

# Paleo Solution - 192

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Robb Wolf: Hey folks, Robb Wolf here. If the room feels oddly tilted as if there's a large object in tow with me, that is in fact the case and it's not my usual copilot Greg Everett. Greg is off you know, doing important Greg Everett stuff today but we have the large and in charge Jim Laird of J&M Strength and Conditioning. Dude, what's going on?

Jim Laird: Not much, Robb. Thank you so much for having me on the show. I really appreciate. This is a huge honor. I've been listening to you guys for a long time now and I just – it's kind of hard to believe I'm actually on the show with you.

Robb Wolf: Well, you know, we didn't keep you in the fluffer green room quite as long as or maybe we kept you in there even longer than Keiffer. Because we tried to do one day and we had a horrible qualms on that day and all those stuff but I'm stoked to have you on. You had me on your show first right?

Jim Laird: Yes. Yeah, we started chatting probably about four years ago.

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: I was suffering from some ulcerative colitis and I kind of stumbled across your show and we were kind of bouncing some Facebook messages back and forth. I believe I asked you just a survey question. I was talking about you know, out of all the athletes you've dealt with, how many of them move well and could squat and do a chin-up and had a regular base. I asked like Joe Ken and Mike Boyle and talking with Louie Simmons and all of my strength coach mentors and friends, Jim Wendler. I was doing a presentation for NSCA conference and the relative consensus was just about only about 10% of the people were well prepared for any kind of strength training program. We just kind of started chatting and then I asked if you would do the show with me and we just kind of started firing emails back and forth and that's kind of how we became friends.

Robb Wolf: That's right. That's right. I remember all that stuff now.

Jim Laird: Well, you know, we had some common past history. I lived in Redding for a little while and played junior college football at Shasta Junior College

and worked out at Curtis Lupo's gym with Danny Thurman all those guys and so we kind of had some common history. Both common, same house struggles and both kind of interested in strength power sports so it's kind of fun.

Robb Wolf: Yeah. So I'm going to shake you down to give people a little bit more of your bio here because we just launched in because Jim and I can on a given day probably exchange upwards of a hundred text possibly. I'm glad of--

Jim Laird: Yeah.

Robb Wolf: --my infinite free texting plan. So Jim and I know each other pretty well at least, you know, remotely and so kind of jumped in here without I guess the usual due process. But yeah, it was crazy when we first started talking like Jim was hanging out around exactly the same circle that I was hanging out with when I won the state power lifting championship and a really small, small world you could consider like Redding California like Danny Thurman and his power lifting coach and Curtis and all that. Curtis if folks don't know like some people will know this but he was a stunt double for Ivan Drago --

Jim Laird: Yeah.

Robb Wolf: --in like '54 and all that stuff.

Jim Laird: He is an absolutely freak show.

Robb Wolf: Big, big strapping dude, yeah.

Jim Laird: Like I mean he came out and played junior college. He played football at Shasta College when I was there and he was on the team the same year I was on the team and the dude is just like I mean you know, as far as nutrition and strength training and performance enhancement and all that kind of stuff, I mean he is just so far ahead of the curve. Just I mean the dude is dialed in.

Robb Wolf: I think when you go to like the IMBD database, you know, like the database of like movies and actors and all that stuff, like Curtis' deal is things you might not know about Curtis and it's like I have like a five-hundred pound bench and that's the only thing that he mentions about himself.

Jim Laird: Yeah, he's a strong dude.

Robb Wolf: Yeah.

Jim Laird: Gosh, that was what year? I was like 20 years old.

Robb Wolf: So -

Jim Laird: Now he was –Uh-hum.

Robb Wolf: '89 through like '92, '88 through '92 somewhere around there so.

Jim Laird: Yes.

Robb Wolf: Going back a little way. So Jim, give folks a little bit more of your longer bio --

Jim Laird: Sure.

Robb Wolf: --and background with athletics and coaching and all that stuff.

Jim Laird: Well I grew up in Canada. I lived most of my life in Fort Saskatchewan Alberta, which is near Edmonton so way, way up there. My parents were good enough to me. I was exposed to every sport imaginable and where I was from, you know, you weren't like playing one sport all year round, it's not heard of. So I mean literally I swam, did gymnastics, played soccer. I played some soccer and did some gymnastics and swimming until basically I just knocked the dog piss out of everybody in soccer and the coaches were like....

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I was always a bigger, more aggressive kind of kid and like huge legs and butt when I was like in – I was 130 pounds when in the third grade.

Robb Wolf: Wow.

Jim Laird: You know, I shopped in the husky section because my ass was just huge. I had upper body but I was just a really well rounded athlete. I worked really, really, really hard and they said like well you need to put him in football. So around 12, I started playing football as well and I was in wrestling and I actually played volleyball for my I guess you would call it middle school and a little bit in high school.

So here I am playing center in volleyball, I'm in wrestling, I'm playing football. So I played everything and then I actually wrestled at a very high level and my wrestling coach was unbelievable. You know, my passion

was football though and I just got deadest on wanting to play football in the United States, playing college football. So I went to a junior college instead of walking on at a four-year school and being smart, like this is long before the internet and no--

Robb Wolf: You build research and stuff.

Jim Laird: Yeah, yeah. You basically just went to your buddy who played in the States and said hey I want to play in the States, do you know somebody kind of deal. So I went, I got talked to go in a junior college in California and I played there for a little while, for one year and then I went to Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia. But my wrestling coach the whole time and this gets into a lot of what I do now about teaching people to be a little smarter about what they were doing instead of just trying to blast with their heads. My wrestling coach is like you're insane, dude. Like you're a really good wrestler, you're competing with like maybe a hundred people in the world right now as like a heavyweight wrestler, you're going to go into a sport where you're competing with a million angry white men that are playing a position that is dying. Like I was a fullback.

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: Like Tom Rathman was my idol. He's like you're going to compete with several million guys to play three positions.

Robb Wolf: Well and I was going to say like maybe a million angry white men but ten million larger, faster, stronger black men so yeah, that's it.

Jim Laird: Absolutely. I love – I was a blocking back and it's just like looking back now it's like wow, I mean he was absolutely correct. So now I deal with like a lot of the kids I deal with they come in and their parents are like I want him to do this, but the kid likes something else and I'm like the kid likes it let him do it. I mean you know, it might be archery, it might be whatever but he could actually go to school and compete as an archer go to the Olympics as archery. I mean don't knock that. I mean just because it's not basketball or football doesn't mean that they can't do something else like track and field or throw something or just develop them as an athlete.

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: We'll get into it more later but. So I ended up going to Liberty and I played there and that's where I met like Dave Williams. I had always been

into lifting weights and I always really loved to lift weight because to be honest kids made fun of me because I was bigger. The way I kind of work is like if you're going to make fun of me, I'll give you a real reason to make fun of me.

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: So I got in the weight room and I just decided I wanted to get as strong as possible and that was when like muscle media 2000 and Dan Duchaine and Charles Poliquin. I was in the Edmonton area so I had some –you know, Charlie Francis was bobbing around with Ben Johnson so I got some exposure to him early on.

Robb Wolf: Nice.

Jim Laird: You know, and I actually worked out at like a real meathead body building kind of gym when I was in high school and like the National Canadian Bodybuilding champion was there. It's funny because a lot of the stuff there are teaching me about nutrition. He said to me if you want to be big and jacked, you got to learn how to control your blood sugar and this was long before anything really mainstream. These guys were so far ahead of the curve as far as nutrition and what they were doing. This was way back in the day. So I got some basic –you know, I was around guys like Chris Benoit was actually a really good friend of mine, the late Chris Benoit. He worked out of the same gym I did and gave me some really good advice about career choices and things like that. I can get into that a little more later but.

So I was exposed. I loved the weight room so when I went to Liberty, I ended up falling in love with the weight room even more than football. It actually probably hurt my football career because I was so concerned about lifting weights and my strength coach Dave Williams is an amazing strength coach, one of the original guys. Actually Louie Simmons gives him credit for coming up with bands and chains like how to use them in a bar that's Dave Williams' kind of came up with that. He actually started with reverse bands. Like during the season a lot of just still lift heavy but take some weight off at the bottom so it doesn't beat you up as much. Then Louie was like well if we use reverse band then we're going to put bands in the other direction and chains and all that kind of stuff. That's where that started.

