



Marius Morstad on endurance training pt 2.

Left: Jerry Moffatt Seb Grieve

You will say it is not possible to train strength everyday or to do strength and endurance everyday. In other sports like weight lifting, they can have four short session a day, six days a week for periods. Most long-distance runners have two sessions a day. Sprinters and middle distance runners train both strength and endurance on the same day. Gymnasts at the highest level can train for 30 hours a week. Some of it is weights, the rest is their routines. You would now say climbing is totally different from other sports, you can't compare climbing with anything else. One thing is for sure – you are wrong but to underline my statement will take up too much space. When Michael Owen started to play for Liverpool at 16-years-old, he had probably played soccer for more than 12 years, 10 of them in a coached situation. This goes for most sports today. Climbing is very new as a sport, and it has stayed in the dark corners with stubborn weirdoes like myself. When people start to climb in their 20s and try to apply an Olympic schedule everything goes wrong, the body is not able to adapt, they become very tired and demotivated and injuries occur. But if the progression had been slowly over years they would have been OK. Age is not a problem, adaptations happen, maybe not as quickly, and not to such a level as when younger. The main problem is cultural – climbers want everything to happen immediately. We want results the next day or even in the same session. If they don't come we try something else. The higher the level of your climbing standard, the more training it takes to reach a higher level. There is no secret training formula or model you can use to cut corners. Looking at the historical development in other sports, in terms of time spent training and total volume of training it has tripled in most sports since the early '60s. Modern training methodology has been instrumental in this development. With quantifying the demands for all

Right: Jerry on Autumn, a Font 7b+ traverse at Eagle Tor. Bouldering can be used to train endurance, you just have to get the grade and volume right. Moffatt coll.

This is how a general development would look like if climbing was a sport

- Year one) 180 days x 8 routes x 25m=36000m in a year
- Year two) 210days x 8routes x 25m= 42000m in a year
- Year three) 230days x 9 routes x 25m=51750m in a year
- Year four) 250days x 10routes x 25m=62500m in a year
- Year five) 260days x 12routes x 25m= 78000m a year
- Year six) 270days x 13 routes x 25m=87750m a year
- Year seven) 280 days x 15 routes x 25m=105000m a year

Divide this further into:

Easy 50 %

Medium 35 %

Hard 15 %

Easy – the level you can climb at with little physical and emotional cost.

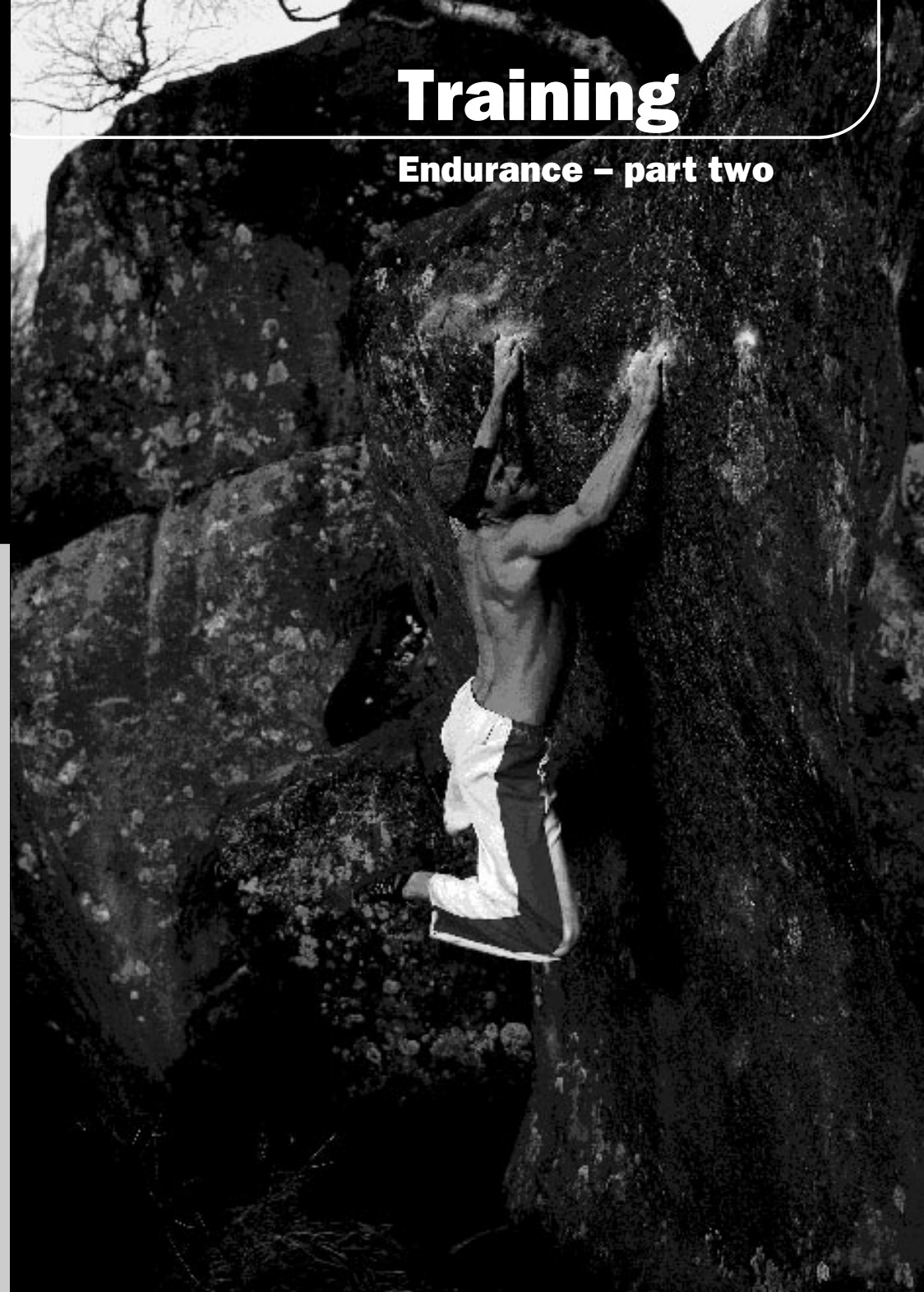
Medium – just below your on-sight level, at on-sight level and just above on-sight level.

