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Burg's Eye View No. 4

Coach Mike Burgener analyzes Josh Everett's use of the split technique in the snatch and clean and jerk.

By Mike Burgener

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One of the original CrossFit stars, Josh Everett is a great athlete who's especially good at the Olympic lifts. At the recent CrossFit-USAW Open in Colorado Springs, Colo., Everett was able to showcase his CrossFit talents and his Oly skills on his way to victory in the 85-kilogram class.

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Everett uses the split style for snatches and cleans, and in Part 4 of this series, Coach Mike Burgener breaks down Everett's technique in these rarer forms of the lifts.

Snatch—115 kg

I would have loved to have seen Josh's set-up before the pull. However, in this sequence Josh is right on. He is using his legs to bring the bar into the proper path. Note his hips are above his knees, and his shoulders are ahead of the bar with a strong back. Note the weight distribution on the feet—combined center of gravity between the bar and body. Josh is looking good!



Oops! When the arms bend, the power ends! His feet are looking good, and his torso is not bad, but you can see the premature arm bend beginning.



Wow! There's really a ton of arm bend now. Hey—Josh is a great athlete and can get away with the arm bend and still snatch a respectable weight. However, Josh could be, in my humble opinion, snatching 125 or 130 kilos if he did not pull with his arms.



Josh creates so much speed even while pulling the bar up rather than pulling the body down.



Burg's Eye ... (continued)

Note the good things here: the arms are high and outside in order to keep bar path close in the line of least resistance.



Wow! Off the ground, and then the power source changes from the ground to the bar. This change creates speed under the bar. Fast, fast, fast!



Great footwork! Josh is getting ready to press his body down into the split.



He's pressing under the bar. His hips are low and his footwork is perfect.



Burg's Eye ... (continued)

Good recovery!



Note the vertical position of the torso. The bones are stacked and the recovery is strong.



Step back! Torso vertical! Yup, yup, yup!



Good lift!



Outstanding athlete!



Clean and Jerk—150 kg

Great starting position for Josh: hips above knees, shoulders ahead of bar.



Starting the first pull can be difficult, but here Josh keeps the back angle similar to the starting position. Also note the feet: he's back on his heels and pulling the bar back to his mid-thigh. A combined center of gravity between the bar and the body is important here in order to keep the bar in the line of least resistance.



The back could be tighter. It looks like he has softened it a bit—but I like his feet.



Burg's Eye ... (continued)

Josh is starting the second pull a tad early, but you can see his explosion ready to happen.



Knowing Josh, what I am really impressed with is that his arm pull is minimal. It has to be because when the arms bend, the power ends.



Note that Josh is beginning his shrug under the bar. Look at his left foot beginning its move back into the split position. The back foot will actually hit a tad before the front.



Can you imagine pulling 150 or so up this high? Great rack position!



Burg's Eye ... (continued)

Great recovery!



Nice rack for the jerk! Note the elbows slightly down so he can get more drive from the triceps to push his body down. The bar is not pushed up. The speed on the drive of the legs and hips is critical, but just as critical is the drive out of the arms to push the body down into that split position/receiving position.



I would like a bit more of chest-up position on this dip, but what I do like is that the drive is straight down with the weight on the full foot.



Note that Josh's weight is still on his full foot on the way up out of the drive, and the arms have not come into play yet. Great job, Josh!



Burg's Eye ... (continued)

Note the feet. The back leg is beginning its move. As in the clean, the back leg will hit before the front leg.



The back leg has hit, and Josh is now pushing his body under the bar.



Not bad! However, I would rather have a more vertical chest position here. Josh is a tad forward with the torso. He gets away with it, but if he had 160 on the bar he might not have been able to support it by what I call "stacking the bones."



Note the knee ahead of the ankle. I want the knee stacked over the ankle. Josh is a bit forward here.



His recovery is actually better. This is where his receiving position should be.



With the weight forward, Josh's recovery is slightly forward, which can make for problems with max attempts.



Good lift! Great athletes want the heavy weight, and Josh Everett is a great athlete!



About the Author

Coach Mike Burgener is the head coach of CrossFit's Olympic Weightlifting Seminars. *Mike's Gym* in Bonsall, Calif., is a USAW Regional Training Center, and Coach Burgener regularly works with top athletes and beginners there in the company of his unflappable dogs. Coach Burgener's son Casey is a top American lifter and national record holder, and his daughter-in-law Natalie, also a national record holder, competed in the 2008 Beijing Olympics, finishing 12th. Anyone who's worked with Coach Burgener will tell you that his enthusiasm and expertise are always worth a few more kilos on any lift.