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WEEKLY MUSCLE BUILDING EXPERT *Interview Series*



Lee Hayward and Joey Vaillancourt
Blast Your Biceps



LH: All right man, let's go for it. This is July 15th. This is in place of the Total Fitness Bodybuilding Talkshow. I'm with Joey Vaillancourt here. Tonight is a bit of a different show. Like I say, this is basically a shared show that myself and Joey are doing here. I'm actually going to be in the hot seat. Lee Hayward's going to be sitting down and getting plugged here by Joey. He's going to be shooting some questions my way regarding bodybuilding training and everything else. And more specifically, with the Blast Your Biceps program and some arm specialization training stuff.

So, like I say, I have a special guest host...coach I should say, Joey Vaillancourt on the line. And Joey, how about we just do a little introduction, because like I say, we have callers here and probably don't know who you are. So, a little introduction on your end and then I'll do the same, because I'm sure there's going to be some people tuning in who probably brand new to my show as well.

JV: Yeah, for sure. I mean, well, my name is Joey Vaillancourt for your listeners here. I'm creator and author of The Bones to Buff Muscle Building Program. I recently became the FAME Central Fitness Model Champion of 2010. I competed in that category. Yeah, I've just been kind of working out and doing the whole fitness thing for quite a while now.

I actually started off reading some of your material when I first started, and I always like to tell people that I came from a fitness Googler's perspective. Because I used to just be on the other side of the internet, just searching for answers to building muscle and all those questions people have. So, I can completely relate. I kind of took it to the next level, though. I got my certifications, I became a personal trainer, I started to write articles and books. So, I've come a long way since then, but I can completely go back to where a lot of people are right now. So, I mean, that's kind of where I'm at.

Maybe, Lee, if you don't mind, I know some people on the call for my own listeners, The Bones to Buffer's here, they might like to know some of your own history and just a bit of stuff you've done regarding fitness, program designs and how you got your start in the whole fitness business.



LH: Sure. First of all, I just want to comment, that was pretty cool how you mentioned that you were a “fitness Googler”. I think that’s where a lot of us probably...this day and age for sure...related. That’s how you get started. In my own case, I started working out back before there was ever a Google or there was an internet. So, I sound like a dinosaur when I say this. But, seriously, I started working out back in the late ‘80’s and that was just literally like working out at home and some martial arts and things like that.

But, I kind of got so-so serious with weight training Christmas of 1990. That’s when I asked my parents to get me a home gym set and they ended up getting me a York barbell and dumbbell set and a York 2001 home gym machine. I don’t know if you remember those or not, but that’s where I got my start. I literally worked out with that little home gym and over the years, of course, added to it, getting better equipment and things like that.

But, I trained at home for over eight years before I eventually moved to a commercial gym. I even did several bodybuilding shows...did my first three bodybuilding shows training from my home gym. So, that was pretty cool.

I started competing in bodybuilding in ‘95. I did the Newfoundland Provincials. I was 17-years-old at the time, and pretty much did bodybuilding shows every year. The way it is, where I live in Newfoundland, we usually have one show a year and it’s pretty much... There was only a couple of exceptions, I’ve done every show, every year. So, I’ve been going straight through. And I’ve also competed at the regional level, competed at the Atlantic Canadian Bodybuilding Championships. And my most recent show actually was this past April at the 2010 Atlantic Canadians. That show, I got in my

best shape ever, competed as a light heavyweight and ended up placing 6th out of 10 guys. It was a very competitive class. It was actually like a small national show, because the caliber of the competitors. That was my bodybuilding history, I guess.

And how I got started with the whole internet aspect of it was after high school I did a computer studies course at one of our local colleges here. And one thing that I really took a liking to was the whole website development. And I literally started my first bodybuilding website back in 1997. It was actually a school project. I created a bodybuilding website for my internet design class. I put that site live. The current site that I have now, LeeHayward.com, the original version of that went live in 1999. That's pretty much all I've been doing.

I mean, I took that website and I started training people online and designing workout programs and just basically started expanding from there. So, this is all I've ever done. I've been an online fitness guru, so to speak, since the late '90s. I guess they say, the rest is history. Here we are, doing an interview now.

JV: For sure. I mean, I've been a long-time follower of your stuff. Even just like recently when I was going to be competing in my first fitness model show. It was a championship show, so it was a pretty big deal. As you might know, and maybe other people on the call, if you're ever doing a competition, a lot of the stuff is kind of underground information that's hard to obtain. So, I actually read some of your articles on preparing for a show.

I remember one in particular that you said it was one of your first shows that you were doing and you ended up...you had to shave your entire body, right, because you have to do that for the show. And then you ended up telling your dad about it or something. And you said, "Aw, man, no, no. No man ever should have to shave his body. Something's wrong." So, that was just pretty funny, because going through the exact same thing, yeah, I felt that shame there.

But, yeah, you've been a complete inspiration to me, and I know a lot of other people. You've been around for quite some time, like you said, 1990. I know your most recent blog just went up. But, aside from that, you've had a site up, products for sale for quite a while. You're quite the entrepreneur when it comes to online fitness programs. So, I congratulate you for that and I thank you for all the information you've been giving, so far.

LH: Cool. It's much appreciated to hear feedback, and I'm glad to be of help. It's always cool to hear stories like this. There's not a day goes by I don't get emails from people from all over the world like that. So, again, thanks again, Joey. It's nice to know that the work goes appreciated. You know what I mean?

JV: Oh, for sure. And for people like me who took it kind of to the next level, there's other entrepreneurs that I kind of followed and just led me down to this path. So, that's the power of an online fitness program.

Today, like I said, I wanted to kind of give my listeners a chance to look into your new Blast Your Biceps program, that I actually reviewed, and it's quite a cool program because it actually has a design goal where it's just to build bigger arms. It's just a generic program, it's a specialize program for arms.

So, first off, I just want to get your opinion on the main reason why the majority of people who are looking to build bigger arms always fail in accomplishing it. What's the number one thing that they're doing wrong?

LH: Well, first of all, when it comes to any stubborn body part, and I'm using arms here because in my case, with my physique, just genetically, I have less than great arms. They have always been lagging behind my other body parts. Like for me, my chest seems to respond pretty well, by back seems to respond well. I have really ridiculous calfs. I always get comments on that, and if you've seen picture, video, whatnot, you've probably seen them.

