

**Tom Corrigan RKC**  
**Kettlebell Lifting for CrossFitters**  
Notes by Eugene R. Allen

**O**n Saturday 051306 Kurt Bowler hosted a kettlebell seminar at his Puyallup, Washington facility - Rainier CrossFit - instructed by Tom Corrigan RKC and assisted by Samantha Young RKC. Samantha was recently featured in Pavel's Vitalics magazine and is a national champion diver who just got a full ride scholarship to Berkeley. She recently did two hundred and forty some snatches with a 26 pound kettlebell in 10 minutes at a bodyweight of about 120 lbs. Samantha told us that kettlebell training and CrossFit has helped her diving substantially by improving her endurance for longer training sessions and her explosive power off the board.



**For the Hard of Reading:**

If you have a really short attention span and the patience of a 5 year old with a can of Coke and half gone basket of Halloween candy and you want no part of what you consider to be data mining from this document to get a nugget of information here and there you can use, allow me to present the Cliff Notes version:

**Grab bell by the horn**

If you are going to clean or snatch your bell grip it all the way to the horn (that's the vertical part that sticks up out of the round part of the kettlebell) on the thumb side of your grip. This way when you clean the bell the handle will be sitting at an angle downward and away from your thumb and on the heel of your palm.

**Swing down thumb down, swing up thumb up**

Have you ever noticed that when an RKC swings their arm sans a bell as if doing a one handed swing they have their thumb sticking out and it points down as they swing their arm down then up at the back of the swing? When they swing their arm forward their thumb points downward as their arm arcs up but at the top of the swing their thumb begins to turn up. The idea is to go around the corner rather than over the top in order to minimize the impact of the bell on the back of your wrist. You can apply this concept to the snatch and make it less of an over the top movement and more of a soft roll around your wrist movement...with a little practice.

**Pressing tips**

Begin your presses with your forearms vertical rather than against your chest in the rack position. As you press the weight upward allow your forearms to drift out to the side as they go upward but do not let your biceps line up with chest until your elbows are above or at least in line with your shoulders.

**Breathing tips**

Remember that Coach is a big advocate of breathing and thinks we should all do it. Especially when exercising. Tom suggested a sip of air when you begin your movement that goes to the belly and tightens up your abdomen. Then squirt a little air out at the completion of the exertion phase of the exercise only to suck in a bit as you return to the start. Short quick breaths.

**Eyes forward**

Don't look down as you do your KB work but don't look up either. Keep your eyes facing forward. The exception here is when doing things like the Turkish Get-up, the squat snatch or other similar lifts where you have to look at the kettlebell.

[www.k2fitness.net](http://www.k2fitness.net)

These kettlebells have the exact same feel as the Dragon Door bells insofar as the handle height, thickness and horn width but with the added attraction of a very nice glossy painted finish and a cheaper price than Dragon Door. The painted surface is very smooth but is not slippery and they look terrific. They are not simply a painted version of some other kettlebell, they have a nice raised K2 logo and if you like DD bells you will love these. Unlike the PowerMax KB's you can get both hands into the handle for the swings and when you do the H2H stuff the bell swings evenly. The PM bells have a heavier handle relative to the weight of the bell so when you release it the handle does not rotate consistently and it makes it hard to catch. The K2's have a sort of uptown gym look as they have a high tech shine and finish as compared to the flat, caveman sort of appeal of the Dragon Door bells of the Party and they take paint very well in case you want to personalize them. (The photo is of DD bells and PowerMax bells).



Tom warned us right off the bat that CrossFitters are strong enough to hurt themselves, the implication being that it is very important to up your dose of KB weights with caution so as not to go from the cutting edge of fitness to the...ummm, I don't have a clever finish there but his point was to get the form down first with a lighter bell and then go up in weight only after your form is solid. The rest of this line is here just to make it even with the picture.

## Swing Progression

As an indicator of just how important the squatting motion is in KB work, it was the very first thing we did. Tom had us all squat to rock bottom and loiter there for a bit as he took a look at our positions. You know the drill, feet about shoulder width apart with the toes very slightly out, knees track over the toes but not past them, hold the curve in the lower back, weight on the heels, back flat, shoulders pulled back, chest out, head up and eyes forward.

Satisfied with our squats we put kettlebell between our feet at the midpoint of our arch and squatted down until we could grab the handle. Then we stood up with it for a KB deadlift. You are not bending over of course but rather sitting back as if sitting down on a box. Stick your butt back and be careful not to collapse, sit with control folding at the hips and then stand with the bell the same way, but in reverse.

