

The Best Supersets Ever

[music]

0:00:11.8 Mike Vacanti: Hello, Jordan.

0:00:12.4 Jordan Syatt: Hello, Michael. We got this thing going.

0:00:14.7 Mike Vacanti: We got it going. I didn't have Wi-Fi. I'm obviously out of my normal element here in a different location, undisclosed, hidden location. And... But we're still getting the podcast in because we upload weekly on Tuesdays no matter what, forever.

0:00:31.5 Jordan Syatt: I forgot my microphone upstairs. I was late. A little combination. You're in your secret hideout bunker.

0:00:37.5 Mike Vacanti: Yeah. Slightly on delay. It's all good.

[chuckle]

0:00:42.4 Jordan Syatt: How are you doing, man?

0:00:43.2 Mike Vacanti: I'm good.

0:00:44.4 Jordan Syatt: You woke up early today. You woke up at 4:00 AM to coach Gary.

0:00:47.8 Mike Vacanti: Wow. Did you have that ready to go to J it as something to discuss, or did it just pop into your brain?

0:00:51.9 Jordan Syatt: Yeah.

0:00:53.1 Mike Vacanti: You had it ready?

0:00:54.1 Jordan Syatt: I had it ready.

0:00:55.1 Mike Vacanti: Man, you're good.

0:00:56.3 Jordan Syatt: You woke up at 3:50?

0:00:58.4 Mike Vacanti: I woke up at 4:25, I think my alarm was.

0:01:02.1 Jordan Syatt: Oh, really? I thought you started at 4:00 with Gary. Is it 4:30?

0:01:05.0 Mike Vacanti: No, we... [chuckle] He does a long commute to get into the city.

0:01:10.1 Jordan Syatt: Oh, I...

0:01:11.1 Mike Vacanti: Yeah. We worked out at 6:30.

0:01:12.3 Jordan Syatt: Got it, got it, got it, got it. I thought that he might've had a travel day or something and he needed to get it in early and that's why you're like, "Yeah, I gotta get up really

early to coach him."

0:01:21.2 Mike Vacanti: No, no, no, no, no, not a fourth. If he had a 6:00 AM flight and he had to wake up at 4 o'clock, we would not be lifting before that flight.

0:01:28.9 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah, yeah, I get it. Okay. That makes a lot more sense. How is the commute?

0:01:33.0 Mike Vacanti: Good. Got work done on the commute and he got a good workout in, came back, hit a lift, little upper body. And I've officially retired from barbell back squats as you and I were having a discussion about off-air. I'm retired. But it was a great workout. That's what's going on.

0:01:58.4 Jordan Syatt: What are you replacing barbell back squats with?

0:02:01.9 Mike Vacanti: I've been hitting full body three days a week. I'm just gonna take squats off of one day, so I'm only hitting legs two days a week. So my two primary lower body moves are deadlifts and Bulgarians, and then it's probably still 18-ish sets of lower body a week, even after taking squats out.

0:02:18.9 Jordan Syatt: Geez.

0:02:19.0 Mike Vacanti: 'Cause my hips hurt after squatting every single time no matter what I do and it's been like that for years. And I've taken 'em out and put 'em back in, taken 'em out and put 'em back in. And there's an element of ego, and then there's like wanting to chase a PR from 11 years ago that's like, "Oh, that would be cool if I squatted more than I ever have," but it just doesn't feel good on my hips at all and there are so many other lower body exercises that are just as effective that do feel really good for me, that at the ripe age of 36, I have put them on the back burner forever.

0:02:55.8 Jordan Syatt: It's so funny. It's like you'll have moments where you're like, "Oh yeah, I wanna hit a PR that when I was 22, that was really important to me." [laughter] And then after one set, you're like, "Oh yeah, I don't care about this at all."

[laughter]

0:03:14.1 Mike Vacanti: I don't understand people who can do really heavy sets of squats and lots of volume who don't have anger as their driving force.

[chuckle]

0:03:25.3 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, or they just really enjoy it. It's like, what is wrong with you? [laughter]

0:03:29.2 Mike Vacanti: Yeah. Like people who can basically squat close to failure heavy, just for the love of the game, that's a wild mindset to me.

0:03:39.7 Jordan Syatt: Yeah.

0:03:40.3 Mike Vacanti: And squats are different. Other compound lower body exercises are... I can't put my finger on it, but there's something absolutely brutal about a barbell back squat.

0:03:49.8 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. You feel your whole body crunching underneath the weight and as you get deeper into it, you feel like your rib cage being closed off. [laughter] It just... It's a difficult lift. And then you gotta drive outta the hole and sometimes you feel like your butt's gonna fall out of your butt. [laughter] It's just... It's not a fun... Especially a max effort move. It's just not the most fun thing to do.

0:04:16.0 Mike Vacanti: Yeah. So that's what's going on here. What's up with you?

0:04:24.5 Mike Vacanti: Hello, Jordan. Alright. In case that five minute intro doesn't work, here's what happened. Gary worked out really early this morning. I retired from squats. We had a few good laughs and we were both very delayed and couldn't hear each other.