What I've found... I've basically been around this game a long time and I've talked to everyone from your average muscle-head gym-goer to literally the world's top bodybuilders. I mean, we've had guys like Branch Warren and Jay Cutler come and do guest posing appearances for us. And so, I mean, I've hung out with those guys and picked their brains for training information. So, I've really work with everyone from the bottom right to the top.

And one thing I find, and it seems to be a common trait, is guys with really good body parts generally it's genetics. For whatever reason, they have more muscle in those body parts and they just really respond. Now, in my case, like calfs, they grow crazy. I mean, personally, I don't even train my calfs anymore and they're still probably my strongest body part.

But, when it comes to arms, I got to fight for every inch of muscle that I gain. That's what I've found when it comes to body part training, a lot of times, is that it's genetics. It's not necessarily that you're doing something wrong. Because you could probably be doing a similar type of workout for all your major muscle groups, but some muscles are just going to respond better than others. So, it's the cursed genetics. The hand you were dealt, basically.

That's why I created his program, because I was always suffering through weak genetics in the arm department. And that's what I wanted to really do. I mean, that was what I was passionate about. I wanted to figure out, okay, how do I overcome this.

JV: You said that you kind of had to overcome skinny genetics yourself and when I was going through the book, I couldn't help but kind of laugh at one of the acronyms you have in there. It's SNAS, and why don't you just tell the people listening here what exactly that stands for and why those people kind of need your program.

LH: They need the program, absolutely, for the 'spaghetti noodle arm syndrome'.

JV: That's it.

LH: That's what I considered it. Like I say, that's one thing that just stands out in my mind when I look back at some of my old pictures. My arms were just so skinny compared to the rest of my body. That's why I termed this. I have the 'spaghetti noodle arm syndrome'.

JV: I love that.

LH: If you're suffering from that, you've come to the right place.

JV: Okay. I've got a really good question here, and this has come into my inbox before, and I just want to get your opinion on it. A lot of people, they want to build up their arms, and like any lagging body part, they think that the more they train it the better it's going to become. Unless it's a planned program variable, which like in the program you designed, there is a bit more attention to the arms. But, why don't you explain why you can't do that forever. You can't just go out and work your arms five day a week or if four sets is good for your arms, then a lot of people think that six or maybe eight might be better. Why is that a flawed way of thinking?

LH: Well, it comes down to what your body can recover from. I mean, yes, for a short period of time, and in a structured play, you can use what I like to term the controlled overtraining to spur on new muscle growth. But, it's only short term thing. You can't, like you said, train your arms every single day and expect to continue to make gains. Because, your body is just going to break down and injury is inevitable, in that case. Very often tendon injury is one big thing from just over using the muscles and the joints and everything else.

One thing, if anybody has done lots of arm training, for example, your elbows will tend to get sore. You might develop some form of tendonitis. The same thing if people tend to bench press too often. Very often it's a shoulder injury and rotator cuff problems. So, I mean, you've got to work with your body. If you abuse it, it's just going to break down.

So, that's why one thing very often a lot of people when we're coaching guys who want to build up size, the every first step that I ask them to take is, hey, take a full week off and just let your body and your system, your central nervous system, everything just

totally recover. And then, we'll move into a structured program. And I believe you actually followed this same approach with a lot of your followers, too, with your Bones to Buff program. Isn't that correct, Joey?

JV: Yeah, for sure. And from what I've noticed, from my own people, like I deal with kind of skin and bones type of guys, and that's where I got my start. So, I find just from my own experience, it might be different from others, but every five to six weeks I like to take about three to four days and sometimes if I feel like I'm very tired, I'll take a full week off, like you recommended, and man, when you come back to the gym after that time off, it's incredible.

Maybe not the first couple of days, but definitely going back into that training cycle, you get stronger, you feel better and you notice it. You start getting the pump in your muscles again and even though it doesn't exactly translate to instant muscle growth, eventually just by overloading your muscles with heavier weights, that will contribute to the muscle gains. So, I mean, yeah, for sure, I completely agree with that, about taking time off.

The other thing, you were talking about genetics and that's a big factor in what your arms are going to look like and my arm, I don't consider myself to have these tree trunk arms. But, for some reason, and like you said, it's probably genetics. But, I've got very defined arms. And I literally...I don't work them that much. I might work them once a week. But, I mean, for whatever reason, that just happens to be what my arms look like.

So, it is. It's a big factor, genetics. But, the other thing touching on trying to do more, like constantly doing more sets of arms and stuff like that, it's not going to work because you've got to also understand...and you explain this in your book, that you're also using your arms for all these other assisting exercises when you're doing any kind of a pull-up or any bent over row, even when you're doing bench press. You're using your arms. So, you're taxing them in different exercises, not just when you work a specific arm exercise, that's the only time you're working it. It's in all these other exercises. So, like Lee said, when you continually do more sets of arms, I mean, it's just not going to come out good.

One thing I wanted to know, Lee, if someone has... Some people say they're left arm is weaker than their right arm, or some people even have vice versa, their left arm could be the stronger one. But, typically in your experience, what would you recommend for that person to change in his program to kind of work on the weaker point or bring that other weak arm up to par with the stronger arm?

LH: This is something that is common. I think virtually everybody has some imbalance between their left and right side. It's not just the arms. This would be your

back, your chest, your legs, everything else. Typically, it's the dominant side is usually bigger and stronger. And what I mean by that is if you're right handed, generally it's the right arm would be bigger and stronger than the left.

But, sometimes, as crazy as it is, it could be the other way around. I've even heard of guys saying, "Hey, I'm right handed, but my left arm is bigger than my right." Why that is, I have no idea. But, it's just the hand of genetics you were dealt, basically.

The big thing I like to do when somebody has a big muscle imbalance is to focus primarily on exercises that work both sides independently. And a prime example of this is like dumbbell exercises where you have weight in each hand and each side is forced to handle an equal workload. Because, even if you're using a barbell exercise, your stronger side can still overcompensate for that weaker side. It's not necessarily a 50/50 split, you're handling 50% of the weight with each side. It could be like a 60/40 split, maybe, where the dominant side is overcompensating and actually taking more of the workload.