After a few slow reps we picked up the speed a bit for a rhythmic deadlift being certain to push with the heels driving vertically. It was easy to see that the harder upward acceleration with the legs lent itself to the lifting of the kettlebell and created the swing. With the addition and moderation of a forward and slightly upward thrust of the hips the swing can be adjusted from a very low hip height movement through chest high, chin high or all the way overhead in the American swing which is the CF method.

Notice how Samantha's head is just slightly behind her heels here as she does a low swing. She needs to counter balance the weight of the bell with that lean and she has just thrust her hips forward to get the bell to swing. This is not an arm lift at all but an extension, a projection of the bell through the power of the legs and hips. Here Tom is demonstrating the next level of swing progression by having a partner hold his hand at your belly button height and swing the weight up to where it just touches their hand. It is to develop the accuracy of your swing so that you can send it to whatever height you want through the proper degree of hip thrust. After we did this we added a bit of power and Tom showed us that with sufficient leg and hip extension you can launch yourself off the ground in a flat footed hop which demonstrates the power of the movement. He made a point to remind us that you should not *try* to leave the ground but rather to simply, forcefully, powerfully extend your hips. Leaving the ground is just evidence of how much power you are creating with your swing.



If you have trouble with your hip extension and can't seem to do anything but throw the middle of you generally forward, try this drill. Lie down on your back as Samantha is doing here and put a ball between your knees. Squeeze your knees together to isolate your hips and lift your hips up and down to get a sensation for what a proper hip thrust should feel like. You will notice that your hips don't go

straight up and down but rather upward and backward slightly (toward your head) so that if you were standing up the movement would be belly button slightly upward not straight ahead. Having the ball between your knees insures you are using your hips to do the movement rather than just hiking yourself up and down by extending your legs.

Keeping this sensation in mind get back up and do some swings in such a way that you extend your legs downward through your heels and your hips forward to project the kettlebell away from you. Since the weight is limited in its forward motion by the attachment to your shoulder, the kettlebell will rise in a short arc and it is the arc of travel you want to influence with your forward and upward hip thrust. Sip of air in on the way down and a short squirt of air out as you swing the bell upward.



## Swing Variations



Take your kettlebell for a walk. Rather than just hanging out in place try some walking swings for a change of pace. Just as you get to the top of your arc take a quick step with each foot winding up with your feet side by side again as the bell goes back down. Be sure to step with the same foot first each time so you don't have to think about your feet. Begin with just a few steps on a flat, level surface then add more steps, then go up hill then try stairs. Careful on the stairs. Tricky.

Try one on for size. When you have the two hand swing well in...um, hand, give one hand swings a go. Be sure to center your hand as you swing so that you pass the bell between your legs and not into a knee. You will have to compensate for the asymmetrical loading by pulling back the shoulder and hip on the side holding the kettlebell and really focus on the hip extension and forward/upward thrust of the hips to generate enough power to get a proper swing

When you tire of setting the bell down to switch hands, switch at the top of the swing and as your bell dexterity and timing improve try letting go at the top of the swing and then grabbing it with the other hand. This is not a beginning concept to be sure but certainly something easily attained with practice. For more details on letting go of the bell and grabbing it again; in other words, passing it Hand2Hand, check out Jeff Martone's wonderful trio of videos on the topic of kettlebell juggling. Great stuff.

## The Clean

Moving the bell from the floor to the position the girls are showing here is called the clean. Once the bell shows up in this position it is called the rack. Check out the racks on these girls. Red has her wrist bent a bit and the bell is not held in the hollow of her arm. It is a bit too far to her right so that the bottom of the bell protrudes outside the line of her body. Black has the bell pulled in tightly so that it is being supported by her body rather than by her arm. Her hand is near her centerline and the bell, her hips and her feet are in alignment. This rack position is very important and is the place from which the overhead lifts, the squatting movements and repetition cleans are done. Thanks to Amy and Amy for showing off their racks.



To learn how to clean properly, that is to get the bell from the ground into the racked position, it is best to start from the rack and work backwards from there. To do that start with a kettlebell between your feet and grip it to the left of center with your right hand all the way up against the horn. Stand with the bell and do a sort of cheat curl so that you use your left hand to help lift and situate the bell in a solid rack position. The bell sits in the hollow made by your bicep and forearm, your wrist is straight and the bell handle sits diagonally from the web of the thumb to the heel of your hand, fingers are loose as there is no need to tightly grip the kettlebell and you have your hips slightly forward to line up the bell, your hips and your heels.