0:04:37.9 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, we were talking about squats, how it's like you said, you don't understand how anyone could squat really heavy without anger fueling that lift. Yeah. It's funny. I had Eric Roberts over last week and we were lifting together. He's 27 and I'm 32. I'm still young. I get it. But there's a difference between 27 and 30, there just is. And we were lifting and he was going super fucking heavy. And he's strong as shit. This kid is unbelievably strong. And then I'm doing my sets and he's watching me and he's like, "Dude, you could definitely go heavier." And I was like, "Oh, I know, but I'm good." [laughter]

0:05:26.1 Jordan Syatt: And I'm watching his sets and every set, like the last few, are just grinders, RPE 9s and 10s, just going. And I'm like, RPE 7 to 8 basically every time. And he's like, "You could absolutely go up in weight." I was like, "Oh dude, I am well-aware that I could go up in weight." But something's happened in the last, I don't know how many, five years where if I do that like I used to, then I'm exhausted the rest of the day and it's just my workout...

0:06:00.9 Jordan Syatt: It's not worth it, 'cause then I can't function as a father, as a husband, as a business owner. Before, it would get me psyched and I'd be like, "That was such a sick workout." Now I'm just gonna keep working and have no issues. But after doing it a number of times as I've gotten older, it's like, I would rather take slightly reduced intensity and be able to clearly think and function the rest of the day. [laughter]

0:06:25.1 Mike Vacanti: There's so many good places to take this. Eric Roberts being an absolute beast in business and content and fitness. The under-discussed topic of like, especially for coaches who enjoy training themselves, how having very intense workouts actually makes business harder, it makes being creative harder, adds brain fog, naps become required. It just becomes harder to do things when you're pushing the intensity in your workouts. And that's just hilarious. I love when... 'Cause... Did you guys have two workouts together when he was down there?

0:07:07.8 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah. We technically had two, but one of them, I just did cardio for, and then the other one we lifted.

[overlapping conversation]

0:07:13.7 Mike Vacanti: I just remember him being like, "Oh, nice, man. That's..." You were doing some exercise and he's like, "Yeah, looks solid," and then later then, he's just ripping curls with a similar weight.

0:07:24.5 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. I was doing incline dumbbell bench for sets of eight with 65s at an RPE 7 and he was like, "Dude, you're ridiculously strong." And I was like, "Oh, thanks, bro." [laughter] And then the next day at the end of the workout, he's doing curls for sets of eight with 75 pounds.

0:07:53.9 Mike Vacanti: Which is insane.

0:07:54.5 Jordan Syatt: And I was just like, "You're a piece of shit. Why would you..." [laughter]

0:08:00.0 Mike Vacanti: "Tell me I'm strong?"

[laughter]

0:08:01.1 Jordan Syatt: "Why would you say that?" And I was like, "You're such a Dale-er. You're the ultimate Dale-er." Oh my God. Yeah, it was hilarious. And using very good technique on the curls. He was like, "No, I'm using cheat reps." I was like, "You're using maybe a little momentum, but to even consider curling with 75s is just wild." Yeah.

0:08:27.2 Mike Vacanti: Yeah. It's something that's important to consider. I mean, look, if your heart's in it and you're going all-out and you're taking that many sets close to failure and you're loving it, amazing. But it does seem to be correlated with age. The body just can't handle the same level of wear and tear year after year, decade after decade. And it's important. You can think about breaking your training up in sprints and into specific goals if you have maintenance periods, when you're more focused on business or more focused on something else, that's great. And then if you have other periods where you're more focused on some aspect of fitness, cool. Follow that interest level and that curiosity and where your passion lies at various times. But these are discussions we've had with clients all the time and with coaches in the mentorship about their clients, which is sometimes maintaining for a four or a six or even an eight-month period is a huge win. When you have 15 other things going on in life, when you're having the birth of a child, when things are very stressful at work, when, heaven forbid, there's some kind of tragedy, and if you can just get a few workouts a week in and not completely blow it on nutrition, that's a win in those periods of time.

0:09:48.4 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, that's exactly right. And going back to the age, that's like... I have so much respect for Tom Brady or LeBron James or even there's this guy in the UFC, there's multiple, but there's one named Glover Teixeira who's an active fighter. He's in his... He's 42 or 43 or something, and he was recently the champion of the world, the UFC champion at over 40 years old. And...

0:10:16.9 Mike Vacanti: Wow.

0:10:17.1 Jordan Syatt: Tom Brady and LeBron, all these athletes who... It's one thing to, I think when you're younger, to look at them and just be like, "Oh, wow, it's amazing," 'cause their skill's incredible, but then to actually see how it feels to be getting older and to still see that they're still performing at the highest level, it's insane. And then you can also extrapolate that to our clients, to your clients who are 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, 70s and understand, you cannot be pushing them, or you should not be pushing them unless it's just a unicorn or they're explicitly asking for that. If they are a regular person, there's no way in hell you should be pushing them to an extreme. This isn't their job.