So, dumbbell exercises are the prime ones that I like to use. And as well as cable exercises where you can work single limbs. I personally love the Hammer Strength line of machines. I know a lot of gyms have them. And I'm fortunate enough to train at a gym which has a full line of Hammer Strength equipment, which allow you to work each side of the body independently. So, these type of things are great for building-up balance and proportion between the L and the R side.

Now, for most people, just including these exercises and pretty much basing your entire program around them, that will balance out the muscle development over time. But, if the imbalance is really severe, I would even have people do an extra set or two at the end of their workouts for their weaker side.

So, in the case of arms, it might be at the end of your workout we're going to do some extra bicep curls and tricep extensions for your weaker side, just to give it a little bit more muscle stimulation and try to help spur-on some new growth that way.

JV: Yeah, that makes sense.

LH: Yeah, it's a common problem. I mean, I think the more experience you get with training, the less, I guess, problem it will be. But, this is something that even guys at the highest level in bodybuilding have.

For example, like Jay Cutler. If you look at his physique, one side of his body is more developed than the other side. Obviously someone like that, he's done everything there is possible to do to improve his physique. It's his entire livelihood. But, it's just a genetic problem that some people do have.

JV: Yeah. I agree. Even myself, I know I have an imbalance on one side more than the other. All you can do is just try to keep it minimal. But, including some of those tips you just gave, I think they're excellent tips to maybe include an extra set on your weaker arm. And just by doing that, your body will have to adapt. And since you're exposing that weaker side to more stimulus, it will have a greater chance of catching up to the stronger side, for sure.

Another question that I wanted to ask you was, in your experience in just training clients and stuff like that, what is contributed to more growth for the arms? Like, would you recommend a person focus more on direct training or like indirect training? So, would you recommend somebody... Let me break it down better. Would you recommend someone doing pure bicep exercises and tricep exercises, or would you tell them that if you really want to pack-on mass to your arms, you should do indirect training and get stronger in the compound lifts, like a bench press or a bent over row and stuff like that, that also involves the biceps and triceps as a secondary muscle group?



LH: The answer to that is kind of a unique one, because both situations would apply. I actually would recommend the person start off doing more of a general type of training with less emphasis on just arm isolation and more emphasis on hitting the major muscle groups. In fact, the Blast Your Biceps program is actually structured-out this way.

The first phase of the program doesn't have any direct arm isolation moves. It's all basically just big, basic compound exercises to increase your overall strength and

power. And most people find that just by getting bigger and stronger all over, you'll also get bigger arms.

Generally, the rule is for every ten to fifteen pounds of muscular body weight you put on, you'll gain approximately one inch on your upper arms. This tends to work out, even for guys who probably have naturally skinny arms. You will find that even though your other body parts may respond better, by getting bigger and stronger all over, your arms will still respond and get bigger.

One thing that I find is, after you do this type of training... Like, let's say you did a six-week training phase, probably more of a power type of training, where you're not really focusing on isolation. You're focusing on mass building, compound movements. After about six weeks of that, if you move into a more isolated training phase where you're doing some direct isolation moves, that's totally new muscle stimulation and your body will really respond well to it, so you can get this another little growth spurt by including the arm isolation work at this time.

Again, going back to the Blast Your Biceps program, that's exactly how I have the training phases laid-out. The first phase is the mass conditioning phase. The second phase is more of a direct isolation phase. And then, the third phase we move into another style of mass training as well. So, again, it's breaking it down.

So, yeah, both styles of training work, but they need to be cycled in order to get the maximum benefit from them.

JV: Yeah, for sure. I think that's a good answer, because if it was just a program that had you working arms five days a week, it would kind of be a little sketchy. But, I really like that idea of kind of indirect training.

I mean, for example, I know you use deadlifts and stuff like that. I mean, your whole...like every single muscle in your body is going to grow from that. It's not just for your legs or your lower back and stuff. So, people have to realize that indirect training is just as important as direct, isolation training for your arms.

I know there's no special number as far as sets and stuff like that go, but I know people are probably dying to know what you think is...if there was a magic number, how many reps should people be focusing on when they're trying to build mass in their arms? So, in your program, what exactly do you include for repetitions when it comes to isolation exercises for biceps and triceps?

LH: All right, well, first of all, I just want to cover...the general rule when it comes to rep ranges is that lower reps tend to produce more strength and power and not quite as much size. I mean, you're not really into hypertrophy phase with the lower reps,

because there's not enough time under tension. But, they're great for building strength and power.

Then, when you get to the really high reps, that's more in the muscular endurance training phase. Again, a lot of time under tension, but it's not, again, the ideal scenario for stimulating muscle growth, because generally if you're using really high reps, say like 25 or more, the resistance isn't high enough.

Then, when you get into the mid range, I would just say the 10 to 15 reps range, that kind of...that's the sweet spot for the most part, for muscle growth, because you have kind of like the ideal time under tension and enough weight to stimulate muscle growth.

So typically, I like to work... Personally, most of my workouts are in the 10 to 15 rep range when I'm gearing towards muscle growth. But again, that's going to vary depending on the exercise you do as well. You mentioned before there are deadlifts, for example. That's a big power exercise and I usually train it as a power exercise with lower reps. That just works well. But, if we're getting into like arm isolation stuff, I would say the heavy end of the scale would be down around eight reps per set, and the lighter end of the scale would be up around 15 reps per set. And anywhere between those two ranges, between eight and 15, is where I would consider the sweet spot for maximum muscle growth. You're in the hypertrophy training phase.

JV: Awesome. I'm sure a lot of people are going to be happy to hear that exact number there. It's always good to put something specific on it, because a lot of people, like you said, for deadlifts, it is good to associate different rep ranges with different exercises. Yeah, I'm sure a lot of people will benefit from that.

Okay, well, we talked about reps. What about... I mean, if there was one exercise you could do to build bigger biceps, which one would it be if you could only pick one out of them all?

LH: Well, saying this would be a...this is a tough one, because of course we're not limited to just one exercise. But, I'd say as a bicep mass building movement, I don't think there's anything that can really beat like a standing barbell curl or probably a standing dumbbell curl, something along those lines, for a direct bicep isolation exercise.

JV: And just quickly, I wanted to know, do you prefer using the preacher bar curl or a straight bar when you're doing barbell bicep curls?