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But Coach Williams was always watching these videos in the back and every time I'd walk in the room, he'd turn them off. It turned it was the

Westside barbell videos from back in the day like the old Louie yeah videos kind of stuff.

Robb Wolf:

Right.

Jim Laird:

He would turn it off and later he told me he's like dude I couldn't let you see those because I knew you'd move to Columbus, you know. So because I was like all about maxing and coach Williams at the time the way they did their strength training was like we're going to lift as much as possible and the strongest guys are going to be the best players kind of deal.

So I came from that kind of background then I decided I wanted to be a strength coach. My education is actually at elementary education, which kind of actually plays a huge role in what I do now. But it's kind of interesting. Well I'll explain a lot of that later but. So I went to an NSCA conference in Anaheim and it was funny because it was one of the first conferences I went to, I'm having dinner with Bill Kazmaier, Magnus from Magnus and Magnus Samuelsson, a guy named Brad Arnett who ended up being my boss at Liberty or at Arizona and Dan Worth. Literally I am the smallest guy there at like 255 pounds. Like these guys are going up to the buffet and they're taking the whole freaking tray.

Robb Wolf:

Right.

Jim Laird:

Bringing it back to the table and like the waitress, we're in a Chinese place, you no come here no more, we go broke. Like I mean it's amazing to watch like Kazmaie eat this whole tray and Magnus Samuelsson. I mean I was sitting there going this is insane. So I ended up making a kind of connection with Dan Worth. I really liked him. So I ended up moving from – I was living in Aspen, Colorado at the time. I would travel from Virginia and in the summers I'd work in Aspen and at Christmas break and I made a butt load of money and that's pretty much how I put my way through school.

And I was an in Aspen and I decided I was going to go to Tucson. So I moved to Tucson and Dan had decided to leave and Brad Arnett had come in and Brad Arnett is a great guy. He has a performance center up in Wisconsin called Next Level Athletics and I mean it's just a great coach. He came in at the same time I did and it was just a lot of fun and that's where I met Jim Wendler.

You know, I had always been like the strongest and most explosive guy and I've had more of like a power body buiding background and so Dan

Worth was like I know this guy who you're going to hit it off. So he introduces me to Wendler. Wendler and I started hanging out and Wendler just kicks my ass on the squat and no one had ever done that to me before. Wendler is like have you heard of this thing called Westside and we started watching these videos and Jim was like I want to do my – he just had the power lifting bug and then Jim and I became good friends. I was in Arizona for a while and then I ended up leaving there and going back to Aspen and Jim ended up being a GA, getting a GA job at Kentucky. It was right around 9/11 and Aspen had shut down completely and I really had nowhere to go because the tourism industry had just collapsed. I didn't really feel like painting houses.

So I just went up to visit Jim to help him with his power lifting meet and here I am I've never left. I never left Lexington. So that's how I ended up living on Jim's floor for like a year in a studio apartment. So I mean I've got a lot of –you know, between living in Aspen and living with Wendler and going up to Westside, I mean I got some pretty crazy stories. I ended up working at a training studio here and then I ended up going to Lexington Athletic Club and I worked there for 2009. After that, I left the Lexington Athletic Club and asked Molly Galbraith to help me start J&M Strength and Conditioning and the rest is kind of history.

Robb Wolf: Yeah and what a history it's been since you guys started working together too, that's awesome. So you know I'm probably going to end up stealing or steering the show actually more towards some of my own questions because --

Jim Laird: That's fine.

Robb Wolf: You know, and I think we have a pretty good listenership that is into like MMA and Brazilian jujitsu and --

Jim Laird: Sure.

Robb Wolf: I know we have all kinds of age ranges. But I'm kind of curious about the more aged athlete and everything and how you keep going on that. But, you know, give us a little bit of your philosophy of how you would approach people and maybe from some age brackets. So, you know, like -  
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Jim Laird: Okay.

Robb Wolf: --the ten-year-old to 18-year-old athlete. I know the show start getting tough because you try to find some general theme and then you talk

about the general theme and then immediately all the general theme is is a diversion or a deviation away from all the nuance and specifics that is necessary.

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Jim Laird: Right.

Robb Wolf: But kind of looking at it like that, that prepubescent, peripubescent athlete.

Jim Laird: Sure.

Robb Wolf: You know, both male and female and then maybe getting into the 20 to 30-year-old athlete and everything and then we'll talk about old folks in a little bit. But I mean --

Jim Laird: Sure.

Robb Wolf: --you've got a lot of experience with that. You know, I think one of the things that struck me early on when you and I first started talking is you shot me a video of a young kid maybe 16 years old who was pretty high level for the team sport that he was playing but he could not, could not do a bear crawl. Could not do --

Jim Laird: Right.

Robb Wolf: --contralateral movements, you know, --

Jim Laird: He couldn't do anything.

Robb Wolf: Yeah. I mean it was shocking.

Jim Laird: We have created a massive epidemic in this country. Two weeks ago, I evaluated a 15-year-old kid, two Tommy John surgeries and a fractured spine. It's

Robb Wolf: Tell folks what a Tommy John surgery is.

Jim Laird: Tommy John is usually what they do to like elite baseball pitchers when their elbow has just given out. Okay. So what's happened is this kid has been throwing for so long and he has no core strength, he has no ability to throw from his body so he's been compensating and throwing a ball any way he can and his elbow has basically taken the load.

You know, two Tommy Johns at 15 and then a fractured spine, you have these kids that have no strength. They've never played, worked on a farm, they've never gotten in a fight, they've never wrestled. They've played on sport. This kid has swung a bat since the time he was a fetus and he has no musculature and he hits the, he goes to rotate and he's using his spine to get that power. Surely, he's fine and I see this like all the time.

You know, one of the things I learned from Louie Simmons love it or hate him is the pyramid is only as tall as the base. We have a whole generation, there is a – I can't remember the guy's name but he was like one of the best orthopedic surgeons in the world. He did RG3s ACL surgery. He said this is an epidemic since 2000. We're seeing these kids are blowing up by the hundreds of thousands of kids with injuries that you would not see except in an elite adult population.

You know, when I was in a high school, a kid blowing his ACL you never heard of that. It was like a freak accident.

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: I mean I got a girl training in here right now who's a senior year in college, three ACLs on one knee and she's got no cartilage in her knee. I mean I rehabbed a girl. There was an article on Keiffer's site about a girl named Amanda Trail, she came to me. She was 15, she had had three noncontact ACLs and we were able to get her strong enough to play through her senior year. But it's insane. You've got – you're going into this sports specific line of training and they might have one or two like Tiger Woods, Serena Williams and they blow up a thousand kids. You know, I'm not trying to be mean or rude or but some parents are going to have to step up and say enough is enough.

Robb Wolf: Well, you know, I was just looking, I was digging around on the internet, actually I can't remember the guy's name, it's like a 1980s video. The dude has got a mallet. I think he's a thrower and he's doing all this hopping and bounding and leaping and everything which the similar videos that I found is this ten part series on the Polish Olympic weightlifting team.

Jim Laird: Uh-hum.

Robb Wolf: It has this huge block of GPP and not like crossfit high motor GPP but like running in the woods, swimming.

Jim Laird: Yes.

Robb Wolf: Tumbling. They went into this – you know, about the size of a basketball court but the whole thing was wrong with stall bars. If folks don't know what stall bars are, usually you only see them in like ballet studios or something like that in just one section. But this thing was literally like thousands of linear feet of stall bars and they did all this kind of gymnastics stuff.

Jim Laird: Yeah.

Robb Wolf: So this dudes that were Olympic weight lifters and granted we've kind you know, I think everybody has moved away from this. This is actually I think where a lot of the conjugate method stuff was born. But these guys were fucking athletic.

Jim Laird: Yeah.