0:11:01.1 Mike Vacanti: Yeah. Especially a young gun, macho, 22-year-old trainer, you're working with a 60-year-old who doesn't really have that level of interest in setting back squat PRs and it's like, "No, you're squatting twice a week." It's not a real program if it doesn't have... And most of us go through a phase like that, but...

0:11:23.1 Jordan Syatt: Yes.

0:11:23.5 Mike Vacanti: It's important to know your audience, to understand their goals, not to impose your own goals or interests as a coach on your client, but instead to actually listen, understand what they want to accomplish, and then tailor a program toward that end.

0:11:37.3 Jordan Syatt: It also makes me think about just the practicality of so many other things like, see these young Instagrammers, they're being like, "Okay, so here's my 48-minute morning routine that I do every day as soon as I wake up and I have Chai matcha tea and I meditate for 46 seconds, and then I do another meditation for 28 minutes, and then I do my yoga practice." And your clients are like, "Oh, I've got three fucking kids who are tearing the Christmas tree down and who are ripping each other apart and I can't do it." So it's like, okay, your life is not someone else's life. And then that also... I know a lot of coaches get really upset. They're like, "I have my clients fill out a weekly report and I wanna know everything about what they're doing and they don't do it." And we look at what the report is and the report takes 45 minutes to fill out every single week. It's like, don't expect your clients to... There are some will be able to do that, but the vast majority, you're trying to make their life easier. It shouldn't be another task on the list to do.

0:12:42.1 Mike Vacanti: Yeah. And this varies from coach to coach, but speaking from personal experience, something like between one in 10 and one in 25 clients, maybe closer to one in 25, one in 20 clients like to pour their heart out in a weekly update and it's therapeutic for them. You've had many like to pour their heart out in emails. That's one of the benefits of coaching is just getting thoughts out whether they're relevant or not to the process. But for the overwhelming majority of people, it's more need to know information in those updates that takes two, three, four, five minutes to fill out, not an extensive number of open-ended questions every single week.

0:13:28.0 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, that's exactly right.

0:13:32.8 Mike Vacanti: Alright. Do you want to talk about either... I'm trying to think of what the first subject was without pulling my phone out.

[laughter]

0:13:42.5 Mike Vacanti: I remember the second one. Do you want to talk about...

[laughter]

0:13:48.4 Mike Vacanti: We've had a little bit of a wild...

0:13:50.2 Jordan Syatt: You're gonna say the second one first?

0:13:52.0 Mike Vacanti: No, I'm not. Oh, actually, I had another... Okay. I have two good ones.

[laughter]

0:14:01.1 Mike Vacanti: Actually, I think I have one good one and one okay but fun one. Before we get into those, what do you think is the optimal, for you personally, answer for you personally and for anyone, the optimal feeding window per day in hours?

0:14:30.8 Jordan Syatt: For me personally, my optimal...

0:14:33.6 Mike Vacanti: To feel good and maintain solid body comp.

0:14:38.0 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. I would say for me personally, it would be somewhere between

11:00 and 12:00, 11:00 AM, 12:00 PM starting and 10:00 PM ending would probably be my time range. That would be the time window that I would have feeding versus fasting. What about you?

0:14:58.4 Mike Vacanti: So that puts you at 10 to 11 hours as the feeding window where you feel best.

0:15:05.0 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, exactly.

0:15:07.1 Mike Vacanti: I literally have written here, the 10 to 12-hour feeding window is amazing and the best for fat loss.

[laughter]

0:15:19.1 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. Why'd you write that?

0:15:22.7 Mike Vacanti: It's just something I remembered from times being in a slight deficit and feeling really good. It's different for everyone. And obviously we throw in feel good because different meal timing works for different people. Some people like a huge breakfast right when they wake up, others don't. Meal timing doesn't really matter for progress except to the extent that it lets you hit your calories, protein, macros, food quality, et cetera, during the day. But not eating for the first couple hours of the day, and then also not stuffing my face right before bed just feels good most of the time and allows me to stay reasonably full on a reasonable number of calories.

0:16:14.0 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, I agree. And also, it's not such a long fasting window that you ever get really, really hungry either. I think it's a good balance of both. I think it's one of the issues with people who try to extend their fasting window super long. By the time they break their fast, they're just fricking ravenous. And then that often makes... It makes the feeding window less enjoyable and less filling 'cause they start off so ravenous to begin with and it makes it harder to stick to.

0:16:43.5 Mike Vacanti: That's exactly right. On the other side of the coin, you have people who don't wanna have any "fast", meaning they start to get... Say, so 11:00 AM is when you... 11:00 AM, 12:00 PM is when you have your first meal. If around 9:00 AM or 10:00 AM, someone starts to feel a little bit hungry, if your goal is fat loss, that's normal. That's like... You should be feeling a little bit hungry at times and embracing that feeling, not starving obviously, not unable to focus or do whatever you need to do, but learning to embrace that feeling is gonna help you in the long run.

