

# THE EFFECT OF STRENGTH MESOCYCLES

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The author conducted a study aiming to find out how 'the development of form is affected by using a non-traditional training structure after the first period of a double periodized year. The structure of the non-traditional approach was based on a 4 to 6 weeks long "strength mesocycle" before the second preparation period.

The strength mesocycle made use of training only with free weights. All specific strength exercises that were close to the competition exercise, or even part of it, were eliminated. These in throwing events included standing throws and throws with heavier and lighter implements, in jumping events all standing jumps, as well as jumps from shorter run-ups. In sprints and hurdles the use of longer repetitions and uphill runs were eliminated.

The development of form after the end of the strength mesocycle was studied in practical experiments with 30 elite throwers and by using a questionnaire involving 150 high level male and female athletes, including 86 internationals.

The results revealed that nearly all participants reached top form for the second competition period. Most improved their form (92 athletes), some maintained it (39 athletes) and a few showed declined form (19 athletes).

It was interesting to note that there was a considerable drop in form immediately after the end of the strength mesocycle, reaching 6 to 12% in speed strength events. The re-development of a mostly improved form showed individual reactions. Some athletes simply acquired form and then maintained it, while others were first faced with a deprivation phase before the redevelopment of form took place.

The presented facts appear to open the possibility to benefit from a strength mesocycle prior to the second preparation phase in a double periodized year.

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