

My First Half-Century in the Iron Game

33

We all make mistakes, and I have certainly made far more than my own fair share of them, but we don't have to lie about them afterwards; personally, I have never been critical in regard to the mistakes of other people, but I have been very critical about some of their outright lies. Fred Hatfield is a case in point; in a recent article (*Muscular Development*, July, 1995) entitled "The Days of Whines and Poses," he published several lies about me.

He said, among other things . . . "Everyone these days has been asking me lately if my quads are predominantly red muscle fibers. At first, I couldn't believe how anyone could ask such a stupid question. I guarantee you, a 40-inch vertical jump and a 1,000-plus squat cannot be accomplished with red fibers.

"At this point, further discussion with such individuals becomes virtually spurious. Where did they ever get such a goofy notion? No less a personage than Arthur Jones said it in one of his never-less-than-incredible diatribes in one of the other muscle mags. Said Mr. Jones, 'Hatfield's quads are the weakest I've ever tested.'

"I gotta get this off my chest before I burst! Arthur, you ... you ... aerobic wannabe!

"The self-proclaimed greatest exercise physiologist who ever lived did indeed test my quads. I was down at his gator-infested air strip in Ocala once a few years ago. Rather than incite his ire, I submitted to being tested. Hey! What would you have done? And I didn't have the guts to tell Arthur, who was at the time reputed to be packing a concealed revolver. So, I obligingly grimaced and pushed with what appeared to be great effort.

"Arthur appeared content. Little did I know that the bogus data he collected would find its way into one of his half-baked training theories! (Do you know that there are still people out there who continue to believe Arthur's one-set-to-failure principle?)

"Hmm! Sorta makes you wonder why anyone would give this guy a forum."

So much for Hatfield's published lies; now we will discuss the truth: Yes, Hatfield visited me, at my expense, nearly ten years ago, in the early winter of 1986; and, yes, while he was here we tested the full-range strength of his quadriceps muscles (leg-extension strength), tested him twice.

But, no, it was not my idea to test his strength; quite the contrary, he insisted on being tested; then, when the first test indicated a very low level of strength in his quadriceps muscles, he was literally stunned by the results. Then he insisted upon a second test that was conducted about 24 hours after the first test. And, guess what? . . . his second test results were almost identical to the results of the first test.

At the time I told him . . . "Look, Fred, if twenty years of hard training has not done it, then twenty-four hours certainly won't do it." All of his test results were recorded by a computer, and I still have those test results. Secondly, I have at least a dozen witnesses who observed those tests.

Shortly before Fred's visit to my "Gator-infested air strip" (which, as it happens, is the largest privately-owned airport in the world, built to handle Jumbo Jets, and where, at that time, I did have a collection of more than 4,000 alligators and crocodiles since we were farming them for both their meat and skins), I had published an article entitled "Exercise, 1986, the present state of the art . . . now a science."

Fred visited my facilities in order to attend several day-long medical seminars where we were presenting the first, and still the only, meaningful tools designed to test human functional abilities, strength, ranges of movement, and muscular endurance. More than 250 of these medical seminars were conducted during 1985 and 1986, and were attended by thousands of medical professionals from all over the world.

The Arthur Jones Collection

During each of these seminars we conducted strength tests with large numbers of subjects, some being our own people and some being visitors; so before he was tested Fred had already seen at least fifty tests that were conducted with other people. His real intention, I suspect, was a desire to show off, to show us that he was far stronger than any of the other subjects. But, surprise, surprise! Rather than being unusually strong, he proved to be less than average in quadriceps strength.

I have never said that he was “the weakest subject I ever tested,” but I have tested several women who were stronger than he was, in spite of the fact that they weighed less than half as much as he did.

In addition to a very low level of strength in his quadriceps muscles, Fred’s tests also indicated two other factors: ONE, he had enormous endurance in these muscles; TWO, he showed very little fatigue from an exercise carried to a point of failure. Both of which test results clearly indicate that he has a very high percentage of so-called “slow-twitch” fibers in these muscles. A fiber type which also explains his low level of quadriceps strength.

Then, you might ask, how could he squat with more than 1,000 pounds? Well, for one thing, what they call a squat is in fact more like a half squat, certainly nothing close to a full squat. Secondly, the quads are not the “prime mover” in such a so-called squat; yes, the quads do contribute to squatting strength, but in fact the most important muscles in that movement are those of the hips, the lower back and the rear of the thighs (hamstrings).

Fiber type in muscles is determined by genetics, and is not subject to change, so it is not Fred’s fault that his quads are relatively weak; but such fiber type is not consistent from one muscle to another, you may have primarily fast-twitch fibers in one muscle and slow-twitch fibers in another muscle. So, given his ability in the squat, it is obvious that he has different fiber types in the other muscles involved in a squat. If he had slow-twitch fibers in all of these muscles then he would not be doing anything with 1,000 pounds, probably could not get up out of a chair without help.