Talk a walk with the bell like this and get used to the position. It should be solid and not require muscular effort to maintain. If it does, your alignment is wrong and you have to adjust the position until your skeleton supports the weight not your muscles. After you switch sides a few times and get accustomed to the rack position we need to lower the weight. Gravity is a great help here and can be relied upon to do just about all of the work. Let it. The bell should be fairly secure where it is so it won't fall to the ground by itself. In order to do that you need to get your body out from under the weight with a tiny shuck with your shoulder and a rearward movement of your hips. You can make the bell fall straight down and then stop the descent just before it hits the ground by tightening your grip and tensing your body to receive the weight or you can let the bell fall slightly forward so that it swings in an arc back between your legs. You do the first one to repeat the dead hang type clean with the lawnmower pull and the second one with the arc if you are doing a swing clean.

Cheat curl the bell back up to the rack position and continue lowering the bell as described until the movement is smooth and thoughtless. The lowering of the bell now becomes the first part of the movement and the clean the second. Having established the downward path simply reverse the movement and quick as you please there's your clean.

## **COOLEST THING I LEARNED AT THE SEMINAR**

When you get some instructional DVD's about kettlebell lifting you will occasionally see an RKC doing the swing movement without a kettlebell as a demonstration of the range of motion. You may notice that when he is at the bottom of the swing he will rotate his hand so that his thumb is facing up when his hand is way back between his legs. Then when pulling back up his hand will rotate in time with the raising of the arm so that his thumb is sideways when his arm is horizontal to the ground rotating to a thumbs up position at the top of the swing. Swing down thumb down, swing up thumb up. In addition to being a very theatrical way to hitch hike this motion provides a wonderful rotation to the kettlebell that allows it to "go around the corner" when doing the clean or snatch rather than flopping over the top and bashing the bejesus out of your forearm. This rotational movement is especially useful for high repetition cleans and snatches and when timed properly seems to use just slightly less energy than the pull/push, putting on a sweater thing you do with the snatch to make the handle rotate around the bell to reduce the impact. The thumb rotation method takes a little practice in order to get the timing down, but once you get the feel for it you will find that both your swing and clean take on a completely new look and feel and you will suffer just a little bit less from BFS.

## **Battered Forearm Syndrome**

Tom had some old gym socks with the foot part cut off for anyone that wanted to enjoy that experience (he insisted they were clean) and showed us the wraps the girevks use in competition. For the wildly reckless or incredibly tender, football type soft forearm pads can be used to soften the blow until the proper clean technique is mastered. It is a good idea to start with some sort of padding in order to not scare away new people who decide that kettlebell lifting causes forearm pain and injury and is to be avoided.

In addition to going around the corner rather than over the top with both the snatch and the clean, it is important to absorb the shock with the legs. Don't just let the bell, especially a heavy one, just fall onto your arm and certainly don't stand up into the descent, instead absorb the shock with a slight knee bend just as the kettlebell lands. This becomes less and less necessary as the hitch hike hand rotation is mastered because the bell never really falls on you.

## **Preparatory Exercises for the Clean**

For those that still struggle a bit with the clean movement because they can't seem to pull high enough or they pull at the wrong angle or they move their hand the wrong way at the top of the pull, here is the fix. Try some high pulls (envision Sumo Deadlift High Pull) with a single bell to about nipple height. The pull comes straight up and the bell should be horizontal at the top of the pull. This is called the lawnmower pull and it does not have an outward curving arc. In order to do this high pull properly you must forcefully extend the legs downward and the hips forward as you pull upward. At the top of the pull the bell will be weightless for a moment. Repeat this movement several times to get a feel for when the bell just sits in space neither rising nor falling. It is at that moment that you want to punch yourself in the face. Sorta. To practice this uppercut kind of movement have your partner hold the bell for you at the height where the weightless thing happens. They are to manipulate the bell so that you don't have to carry any of the weight as you move the handle thorough a specific range of motion. You begin from the position where your fist, elbow and bicep are all in line parallel with the floor at about shoulder height with the bell also horizontal to the ground and facing away from you being held by your partner. Bring your whole arm, hand down a few inches as you rotate your hand (and the handle) inward and as your elbow continues to drop bring your hand upward toward your face as if you were going to punch yourself to the jaw. Your hand traces a U shape and the bell winds up in the rack position. Bring your hips forward (not your shoulders backward) to line up the kettlebell, your hip and your foot just as the bell nestles itself in the crook of your arm. Do enough reps with your partner to get a feeling for the U shape your hand will describe in the air and with a light kettlebell do several high pulls and just when you feel the bell float draw that U shape with your uppercut making sure the bell goes around your wrist and not over your fist. Don't let the bell bang your arm – if it does you are probably letting the bell flip over the top of your fist. Remember to let the bell's mass just rotate on its own central axis with the handle moving and the mass of the bell just hanging out in space as your fist and wrist go from above to below the bell, and be sure to absorb the shock with a slight knee bend just as the bell gently settles into the rack position. Well done. Nice rack.

