUNGES

4 x 8-12

This movement is a great finishing exercise for quads. These are done one leg at a time, in place (as opposed to walking lunges). For variety, I will sometimes substitute one-legged squats in place of lunges.



#1 HAMS

LEG CURL

20 rep warm-up, then 3 x 15/12/10

Depending on which of the two gyms I'm training at, I do either two-legged or standing one-legged ham curls. Once again, this is classic pre-exhaust at its best. By isolating my hamstrings, it both lowers the poundage needed in other exercises and increases my ability to "feel" them working. On some days when I feel like training heavier, I might use reps of twelve, ten and eight on my working sets but NEVER go lower than eight.



#3 HAMS

DUMBBELL STIFF-LEGGED DEADLIFTS

4 x 8-12

I prefer dumbbells stiff-legs over deadlifts done with a straight bar. I find that I can more comfortably keep my torso upright for the stretch needed to make it a leg movement and less of a lower back exercise. I do four sets of eight to twelve reps with my heaviest weight being 145-pound dumbbells.



#2 HAMS

SUMO SQUATS

15 rep warm-up, then 3 x 10/8/6

This is a great exercise that most lifters don't seem to know about. I've been doing these for the past six years and credit them for the completeness in my lower body development. Like many things, this originated as just an exercise I saw someone doing, so I gave it a try. After experimenting to find the proper form of the exercise I found that it really targeted some of the typical "hard to hit" areas of the leg — the inner thigh, glute/ham tie-in, and outer thigh sweep.

To do sumo squats, begin with a wide sumo stance, toes pointed out. All the pressure should be placed directly over your heels. Keep your head up. Your torso should stay perfectly upright throughout the movement. Most people do the exercise incorrectly and bring into play their lower back, which makes it more of a deadlift. This is strictly a sumo SQUAT. If done correctly, it's all legs.

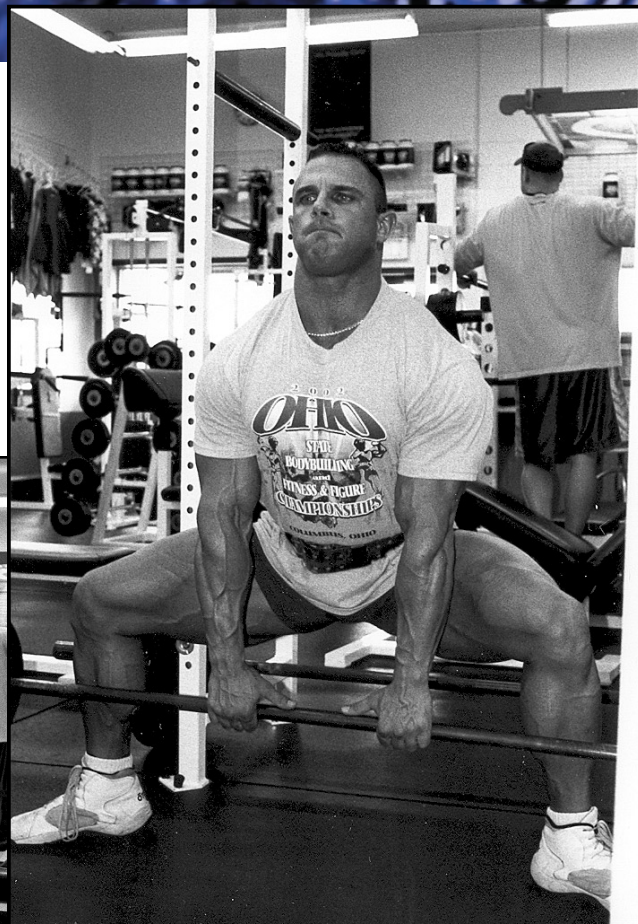
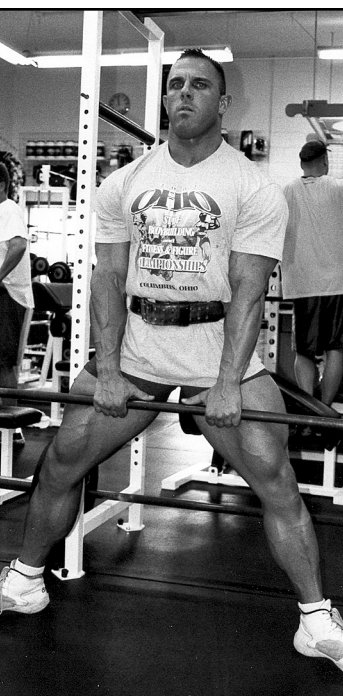
On days when my strength might not be there, I usually switch over to higher reps. On these days, I lower the weight and have work sets of fifteen, twelve and then ten reps, concentrating on "feel."

Sumo squats are my heavy mass-building movement for hamstrings. I've used up to almost 500 pounds but usually I use 250-350 for reps and concentrate on form and feeling the movement. This is the number one exercise for transforming big legs into impressive legs.

DUMBBELL LUNGES

4 x 20-25

You will notice that Dumbbell Lunges are used as a finishing movement for both my quadriceps and hamstring workouts. On hamstring day, I use higher reps



#4 HAMS

(twenty to twenty-five) and a faster pace with a moderate weight. The goal here is to make sure my hams are completely depleted and I've forced as much blood into my hams as possible.