0:17:23.8 Jordan Syatt: Yes. Yeah. And if you're not hungry, then you're not in the deficit. But I remember when I was younger, I read an amazing quote from Dan John about strength training, and it was to the effect of soreness, being sore isn't an illness or something like that. It's not an emergency to be sore. It's okay. And it came from a place of understanding that a lot of people are like, "Oh my God, I get so sore, I'm gonna get so sore," and they get worried and that prevents them from training. He's like, "It's not a bad thing. It's not a marker that you're making progress inherently, but you shouldn't avoid soreness for the sake of avoiding soreness." And that made me think a lot about hunger and how a lot of people will avoid reducing calories because they're gonna get hungry and it's like, hunger is not an emergency.

0:18:14.1 Jordan Syatt: Hunger is... And especially in recent years, it's been demonized at the slightest whisper of hunger. Just eat whatever you want, queen. Eat whatever you want, king. You deserve it. You've earned it. Whatever. It's like, oh my God. At the slightest hint of a, "Oh my God, maybe I could eat something right now," it's like, well, go have that cookie. Go have that bag of chips. It's like, you couldn't say, I don't know, "Have some water and maybe an apple or, I don't know, wait 20 minutes and see if the hunger dissipates. [chuckle] It's very odd to see how many

people really freak out about it.

0:18:56.1 Mike Vacanti: And here's where I really like the 11, 12 hours, 10, 11, 12 hours, just kinda naturally being a feeding window rather than trying to do something like 18, six where you're confining everything into a six-hour window, or a four-hour eating window, or one meal a day, is that... Say you wake up at 6:00 AM and you're not going to eat anything until, say, your feeding window is 2:00 PM-8:00 PM or 3:00 PM-9:00 PM. Going from 6:00 AM-3:00 PM, and I did this back in the day, I played with larger windows on daily intermittent fasting, there's no way to avoid hunger. No matter how many... Not no matter how many, but if you're eating the same number of calories, if you're eating 2,000 calories in a six-hour window compared to a 10-hour window, when you eat those 2,000 calories in a six-hour window, the next day when you have to be awake for nine hours and you don't wanna just abuse caffeine, you're gonna get hungry to the point where it's detrimental to your life. And so having a little bit smaller meals, perhaps having more meals and spreading them out over a longer period of time helps a lot.

0:20:05.9 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, completely agree.

0:20:08.1 Mike Vacanti: Do you want to talk about...

[laughter]

0:20:14.3 Mike Vacanti: The biggest things someone can do to improve adherence, like dietary adherence, or the greatest supersets of all time.

0:20:29.0 Jordan Syatt: Let's do the supersets. What you just did also reminded me of something. My mom always... Now that I have a kid, my mom always tells me her greatest parenting strategies. She's trying to impart the wisdom on me. I don't ask, but she will tell me about it. [laughter] And some of them are actually very good. Some of them are great. One of the ones that she tells me a lot is that she wanted to give me... Make me feel like I had a voice and that my thoughts really mattered, but she also didn't want me to do stupid stuff. So, for example, when I was gonna get dressed in the morning, she didn't just say, "Hey, you're gonna wear this," she would pick out two outfits and she would say, "Would you like to wear this one or would you like to wear this one?" And that way I felt like I had a choice rather than just being like, "I'm gonna wear a cowboy hat and underwear and a cape." It's like, "Well, no, you gotta wear something appropriate."

0:21:29.9 Jordan Syatt: So she was able to pick out the appropriate thing, but then give me the option. So you just sort of did what my mom did, like, "Okay, Jordan, you could go in a lot of different directions, but I'm gonna give you two choices that you can pick from." And I'm really going with the one that I think that you are gonna like the most, is the best supersets.

0:21:47.7 Mike Vacanti: Oh, I like them both.

0:21:50.3 Jordan Syatt: No, but you really like the supersets one, for sure.

0:21:53.7 Mike Vacanti: I do. I like the supersets one.

0:21:56.3 Jordan Syatt: Okay, so let's start with that.

0:21:57.9 Mike Vacanti: So let's actually start with, what is a superset? A superset is generally a pair of exercises that you're alternating between. You could have more than two, but that would be, I guess, a tri-set or a circuit, some might call it. Rather than if you have three sets of five reps of a dumbbell bench press, you're... What are you laughing at?

0:22:26.7 Jordan Syatt: I was trying not to make it obvious. Every time you're saying superset, I'm thinking of that guy who's like, "Fucking supersets." [laughter] It's an old YouTube video. It's just going through my head. I'm trying so hard not to laugh every time you say it. "Fucking supersets." [laughter]

0:22:48.3 Mike Vacanti: Is that the "my new haircut" guy who did that?

0:22:50.3 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

0:22:51.9 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, yeah, classic.

0:22:53.5 Jordan Syatt: "Jägerbombs!"

0:22:54.4 Mike Vacanti: Doesn't hold up though, on the rewatch...

0:22:56.7 Jordan Syatt: It doesn't. It doesn't.

0:22:57.7 Mike Vacanti: Which is so unfortunate.

[laughter]

0:23:00.7 Mike Vacanti: Because that was the best YouTube video in 2008.

