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## “Snatch a Dumbbell? Madness!”

Pat Sherwood confesses to a history of biceps curls before detailing favorite WODs that have helped him stay fit on an epic motorcycle trip.

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By Pat Sherwood

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All photos: Staff/CrossFit Journal

I know I'm butchering the saying, but it goes something like this: "If you view the world today the same way you did 10 years ago, you have wasted a decade."

I'm in full agreement with that statement, especially when it comes to how I train today compared to a decade ago.

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In early 2005, I received a phone call from my buddy Dave Castro. We had met in 1997 in SEAL training and remained good friends ever since. I was in Virginia Beach, Va., and he was living out in the Bay Area of California. Dave excitedly told me I needed to check out the gnarly workouts on a website he had recently discovered.

I pulled up CrossFit.com and was utterly confused by what I saw. Actually, I was so confused that I told him I thought I had gone to the wrong page.

"What does it say?" Dave asked me.

I replied: "It says, 'Deadlift 1-1-1-1-1-1-1-1'."

"Yeah! That's it," he said.

At that moment in my life, I had been doing classic weight training/bodybuilding-type training for 15 years. I spent at least 90 to 120 minutes in the gym working chest and tri's one day, back and bi's another day, and I sprinkled in abs and the elliptical as needed. That was how you worked out. It was all I knew.

I stared at the screen trying to wrap my head around how picking up a barbell seven times was the day's workout, or "WOD" as it was called. It was all so utterly different that I immediately dismissed it as ridiculous.

As I stared at the website, I told Dave, "This is the stupidest thing I've ever seen. It is nowhere near enough for me. Do you know how quickly I will fall out of shape if I do this crap?"

And just like that, based on damn near zero facts or data, I dismissed something I did not understand.

Months later, I met up with Dave at a social event. We did a workout together. I could generally beat him on military-type calisthenics such as pull-ups, dips, push-ups, etc., and the workout we did looked to be in my favor. But he crushed me.

Confused, I asked him what the hell he had been doing differently.

"CrossFit," he said.

Son of a bitch! I decided to start the day after my 30th birthday. On Aug. 18, 2005, I did my first official CrossFit workout. I went to the innocent-looking website and learned the WOD was something called Murph. Honestly, I thought it looked pretty easy.

I figured I'd be done in about 30 minutes. An hour later later, I was lying on my back on the floor of my garage in a pool



*On the road, Sherwood can sometimes train at an affiliate, such as CrossFit Korvo in Argentina.*

of sweat, hyperventilating and completely confused about how that workout had just stomped the shit out of me.

My entire perspective on fitness changed. The way my mind worked changed.

Now, the workouts still leave me hyperventilating on my back in a pool of sweat. The only thing that has changed is that my times are faster and my lifts have improved. That wonderful agony has never disappeared.

In 2005, I started devouring all the information available on CrossFit.com and the *CrossFit Journal*. What I read, watched and learned changed the way I trained. It changed the way I ate.

I began to get fitter than I had ever been, and it was taking me half the time in the gym. I also began to learn what fitness actually was. I'd never really considered that it could have a measurable definition.

Now I find myself on quite a long trip. Today is Day 100 of riding a motorcycle through Latin America documenting the CrossFit community. Very often we find ourselves needing to hit a workout in a hotel or Globo Gym with traditional gym equipment, and sometimes we have zero gear. Because of the amazing change of perspective I've had over the years, we've been able to maintain a high level of true fitness in conditions that are far less than ideal.



***Sherwood 2005 would have been all over chest flies, but Sherwood 2013 used this hotel-gym gear for 100 over-the-bench burpees.***

Bumper plates, lifting platforms, GHDs, rings, ropes, tires, prowlers, yokes, Airdynes, medicine balls, boxes and other items that are common in CrossFit affiliates are often not present when we need to hit a WOD. No problem. We just scan our environment and find a way to perform a variety of functional movements with intensity.

Below are some of my favorite workouts we have done with zero equipment or in normal hotel gyms. A good hotel gym usually has a dumbbell rack that goes up to 50 lb.

- 10 rounds:
  - 1-minute treadmill sprint
  - 1 barbell complex: 3 strict presses, 3 push presses, 3 push jerks with 120 lb.
- 200 snatches for time with a 50-lb. dumbbell, alternating arms
- 100 thrusters with 35-lb. dumbbells, with 5 burpees at the top of every minute
- 5 rounds:
  - 400-meter treadmill run
  - 15 45-lb. dumbbell thrusters
- Death by 5-meter sprints (zero equipment needed)
- 150 burpees for time
- 10 burpees every minute on the minute for 20 minutes

- 100 over-the-bench burpees with 50-lb. dumbbells
- Accumulate 5 minutes in a handstand against a wall, and every time you kick down, do a certain number of air squats (I did sets of 15 squats because I suck at handstands and had to kick down about 300 times)
- 4 rounds for time:
  - 400-meter treadmill run
  - 20 one-arm 50-lb. dumbbell snatches (alternating arms)
  - 20 front squats with both dumbbells
  - (I would change the snatches to 30 per round)
- In a hotel with six floors, 20 minutes of stair sprints and bunny hopping up the stairs
- 5 rounds:
  - 40-meter treadmill run
  - 15 hang power cleans at 135 lb.
- Monkey-bar Cindy in a park at night

Before CrossFit, I would not have viewed many environments the same way. As far as I was concerned, dumbbells were for hammer curls, concentration curls and flies. If I had seen someone snatching a dumbbell, I would have assumed he was a psychopath who had just escaped from a mental institution.

CrossFit has changed my view of fitness and how to achieve it, and the new perspective has been a tremendous asset in staying in shape during our motorcycle trip.

So when you find yourself far from home because of work or play, avoid the temptation to skip training because of a lack of equipment or the absence of a gym. Analyze your environment and apply what you have learned with CrossFit, and I bet you'll be able to create challenging workouts with relative ease.

Live life. Train hard. Have fun.



### **About the Author**

*Pat Sherwood works for CrossFit as a flowmaster and member of the Media Team. He's done just under 200 seminars all around the globe for CrossFit HQ and competed in the 2009 CrossFit Games. He hates HSPU and loves ice cream.*