Robb Wolf: You know, a 270-pound guy doing front handsprings all the way down the wall and doing this one-legged bounding and everything. This is the type of stuff that they did since kids.

Jim Laird: Right.

Robb Wolf: And even as part of their preparatory phase each year doing the Olympic lifts, they would do time off and play some volleyball and do some tumbling and do some swimming.

**[0:20:05]**

Jim Laird: Yeah.

Robb Wolf: And they would start cycling back into the competitive sports. We just don't have GPP at all anymore like you said.

Jim Laird: No.

Robb Wolf: The kids don't work on farms. Kids don't even really ride their bikes around anymore you know,.

Jim Laird: No. What we're doing to kids would be a comparison of taking a kindergarten kid and putting him in a biochemistry college class.

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird:

That's basically what we're doing to these kids and it's criminal. These federations, I'm not going to name any of them but they're doing these camps and these elite camps and they're making a ton of money off this stuff and these kids are just it's insane. My main business, 90% of my clients that come in here are women. I try not to work with – I do work with some kids but my main focus is the ladies because they're just so easy to work with. When you deal with kids, you have to deal with the coach, you have to deal with the parents and most parents like that kid that couldn't bear crawl, he had gone to several speed camps and he got slower. In fact he was in pain.

I was like the reason he's slow is he can't control his body. Like you put him on a high street treadmill, you're just going to wreck his hips. Like the kid couldn't move at all. So they're trying these advanced methods like the worst I see is these poor volleyball girls. The entire sport is jumping so instead of taking a break from jumping and having these girls maybe do some gymnastics or some crawling or some basic strength training, they have them do more jumping on the off season. They have them do depth jumps. Like they haven't jumped enough.

Robb Wolf:

Right.

Jim Laird:

And if you did some research the highest vertical jumpers in the world are not volleyball players and basketball players, they're weight lifters. So we need to build some horsepower with these kids and it's just do more of the sport, do more of the sport. Most of the kids that I've seen that were high level when I first started in this town usually ended up burning out or getting injured. By the time it was time for them to go to college, they were done because they were so cooked. It's hard to find parents that will buy into well your kid needs to come in and do some crawls and we need to have them do some carries and we need to work on getting them to move, learn how to hinge, learn how to squat.

You know, I worked with a very high level female golfer and luckily her orthopedic agreed with me. I started with her she's 11, she's graduated from college now but she literally walked sideways when I first started with her. She was in so much pain. She was so rotated and I was like we need to start swinging the club the other direction. Her golf coach was like she need more golf specific training, I'm like no, she needs to learn how to play and be a kid. So we spent like five years building a base with her and she's able to get healthy enough to be able to compete at a high college level and she might even be making a run at the LPGA here pretty soon.

The funny thing is Tom Malinsky wrote a great – Tom Malinsky who worked with Buddy Morris wrote an awesome, awesome paper. It's on Lead FTS about the Russians and their research that they did between specialization and building a general base. The Russians did all this research way back in the day. I mean that's one of the –you know, I can't really say much good about communism or fascism but you're a fascist communist state, you do everything for the state. They took 10,000 athletes and put them in a specialized program and they took 10,000 athletes and they put them in a build a base conjugate type system and they found that yes the kids that specialized early they do improve but the burnout rate and the injury rate is astronomical.

Robb Wolf:

Uh-hum.

Jim Laird:

So you have to build that general base and then you specialize according to how the kid develops. It's amazing because my kid is the best seven-year-old soccer player means he's the next Pelé. No that's not necessarily true. You know, we're trying to develop the best athlete possible and then if they're good enough in college if they're a good enough athlete, they'll pick their sport and excel. Like majority of the athletes like the Mia Hams and the Wayne Gretzkys and those kind of people were multiple sport athletes. Wayne Gretzkys played baseball and lacrosse and hockey, you know.

Our system is so broken and if you look at the eastern bloc countries, look at like you know, we can get some –you know, I'm a huge history nerd. Look at the battle of Stalingrad in the eastern front. They lost the majority of their male population, the Russians and the Germans. How good was their system? Their system was so amazing they dominated the track and field sports in the '70s and '80s even though they had no genetic, like all their alphas were gone. We have the best athlete selection pool, gene pool here in the United States probably in the world and we still get schooled by a lot of countries because their system is so much better than ours at developing talent. We just happened to have the numbers and the genetic diversity to pull out like Lebron James is and Serena Williams and Tiger Woods and people like that.

**[0:25:00]**

Robb Wolf:

The high paying sports around the United States nobody else really plays them that much.

Jim Laird:

No, no.

Robb Wolf:

Yeah.

Jim Laird: That's why other than women's soccer, we generally suck at soccer, we suck at rugby, we suck at all these sports that require not a lot of technology like the track and field sports and wrestling and things like that we're usually behind in because people don't tend to go into them.

Robb Wolf: You know, I've had clearly a lot of go arounds with the crossfit but I'll give the props where props are due. Even early, early in the crossfit development, Greg Glassman, he made an observation that he would have folks roll into his gym, triathlete, soccer players, baseball players, whatever jujitsu players, he was working with a lot of high level jujitsu folks. These people were definitely getting seduced by this idea of sports specific training and we go back and forth on this.

So he noticed that if you could just get people to squat and deadlift and do a rope climb and get a pull-up and like maybe a handstand to a front roll and stuff like that, it did some really amazing stuff for them.

Jim Laird: Absolutely. It's too bad he just didn't stick with that because that's great. Instead he decided to go down this let's see who can suffer the most path and that's just --

Robb Wolf: Or just create multiple paths, you know.

Jim Laird: Right. Exactly.

Robb Wolf: Say here's the sport of fitness, here's the --

Jim Laird: Right.

Robb Wolf: --application of these concepts in the strength and conditioning realm instead of trying to say it was the panacea for all of that. Yeah.

Jim Laird: And that's pretty much what I do. Like when people come into the gym, I want to like what you've talked about who are you, what are your goals and the majority of the people -- I've got about 25 clients I've trained for 12 years and out of the people that come to me, the majority of the people that come through my door when you actually talk to them and you say what do you want and you say is your goal to look good and feel good and they go yes. Okay, why are you running a marathon and why are you doing four triathlons a year and why are you doing --you know? That's what I do.

If someone wants to run marathons and do triathlons because that's what they want to do, awesome. But most people are doing these activities because they think it's going to make them healthy and they think it's going to extend their life and they think it's going to make them look good in a bathing suit. What I tell them no, the key to that is cutting out all refined starch, eating real food, sleeping, lifting weights once or twice a week and walking every day they go what that's it. I'm like yeah, that's really it and you can do that for the rest of your life. No, you don't have to do seven met cons a day or seven met cons a week and pair it up with running a marathon. That's actually going to take years off your life. You know, and he started explaining to these people about you're like a car, if you have 200,000 miles on a car and you have 80,000 miles on a car, which car do you think is going to be in better shape?

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: You starting talking to people about that kind of stuff and you start talking about hormones and food choices and things like that and they start going, oh well that makes sense to me. I understand that, the metabolic derangement and you start telling them hey, you know what there's nothing wrong with working hard where we got to work smart and we've also got to put as much effort into take care of our bodies as we do pushing it.

Because, you know, especially women the, you know, the women that come into our gym most of them don't eat enough food. I've never ever in my career seen a woman that's come in that's eating enough. Most of them their diet consists of yogurt, fat free yogurt and celery sticks and almond butter and then they go on like a huge binge. A huge binge wouldn't be that bad if they actually ate good food and had a healthy metabolism. Their body would speed up and they'd actually lose some body fat but they're so metabolically broken and you can comment on this whether I'm right or wrong but they're so metabolically deranged their body is in a survival state and they're trying to store everything they can. You know, it's just they're killing themselves with cardio plus they're starving themselves at the same time and it's really – it's hard because you watch these people who are working so hard to get nothing out of it when they just need to chill out a little bit, take better care of themselves, eat better food. I mean a lot of the people that come through my door, I won't even let them work out for a month or two.