0:23:04.7 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah. That was so good. Oh, my God. Alright, anyway, so keep going with your the supersets.

0:23:11.7 Mike Vacanti: You have a dumbbell bench press, three sets, five reps. You're taking two to three minutes rest between each. And then say you have four or five more exercises during the workout. You do your warm-up sets on your dumbbell bench, and then you do your working sets, and then you do your warm-up sets on your bent-over row, and then you do your working sets, and then whatever, shoulder press, curl, whatever else you have, but three sets, three sets. Instead of... In an effort to reduce time in the gym and maybe for a little bit of psychological stimulation for some people, but mostly just as a way to save time, you hit a dumbbell bench, and then you hit your bent-over row for a set after that, and then you hit another set of your dumbbell bench, and then you hit another set of your bent over row. You're supersetting those two exercises. Do you have anything to add, I guess, on why superset other than saving time?

0:24:08.5 Jordan Syatt: So I'll add one more thing. Some people get really nitpicky with this. I personally don't give a shit. The example you just gave, the bench and the row is perfect 'cause that technically, if we're being really technical with it, it's opposing muscle groups is what makes a superset where it's like you would have like a push and a pull, a bench and a row. Apparently, there's the term for if you did the same muscle group, that could be like a compound set or a paired set where let's say you superseded a dumbbell bench press with a push-up, I still call that a superset, but I've said that online and there's always some motherfucker who's like, "Well, actually, that's actually a compound set 'cause of this muscle group." I'm like, I don't give a shit. It's the same thing. But there is a time and a place for... What's that?

0:24:56.5 Mike Vacanti: Isn't it just an agonist and antagonist superset?

0:25:02.4 Jordan Syatt: Would be another way to say it to make it more clear, yeah. I just know I've said it before, there's always someone who's angry about it.

[overlapping conversation]

0:25:05.8 Mike Vacanti: But both supersets.

0:25:09.1 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah.

0:25:09.7 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, but were they jacked and/or strong and/or not a fake natty? Were they talking about fiber types and the direction of lines of pull?

[laughter]

0:25:20.7 Mike Vacanti: Were they?

0:25:22.2 Jordan Syatt: I don't think they were jacked or strong, and I don't think that they were on steroids, either. I think it was just some nerdy coach who gets upset. It's the kind of coach...

0:25:32.8 Mike Vacanti: You know what, bless his heart.

0:25:33.2 Jordan Syatt: Who doesn't have a big audience...

0:25:34.5 Mike Vacanti: Bless his heart.

0:25:36.2 Jordan Syatt: Who gets mad that someone has a bigger audience than them even though they feel like they know more. And so then they send you angry DM shit saying that you're wrong about something that... I feel like that was the situation.

0:25:45.5 Mike Vacanti: Okay. So did you just tell me the exact person who it is too, by telling me that story?

0:25:51.4 Jordan Syatt: No. No, no. No, I actually did not... It's not... I don't even think it's a person that you know.

0:25:56.5 Mike Vacanti: I'm sticking to the story that even if, whether they're opposing muscle groups or not, a curl and a push down... You know what, here, then let me ask you this. What if they're not opposing or the same muscle groups? What if you're doing a barbell back squat with a barbell bench press? Is that not a superset 'cause they're not opposing muscle groups?

0:26:17.2 Jordan Syatt: I would say it's a superset.

0:26:18.5 Mike Vacanti: You got me tilted by this person, but we're just gonna press on.

0:26:21.3 Jordan Syatt: Yeah.

0:26:24.9 Mike Vacanti: Not actually tilted.

0:26:25.4 Jordan Syatt: There are a couple different... There are different reasons why it's superset. I think the main reason is saving time. I think it's the main reason why someone would use it. There are other reasons why you could use a superset. For example, there's something called a contrast set, which is another form of a superset, but a contrast set would look like you do a really heavy squat, for example, supersetted with a jump squat with no weight. And the reason you would do this is there's a term, it's called post-activation potentiation, PAP, if you wanna look into the

research, but when you go lift something really, really heavy and then essentially do the same movement without that extra weight, then you can actually generate more force and you'll be able to jump higher.

0:27:16.4 Jordan Syatt: The practical example of this in sports would be if you watch baseball, you see the On-Deck bat, or they put the donut on the bat and that makes the bat heavier for them to swing in the On-Deck circle. Then when they get back to... Then when they go actually up to the plate to start swinging and going against the pitcher, their bat speed is faster. They can get the bat around more quickly. So there are other reasons as well, but I think the main reason, especially in a general population thing, is save time.

0:27:46.7 Mike Vacanti: PAP.

0:27:47.3 Jordan Syatt: PAP. That's it. My favorite supersets especially for general population is a strength move with a mobility move. I actually don't even do many supersets with strength and strength. More of it's strength mobility, strength mobility, strength mobility. And I literally just got... I'll actually read you a... See if I can find the screenshot really quick. Someone in the Inner Circle posted during the live call the other day. Okay, perfect.

