

## CrossFit Works

The CrossFit world is full of amazing stories—here are some of the very best.

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Daniel Andrews, Mike Warkentin

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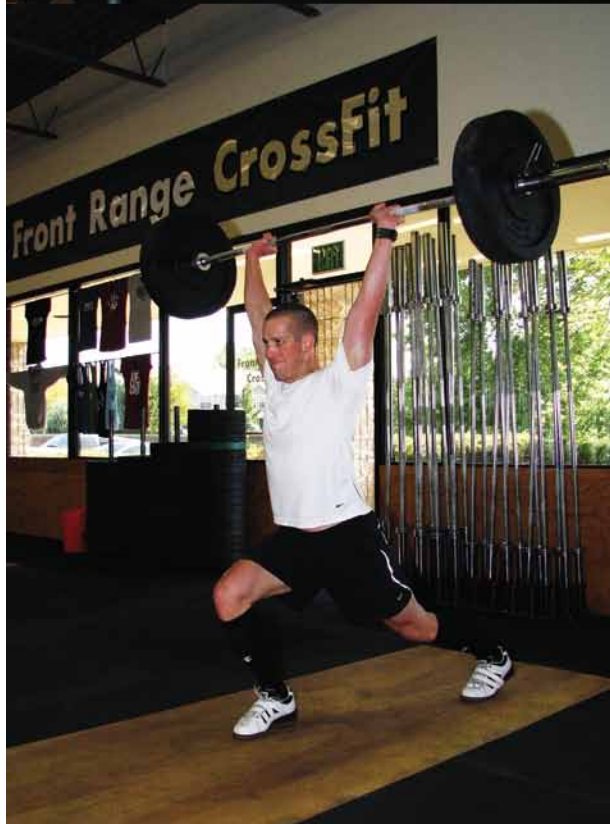
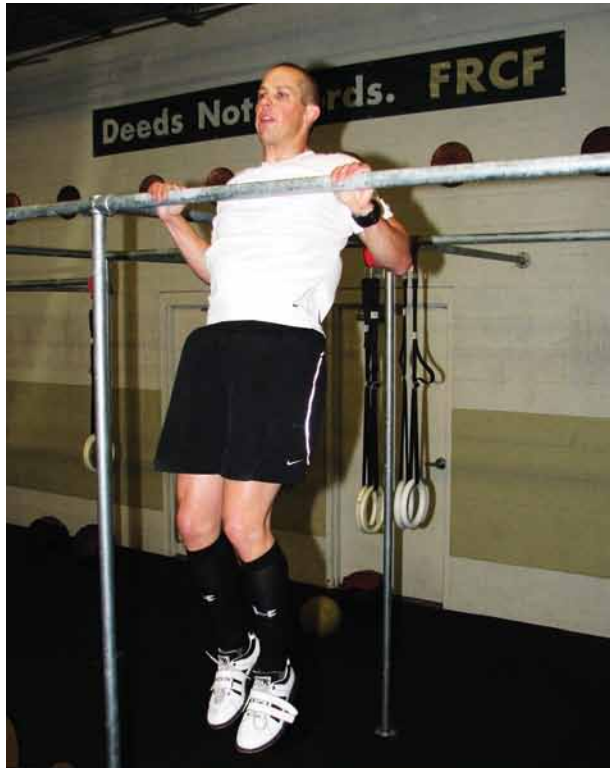
Courtesy of Daniel Andrews

CrossFit changes lives—we all know it.

In this regular feature, the *CrossFit Journal* compiles the most extraordinary stories from a community of extraordinary people.

In this edition, we feature a Denver police officer who helped lift a pick-up truck off a downed colleague, as well as a young woman who used what she learned in the CrossFit box to fight off an intruder in her bedroom.

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Skip and Jodi Miller/Front Range CrossFit

## 1RM Pick-Up Deadlift

Daniel Andrews

Prior to being introduced to CrossFit in October 2005, I'd spent the previous decade trying to "get huge" by following the standard muscle-mag protocols. You won't be surprised to hear I had little success. At one point, I managed to put on weight. I was about 25 lb. over what I now believe to be my ideal weight, but I really wasn't that strong, and I certainly wasn't fit.

Fitness is important to me because after 12 years patrolling the streets of Denver as a police officer, I've realized that many of the criminals are in their late teens; I'm the only one getting older. As a friend likes to say, when we took the oath to serve and protect, we gave up the right to be out of shape.

After an instructor at the Denver Police Academy pulled me into his office and showed me the [CrossFit.com](http://CrossFit.com) website, I was hooked and I've never looked back. I began by trying to do the WODs in the gym I belonged to, and when my wife and I moved out of our condo and into a house, we dropped our Globo Gym membership and started setting up a basement gym. After moving again, I now feel very well equipped in our garage gym.

Having never been to a cert and being un-coached until May (when I came under Skip and Jodi Miller's excellent tutelage at [Front Range CrossFit](http://Front Range CrossFit), I devoured [CrossFit.com](http://CrossFit.com), the *CrossFit Journal* and the daily comments, where I've long posted as "Denver Sheepdog." I still can't believe all the information is free for the taking!

I've enjoyed tremendous results by adhering fairly strictly to the main-site WODs. I've been running several marathons each year and getting faster every time by simply following [CrossFit.com](http://CrossFit.com) and throwing in a handful of CrossFit Endurance WODs as the races approach.