Another preparatory exercise Tom presented was the six-gun. Imagine the old west gunslinger doing a quick draw and firing from the hip. Do the same with your bell but refrain from shooting anyone. The handle is vertical with your thumb facing up. You swing the bell between your legs with your hand in this alignment throughout the swing. It doesn't take much of a flip of the wrist to have the bell rotate around your wrist into the rack position at the top. Remember the thumb rotation thing? Put that together with this six-gun movement and you will have no trouble at all getting the hang of getting the bell to go around the corner to avoid BFS.

## Grace or Power?

When you do your pulls for either the clean or the snatch you can swing the bell in an arc or you can do a lawn mower type straight pull. The swing takes advantage of momentum the straight pull is more direct and powerful. You can do the straight pull with a bit of a rearward swing or really challenge yourself by doing it from the dead hang position.

To further muddy the technique waters we have the Girevoy sport method which is a bit different from what Tom has been presenting here. If you watch a Girevik do the clean or the snatch (which will be addressed soon enough) you will find that have a very slow and methodical metronomic movement that uses a bit less bend in the legs and a bit more bend in the back. Girevoy sport is done for maximum reps so energy conservation is a key component of each repetition. I mention the difference here so that you don't watch a video of a competition and think that you have been taught incorrectly. The forum on [www.dragondoor.com](http://www.dragondoor.com) is a great resource for all things kettlebell and you will find a huge pool of KB information there.

## Kettlebell Front Squat



Remember our focused effort on the squat at the start of the clinic? Well, put that together with a racked kettlebell and you have a single kettlebell front squat. Be sure to keep a nice flat back and as erect a posture as you can manage. Resist the urge to look up in the air and try to look a bit more forward instead. Feet are just slightly wider than the hips, toes slightly out, knees tracking over the toes, a sip of air into the belly and hold it on the way down, puff the air out as you press with the heels to get back up, keep the elbow tucked inside the thigh to avoid contact. The guy in the center is doing a thruster but at the bottom it is the same as the front squat. He could stand a slightly wider stance and it would be better for him to look a bit less upward and a bit more forward. You can do the front squat by itself of course, but to add a degree of difficulty do the:



## Kettlebell Thruster



If you put together the front squat with a push press you create the thruster. Just as with the barbell thruster the bells move in time with your squat. From the racked position take a sip of air to pressurize and stabilize your torso and sit back to a full squat. (In each of the squat photos of Amy I caught her just as she was on her way up, the squat should be to a lower position and with the feet just slightly closer together). Exhale as you get to the top of the squat and continue the upward movement of the kettlebells unbroken, don't stop at the top of the squat and then press the bells. The bells should not stop their upward track from the bottom of the squat to the top of the press. By the same token the downward movement is also unbroken so the bells follow a continuous downward and upward motion without any pause in between. The movement from the bottom up is not simply a standing motion but rather an upward explosion with a powerful thrust through the heels, with that power being transferred to the kettlebells so that they seem to float off the shoulders at the top of the squat. At that moment when the bells are weightless and have lifted slightly off your shoulders continue the explosive effort upward with the arms to push press the bells the rest of the way overhead to lockout.

Amy is doing the movement with two kettlebells but you might want to start with just one. In fact, if you have not done it before do it with no weight or a roll of Lifesavers in order to get a feel for the timing of the movement. With one kettlebell the weight will be less of course but the balance will be a bit off as well and you will have to account for that with tension in your torso to keep from leaning over on the weighted side. Keep a steady even tempo and avoid pausing at the top of the squat. Instead drive through your heels and put the power of your legs into the push press.