LH: What I've found... Okay, for years, I always used the easy curl bar, I think that's what you meant when you said preacher bar.

JV: Oh, sorry. Yeah.

LH: Yeah, easy curl bar. A lot of people like that for curling and it tends to be easier on the wrists, easier on the elbows and things like that. If you are suffering from joint problems, it's a great alternative. But, you're not really going to maximally stimulate your biceps with an easy curl bar because just the whole act of twisting your wrist all the way around, as it will be when you're grabbing a straight bar, I mean, just that motion there flexes your bicep. I mean, you can even do it now while you're sitting here listening. I mean, you twist your arm over you can see your bicep starts to flex. And by having your arm twisted over all the way, supinated, that will maximally stimulate your biceps as you do your curls.

So, even though it's more uncomfortable, I would opt for the straight bar whenever possible. And the only time I would not use it for curls is if you're trying to work around an injury or it's just too painful. If somebody has joint problems and they physically can't do it, then obviously go with an easy bar. But, if you can use the straight bar, even if it's a little bit more uncomfortable, go for it. I think you'll get better results in the end.

JV: Yeah, for sure. I've noticed a big difference in tension on the bicep when I use a straight bar versus the easy bar. So, yeah.

LH: Like, if you're using the easy bar, you'll never get that full contraction in the bicep like you will with a straight bar. Yeah.

JV: Exactly. And even, I notice when I do...if I do like seated preacher curls with a dumbbell, I find, like you said, when you twist your pinkie inwards towards your arm, you get that contract there. So, when your arm's completely fixated in that position, you're always going to keep that tension on the bicep by using that straight bar.

I mean, yeah, if you don't have an injury, go for it. But, if you're trying to work around something, like Lee said, it's just a little less tension, I think. But, you're still going to see...if you're progressing the exercise, it's progression, nonetheless. Don't dismiss that just because of that.

I wanted to clear up a myth here. I get a lot of people asking me what exercise is going to create a peak in their bicep. And in your opinion, have you ever been able to actually develop a peak or do you think that that's just a genetic term. You know how you were talking about the arms can just be a genetic thing. So, have you found that there's some exercise to actually bring out a peak, or is that just a myth?

LH: There is actually exercises to develop the peak of the bicep. But, again, getting back to your genetic muscle shape. Everybody has their baseline genetics, and that's going to determine your muscle shape and everything else.

One thing when it comes to the peak of the biceps, like some people have long biceps that connect all the way down to the elbow and they tend to be longer, flatter looking biceps. And then, there's other people may have a shorter bicep which almost looks like there's a gap between your bicep and your elbow.

Now, when somebody is starting out, they may actually think that having that shorter bicep is a negative. But, once you develop the arm, that shorter bicep will actually become a more peaked, more separated and actually more impressive looking bicep when it's fully developed. You think of the baseball biceps. For example, the classic pictures of Arnold Schwarzenegger, with the really high bicep peaks and things like that. That's somebody who has a shorter bicep.

So, again, your genetics do play a huge role. But, one thing you need to look at, the bicep is two muscles. You have the...hence the name bicep. The outer head is a shorter head and that gives your bicep more peak. And then the inner head tends to be the longer, fuller head to give your biceps more size and fullness. So, doing exercises that target that outer bicep head will help to develop more bicep peak.

How you can easily do this is, for example, if you're doing like a straight bar curl, gripping the bar narrower tends to work the outer head. Gripping the bar wider tends to work more of the inner head. So, it's kind of like the opposite. If your hands are close, the outer head of the bicep tends to work more. If your hands are wide, the inner head tends to work more. So, again, if bicep peak is something that you're trying to get, working with a closer grip can help stimulate it. And also, doing exercises such as hammer curls, which can focus on the brachialis and the outer head of the bicep. Those are great exercises as well for building up more bicep peak. Again, it's still limited by your genetic shape.

Another thing that I want to mention, too, when it comes to bicep peak is your level of body fat is going to have a huge impact. I find, like for myself, when I'm in the off season and I'm carrying a bit of extra weight, I don't have as well peaked biceps. When I diet-down and my skin gets really thin, the muscle looks way more peaked and way more separated. So, that has a huge impact as well. And it's something that you can control. I mean, you can focus on working the outer head of the biceps, you can control losing body fat. So, those are things that you can actually do to improve your peak. Other than that, you know, like your genetic muscle shape, well, you're born with that. You're stuck with that one. But, there are some things you can actually do.

JV: No, for sure. I actually have shorter biceps, so whenever I flex it, I kind of get that softball appearance. So, I feel like I was gifted for that. I thank God for that. That's cool. And like you said, whenever you diet-down, it makes such a big difference, because like you said, in the off season you got subcutaneous water under there, you've got a bit of fat storage going on. But, when you diet-down, man, your arms actually appear bigger and they actually...they don't shrink, but they do become a bit smaller, just because you're depleting your fat stores.

My arms went down by a little bit when I dieted for my show, but they look like a lot bigger than what they were when I was at a higher body fat percentage. So, for anybody that had failed to see any kind of definition in their biceps, and if you haven't been tracking your body fat, I'd definitely take that into account, if that's your last resort, if nothing else is working for you. Just really check your body fat, and the lower you go, the more....overall body definition you'll get.

And just to touch on one more thing, for the competition, I mean, I'm sure you know, Lee. You probably spent lots of time posing and practicing that in the mirror. Although it might be weird for some people, the more you practice contracting a muscle, and just really focusing on that contraction, I find that it actually translates into the gym when you're training. Because, there's that mind-muscle connection that you can make. And the stronger you can develop that bond, the better it is when you're working the muscle in the gym.

I've noticed a big change since when I was preparing for the competition and everything and I started to do that. I started to really notice a jump in strength as well as definition and stuff. So, it's also another way to bring out that really nice definition in your arm. So, just for anybody... Did you notice that, when you're doing your competitions?



LH: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, I do like to practice posing a lot when I'm getting ready for a show. It's a serious part of my training, because after all, I mean, in a bodybuilding competition, I mean, that's what it is. I mean, you're displaying your hard work. So, a lot of people, they put all this effort into getting in shape, training and dieting and everything else, and then the posing is probably like secondary. I literally know guys who don't even practice their posing routine and kind of just wing it. I mean, I shows when somebody gets on stage and they haven't practiced. So, that's something that I do put a lot of emphasis in.