This summer I tackled the Pike's Peak Marathon (PPM), which has a total elevation gain and loss of about 15,000 feet, and I came in 25 minutes ahead of the average male finisher. Most of my competition probably wasted countless hours on long, slow distance training and had relatively poor functional fitness. Having an 892 lb. CrossFit Total and a four-hour marathon time is as all the validation I need for the CrossFit prescription.

By seeking to forge my own elite fitness, I've been able to defeat a violent felon who tried to disarm me and had over 40 lb. on me, and I won the Colorado Police and Fire Games 2009 Toughest Competitor Alive team event with my co-worker Todd Gentry. I was also surprised to recently set the Front Range CrossFit record for Nancy.

Fighting through some of the monumental WODs (Murph with armor, Eva and Tommy V are my biggest adversaries) has also helped me toughen my mind and spirit. As I heard Coach Glassman say in a recent *Journal* video, "Learning to stop that inner voice has enormous positive implications for anything you want to do in your life. Learn to never quit!" That increased mental fortitude has served me well in everything from marathons to marriage and fatherhood.

Although I've had first-hand experiences with many things that most of the world only sees on the nightly news, I would have never imagined the situation I found myself in on Aug. 19, 2009, as I drove home from a noon-time meeting, off-duty but in uniform. Having been on graveyards, I was barely awake and was seriously having trouble walking given that it was only three days after the Pike's Peak Marathon. As I approached a major intersection, I saw officers from several jurisdictions and some undercover detectives running with their guns drawn toward a Ford F-250 extended-cab pick-up that had left the roadway and appeared to be stuck on a retaining wall.

Never wanting to miss any action, I stopped my vehicle and ran (which was amazing to me) to get in the game. When I got to the truck I heard an officer yelling at his dispatcher to send a tow truck immediately—and then I realized someone was pinned between the chassis of the truck and the rock retaining wall. An undercover detective ran up and identified the man under the truck as a cop, Jefferson County Sheriff's Department investigator Art Peterson.

Someone began yelling that we should lift the truck up so Peterson could be pulled free. My immediate reaction was that even with the four or five men present, lifting the truck would be impossible. My next thought was that we owed it to our brother in blue to try.

There was no time for planning, so we all just grabbed a piece of the right rear corner of the truck, and someone counted off, "One, two, three, lift!" The curb weight of an F-250 is about 6,000 lb., and I couldn't tell if we were making enough progress until the wheel started to spin and kick back gravel. Obviously we'd gotten it off the ground. As

someone else put the truck in park I saw Peterson pulled from under the truck, and we all let go. I'm sure it was an ugly deadlift, but it got the job done—by the grace of God, I'm convinced.

I later learned that Peterson was part of an auto-theft task force and was trying to arrest the driver of the truck when she took off, dragging him down the road until she crashed into, and over, the retaining wall.

The past four years of loyally following the Glassmans' programming physically prepared me for a once-in-a-lifetime team WOD: 1 round of pick-up-truck deadlift. CrossFit also gave me the mental toughness to try something that seemed impossible, just like so many of the WODs appeared at first glance.

As a Christian, I rest in the belief that "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13). But my creator expects me to hold up my end of the bargain and do what I can with my 36-year-old, 5'9", 160-lb. body. To that end, I can't imagine anything better than CrossFit.



### About the Author

*Daniel and Stephanie Andrews and their seven-year-old son Ian live in Littleton, Colo. Daniel is a Denver Police corporal and field training officer. He finds it almost impossible to go to bed without knowing what the WOD is for the next day.*

## Functional Fitness in a Fight

Mike Warkentin

Call it a fight gone bad for one would-be rapist and a TKO victory for a CrossFitter.

Late in September, Cincinnati, Ohio, resident Katy Vander Roest was attacked in her home in Hyde Park. According to police reports, an intruder used a glass cutter to gain entrance to Vander Roest's apartment, where the 23-year-old was sleeping.

"I woke up because I felt like something was off," Vander Roest recalls. "I looked to my left and there was a guy on his knees, and his hands were under my blanket and I was sitting up. I touched his hands, and I felt rubber gloves ... I immediately thought I was going to get raped."

Vander Roest reacted instantly.

"I hit him twice in the face while I was still in bed," she says, "and then I jumped up, and then I remembered that he had rubber gloves on again. It made me angry instead of scared—and I beat the shit out of him."

She continues: "He was in my room probably for like two minutes, and I was yelling at him to get out, and I pushed him down the hallway like three times and yelled at him to get out."

After fighting the attacker out the front entrance, Vander Roest locked the door and called the police. She says the man arrested and charged in connection with the break-in got the worst of the battle: "His eyes were puffy and his face was messed up, and he had two cuts under one of his eyes."

Vander Roest has been doing CrossFit since February 2009 after being introduced to it by her boyfriend. She works out at [CrossFit Nasti](#) and occasionally takes a class or two at the MMA gym next door to the affiliate.

"I'm addicted to CrossFit and I love it," she says. "I just know that I'm a little more confident in how strong I am, so I knew I could handle (the attacker). I think I just reacted the right way."

She adds: "I was just angry and then I think I just learned from CrossFit that you're so strong, and I can handle things."



Vander Roest—5'8", 155 lb.— lists Cindy and DT as her favourite WODs, as well as anything that involves running. She notched a recent deadlift PR of 220 lb. and can string together 20 pull-ups after working for five months to get her first one. She can run a 54-minute 10K, and her 5k time is right around 24 minutes. She's confident her daily WODs have prepared her for the unknown and unknowable—even an attacker in her bedroom.

"If something comes up, you know how to handle yourself even though it's the last thing you expect," she says.