Robb Wolf: And just basically you have them focus on lifestyle features first and then shuffle back around?

Jim Laird: I have them focus on lifestyle and getting their body healthy enough so they can handle training, you know. Most of the people we see that are coming into our gym, they think they can fix everything with exercise and exercise is great if you're prepared for it and if you're metabolically healthy. But if you're not, it's a coffin. It's a killer for a lot of people in my opinion.

Robb Wolf: I totally agree and I mean this is some of the stuff that we've wrestled with it at Nor Cal for a long time. I mean even having some things like a 6:00 a.m. class.

Jim Laird: I agree, yeah.

Robb Wolf: I go back and forth for it because for a ton of our clients, I mean one it would be tough economically for us to even make the gym run --

Jim Laird: Sure.

Robb Wolf: -- if we didn't have a 6:00 a.m. block because we have a ton of folks that that's the hour that they can train, that they will train. If they didn't train at our place, they're going to train at somebody else's place. But I legitimately morally have some questions about that because I know folks aren't getting in bed until like 10, 11 o'clock.

**[0:30:22]**

Jim Laird: Sure.

Robb Wolf: They're not really falling asleep until about an hour after that. So they're getting up at 5:00 a.m. or maybe even 4:45 to get to the gym. They've got kids, they've got this, they got that and they roll into the gym and they're smoked.

Jim Laird: Yeah, well me too.

Robb Wolf: Yeah, yeah.

Jim Laird: I mean as a coach I've been getting up early for a long time and that's one of the things that almost dug my grave.

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: You know, we can talk about that a little bit more later. But you know, and that's the thing and explaining to people that it's okay, we'll have like a recovery class like we'll foam roll, we'll do a little bit more about like

doing a little bit less. Telling people like some days the little bit less is what you need to get better. There's nothing wrong with working hard if you're taking care of yourself and you're ready to train hard and you want to train hard. But you don't need to push yourself to the max every time you come to the gym.

Like Mark Sisson is a prime example of somebody who pushed himself for a long time and now he's like I'll play a little ultimate Frisbee, I lift some weights and the guy looks fantastic and that's pretty much we're trying to set people up with stuff they can do for the rest of their life and then if they have some performance goals, we'll try and get them to work within some smart training. I'm a huge military geek and if I've got 200,000 troops and I got to take a hill that has 15,000 troops that are dug in or if I've got 20,000 troops and there's 10,000 troops dug in on a hill, I mean I could be like you know, marine corps mentality and just charge the hill but if I've got some air support, I've got some snipers and some artillery, I'm going to sure as heck pound the living daylights of that hill and get rid of as many of those troops as I can so I have the least amount of damage possible.

That's really –you know, this thing in the fitness industry right now about tough it up, work harder, work stronger, you know, do more kind of that crossfit kind of attitude, I mean it might work for a few but in the long run you're going to pay the price. That's why I'm a big fan of like Joel Jameson and what he's doing with his HRV. Taking a look is your body prepared for stress. If it's not then you need to do the work whether it's meditation or massage or nutrition to get your body prepared and then know what you're preparing yourself for so that you can prepare yourself but making sure that you're not digging a hole for yourself.

Robb Wolf: Right, right. You know, it's tough because folks do seem to come in one of two flavors, one is the mock ten hair on fire, we need to put a Lojack on them to keep them from going on a 5K run in the morning just because they feel like they need to get some cardio before they have breakfast.

Jim Laird: Right.

Robb Wolf: And then the other crowd like you literally have douse them with gasoline and set them on fire to get them to do anything.

Jim Laird: Sure.

Robb Wolf: And there's not a ton of middle ground.

Jim Laird: No, there's not.

Robb Wolf: It's tough.

Jim Laird: The cool thing is I found that a teaching perspective with the people that don't do much, I think once they get into a smart strength training program -- we got some people that, I mean some of the ladies are in The Misfits the group that I work. I mean there's a couple of ladies that had done power lifting meets with me who like and some of the guys that I've had do power lifting meets in a million years like their relatives are like how did you get this person to lift these weights.

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: Well we started with their body, you know. We started where they were. It's like an infant, a toddler, you have to start where they are. You have to teach them and I think what happens is with a lot of these people that are kind of laidback, they look at like the Biggest Loser, they look at crossfit and they see these people getting crushed and they're like, oh my gosh, do I have to do that to be fit?

Robb Wolf: Or they have some good sense and they're like "that looks like it sucks..

Jim Laird: Right, yeah.

Robb Wolf: ..so I'm not doing that."

Jim Laird: Exactly. So we start them where they are and we work within their means and they're like that's not so bad. I know I'm doing a good job particularly with a female client when they start asking if it's okay to add weight.

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: That's when I know I'm doing a great job a coach and then they feel empowered, they get a little more confident. They're like and if your clients are leaving the gym and they feel better than when they came in, you know you're doing a good job. When your clients are coming back and going man I just feel so much better now that I started here and that's within working within your client's ability to recover. Because you know you've got those hard chargers that are going to push through no matter what you do. You know, they signed up for hell week with the SEALS because they thought it was fun and those are the people that I may get like the HRV app. I'm saying here I'll train you free for a month if

you use this app. They start looking at red and orange and their numbers are like oh wow, I have the fitness level of almost a dead person at 37.

Robb Wolf:

Right.

Jim Laird:

And they're like holy crap and they start understanding that if they train now, they're just going to dig the hole deeper. So it makes them kind of want to earn the right to train.

**[0:35:06]**

I have a lady that's in The Misfits Jen Rankin who started out with me. She was training with another trainer across town and I probably shouldn't have said her name but that's all right. She was doing like two days and eating less than a thousand calories a day. I mean she had the willpower, I mean she was driving herself into the ground. Now she's eating like four times the amount of calories and she's working out three days a week and she's lost several clothing sizes. She looks fantastic and part of the reason we were able to get her there is we got her the HRV app and she was like, oh my, she read Joel's book and she's like, oh my gosh, I'm killing myself.

And that's really the only thing that stopped me and made me slow down was like that HRV app looking every day, oh wow, I have the fitness level of like an untrained person because I'm running my body so hard. I meditated for two weeks, and now I have the fitness level of like a basketball player explosive power athlete at like 87 or 90 and the only thing different I did was take a half hour every day and meditate.

So explaining to people and it goes back to –you know, I learned this from Paul Chek and if you had asked me about Paul Chek like six, seven years ago, I had laughed and told you he was a total clown. What he said to me you've got to earn the right to train, you've got to work in so you can work out. American society is all about go, go, go, go, go. We've lost like the eastern society, that chill out, that meditate, that put gas, you know, money back in the bank. We don't have that in this culture. It's about push harder, do more, and there's a lot of programs out there that are capitalizing on that but it's going to bury most people. It's unfortunate that the majority of people in this country if they just walked every day and then ate a paleo style diet and got their sleep, we would see pharmaceutical industries going out of business.

Robb Wolf:

And possibly not bankrupting our economy in the process but yeah, yeah.

Jim Laird: Yeah. And the funny thing about us too is we're very similar politically and we won't get off on to that because then we'll go down to one and a half listeners but --

Robb Wolf: Exactly.

Jim Laird: Yeah, we're both constitutionalists and it's kind of fun to be around somebody that has that overall same view on training and how -- I mean it is very rare that you run into somebody that's got that overall same worldview as you do.

Robb Wolf: Well it's kind of funny the folks, the circles we run in. Like you know very different backgrounds but people have kind of -- it's kind of like convergent evolution, you know, like sharks and dolphins look a lot alike because they deal with the same environment. They're aqueous predators if you know what I mean.

Jim Laird: Yeah, that's true.

Robb Wolf: End up looking similar and I think when you end up doing this stuff and maybe that's a good segue, which was the worst thing that I ever did for my health, fitness, and athleticism were two things, open a gym.

Jim Laird: Yes, amen.