And even for folks who are not interesting in getting on stage and competing, which I mean, I'm assuming that the vast majority of our listeners are in that category. They're not considering competing. Just flexing a stubborn body part on a regular basis will really help. Like, for example, let's just say your biceps are the stubborn muscle group. Flexing your arms and making a muscle and literally holding that for 30 to 60 seconds and doing that a couple of times a day, just really flexing and cramping the muscle and holding it as hard as you can for a minute, and doing that regularly will help develop that mind-muscle connection so that when you're in the gym you'll get a better pump in your arms. You'll feel them working more.

Typically, the muscles that you get the best pump in, that you really feel working, are the ones that respond to this. If you're in the gym and you're training arms and you can't feel the pump in the arms, chances are your arms are probably not a very good muscle group. And this can apply to any body part. If you can't feel your back when

you're doing your back workouts, then chances are your back is probably not very developed. So, just focusing on flexing and squeezing those muscles, building that mind-muscle connection, that could be the little missing link that could help take your training to the next level.

JV: Yeah, I agree completely with that. I mean, it wasn't until I started doing that that I started to really...been able to control my muscles when I'm in the gym and get that contraction that I needed to spur new muscle growth. And another thing, too, is I find, at least, a lot of people that I train and a lot of people I see in the gym around me are always using way too heavy of a weight when it comes to any kind of arm training, but more specifically to biceps.

I see people swinging the weight up, they're basically doing almost like a hop-squat and then just completely swinging the weight and trying to...they're almost knocking themselves out by hitting themselves in the forehead. And it's okay to use a bit of momentum, getting a rhythm, but I mean, just drop the weight and really focus on that contraction first. Make sure the form is there and then move up in weight. And as you progress in that manner, you're going to have a lot better chance of actually giving your muscles a reason to grow versus just using a weight that's just way too heavy and you're not using proper form. So, you're not putting proper contraction on the muscle.

So, I think that's another important note to touch on for anybody out there. You know, just always leave your ego at the door when you go into the gym and you may have to drop your weight sometimes, like the amount of weight you're lifting. But, in the end, I've found from experience that as long as you can feel the muscle working, it's a lot better than just going through the motion. You know what I mean?

LH: Yeah, for sure. That's smaller body parts, like biceps, triceps and things like that. you're not going to make huge jumps in weight like you can with the compound movements. I mean, there's a big difference between curling a 30-pound dumbbell versus doing a 300-pound deadlift. If you add five pounds to a 300-pound deadlift, that's not much at all. But, if you add five pounds to a 30-pound dumbbell curl, I mean, percentage wise, that's a huge jump. So, you're not going to make massive strength gains in smaller muscle groups like that.

JV: Exactly. That's a great point.

LH: Yeah. I mean, a lot of people...I want to go up five pounds each week. Well, percentage wise for small exercise, that's huge, versus the big ones, again squats, deadlifts, bench presses or whatever. Adding five pounds a week to your lifts is actually a realistic goal for the short term. But, again, it's not going to carryover to all the small, isolation exercises.

JV: No, for sure. I think that's a great point for everyone to note. Those different poundage increases are going to vary a lot. There's going to be a big difference there between a deadlift and a bicep curl. But, you've got to think, one's a total body movement and one is just an isolated movement for a smaller muscle group. So, take it for what it's worth and just progress properly on each.

So, we've covered reps, sets, exercises and the common mistakes that some people are making out there. But, the one thing that I think it comes down to, Lee, is just to have a plan to follow. I mean, we talked about like the reps today, but if someone just doesn't have any kind of plan to go against, then it's kind of hard for them to make real progress. It's one thing to learn all these, but it's another thing to actually implement them.

Now, I read through your Blast Your Biceps program and it's a really thorough program. I mean, I looked at it and it's about 150-some odd pages. But, it's packed with content and I would have never thought that there could have been that much information for training your biceps. I mean, it's incredible.

Definitely, we can't get into it all on a one-hour call, you know, in one night. So, I mean, for anybody who's interested in actually building up your biceps and building up to two inches, you know, in eight weeks, I would definitely check it out. You have everything in the program that you need. You have exercise descriptions, you have a lot of photo demonstrations as well, which is really important for people to learn how to do the exercise properly.

One thing I really liked about your program, Lee, was that you could tell that you've had such an enormous amount of experience in this field. You really put a lot of your heart into this book and you can tell. I mean, you can tell it's quality. It's not just a couple of pages of theory and the workouts. I mean, you really give in depth exercise prescriptions to build up some massive biceps and some big, bulging triceps there.

So, could you just explain, in a nutshell, just...like I said, the book is fairly big and it does exactly what it's designed to do. But, could you just maybe explain to people what they're going to get when they pick up the Blast Your Biceps program?



LH: Yeah, for sure. First off, I mean, the whole main Blast Your Biceps, I kind of picked that because, I mean, I think it sounds cool, Blast Your Biceps. But, it's so much more than just a bicep workout, like you mentioned. It is a total body training system and the whole idea here is that we're going to build up bigger arms, specialize on getting bigger arms, but we're going to do that through getting bigger and stronger all over.

So, I mean, it's not just like you're going to do this program and get bigger arms. You're going to do this program and you're going to notice gains in your back, your chest, your shoulders, your legs and everywhere else, as well as your arms. And again, the target is the arms.

But, in order to get those big arms, you've got to get bigger and stronger all over. So, that's a big misconception. Like a lot of people think, oh, is this just an arm workout and no. It's a total body training system.

What do you get with it? Like I said, there's a complete training manual there and it goes into so much more than just workouts, everything from the mindset to even how to choose the proper gym to train in. I mean, goal, setting, the mental aspect that goes behind it. I mean, there's a lot of inner game stuff that I cover here that I've picked up through almost 20 years of weight training experience now. So, it's not, like I say, a Mickey Mouse, slapped together workout program. This is something that I've very

passionate about, because it's something that I struggled with personally. And I basically just spilled the bean on this through this program.