0:28:15.6 Jordan Syatt: So this woman, Meredith, I was doing the Inner Circle live and she wrote, "I just did the Lower Body Day from the June program a tad bit behind. And it's amazing that you work in the mobility moves into the workout. When I first did that Lower Body Day, I was like, 'Why is this necessary?' I want to lift LOL. But today my inner thigh was sore on the deadlift. And then I did the mobility exercise, partnered with it, and it stretched it out immediately and it felt better. Programming is genius." So it's like, especially for general population people who do not get enough mobility in, they're sitting down a lot of the time, I think having those paired together is so important 'cause a lot of them are not gonna warm up properly. They're not gonna go through an extensive seven, 10, 15-minute warm-up. They're not gonna stretch on their own. So rather than just sitting there texting on their phone in-between sets, I just have them do mobility exercise.

0:29:05.6 Mike Vacanti: It's really smart for the reason you just mentioned, and I've tested this with various clients, which is loading up a warm-up with mobility work, or having a slightly more brief warm-up, and then putting some of the most important mobility work, superset it in. One of the other big benefits of doing that is when you are pairing two strength exercises. Even... So when you're benching, your chest, your shoulders, your triceps are all fatigued, and then you get this rest time, and then you bench again. If you're doing a bent-over row, even though you're in-between, if you're supersetting those two, even though you're not fatiguing your chest, shoulders, and triceps on the bent over row, there's still systemic fatigue that is going to hinder performance on the bench. For example, if you're taking five reps a bench close to failure, and then you take a three-minute rest, and then you take five reps again, close to failure, you're gonna perform better than if you do the five reps.

0:30:09.4 Mike Vacanti: And then during your three-minute window, you also hit a heavy set of bent-over row as part of that three-minute rest, and then you go back to bench because there's total body fatigue to simplify what's going on. When you are hitting a mobility move instead of two strength moves, you're not fatiguing yourself at all. And so during that three minutes where you would be... Even if you're doing something somewhat productive, walking, going to get a drink, thinking about your next set, it's still more productive to get some mobility work in because you're not hindering your working set at all.

0:30:49.3 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah, completely agree. And also, it just feels really good, man. And I used to do more strength and strength supersets, especially when I was younger. I would do it

a lot and I would do it for my clients. And I still have them occasionally in the Inner Circle. I've just found that, going back to what we were talking about earlier, it's like, it's that fatigue and not even necessarily physiological as much as sometimes psychological where it's just like, it can be really difficult to bring the intensity that you want to bring, especially when your heart rate's already elevated, you're already fatigued, you're already tired, and then to hype yourself up for another heavy exercise even if it's an opposing muscle group can be very, very difficult.

0:31:29.4 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, that's certainly true. And over the years, something I've done is increase the rest time. If I have a client who's hitting two compound moves, superset it early in the workout, have at least 90 seconds between each, if not two minutes between each exercise, which means you're gonna be getting three to five minutes between the same exercise.

0:31:52.6 Jordan Syatt: Yeah.

0:31:56.4 Mike Vacanti: And yeah, more supersets of single joint movements later in the workout to get it in. Something that I like. I mean, there's a convenience aspect to supersetting, right? So if you think of a pec deck and a reverse pec deck, you're already sitting there like... It's single joint, higher rep range, like spinning around, getting both chest and rear delts in. There's also something to be said, and this is more like... This is more art than science, but on something like any kind of row variation, supersetted with any kind of bench variation. I like having a little bit of a back pump from the row for my bench because that helps with the mind muscle of making sure my shoulder blades are in the right place. It just feels better to have my back more activated when I'm benching. So that's a combination that I like.

0:33:02.1 Mike Vacanti: Bicep, tricep is a classic. Any kind of like, if you're already over by the cables... And this is something that needs to be thought of, especially with online coaching when you're not with a client in the gym. If you have someone in a commercial gym and you're having them do a barbell bench press and then, I don't know, go over and do a pull-up, and those are on the other side of, the opposite side of the gym, for some people, it can work. Maybe they're training in the middle of the day and maybe they have a home gym, great. But often, it doesn't. It's just too inconvenient. And so you can make a note like, if this doesn't necessarily work, breaking these up into straight sets works great. But thinking about the layout of the gym and coming at it from a logistical perspective, if you're gonna be supersetting any exercises is definitely something to think about.

0:33:51.3 Jordan Syatt: This is one of the reasons why I think it's so important for people to coach in person before they start coaching online. Because a lot of people, if you've never really lifted in a public gym or a gym like, I don't know, LA Fitness or Lifetime, or Gold's or any of that, if you've never lifted there and you've only lifted in maybe your own home gym or whatever it is, you don't understand that when you have a bench press, if you leave that bench press to go do exercise somewhere else, someone else has taken that bench press, or someone's gonna start taking your weights off, or someone's gonna come up to you and be like, "How much longer do you have?" And sometimes they get aggressive. It's like... And if you've never been in that environment, then you don't understand how that happens so you don't even consider all of these different options when you're programming for people who are working out in a gym like that.