Robb Wolf: And write a book that seems to be reasonably successful and then do the travel necessary to support that. You know the stress of starting a business, the demands of being a trainer, being up early, being at the gym all day, being there late, emails, trying to blog, it really took the starch out of my breeches and it took a long time for me to get a handle on that. I had had kind of a health crisis earlier than that and figured out a lot of stuff but then I've got to say the starting of the gym and doing a ton of travel kind of took me down at the kneecaps and it's taken me some time to figure out what the balance point is with that. You had some pretty -- you know, you were both a high level athlete but also suffering from what could have been a life threatening illness. Like talk to people a little bit about that.

Jim Laird: Well I was basically competing in power lifting and working from six in the morning until nine at night and you know, working at Lexington Athletic Club here in Lexington from like 2001 to about 2009. Then they had that really big like real estate bubble broke and I mean it wrecked the economy here in Lexington. Lexington is pretty stable. It was not as bad as it was in some places but when the majority of your clientele are

realtors and horse people, all of a sudden it comes April and half your clientele is like I just can't afford you anymore. I wish I could. My taxes came due and I don't have any income anymore because all my sales have dried up but I've still got to pay taxes from last year. All of a sudden your bottom line is like drastically reduced. You're like whoa.

I used to bounce in college so I started bouncing in a nightclub so then I started working the night shift in a night club but I didn't change my lifestyle of course. I kept living the high roller lifestyle spending a lot of money on eating out and all that kind of stuff. Stopped getting my massages. I used to get weekly massages which I think you know, just lying on the table for an hour doing nothing I think is huge for --

**[0:40:05]**

Robb Wolf:

Right.

Jim Laird:

--keeping yourself healthy. And you know, I just kept pushing and then I would work the night shift on the weekends. I'd come in on Sunday to train and I'll only get a couple hours of sleep and instead of like maybe sleeping or chilling out, of course the old caffeine ephedrine, aspirin stack, caffeine, a pill or two of ephedrine and aspirin washed that down with like rip fours and then put the metallic on get after it. Have four or five other dudes there with you screaming at you and banging, you know. I never ever got hurt training but that lifestyle and the no sleep and the just driving myself eventually it was about 2008 I think, I literally just went crazy.

One day I was just like I go to a point where I just didn't want to deal with anything anymore. I wasn't happy with who I was. I hopped in a car and just drove back to Aspen. I took a job out there at a buddy of mine's place. I drove out there, I got there and I went. I just made a huge mistake. I drove, turned around and drove back the other direction and came back. I was like I'm going to face this mess I've created and ended up having to leave LAC and ended up being an independent contractor and being hired as a consultant by some different people here in Lexington. I just created a huge mess and I still continue not to slow down. Then eventually one day I just started feeling just terrible. Started losing a ton of weight and then, you know, ulcerative colitis is so awful. You're fine during the day but about every 15 minutes at night you're having bloody bowel movements all night long.

I wouldn't wish it -- I've got some pretty high quality enemies and I know you do too, and I can't remember whether it was Paton or somebody like that said you can always judge a man by the quality of his enemies. So I'm

a pretty good man in that regard. But I wouldn't wish like a full blown colitis, ulcerative colitis flare-up on my worst enemy. It is god awful.

So I had dealt with this for about a week and I've lost a lot of weight and I was in serious shape. Like I was cramping up at work and I looked awful and people are like what is wrong with you. Like I never ever call in sick for work and I ended up leaving for like two days and they were like what's wrong with Jim Laird.

So I ended up going to the hospital and they wanted to put me on a bunch – my dad had ulcerative colitis, he's actually has a colostomy bag and all that good stuff and then my grandmother died of liver cancer and she never drank a day in her life. So you could see the kind of gluten history right there. But I went to the hospital and they wanted to basically take out part of my colon and all that good stuff and put me on a bunch of steroids and not the good kind either. I basically was like no, I literally had to physically leave the hospital. They gave me a couple of IVs and they're like well you're going to stay here and I'm like no I'm not going to stay here.

I started getting on PubMed and Googling and stuff looking up colitis and reading and researching about it and I came across a study that talks about using nicotine to calm a colitis flare-up.

Robb Wolf:

Uh-hum.

Jim Laird:

The Indians used to use tobacco for digestive issues and so I drove straight to Walgreens because I couldn't keep water down or anything. It would go right through me. So I went to Walgreens and you send me a check Walgreens and I slapped a couple of nicotine patches on and sure enough I was able to keep water down. Then I went into like a GAPS protocol and that's when I kind of started reaching out and listening to like I think Sean Croxton was like the first person I came across and I stumbled upon Paul Chek and I stumbled across your podcast and with your background and your kind off the shelf sense of humor, you kind of appealed a little bit to me a little more to me than Sean.

So I started to listening to your show and I just started learning about hey, you know, what I was doing – also this was the time in power lifting when going up a weight class was the answer to everything.

Robb Wolf:

Right.

Jim Laird:

So I was bobbing around 275, 280 and I used to cut down to 242 to compete. So I was like you know what, I'm going to go up to 308, 320 and I'm going to compete at like 275. So I'm shoving like omelets. My breakfast is like a whole loaf of bread and like an omelet and like a steak and then I was eating pizza like every single day. So I've got the perfect storm like no sleep, not getting any vitamin D. I'm training like a maniac but I'm telling all my clients not to over train of course and I'm training like a maniac, I'm not sleeping, and I'm shoving all this food into my system that's destroying my digestive tract and just inflaming me like crazy.

Eventually just the wheels came off the wagon and I got in a car wreck too. That was the first of my four car wrecks that I've been in in the last four years.

**[0:45:03]**

Robb Wolf:

By the way, I'm never driving with you, dude. Not even going to be in a convoy with you.

Jim Laird:

Dude, first two were ladies running red lights. The third one was a deer jumped in front of me and I swerved to miss the deer and hit a tree head on okay. And then this last one that just happened like in December was a dude wasn't paying attention and smashed into me as I was stopping for a lady at the crosswalk. All right. So it's not me, it's all these – maybe I've got a magnet, I don't know.

So you have this car wreck, you have all this disruption in my life and I'm just continuing to pop ephedrine pills to keep training because I'm stupid. You know, I'm so caught up in what I'm doing I'm like a pit bull who's got a bone and I'm just like I'm walked on to that because I want to compete in power lifting so bad that I'm just going to keep training no matter what my body is telling me. Luckily for me, it was just my digestion that gave out and not anything else. That was the most humbling experience I've ever had in my life. I literally –you know, it took me three years to take myself out of that hole because I had just dug it so deep.

You know, the body is an amazing thing and we tell this – it's probably one of the reasons I'm so passionate about smart training and knowing why you train, your body is much smarter than you are and you could ignore it but it will stop you eventually. Like your body will shut you down. It's just a matter of time and it's just a matter of how stubborn you are. If you're smart and you listen to your body, you'll learn a lot from it. You'll learn about what you need to do to take care of it. But most people

are too busy with life and too busy trying to push through and drive through because they need to be tougher.

Robb Wolf: Yeah. You know it's interesting talking to a lot of the guys in the special operations community like clearly you're going through BUD/S you're going through some other selection process. Like there needs to be the mental toughness to be able to grind yourself down to a nub. But what was interesting what I've gotten out of this in like talking to Doc Parsley, a lot of the people who make it through to some degree like all of these guys are mentally tough. Some people end up giving and break mentally but a lot of them it's just luck of the draw.

Jim Laird: Right.

Robb Wolf: As far as like when their body gives out. Like one guy tweaks a knee, another guy tweaks his back, another guy ends up with like digestive issues and they're out of the selection deal. But there's some point where the mental toughness ends up just getting overwhelmed by the realities of training. I wouldn't say that I'm like one of the people that – like I don't go after like professional athletes. I've worked with a few MMA folks, a few other people from different sports. What I've found the continuity or the consistency with these people is that I never need to motivate them. Most of my --

Jim Laird: Correct.

Robb Wolf: -- is kicking them in the balls to sit down.

Jim Laird: Correct.

Robb Wolf: And like relax.

Jim Laird: Correct, correct.