Hard – hard bouldering moves.

For the first year this gives 18000m at easy level, 12600m at medium level and 5400m at hard level. You might think this is not much climbing at the hard level, but if you multiply >>

Training

Endurance – part two



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aspects in the particular sport in question. From this analysis a long term plan can be made. This means starting to write down everything you do, so you can be really sure that you do more this year than last year.

Attitude:

One of the great things with climbing is the instant reward, you constantly break barriers, especially in the beginning. When development in one area stops, you just change game, to dry tooling for instance or dangerous routes. You maybe do some stretching for a couple of weeks and feel that it makes a difference immediately. You're always searching for easy solutions, dreaming about the one thing that will do it. You might think that there exists a method for training that does it without spending time or effort. Believe me, there isn't, there is only hard work.

Another important issue is to know when you are competing (or said a little subtler comparing and training. Always doing the first is motivating, especially if the other beats the dust, but this kind off focus is also very draining and can take attention away from important training tasks. Psychologically it will make you save yourself always trying to peak and by doing that hold back on the training and consequently have a slow progress.

Progress:

You make the decision, I'm starting to train, getting all dramatically about it. Start to climb everyday, pumped like fuck from the first move to the last move, throwing yourself at it with all you have. Very soon you feel something is wrong, nothing is happening. But what can you expect, if we where made this way biologically and genetically, it would also work the other way. Everything we gain we would loose in a fortnight. Start easy give the body and mind time to adapt slowly, add one element at the time at let the body adjust to that before moving on. If you do a lot of bouldering and then suddenly decide to get some endurance for a route you want to do, you have to be careful! You will need to lower the volume on your bouldering and start with some very, very easy routes, just to wake up the body and tell it that you are doing some endurance training here. At first you will vary in performance from session to session. After a while your performance will stabilize. Then stay there for a while without increasing either volume or intensity. Let the body fully adjust. Wait till every session for a week feels easy, then increase. Remember: when progress is rapid, like at the start of any new training regime, the body is just adjusting to the training, you have not got the real gains yet. It really starts at the point when you would normally quit and move on to something else – keep going! Common methods in sport are to add additional training like weight training or running, to speed up the progression. You're the best judge of which area needs to be improved.