During his visit, in attempts to demonstrate just how smart he was (and how dumb we were), Fred raised several points which he assumed would be new to us, factors he assumed that we had not previously considered. But every time he mentioned one of these factors, I immediately whipped out a copy of an article on that subject that I had published fifteen years earlier; articles that he had never read, articles that were the first published mention of any of these factors. Nothing that he said was new to us, but almost everything that we said was new to him.

In an earlier article, published in another magazine a few years back, Fred stated that I now admitted that “one-set-to-failure” training was worthless, or of very little value. Which statement was another outright lie on his part.

On the day that Fred departed California in one of my jets in order to visit us in Florida, both Fred and Joe Weider signed a contract in which they both agreed to publish my article, “Exercise, 1986 . . . the present state of the art, now a science.” Agreed to publish it word for word as written, without editing.

But, of course, they never quite got around to publishing it; because, I suppose, publishing it might serve to give me at least some credit, and I have yet to see a single example of either Weider or Hatfield giving anybody credit for anything.

Although, when he visited me in Florida a year or so earlier, Weider did ask me for some advice: he never had, he said, much luck with girls, did not know how to attract them, and wanted me to tell him what to do in that regard. But, as they say . . . “Them as can, do; them as can’t, teach; and them as can do neither criticize.”

Frankly, I would now be a hell of a lot better off if I had been far less successful in that regard. But, again, as the old German supposedly said while walking down the street with a young blond under each arm . . . “Why do we get so soon old and so late smart?”

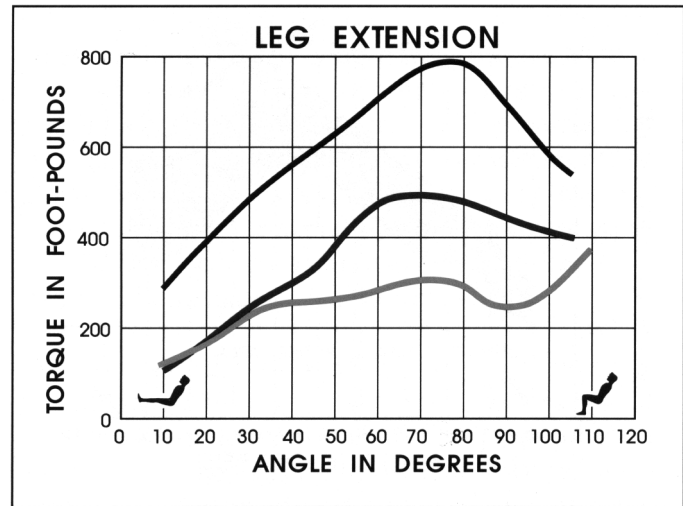
For his part, if Fred is willing to put his money where his mouth is (which I doubt), I hereby challenge him in the following manner: for a cash bet of \$10,000.00, I will retest his quadriceps strength in comparison with a man who weighs more than 60 pounds less than he does, and give him another clear example of just how strong quadriceps muscles are capable of being, providing they have the right type of fibers.

The Arthur Jones Collection

At one point in his published lies, Hatfield mentioned my “bogus” test results: well, be informed, we tested his strength with the only tool capable of performing such tests in a meaningful manner. Not the “best” tool, but literally the “only” such tool.

Was it a “perfect” tool for its intended purposes? No, it was not; not yet, at least; but it was damned close, and we were clearly aware of and understood any remaining problems.

At the time Hatfield was tested, we had been working continuously for more than fourteen years in attempts to provide a perfect tool for its intended purposes, but were still not totally satisfied with it. Another five years of work were required before we were satisfied with it. Altogether, it took us nineteen years and three months to solve all of the problems that we encountered in our attempts to produce a perfect testing tool; such work started in January of 1972 but was not successful until April of 1991.



The lowest curve on this chart shows Fred Hatfield's fresh, full-range strength of the quadriceps muscles, compared to the fresh strength of the strongest man we ever tested in this manner, strength shown by the much higher curve.

So if Hatfield was trying to downplay the validity of the testing tool, then he was way off base. But if, instead, he was trying to imply that his efforts during the testing procedure were less than maximal, that he only pretended to perform the test properly, then he is again way off base; because our testing tools are provided with what we call a “wimpometer,” and this gives us the ability to know whether or not a subject is producing a maximal effort. You may be able to fool the person conducting the test, but you cannot fool the testing machine. So, in fact, Hatfield almost busted a gut in his attempt to produce as high a test result as possible.

Secondly, insofar as his remark about rumors to the effect that I carried a concealed revolver, I will point out the fact that I had a permit from the State of Florida to carry a concealed gun. I look upon a pistol in much the same way that I do a tourniquet: you hope that you will never need one, but if you do then you need it badly, need it quickly, and nothing will take its place. Remember: Hatfield isn't the only kook running loose out there.

So . . . having heard from the other end, you have now heard from the horse's mouth.