Robb Wolf: And just you know, if the person wrestled in high school, if you're tough enough or dumb enough to want to do that, then I usually don't need to motivate you to get out and go do a run or lift weights or do whatever. What I do need to do and this is where like Joel's heart rate variability stuff is so helpful, you know, what they do need to do is like check in and be like how is your sleep, how's your digestion, what's your energy level, what's your libido like, you know.

Jim Laird: Right.

Robb Wolf: And if we start seeing stuff going south and we to chill out and back things off a little bit. Maybe it's not that we take a day off but maybe today is not a hard sparring session.

Jim Laird: Absolutely.

Robb Wolf: Today is just some technical rolling and get the body temperature up, keep the heart rate in the 120-130 range and just cruise that day. Foam roll, stretch, get some sun and then the next day the all cylinders are firing.

Jim Laird: Right. Absolutely and then that's where it comes in the difference between being a drill sergeant and being a coach. That's the one thing I notice about when I -- the few times I spent with Charlie Francis, he was like an amazing teacher and guys like John Wooden, what an amazing teacher he was. You know, he didn't grind these guys into the ground. He worked on skill until they got sloppy and then he stopped because there's no point in doing something when you can't do it properly. Then when the game time came, they were magnificent in their execution and that's the way.

When people come into our gym, I'm like if you're looking for a cheerleader, go somewhere else. One, I wouldn't make a good, a cute cheerleader but two if I have to motivate you, that's not my job. If I had to motivate everyone that came through the door at J&M Strength and Conditioning, I'd be dead. My job is to steer you in the right direction as far as what you're trying to accomplish and advice you on what you need to do. People that need motivation, you know, I can hold them accountable but that's not -- I don't think a coach's job should be to motivate, a coach's job should be to teach and to lead and to act as a guide, as a teacher. I think that's one of the things that we've kind of gone the wrong direction in the United States as far as the field of strength and conditioning is most of them has just become cheerleaders and run over there and do 30 burpies and run over there and do 20 jumping jacks.

**[0:50:25]**

What we really need to be building a foundation of movement for more advanced training so that we can do different types of training just like you talked about with the Olympic lifting guys. I mean I read one book about one of the greatest Olympic lifters of all time. He used to play ping-pong for like two months year. He had all the same athletic markers. Like he would do all these different things so he'd keep from getting burned out.

You know, that's what we need to do. We need to have a diverse, you know, strength training program where you're doing different types of things throughout the year so you don't get fried and fried on life. I mean when women come in to sit down with me, I'm like when's the last time you took a bubble bath, when's the last time you got your nails done. Have you done anything for yourself lately because most of the women that come train with me are they have a family, they have a career, they might have multiple former spouses, kids with all sorts of different situations that we didn't have to deal with before. Tons and tons of stress and then they're doing four spinning classes a week and you sit down and you talk to me like hey would it be a good idea to run from a bear for an hour? No probably not. Then why would you do spinning class because your body thinks it's the same thing.

Robb Wolf:

Right.

Jim Laird:

And then they go really? I'm like you're stealing all your resources that your body would put in to sex drive, into good hormone production so you can have a healthy body into all these wonderful processes that are going to make you look good and feel good. And you're stealing them from running from a bear that doesn't exist. They go oh, wow, if you put it that way, oh wow. I always feel good when I do spinning class but about two hours later, I feel like I can't get out of bed or I can't get up to go to the bathroom because I'm so tired. Well it's probably not a good idea. [Laughs] So starting to educate people on why and how and what you know, is pretty much what we do. I want people to get the most out of the least amount of work especially as people get older we need to start being really smart about their training.

You know, Dan John is a big influence on me. One of the most profound things he ever said is you know, if a woman comes to me and wants to lose body fat, I'm going to teach her how to eat, I'm not going to teach her how to do the snatch.

Robb Wolf:

Right.

Jim Laird:

You know, everybody that runs a crossfit just had a heart attack. But it's so true. Like why would you want to teach someone to do something that requires a lot of skill and has a lot of risk when you can just teach them how to eat and that's going to affect them for the rest of their life you know. Half the people can't even put their arms above their head so do you really – you know, the amount of effort it would take to teach like a woman that's been sitting at her desk her entire life to do the snatch, was that really worth it or would you rather be best spent teaching her hey

you need to eat some good high quality animal products and you need to eat some vegetables and you need to get your sleep. I think time would be much better spent that --

Robb Wolf: Push a prowler and do some body rows and --

Jim Laird: That's it. You're good and you can do that for the rest of your life. I mean one of my favorite clients is 84 years old and I've been working with them for the last 12 years and the dude has put about 10 or 15 pounds in the last ten years. You know, he pushes the prowler. He does kettle bell carries. He does crawls on the floor. We make him get up and get down and he stands there. I've got some videos of him on my YouTube page but he moves exceptionally well and he moves better now than he did. He was a doctor his entire life so he sat his entire life and he moves better now at 84 than he did when he started with me.

Robb Wolf: Nice.

Jim Laird: So that's what it's about and he's worked out a half an hour twice a week for the last twelve years. Majority of my clients have worked out two days a week and walked every day for the last 12 years and barring a couple of exceptions they are all in better shape than when they started with me and that's what it's all about is giving people something they can do for the rest of their life.

Then if you have performance like somebody like Scott Downs who I've worked with for the last eight years who plays for the Angels, he's one of the best eighth inning relief guys in the majors, his ERA is like 143 right now or something. I hope I didn't jinx him but you know, with him it's about getting him back to some sort of normalcy. I mean he gets so -- his travel schedule is so bad during the season and then his body becomes so one dimensional and so specialized, it's like pulling him back and having him build some of that base movement so he doesn't get so out of whack and so out of balance that by the end of his 200 game season he doesn't get hurt. Keeping him and getting him as healthy as we can so he can withstand that travel schedule and I think it's the same thing with the SEALs. You want to go into that with a high work capacity but be as healthy as you possibly can be.

**[0:55:16]**

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: And there's a lot of really smart ways through dragging and pushing the prowler or doing carries. You know, there's a lot of smart ways to build capacity without crushing people.

Robb Wolf: So, you know, for my situation I'm 41 heading to 42 years old doing old dude Brazilian jujitsu like I can two to four days a week is all I can handle and it's more on the two to three. Very, very rarely do I get a fourth day. But I'll get home from jits and I'll have my meal and I'll sit down and I'll be like wow. You know that was a lot. And then I try to get two strength sessions a week. Since I had been following Joel, I will do at least one day like a recovery day like 120, 130 beat per minute super low level cardio kind of his --

Jim Laird: Yeah.

Robb Wolf: --2.0 kind of gig. You know, what's been interesting is a couple of things rattling in my head that I've observed. I'm more sedentary now than I've ever been in my life.

Jim Laird: Yes.

Robb Wolf: There was a time when I rode my bike and I taught kickboxing and I was in a gym and I was on my feet and I was moving around. So I think there was a time when I just had a base level of capacity that was higher.

Jim Laird: Yes.

Robb Wolf: But I've also always kind of skewed doing what I would call endurance work. But I was doing stuff that was producing endurance and then you know, I would swing back in and try to do some crossfit or try to do some jits and it was just throwing me into that glycolytic lactate producing pathway, which was just a crusher on me. So over the course of time a couple of months building some aerobic capacity, low level aerobic capacity, I'm doing pretty good with that. But when you're parsing all that type of stuff out, a person in my situation, you know, there's this interplay between volume and intensity.

Jim Laird: Sure.

Robb Wolf: You know, for strength work, were always looking at like intensity factor, percent one rep max kind of gig. You know, ones or threes or three to five something like that on the repetitions that we're working with but then we've also got some of the orthopedic loading issues.

Jim Laird: Yes.

Robb Wolf: You know, like Dan John has talked about as you get older you want to do a little more hypertrophy work and stuff like that. What do you feel like is kind of a balance or an interplay or would you see like a blocked periodization for somebody like me where I'm doing say three weeks of some neuro based stuff and then maybe three weeks of some more body buildery reps, 6 to 12s or how would you slice and dice something like that? I know it's super specific based on --

Jim Laird: Sure.