Right: Darren Stevenson, Jerry Moffatt and Ben Moon relaxing in the warm winter sun at a French *aire* on a bouldering trip to Fontainebleau. Plan your year's training to peak at the right time and you'll get more out of your trips away. Training needn't stop on climbing trips either. Try dropping the grade and increasing the volume when you're away; you'll get more done, have loads of fun and return to your training refreshed and motivated.
Jerry Moffatt



>> this into single hand moves (on average there are two hand moves per metre) we get 5400meters x 2 moves = 10800 moves. And if each boulder problem consist of six moves, 10800 divided by six is 1800 problems. For the seventh year we get 5250 boulder problems, 1470 routes at medium level and 2100 routes at easy level.

We can then add grading to this. First year easy is 5a, medium is 5c and hard is Font 5c. Year two easy is 5b, medium 6a and hard is Font 6a. On paper and in theory you should be able to climb in year seven, easy 7a, medium 7c and hard Font 7c. If starting out at young age the progression would be faster, at an older age it would be slower. This would form a base for further training into a really high level. It would give the body and mind time to adjust slowly and by that avoid injury.

You will probably react and get a little upset about all this easy climbing! Endurance training is to improve the ability to realise more energy per time unit, so when climbing you have more energy available for use. With a slow increase in load and progression, the body will adapt. There will be more blood available, better blood shunt to the upper extremities, the local muscles involved will also have a better ability for transport blood to the muscle and away from it. At muscle cell level, it will be more of everything, packed and trimmed.

In the first year a week could look like this:

An average of 200m climbed each session, four days a week, 45 weeks a year.

One session could look like this:

Easy 50% = 100m = 4 routes
Medium 35% = 70m = 3 routes
Hard 15% = 30m = 10 boulder problems

The seventh year could look like this:

2188m climbed a week, 6 session's week, 365m a session, 48 weeks a year.

One session could look like this:

Easy 50% = 180meters = 7 routes
Medium 35 % = 128meters = 5 routes
Hard 15 % = 55ms = 18 boulder problems

Jerry's bit

Planning a training schedule

Marius's seven year illustration shows how training can develop over the years. When planning my short term schedule I always bear in mind how my year will pan out. I consider which countries I'll be visiting and when I aim to be peaking. I usually want to be climbing at my best when the grit is at optimum fiction. It is impossible to be at your best all year. I find my standard differs dramatically. Hang in there when you're in a slump. That's the time to try new exercises, different rock types or styles of routes.

Back in the early '80s I'd have three sessions a day, most days of the week. I'd do gym work, pull-ups and hangs for an hour. Then I'd do an hour traversing. In the evening around 8ish I'd do another hour's power. With power training the more effort you put in the better the rewards will be. When Marius talks about power and training hard you must be totally committed and give it 100%. That's what power is all about. If you give it 90% you're not really training power. With endurance you can give 70% or less and still get a lot out of it. The two are totally different.

Make sure you write down your training in a diary, especially when you start. You'll be able to look back and see your improvement over time. This can be a real boost if your motivation dwindles.

I would also say this: Enjoy it. If you're not having fun with your training then something is wrong and you'll never see the winter through. It shouldn't always be a pain. Once in a while you will go through a rough patch. When this happens you just have to knuckle down and put the hours in. However, that shouldn't be the norm.

This is a good article with a lot of valid points. I would read it through and try to fully understand it before carrying out with the exercises.

Variation:

There is constant discussion in the sport world about this aforementioned method of mixing strength, endurance etc. If the athletes are on a medium level, it is the thing to do. The discussion is with athletes at Olympic level, if the stimuli get strong enough to create the necessary changes. The prescribed solution to this is to have periods where you focus on one element, and just maintain the other elements. There are no climbers in the world that have to concern themselves with this discussion. But it can be used in small portions. If you are going to French limestone for Easter, climb 20 easy routes a day for ten days. This gives you on sheer volume 5000 climbed metres, then you can take a period when you come home, in the medium category, and get some on-sights in the bag. Going to Fontainebleau doing 40 problems a day, for 10 days, in total 400 problems will also shock the system to move forwards.

Stagnation:

Many climbers I know reached their max on-sight level after three to four years of climbing. Now ten years later it is still the same. It happens maybe more often, and they have had this lucky moment, when they on-sighted a F7c+ that suited them real well, that wasn't a real on-sight. Since then they have been looking for easy solutions that take no effort or time. Forget it! Start to climb again, find the motivation, drive, keenness, whatever you want to call it, that you once had, and go out and climb like there was no tomorrow.

Conclusion:

Climb more, compete less.