And another cool thing that is totally unique here is that it's not just a manual, but I include video for every single workout. So, I actually have every single training phase, not only can you read about it in the manual, but you can actually watch the videos that go along. So, I mean, if you were unsure on how to do an exercise, hey, I go through the entire video. I'm not sure exactly how much. I think there's over three or four hours of video footage that comes along with this program. So, it's a huge package.

JV: That's awesome. If I'm not mistaken, you also have the nutrition part covered, too. Right?

LH: Yes. I threw in some extra bonuses. Like I say, the manual itself focuses mostly on training, but I do have like a supplement guide to go along with it, a nutritional guide as well. And again, the prime goal here when you're looking at getting maximums size, so it's more of a mass building nutrition program, and same with the supplement guide, and also some tracking software that goes along with it as well. So, I did cover all bases as far as training, nutrition and supplementation.

JV: Yeah. I think that's the biggest benefit to getting an online fitness program like the one you have right here, is just that you take all the guesswork out for the end user. I was on the other side of the fence for a long time when I first started, and the biggest thing I noticed was whenever I got a program, the reason I was successful in doing it was because I was held accountable because I bought it, I wanted to use it, it was something I really wanted to accomplish. But, I didn't have to ask much about the questions because everything's answered within the program.

That's the kind of advantage you get when you get a program specifically designed to achieve something. Of course, I mean, like Lee said, it's going to be building your arms, but it's also going to be building mass in your entire body. And I'm sure that's not something anyone wants to really turn down. I know for myself that that's always an added benefit. So, on top of getting bigger arms, you're also going to get a more muscular body.

Like I said, if anyone is interested on this call to dramatically increase your arm size, more than probably you've ever done in the past training years you've been doing it, or if you're new to it and you kind of want to see a bigger jump in your arms size versus anything else, definitely check out BlastYourBiceps.com. Lee's put together a heck of a program.

I was actually looking at it. I'm on a growth cycle right now, using my own program. But, after that, I'm definitely going to take it up and give it a shot and try to add an extra inch or two to my arms.

LH: Yeah.

JV: I mean, I'm an author and stuff like that, but it's always nice to see other programs, something interesting like this. Of course, I'll be checking it out and letting you know how it goes. I checked out the science and the theories and the workouts, and you'll definitely get your money's worth in this.

I don't know, Lee, did you want to open it up for some Q&A now?



LH: Yeah, sure. We've got some callers here tuning in live, listening. So, yeah. I'm actually going to open this up and basically what we want to keep the theme on is, I guess, arm training in general. It could even be mass building. But, we're going to stick to those kind of questions, mass training, arm training, any specialization, stuff like that.

Again, I'm going to...here we go. The conference is unmoderated, so we'll take them one at a time. Hopefully this goes in an orderly fashion. But, if you have any questions, feel free to chime in. Just introduce yourself and ask away.

Caller: Hey, Less, it's Steve Murette again. Question for you. We had mentioned earlier, I'm recuperating now from the rotator cuff surgery. I'm trying to keep working the left side and I understand that within a certain extent, even though I can't do

anything active just yet with the right until the tendon heals up a bit, that the body will actually try to balance itself out naturally. What are your thoughts on that?

LH: You know, it will. Your body is actually going to try and balance things out, just like you said. I haven't had direct experience with a shoulder injury. Like you say, you've got a rotator tendon tear. But, a prime example of this is my girlfriend Patricia, she broke her wrist a couple of years ago in jujitsu training. While her wrist was broken, I mean obviously she was very limited in what she could do for your whole...I believe it was her left wrist, in her whole left side of the body.

But now that it's healed-up, her left side is actually more developed than her right side. So, the side that was actually injured is actually bigger. I mean, you can even see it throughout the arms and her traps and everything else. So, I mean, a couple years after the injury, it's like the body overcompensates to send, I guess, more nutrients and recovery and everything else towards that damaged area.

I'm assuming that in your case, you have your rotator cuff which is injured, and obviously you're resting it up. But, give that some time and your body will actually send its recuperative abilities to that damaged area.

Another example that I have, as well, I know a friend of mine was in a car accident and hurt one side of his body. He had to get some skin grafts and things like that done. On that side, where he had to get some skin grafts done and things like that, he noticed his arm hair would grow more than twice as fast on his injured side than it was growing on the other side. So, I mean, it's just a sign that your body is sending its energies to help speed up recovery in that damaged area.

Is that kind of what you're getting at?

Caller: Yeah. Like I said, I was just kind of curious if you'd had any experience or knew anybody that had been through that. It sounds kind of like you did then.

LH: Like I say, not directly with the shoulders, but I've had experience with friends and family with other injuries. And it is; it's just strange how the body works. But, it will direct its energy, I suppose, to help them recover that area.

Caller: Well, for what it's worth, I'll keep you posted via email on what I find with this.

LH: Yeah, for sure. I'd love to hear your story and stuff about that. And like I say, even though this is a shoulder related injury, this can kind of apply to any type of injury, like I mentioned. So, it's certainly valuable, a very valid question to have.

All right, I know we've got a couple dozen people here, tuned in to the call. Feel free if you have any questions that you'd like to ask with regards to training, nutrition supplementation, whatever. We've got another ten minutes to go.

Caller: I'm sorry, Lee, who's your guest? What's his name again?

LH: Joey...we'll call him Joey V.

JV: That will make it simple.

LH: Yeah.

Caller: Joey, first I want to congratulate you on your success in your show. That's very impressive.

JV: Oh, thank you very much.

Caller: You're welcome. I did want to ask both of you, you were talking earlier about percentage wise gains you can expect with compound exercises in the large body parts as compared to expectations for your arms. Well, what kind of expectations, if everything's working efficiently, your nutrition is correct, what would you expect to see as far as like a curl maximum from week to week change?

LH: Do you want this one Joey? Or do you want me to take it? It's up to you.

JV: Well, I can give my input and then you can give some input, too. How about that?

LH: Good. Yep, we'll both do it.

JV: I mean, in my experience, as far as any kind of big compound lift, like a deadlift, depending on how long you've been training, too, because you reach a point in your training where you're not necessarily going to stop growing or stop getting stronger, but your gains aren't going to be as big anymore. So, when you're starting off, I would say 5% increased on big compound exercises, like deadlifts and stuff, granted that you are taking in a good nutrition plan and you're following a solid training program. As far as a bicep curl and stuff like that, it's really dependant on the person. Lee, do you want to chime in for the isolation increases?