0:34:41.0 Jordan Syatt: The art and science of program design, only part of it has to do with kinesiology and physiology. There are other aspects that are more societal and like understanding the psychology of your client, and are they gonna be the client who would be totally fine going between the leg press and the leg extension and going through that nonsense of making sure people aren't gonna get in their way, or do they have all that stuff in their own home gym or whatever it is? There's so much to consider even outside of the physiology and kinesiology and that's already a lot

to consider.

0:35:16.3 Mike Vacanti: Yeah. Yep. And for any beginners or people who are relatively new to the weight room, just a general rule of thumb, throwing some of your crap down near where you're working out is a good way to save a bench, save a... Whether it's your water bottle, a phone, your paper and pen or your notebook where you're writing down your workouts, slap it on there, leave the dumbbells right there. That generally is gonna lead to no one touching it for at least the one to three minutes that you need to walk somewhere else. Not guaranteed, that's for sure. I've seen plenty of people brush stuff aside and, "Oh, sorry, I didn't even see your keys and your phone and your notebook all sitting right there." I was like, "Okay."

[laughter]

0:36:00.1 Jordan Syatt: It was actually funny, when Eric was here... This is the first time I've ever seen this happen. We have a gym in my building that you know, and there's two squat racks, and there was a woman who was doing RDLs in one squat rack, and then, I don't know what the other exercise was, but she was using both squat racks and she was going back and forth between them, and she has just taken up all of that and then also had a bunch of dumbbells stacked up in order to be recording herself. I was fucking furious. I was like, "You're using both squat racks and you're taking a bunch of dumbbells, not even to lift with them, just so they can hold up your phone so you can film yourself." And Eric was funny. He just walks up to one of the squat racks and starts doing chin-ups on it and you can see that she got visibly frustrated, and then it was just like, "You're using both squat racks. This is wild."

0:36:53.2 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, it's... So sometimes the best thing to do... He didn't even say anything. He just went up and started doing it. And she didn't confront him at all, but it was like, sometimes just, if someone's taking up too much equipment, you don't even need to say anything, just start using it because you have a right to use it.

0:37:07.8 Mike Vacanti: That's also a super reasonable... Like if someone is squatting and taking four-minute rests, you can do chin-ups in the same space that they're. It's not like you're unracking their weight, taking the barbell and doing a curl and making them put their weight back on. You can use the same space in the gym, and to the extent you feel like communicating with that person, most people are very open to it. If I'm ever taking long rest times and I see someone around who wants to be using something, it's like, "Hey, if you wanna jump in, I'm taking three-minute rest, go for it," whether it's cables or anything like that. That's funny that he just jumped in. What was the move she was doing in the second squat rack? Do you remember?

0:37:45.2 Jordan Syatt: I'm trying to remember.

0:37:46.1 Jordan Syatt: Was she using the barbell?

0:37:48.4 Jordan Syatt: I don't remember. If I'd say anything, I'm just gonna be making it up. I just know in the other one, she was doing her RDLs 'cause she had the whole stack of dumbbells stacked up so that she could film herself.

0:37:58.0 Mike Vacanti: Are there only two barbells as well as two squat racks, or are there more barbells?

0:38:02.0 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, there's two... There might be three barbells, but one of them is like in a different part of the gym for, on like the landmine for rows and stuff. So there's two in the actual squat racks.

0:38:17.0 Mike Vacanti: Gotcha.

0:38:18.8 Jordan Syatt: What is one of your all-time favorite supersets for you personally? If you could design like for any muscle groups, for any workout, what is just one of your all-time favorite supersets?

0:38:33.6 Mike Vacanti: I listed the... Most of them boil down to convenience. And so the pec deck and the rear delt fly on the pec deck I love. I even like when you can use the same attachment, so you don't need to be switching on the cable. So a rope hammer curl with a rope tricep press down I like. I like a... I actually don't love this, but an incline... Usually, I don't love supersetting my first movement of the day because I'm going to be going pretty heavy. I probably wanna be focused on just that, but sometimes I do like to, if it's a little higher rep, depending on what the goal is or what I'm doing in that training phase. But a incline dumbbell bench with either a chest supported dumbbell row or a bent-over dumbbell row, you're in the same area, I... Again, for the reason of liking the back pump on the benching.

0:39:45.0 Mike Vacanti: Overhead work gives me... Has historically given me enough shoulder issues and discomfort in general that even though something like a... Some kind of overhead press with an overhead pull. So that could be a barbell OHP with a pull-up or a chin-up. I like the sound of that in theory, but in practice, it's just too much overhead volume in a short amount of time. So, I'm usually breaking those up. Although for clients who can tolerate it and enjoy it and don't have any complaints, I don't hate that, it's convenient, and it makes sense. And then, I mean, I guess it's not a superset, but there are... Like a back move with a curl immediately after, I don't mind, especially later in the workout. So, if someone's in like a back specialization phase, because that's what they want to focus on from a strength and muscular perspective, some kind of... Whether it's a seated cable row or a chest supported dumbbell row, followed immediately by some curling variation is cool.

0:41:03.3 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. I like that.

0:41:04.6 Mike Vacanti: How about you? You got any supersets you like?