Robb Wolf: -- you'd like to have the person in the gym with you and see what their strengths and weaknesses are, where they're succeeding and failing in the sport which for me is Brazilian jujitsu. What are your thoughts about all that stuff?

Jim Laird: First of all I want to see how well somebody moves and how efficient they are. If you have any glaring asymmetries like one hip to the other like you have.

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: And then I want to work on breathing. Like I mean this is going to sound like ridiculous but if you don't breathe effectively, it's going to affect everything. So getting into --you know, somebody wants to go to like somebody that does tai chi, qigong those sort of things where you're learning how to deep breathe through your deep, deep belly, that's going to help big time because if you're not breathing through your belly, like subconsciously you are in a high alert state constantly. It's also going to drive bad posture. So if you can get yourself to breathe efficiently, you're going to be more efficient. I mean I've taken athletes and totally just improved their cardiac output just by getting them to breathe better. I'm very grateful to Bill Hartman and Mike Robertson for introducing me into that breathing because that is just -- if you have a clogged air filter on a car, it's only going to go so fast.

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: So to really have someone look at your breathing. I really like --you know, for somebody who's like you could do, like I really like like a Westside for Skinny Bastards kind of template because it allows you to do some strength work with hypertrophy work and then. You know, for somebody like you having you maybe not do full deadlifts, having you maybe do like

pull from pins or pull from mats or something like that, something that's not going to beat you up as much. Squatting off a box and then doing lunge work for your full range of motion hip activity so that you're not getting –you know, I think I love free squatting and don't get me wrong, there's going to be people going oh my god he said only box squat. But for somebody who's like an older population who's pretty beat up, I like using the box squat because it's not as hard on the body but it still gives you kind of a strength base. You might box squat for a week or two and then go back to regular squat for a week or two especially when you're not doing as much jujitsu but like a full body strength day.

**[1:00:13]**

Then like a hybrid strong man day I think is awesome where you push prowler, you do carries, you may be throw some medicine ball. So I do a lot of that with a lot of people I work with. You know, one day is going to be like we're going to pair like box squat or pin pulls with some upper back work or maybe some dumbbell press or push-ups in between. And then we're going to pair some like misloaded lunges with glut ham raises and that sort of thing so we can maybe do some bear crawls as an ab finisher. So we can get as much high quality work until like a short period of time and then the second day we're going to do some more athletic stuff, maybe do some crawls in a warm-up and throw some medicine balls. I really like throwing medicine balls. I think that's a great low impact way to improve capacity and also keep explosive power high.

And then I love things like dragging and pushing a prowler. I love like different carry variations, dragging sleds. You know, pushing the prowler –you know, we have some butchers from Rogue at our gym, pushing it down and then having people go into a squat row in the way back. They like squat down and they row it, they squat and they row it.

Robb Wolf:

Uh-hum.

Jim Laird:

Stuff like that and making sure you're working on all the modalities doing some strength work but it's not crazy, it could be anywhere from 3 to 6. I'm not real big on like I lift basically – well I like to work people on how they are that day and what it looks like. I kind of write down what their record is on that lift and I have at the back of my head and I look at it and I go that looks pretty let's stay there. And you know, usually it ends up working within Prilepin's chart with what their work sets are, but I'm really big at watching people and everything they do is an assessment. I kind of go on that but that would kind of be like – I really like like the Westside for Skinny Bastards type template because you can really do anything with it but making sure you're doing more upper back work than pushing. Making sure you're doing something to resist movement that

sort of thing and then some full range of motion hip type stuff. But I think the breathing stuff and then –

You know, I just did an article for Greg, I don't know when it's going to be set up but it was like five low threshold things power athletes need to work on like on their off days and one of them was crawling. One of them was like 90/90 position. You remember I had you sit in that at Paleo FX.

Robb Wolf: Yeah.

Jim Laird: And then breathing and then the other one was like a dynamic black burn kind of complex and carries. You could pair something like that together in the morning and do ten minutes' worth of work, do like feeder workout. I do a lot of that like a lot of the low threshold stuff. You and I have done so much power lifting and stuff like that, we're really high threshold athletes. So getting a lot of these stabilizing musculature, I'm not saying we have to stand on one foot on a bosu ball and hum but doing some lighter stuff that's more stability based, balance based kind of get in the body working together as a unit I think for guys like us that have spent most of our life power lifting or doing some wrestling where you're doing a lot of like high threshold stuff, getting a lot of this low threshold stuff to kind of turn on the stabilizers in that is kind of important for longevity and for staying healthy.

Robb Wolf: Yeah and you know I've been tinkering with figuring out how to make that work and make it a little bit more both enjoyable and interesting but a little more applicable to the jujitsu gig versus just sitting on my concept 2 rower for 30 minutes but --

Jim Laird: Yeah. I mean you compare crawls like crawling on the floor like forward, I like knees out, open the hips up, forwards, backwards and flipping over and doing like a military style scoot on the floor.

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: Like shoulder blades and then like a lot of the move and that stuff is really good. I mean they're really doing a lot of cool stuff with FMS to kind of help people how to move better. But pairing crawls like just body weight crawls and like wrestling, crawling into a sweep, crawling into a sleep, do that kind of stuff almost like a shadow boxing kind of thing but with like mat stuff that would be a great way to spend, put the clock on and do 10 or 15 minutes of that, you know.

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: That's the kind of stuff I like to do so that way if I do have to move quickly I still can. It's pretty funny because people watch me walk and you've seen my car accidents and some of the heavy lifting. I walk in a little bit of a gimp but then some people will see me, some people will want to wrestle me for fun in the gym and they'll be like holy cow, where did that guy come from. I'm like dude I'm really fast. I just don't look like it.

Robb Wolf: Right, right. I can't think of anybody wanting to wrestle with you but they're probably a little heavier and tougher than I am so.

Jim Laird: Well I'll tell you what the guys that are about 198 you know, they're the worst.

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: Because they're so [audio glitch] and they're so fast. I'd much rather wrestle a really big dude because they're so much easier to deal with once you get them on the ground. But those little guys man, if they're about 198, oh my gosh like you better know what you're doing. You better --

**[1:05:05]**

Robb Wolf: They're big enough to be strong but small enough to have a lot of cardio and a lot of mobility so yeah.

Jim Laird: Yes.

Robb Wolf: Yeah.

Jim Laird: Yes. You're correct.

Robb Wolf: Yeah. Well Jim, tell folks – you guys have a seminar coming up. You've got some product. You even did some work with some slapstick in the nutrition realm on the Boot Camp in a Box. Tell folks how to track you down and some of the stuff you have cooking.

Jim Laird: Wow. We got so much stuff going on. My business partner Molly Galbraith has her blog. She's got a ton of stuff on there. She's done a lot of stuff with like figure competitors and body image and really kind of looking at women's issues as far as like giving women some grace, is it really worth it to be that lean. So you want to look into that MollyGalbraith.com. All of our information, my blog, everything about our gym is on J-M strength.com. And then I have a group of normal ladies

that I tricked into lifting weights and they compete in power lifting and they formed a group called The Misfits. Just some normal every day ladies that want to teach women that you know what, if you want to look good and feel good, incorporating strength training into your program is also that's TheMisfits.com.

We did have like Training Like a Girl that was in May. We had Mike Robertson, myself, Keiffer, Julia Ladewski, Molly Galbraith. We all came here and it was basically teaching women how to train smarter to doing stuff women specific wise. I mean all the information out there is pretty much put out there by like power lifters and strength athletes. Like we get women coming here all the time and they're squatting with their hands out by the end of the bar.

Robb Wolf:

Right.

Jim Laird:

And like why are you doing that, well that's how such and such showed it on the internet. I'm like such and such is squatting that way because they're so freaking big they can't put their shoulders by their side. You know, and so teaching women the movements more specifically geared towards their frame and their structure, that was in May – we're actually working on releasing that in product. It's not out yet but that will be up soon. We're looking at doing Train Like a Girl 2. It's still kind of in the works as who we're going to have in it and all that kind of stuff but it's going to be huge. We're looking at having that possibly January, February. We were going to have it in May again but we need a bigger venue and most of the hotels here in Lexington are really, really busy in May. Like people getting married and stuff like that. I don't know why anyone would want to do that but. So we're looking at doing that.