LH: Yep, sure. I'll kind of go with what I recommend and what I shoot for myself. When it comes, again like Joey mentioned, for the big exercises, and what I mean by big exercises, your rows, your presses, squats, deadlifts, things like that, you can typically gain five pounds per week on those major lifts. And a lot of people can keep that up for a long time. I mean, it could be several weeks or probably even several months, keeping those five pound jumps going if you're consistent and everything's spot-on with your training and nutrition.

 I actually like to pace myself with these big exercises and limit myself to five pound jumps. Because, I find that if your body is...you're hungry for increasing the weight and you feel like you can actually do more, then that just add the motivation for next time when you want to go. Again, pace yourself.

Let's say you're on a bench press program and you want to go five pounds per week. You space that out. You can stack those five pound jumps week after week for several weeks in a row before you hit a plateau.

Now, when it comes to biceps, obviously you're handling much lower weight, and the same with triceps. So, adding five pounds to a 200-pound bench press versus five pounds to say a 20-pound dumbbell curl. What I typically do when it comes to arm training and things like that, I like to focus on increasing the reps. So, let's say you're doing sets of eight reps this week. Maybe next week I'll try to do sets of nine reps. And then the week after up to ten reps. If I can get it up to say like twelve or more reps, then I'll make that five-pound jump and then drop my reps back down and start the whole process again.

So, keep within say the eight to twelve rep range and then once you're doing all your sets with twelve reps, good form, up the weight five pounds for your next workout, and then start that little rep climb again. That's a way that I like to progress for the smaller isolation exercises.

JV: I'm the same way, actually. You just kind of reminded me when you were talking about it. But, even when I feel like I can maybe increase ten pounds or something like that on the bench press, I purposefully don't do it because if ever I do that, sometimes I find the next week I'll come back a little bit weaker because I expose my body to too much of a stimulus. And by progressing in smaller increments, you're actually going to leave your body enough time to recovery properly instead of trying to overload your body too quick.

The other thing I completely agree with is reaching a cut-off point for isolation exercises. So, instead of always trying to add poundage, you would essentially reach a cut-off point, like say 12 reps, and then you increase the weight and drop the reps. So, yeah, I mean, I completely agree with that. That's what I do. Because, it becomes too hard to actually add a bunch of weight to be bicep curl. I mean, you've better off just keeping good form and going for a higher rep and then once you reach that cut-off, adjust at that point.

Caller: Excellent answers, gentlemen. Do you mind if I ask something else real quick?

LH: Yeah, go ahead.

Caller: Okay. I just recently bought the Critical Bench and the Blast Your Bench package. I must admit I haven't been in the gym to bench press probably for the last 20 years. And what I'm wondering about, and this is on all exercises, because it also came with Blast Your Squat and I'm really looking forward to getting into that, is how do you

figure... How do you find your initial starting max on most exercises without wearing yourself out or hurting yourself?

LH: Right. First of all, if you haven't done any heavy lifting for a long time and just getting back into the gym, I would just kind of go through a general training phase, maybe like a total body workout. It could be based around say like a few sets of bench presses, a few sets of squats, a few sets of rows or something like that.

Caller: Work on form more than anything else to start with?

LH: Yeah, get your form down pat and for the first...like I'm assuming if you haven't worked out at all for a long time, you're totally coming back, you look just like a beginner again.

Caller: Just starting.

LH: Literally go through the motions with your workouts. Get into the habit of just going to the gym on a regular basis, get used to going through the exercises and learning the form, just feeling how your muscles work. Just get back to the whole swing of things. And if you feel like, okay, I did a set and this was obviously way too light, then increase the weights ten pounds or something. But, after a month of going through the motions with your workout, you'll kind of have a ballpark figure of what you can lift for a lot of those major exercises.

Then when it comes time to actually...if you have to base your strength off a one-rep max, do it conservatively. If you want to work your way up and kind of test it, you can. But, be conservative with those lifts. I wouldn't recommend somebody going in and pushing themselves where they're going to strain or pop or pull something in order to figure out their true one-rep max. Take it conservatively and base training weights off that.

You'll find that being more conservative and having a lot of those days works out better in the long term than trying to do too much too soon and end up just getting injured in training or burn yourself out.

Caller: Good, that's what I wanted to hear.

LH: Yeah.

Caller: Thank you.

LH: Think of the long terms when it comes to... This isn't a sprint to the finish. This is more like a marathon. You want to make gains not just this week, this month. I want to be healthy 10, 20, 30, 50 years from now. I'd like to be doing this. Think of the long term gain.

Caller: I'd like to be alive 50 years from now.

LH: Exactly, yeah, and still working out.

Caller: Right.

LH: Okay. Anybody here, we'll take one more question.

Caller: What's up guys. I just had one quick question for you. Number one mass building triceps exercise.

LH: Okay. What's your number one tricep exercise, Joey?

JV: It would definitely have to be a tie between kind of like a decline close-grip barbell bench press. But, my other favorite one that I've kind of been favoring right now is weighted dips. Not flaring the elbows out, but just really focusing on the triceps and of course, you can't use such a low rep range with an exercise like that, in particular. Because with triceps, I find if you just train a little bit more repetitions, then it will keep that contraction on the muscle better. But yeah, I would say weighted dips, for me. That's just personal to me.

I mean, everyone's different. Like, Lee, what's your number one?

LH: I'm going to go with power rack bench press lock-outs. This we actually covered in the first phase of **Blast Your Biceps program**. This is an exercise I got from power lifters where they literally do bench presses in the top range in the power rack, just focusing on locking the weight out. The top range of a bench press, like those last few inches, all it is is straightening your arms out under the bar and it's pure triceps. So, you can handle a huge amount of weight, even way more than you can bench press in full range of motion. All that weight, all that stress on the muscle, it will really overload it. So, I'd say that's probably my number one mass builder, right there.

Caller: In those lock-outs, about how far are you moving, like two inches?

LH: I kind of depends. You have to like play around with it, set it up in the power rack and the bench. Obviously different power racks are different heights and stuff. But, I would like to be able to lock it out and hold the bar, I'd say, four to five inches above the pins when it's fully locked-out.

Caller: Okay.