0:41:07.9 Jordan Syatt: I like supersets, going back to the strength and mobility, I like a superset that really compliments how the strength movement is going to feel. Right? So for example, I like doing, we'll say, a goblet squat or any squat variation, supersetted with a split stance adductor mobilization. Because as I'm going through those sets of squats, I can get deeper and it feels way better from doing that superset. Or if I'm doing a hamstringing curl, glute ham raise, whatever it is, I'll superset that with a hamstringing stretch. So I really like... Even if I'm doing a bench press, a dumbbell bench press, whatever it is, I'll superset that with some type of like a pec mobilization. So it's movements that help me increase my range and essentially make the strength movement feel better throughout that workout. So those are my favorite ones.

0:42:04.1 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, I hear you. No PAP?

0:42:08.5 Jordan Syatt: Those are fun. I do like PAP. I do like... I think I'm gonna start adding some more of that in just for athletic purposes.

0:42:16.0 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, for yourself. That's not...

0:42:17.5 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah, not something I would put in the Inner Circle.

0:42:19.7 Mike Vacanti: Yeah.

0:42:20.7 Jordan Syatt: No. No. I'm not gonna tell the Inner Circle members to load up a heavy fucking squat, [laughter] and then like, "Alright, now I want you guys to jump really fucking high." I would never ever, ever do that. Yeah. Another thing I won't do... I love cluster sets. I love cluster sets. And I love cluster sets for gen pop, even Inner Circle members. But there's different types of cluster sets. So for example, I will never program squat cluster sets because every time you have to re-rack... Like most people will often get hurt in a squat during the un-rack or the re-rack.

0:43:02.1 Mike Vacanti: Explain what a cluster set is for people.

0:43:04.4 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. So a cluster set is... We'll say... Let's say you're doing three sets of six. So three different sets of six reps. Anyone who's lifted for any period of time understands that those last reps are difficult. Technique tends to break down, it is the most difficult to use good form and to produce enough force to when you're starting to fail. So a cluster set, instead of doing a set of six straight sets, one example would be you do two reps, and then you take a 10-second rest, then you do two more reps, and then take a 10-second rest, and then you do two more reps, and then you're done. That's one cluster set of 2-2-2. So the same amount of work is done. You get the same amount of weight lifted, the same total work, same total volume, all of it. It's just you take brief bursts of rest in-between every two reps. It doesn't have to be 2-2-2. It could be 1-1-1. It could be 3-2-1. It could be like any combination that you want, you get the same total amount of work done, same intensity, same exact stress on the muscles, it's just you get a little bit more rest.

0:44:11.5 Jordan Syatt: And I love doing it for deadlifts. I love doing it for rows. I love doing it for push-ups. I love doing it for chin-ups. I love doing it for so many different movements. But I would never do it for a squat because you have to re-rack the bar and then un-rack it between every single cluster. And oftentimes, people get hurt during the re-rack or the un-rack. And then not to mention, you have to get set up every time, so the rest ends up being like 20-30 seconds instead of 10 seconds. Whereas with a push-up or a deadlift or a row, you can legitimately have 10-second rest. So it not even just like the... Not just like, "Oh, cluster sets are great." It's like, "Well, which cluster sets? And in which situations would you do it?" I probably wouldn't do it for bench press either 'cause you'd have a lift off every single time you're lifting it off in-between every single cluster, your scaps are getting out of position and it's a whole shit show.

0:45:01.5 Mike Vacanti: Those are probably the two main ones that you wouldn't do it on, are a squat and a bench press.

0:45:08.6 Jordan Syatt: Yeah.

0:45:09.3 Mike Vacanti: Just with so much physical and mental energy and focus required to properly un-rack and make sure you're in the proper position before hitting that first rep, and then it's like, "Oh, well just don't rack it." It's like, well, that's not really a rest if you're just standing there with...

[laughter]

0:45:28.4 Mike Vacanti: A whole bunch of weight on your back, or if you're just laying there holding that bar straight above your neck. Yeah.

0:45:35.9 Jordan Syatt: Yes, exactly. The whole purpose of clusters is to be able to lift more than you would... You'll be able to lift more with a cluster of 2-2-2 than you would be able to lift with just a straight set of six. Which actually means like, I was wrong before, you're actually probably

gonna be lifting more weight and getting more total work done just with slight rest. So if you're holding that bar, like you said, just over your neck with heavier weight than you would normally, you're completely... You're ruining the purpose of this cluster set.

0:46:06.0 Mike Vacanti: Yeah. The mid-set break is a classic move though. Late in the workout, trying to take it to failure, squeeze out some extra reps. Different than a cluster set though. Different conversation. Great episode.

0:46:20.5 Jordan Syatt: Awesome episode, Michael. That was great. Thank you everyone for listening. We hope you enjoyed it. If you did, please leave a five-star review. And we hope to see you in the mentorship. If you wanna grow your online fitness business, you know the place to go. Go join us at the link in the show notes. Have a wonderful day. We'll talk to you soon.

0:46:38.8 Mike Vacanti: See you soon. Goodbye.

[music]