Then we did Boot Camp in a Box. Basically our gym is growing so fast, we literally are turning people away. Like if people come in and meet with me, I'm like yeah, I don't think you're a good fit for us. Sorry. You know, we literally turn people away left and right if they're not a good fit for our community. It's basically what I've done over the last 12 years and incorporated into a large boot camp style class. We've had a whole bunch of gyms buy this and just totally refresh and kind of – it's basically how to take a boot camp style class and turning into a base building scenario kind of like with Nor Cal how you guys have an on ramp and all that kind stuff. Taking people and being able to progress and regress so you can have people on different levels training at the same time but they're building a base of hinge, the squat, getting popular scapular motion.

Mike Robertson did all the regressions, progressions. Molly Galbraith wrote the manual because I can't spell out of third grade level. But it basically gives our entire gym's philosophy. This guy named Robb Wolf gave his nutritional philosophy and lifestyle change, how they deal with that at Nor Cal and how important that is and how really that's the most important thing if you own a gym is to get people to buy into that stuff at least 80% of the time. It's got this other smart guy named Joel Jameson how to incorporate stress management and HRV into your program.

Molly and I have also – since we originally released it included our orientation, also some of us actually coaching, we do actually coach real people. One of the reasons I don't do a lot of internet stuff is I actually have a real job and I actually coach people. I just don't sit in computer land and write blogs and stuff. I haven't put enough time well into the gym and I can't spell so that's not a good choice for me.

Robb Wolf: Faces and places.

Jim Laird: Right exactly. So

Robb Wolf: Yeah.

Jim Laird: It's got actually like footage of us coaching so you can see how we actually change our class on the fly and regress and progress. Our theory we're pretty much as big as we want to be but what we're doing is as people get better, we progress them into like small group training where they could do more advanced training like you guys kind of do at Nor Cal where you have an Olympic lifting program, you have a power lifting program. That's basically what we're doing with our gym.

If you own like a gym whether it's a crossfit gym or like a boot camp style gym, this is the model you're going to have to go to because it's going to get really competitive and people are going to start figuring out that you can't beat the hell out of them all the time. The era of run over there, do a thousand burpies, run around the building, high five your partner and do-si-do is coming to an end.

**[1:10:08]**

It's going to swing the other direction where people are just breathing and humming and it's going to be somewhere. It's going to end up somewhere in the middle for the smart people. They're going to figure out that smart nutrition combined with lifestyle and a smart strength training program based on where people are at is going to, you know, we did a check here this past week of our – I think we got about I don't want

to say the number. We've got close to almost 300 total people that come to our gym and there's only like 10 people we hadn't seen in a month.

Robb Wolf: Hmm.

Jim Laird: So you know, we're doing something right here and basically our family for success combined with Mike Robertson's amazing progressions and regressions, your information all this stuff, six months of programming and it's called Boot Camp in a Box and you can go on I think you're going to have a link to it on your blog, [BootCampInABox.com](http://BootCampInABox.com). If you type in the word Wolf, you get \$100 off the product. I think it's like normally \$247 but you get it for- let me quote that right but it's \$100 of whatever the price is. Maybe it's \$297 I can't remember but --

Robb Wolf: Okay.

Jim Laird: I don't want to quote anything because then people will get pissed but it's \$100 off whatever the product cost and --

Robb Wolf: Right. I never know the details either and I'm theoretically the one in charge of all that stuff so.

Jim Laird: Mike Robertson is only going to allow us to do that for a week so if you're listening to this like two months later, please don't email us and go how come the promo code doesn't work. Well that's because you didn't catch it soon enough.

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: So we've got a lot of really cool stuff and you know, Molly and myself and the rest of the staff here and along with guys like you and Mike Robertson and guys like Greg Everett. We're just trying to get the world out that quality is the key and you don't have to beat yourself to death and being appropriate and not beating yourself into the ground and having some sort of cognitive approach to this thing called training so it's actually beneficial to your life and not a life taker. Just get that message out because it really you know, it really -- people need to hear this stuff. Like you don't have to murder yourself in the gym. You can train smart and eat good food and get some really nice results that you can not only do for the rest of your life but you can teach your kids about too, you know.

Robb Wolf: Right. Right. that's awesome man. Well we managed to pull it off and we didn't – I don't think we shipped the bat on this one at all so I'm pretty impressed.

Jim Laird: If we did, we cleaned up really fast.

Robb Wolf: Yup, yup, total, totally. Well dude, it was great having you on, Jim. We definitely need to have you back on. We definitely need to do – at the next go around we need to have Greg in and we can talk some power lifting versus strong man versus lifting. Like we can --

Jim Laird: Yeah.

Robb Wolf: -- go a little deeper on some of that stuff.

Jim Laird: That will be awesome. One question before we get off here.

Robb Wolf: Yeah.

Jim Laird: One of the biggest things I see with kids that I work with that go to colleges is I'd want to get Greg's take on this is that when you want to deadlift if you're trying to deadlift heavy weight, you want your shoulders to be in line with the bar or slightly behind. One of the biggest problems I see is they try and teach these kids to deadlift with the same form as you know, like Olympic lifting you want your shoulders in front of the bar correct?

Robb Wolf: You want them as like snatching clean and jerk set up typically if you were to drop a plum line and your arms are going down to the bar, you almost want the shoulders a little bit behind that in a way.

Jim Laird: Okay.

Robb Wolf: And you know there's some argument there that then you know, when the weight gets heavy that you're going to translate forward a little bit and stuff like that and some of the argument for setting up with the bar through the mid scapula and all that stuff. But you know, I definitely I'm a mediocre Olympic lifter at best.

Jim Laird: Right.

Robb Wolf: But you know, I think the intentionality in Olympic lifting is to make the bar go up.

Jim Laird: Correct.

Robb Wolf: And so you know, yeah --

Jim Laird: I just so many of these kids that are being taught to Olympic lift like the deadlift and it's just like it's not a good combination.

Robb Wolf: That's a problem.

Jim Laird: You want to get Greg's take on that. [Laughs]

Robb Wolf: Yeah. I'm not nearly as smart as Greg on any topic especially not the Olympic lifts but even from my neophyte status as an Olympic lifting coach that's a problem. I mean it just ends up being a massive you know, hip bump kind of gig which again at the end of the day, kind of like bigger, faster, stronger kind of program where they're squatting and deadlifting and doing a power clean and stuff like that. At the end of the day, is that the most horrible thing in the world, no but it also becomes kind of a dead-end, you know, --

Jim Laird: Yeah. You can't go off anywhere.

Robb Wolf: Yeah.

Jim Laird: But you know, the biggest issue is like you know, all these coaches agree that most people are at like 10% of people are actually prepared to train.

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: So are these people actually prepared to do any of these movements, would they be better off doing an explosive med ball throw and maybe learning how to sprint a little bit better as opposed to trying to do some movements that they're totally unqualified for.

**[1:15:05]**

Robb Wolf: Right.

Jim Laird: You know, that's a discussion that definitely needs to happen because most of these people they can't even do a bear crawl not alone freaking throw a bar above their head, you know?

Robb Wolf: Right, right, yeah. Yeah.

Jim Laird: Well we better get off here before we start another podcast altogether.

Robb Wolf: Well cool dude, you know, I think that there's a ton of other things that we can and should hash out but it'd be great to have Greg in on the --

Jim Laird: Awesome.

Robb Wolf: --the next one because he'll round all that stuff out. Well cool, I will make sure to get the affiliate link up o that so that folks can check out the Boot Camp in a Box. We'll have links to Jim and Molly's and all the other folks' material and definitely folks check all that out and thanks for being on, man.

Jim Laird: I appreciate that. Thank you, man. Thanks for being such a good friend.

Robb Wolf: Cool. Will talk to you soon.

Jim Laird: All right, Robb, have a good day.

Robb Wolf: Okay. Bye.

**[1:15:52] End of Audio**