LH: And another thing, keep your grip fairly close on this. I should rephrase that. Keep a medium grip. Don't go excessively wide. Like for me, I like to use either my pinkie finger on the rings of the Olympic bar or even a little bit narrower. But, I don't go crazy close with your hands just a couple of inches apart. And I wouldn't go too wide,

either. Keep it just a bit wider than shoulder width and it will place maximum stress on the triceps.

Caller: Very good. Thank you guys.

LH: Like Joey said, I'm kind of tied between that... That would be my number one compound mass builder. And if I had to say another one, for triceps, you've kind of inspired me here, it would be the decline bench skull crusher.

During my training, I always hated the regular skull crushers, you know, the lying tricep extensions. Most people use the easy bar, lye on a flat bench and do these tricep extensions. I knew it was a good exercise, but it just killed my elbows, for years. And I kind of avoided it and everything else. But, I found a variation where if you do it on a decline bench, so you're actually facing down, just the same as if you were doing like a decline bench press or whatever. That angle places less stress on your elbows, actually gives you a better range of motion in the triceps and I find that I get a killer pump from that exercise.

So, very often, I'll do like a mass builder, say like the power rack lock-out bench that I mentioned. And I just get crazy pump in the triceps when I do the decline bench tricep extension with an easy bar.

Caller: Could you take that exercise and compound it into a lat workout also, at the same time?

LH: Like a pull-over type exercise, you mean?

Caller: Yeah, like let the weights go all the way to the floor, pull it up with your lats and then extend it.

LH: I do include pull-overs, but no, I wouldn't do them with this tricep extension. I would just focus purely on doing it as a tricep exercise. For like my back and chest I'll sometimes do pull-overs, but I keep that separate.

Caller: Okay.

LH: But, that's a good point. Pull-overs are a great exercise for the back and the chest. But, that's just, you know, different ball game here. We're talking about tricep exercises.

Caller: Okay.

JV: Actually, I want to change my answer there. The only reason I picked the close grip bench press is just because we don't have a power rack at the gym in my hometown here. But, when I have the chance and I have the power rack there, yeah, I

definitely...it's just been a while that I've been using it. But yeah, for sure, that one would be the number one, just because you have that limited range of motion and you can really work with it, versus if you don't have the power rack, you kind of have to force yourself to stop and you're not sure if you're stopping in the right spot every time on regular bench. But, yeah, the power racks would definitely triumph over the regular bench, close grip bench.

LH: Another little thing, when I'm doing those exercises in the power rack, I'll literally let the bar smack down and hit the pins in between each rep. So, it's not like I'm trying to control it or pause it at the top. I just lock it out, hold it for a second and then let it come down, hit the pins and reset and then press again. With each rep, I'm literally doing it from a dead stop off the pins, and I find that that really works a lot harder. It's harder to start a weight from a dead stop than it is to keep the momentum going and pump out reps.

For example, deadlifts, and stop the weight on the floor in between each rep. That's a lot harder than just pumping out rep after rep and keeping the weight going.

All right, folks, that's a little over an hour now, we've been doing the call. So, like I say, I think we're going to close it up here tonight. Great stuff. I thank Joey for taking the time to interview me. I really enjoyed it. It's cool when somebody else asks some questions, because it gets me thinking in ways that I normally don't think. So again, I think we covered some cool stuff here tonight.

JV: Oh, I think that there's a lot of information there. I mean, I learned a lot from you when I was first starting out. So, I mean, you've stood the test of time. So, I mean, congratulations on that and thanks for all the information. I'm going to share this with my members as well.

My muscle building program is really kind of a proportional gaining system, but it's nice to add in a little spice and a little bit of variation with your Blast Your Biceps program as well. So, anybody wants to check that out, like I said, BlastYourBiceps.com. Lee's got some killer information as you can probably tell already, just by being on this call.

Of course, if you have any questions for me or Lee, just get to our contact pages and feel free to shoot us an email on anything related to biceps or muscle building or any kind of fitness related questions.

Lee, it's been a pleasure to have you on the call tonight. I really appreciate you taking the time for me as well as my members, and I'm sure your clients appreciate it, too.

LH: All right, Joey, thanks a lot. I really appreciate it. And again, if anybody wants to get some more information about you, it's BonesToBuff.com. Is that correct? I believe it is.

JV: Yep. That's it.

LH: Yep. BonesToBuff.com And like I say, I've been following along some of your stuff. You do have a cool program there, and again, geared towards the skinny guy who wants to put on...what is it, go from skin and bones to strong and buff. It's very important because most of the fitness media out there, it's geared towards fat loss and it's geared towards that overweight person who wants to trim down, and they kind of ignore that skinny person who wants to build up.

I think from an emotional standpoint, it's just as painful to be that skinny person trying to build up as it is to be that overweight person trying to trim down. So, it's kind of an area that a lot of people don't touch on. But, you're living proof that it can be done.

JV: Yeah. But, just before we leave, I want to say that, that really touched something with me there. You know, I was telling some of the people that I hang around with, you know, when people...when someone calls someone overweight or something like that, it's a big insult. But, if you're called skinny, nobody really considers it an insult. But, to me, it is.

LH: Some people even consider it a compliment, especially from a female perspective.

JV: Exactly. But, as a guy, man, you don't want to hear that. Hearing skinny is just as bad as hearing you're overweight or something. So, I mean, I'm really passionate about helping people reach success I feel that I've reached in my own life, just by an online fitness program. That's where I started. And it's made such a big difference in my life because it's opened the doors to many different opportunities outside of fitness as well.

So, yeah, I mean, I cover a lot in that program just because I started off on that other side of the fence. I include a lot of things that help people kind of beat the learning curve that took me so long to beat. And yeah, so if anyone wants to check that out, for sure. And if you have any questions, just feel free to email me.

And I'd like to do another call with you sometime, Lee. Maybe we'll dive into some more material, maybe some other muscle groups. Sound good to you?

LH: Sounds good, man. Like I say, there's so much stuff to cover, but so little time. But again, I really enjoyed this tonight and I think we had some good questions afterwards. So, good stuff, man. I think tonight was a success.

JV: Awesome. Well, we'll definitely do it again.

LH: All right.

JV: Thanks everyone for being on the call, too.

LH: All right, Joey, take care, man.

JV: All right, Lee. Take care.

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