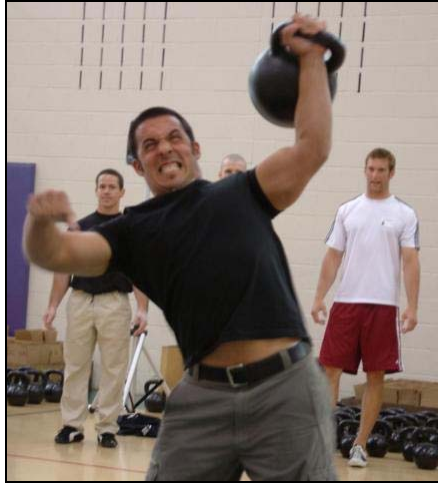


Interviews Joe Sarti



Joe Pressing #102 kettlebell at BW 170

1. Joe Thanks for taking time from your busy schedule to sit down with me. Could you tell us a bit about your background?

Ken, I have been in the training world for 11 years as a professional and an active athlete since birth. I have been fortunate to have great coaches who have taught me an infinite amount of knowledge. This, combined with the wonderful experiences I have had working with a diverse population of people from athletes to everyday people has truly opened me to many exciting opportunities to make an impact

2. You have been training Frank Shamrock. That must be a great experience for you. Would you care to share any secrets with us?

I hate to let the secret out but Frank is a Mutant and the perfect physiological specimen for his sport. The secret is we keep things pretty simple. We use tools such as the sled, tire, sandbags and kettlebells to help with his fight strength and conditioning. The exercises are straightforward and the key is we work to accomplish our goals in the shortest time possible with the highest degree of skill. The exercises he really finds make an impact are the sled and the swing.

3. Recently you have been training Frank Shamrock's team The San Jose Razorclaws of the IFL (International Fight League) How do you find the time! Could you run us through your training philosophy for the fighters? Also what would a typical training session look like?

The philosophy is K.I.S.S. (keep it simple sweetheart). These guys train fight training 3 hours a day, 6 days a week. So, we keep our workouts to 30 minutes or less and spread them out over 5 days splitting the work between odd lifts and kettlebells 3 days a week and swim/sprint run conditioning twice a week. Oh yeah, plus we do joint mobility and stretching.

Typical strength/conditioning session

Sled pull

Tire Flip

KB Clean, Squat Press

KB Swing

Sandbag Get-up

3 rounds of 1 minute or less per exercise with a 30 second transition.

Typical Sprint workout

Sprint 10 yards for explosive strength/power

Sprint 100 for speed/endurance (walk back to recover and repeat)

Tempo Runs (10, 100 yard runs at 75%)

4. It is very easy for fighters to over train. How have you combated that?

That is a great question and yes, every workout I combat this. I always approach each workout with an idea of what I want to accomplish but depending on how the guys are feeling I make adjustments. Now, Mondays I choose as the hard day since they are fresh and Wed or Thurs I like to have them swim to open the lungs and help the body recover. This is a constant struggle and we really emphasize rest, recovery and nutrition combined with therapy (massage, foam roll, A.R.T., etc.)

5. Let's talk a bit about your training Joe. You missed out on the Beast challenge (A strict overhead press, pistol (one legged squat) and a pull-up with the #104 kettlebell) put on by Dragondoor.

That is a very impressive feat at your weight. How did you train towards that? I am pretty sure I read that you didn't even train with any kettlebells heavier than the #88.

LOL. Training for the beast challenge never even entered my mind. I did not spend one day training for the beast challenge. I did it on a whim as my mentor/coach Mark Reifkind and Monica Cuevas encouraged me to try it. Shoot, I thought I would be able to at least do the pull-up, which I missed by the hair on my chin and never imagined doing the press and pistol which I did in fact accomplish.



Joe doing a pistol with the #102 Kettlebell

I would tell you that it was all the training and the techniques/principles that enabled me to succeed. Add on the motivation of the other men up there taking the challenge with me and all the students watching added motivation. The key is sticking to the basics and doing them to the highest levels.

At this point I am training for the Tactical Strength Challenge in September therefore I keep my movements with the kettlebell basic (i.e. Swings, Snatch, cleans, presses, & pistols) and I do pull-ups and deadlifts. In general I emphasize training my Central Nervous System to operate at the highest level possible as strength truly is a skill not a movement.

6. Training goals are a definite must in my opinion Joe. You have a strong deadlift and I don't believe you have fully tapped into it yet. Any tips for the average Joe ?

Well I am no average Joe, LOL. The thing that is truly helpful is a great coach and I am lucky to have a former USA Powerlifting Coach, Mark Reifkind training me. Other than that I find that deadlifts are about willpower because when it gets heavy and you find yourself struggling you have to make the decision to go or put the bar down.

Important techniques that one must learn:

- Proper leg position (sumo or conventional <my preference>)
- Linking your body to the bar
- Set your hips properly
- How to breathe
- Using your lats
- Determine which grip is best (double over or mixed)
- Learn how to use a belt
- Have fun

7. Joe I read on your blog sometime back about wedging helping your deadlift. It looked like it would be beneficial to a lot of exercises. Could you explain how you do it?

Wedging is an excellent isometric exercise. The trick is to learn how to wedge your body between the bar and ground. One way to do this is to go to a playground and find a bar (low to the ground similar to your deadlift position) and attempt to do a deadlift. Now the bar will not move unless you are a true mutant ☺ but you should get/feel the idea of what it takes to attempt to move the bar.

8. It seems everybody is looking for the quick fix or magic pill these days. What do you think will be the major things that change in the industry? Where do you see it heading in the next ten years?

Education from people such as ourselves. There is so much information and so many sources that determining what to do, how to do, etc. is becoming increasingly difficult for people. Enough of this quick fix, fad stuff we need to start teaching kids in school, their parents, and adults in general how to eat healthy, about the importance of being active and we need food companies to produce foods of higher quality.

It truly starts with children because if we can get them on the right path at a young age they will have the ability to affect future generations in a positive way and will lead the change. There are too few classes on health and fitness and not enough emphasis on physical education.

My hope is that the education system starts to place importance on exercise and nutrition. My hope is that companies start to encourage their employees to eat well by providing healthy sources and exercise by allotting time for exercise and even incentivising their employees. My hope is that these health insurance companies offer health benefits to those who are healthy and promote this by offering to cover a portion of the cost (i.e. 20 sessions with a Certified Personal Trainer and Nutritionist) to learn how to succeed in health and fitness.

9. Any parting words of wisdom Joe?

This is your life and you must treat your body well. As I mature I am focusing more and more on balance of movements (strength, flexibility, mobility, endurance) and on nutrition. I think of myself like a high performance vehicle and like any such car it needs premium gas and service to perform its best and therefore I apply the same principles to my body. More than anything the most important thing is to eat well and move your body. Make sure you find something you enjoy because you are more likely to stick with it and that is a big part of the challenge.

Thanks for the insights Joe. Where can people find out more about you.

My website which has some basic info

www.fitnessjoe.com

or my blog which has insights and my training regimen

www.joefitness.blogspot.com

Thanks for your time Joe. Good luck with your training and look forward to seeing your results in the TSC.

* Pictures courtesy of Dragondoor.com

<http://www.theothersideofstrength.com/>