## **Press – Push Press – Push Jerk**

The first, and least powerful method for getting the bell overhead is called the Press and is simply an upward movement of the weight to an overhead, locked out position. To begin the Press adjust your forearm from the rack to a more vertical position, pressurize and extend the arm upward. As you push up rotate your forearm to the outside but don't let your upper arm get parallel to your torso until your elbow is at least as high as your shoulder. Pressing with your elbow too low will create shoulder issues. The bell will go slightly behind your head at lockout for balance and proper alignment. Just as with a barbell press, when the kettlebell is overhead "look through the window" by extending your head thorough the window frame of your arms. This is the finish position for each of these lifts. When pressing the weight the lowering part stays under tension so that you can reverse the movement and get the weight back overhead, maintaining a vertical forearm.

The Push Press is next and is much like the Press except it has a leg dip just prior to the pressing movement to lend power from the legs to the arms. In fact, it is more of a leg movement than an arm movement when done properly and can handle much more weight than the Press alone. The Press is as simple drive of the weight upward. The Push Press is a dip and drive. The dip is just that, not a squat, just a slight bend in the knees and a powerful extension.

The Push Jerk begins the same way as the Push Press does but it finishes differently. The dip and drive is the same but then there a second dip to get under the weight. The timing must be such that as the bell gets to where it floats at the top of the drive with the legs, begin extending your arm as you dip under the weight. You are not pushing the weight up but are rather squatting down under the weight and extending your arm fully to catch the weight in a supported from the bottom position. As with the other lifts lockout at the top and peek your head forward so the weight is slightly behind your head.

Remember that with the Press the forearm begins from a vertical position. With the more ballistic Push Press and Push Jerk you will be using more weight and it is better to absorb the weight back into the rack position rather than to the bottom of the Press position. When you lower the kettlebell from the lockout be sure to use your legs like shock absorbers so as not to be punished by gravity's insistence that the weight be back on the ground.

## **Split Jerk**

Unlike the barbell split jerk which is done to allow the movement of greater weight overhead, the kettlebell split jerk is not really necessary to move greater weights but it does wonders in creating incredible cardio/respiratory and muscular endurance demands from the exercise. From the rack position jump the foot forward on the side holding the weight and other back so that you have your feet about shoulder width apart and your rear knee near the ground the front foot facing directly forward. Don't float but rather explode downward as you drop under the weight and stomp your feet as you do with the barbell jerk. Very explosive and very, very fast.

## The Kettlebell Snatch



Here are three snatch variations (for those of your familiar with Nicole's picture and know she was really doing an OHS – keep it to yourself. Looks just like the end of a perfect squat snatch so let's leave it at that). The idea is that you are moving a weighted object from the ground to overhead in one swift and powerful motion. You can do it with a barbell, you can do it with a dumbbell and you can do it with a kettlebell to either a squat or just as with the split jerk you can do a split snatch, or you can stay standing.



Here's some great snatch info from the Dragon Door website.

## The Competition Kettlebell Swing Snatch

**Jim Trench, RKC**

*Jim Trench, RKC won the [1st Tactical Strength Challenge](#), Ready to Defend! Division, held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He is based out of Stamford, Connecticut where he trains clients one on one, in small groups, visits local gyms to promote KB's sharing the value of the KB and holds private workshops for the trainers of these facilities in the proper use of the KB. He is currently enrolled in the CFA program in association with AIMR a recognized standard for ethical behavior and advises small businesses in the fitness industry via business plans, budgets, and marketing for market share. Contact Jim at [JimTrench@infinite-knd.com](mailto:JimTrench@infinite-knd.com)*

I picked up my first KB in February of 02 and started doing swings, cleans, and snatches. The cleans and snatches punished my forearms for a couple of weeks, and then it just clicked. The unnecessary pain I induced on my forearm stopped. No bang, no pain, it felt...pure. From that day on I never had a problem snatching any [Kettlebell](#), including the bulldog.

I did not execute my first swing snatch until the RKC Certification in September. At the certification Jeff Martone led us in a post lunch "warm up" on the final day of the certification. He did 30 snatches each arm quick jog, then 20 quick jog, and finally 10 and in the process created a new reality for me. It wasn't that he did 30 that was impressive...but the fact that it looked like he was just getting started. I am a trainer, my condition level sets the standard for what I expect out of the people that I train. I was in the low 20's when he got to 30. Expectations I have for my clients never exceed my own expectations. My expectations rose. During the course Jeff said train smart not hard. This went against my philosophy in the sense of priorities, my focus is always go and keep going hard, fatigue to me, in part, is a matter of focus, technique suffers because I lose the focus to see through the fatigue, I had lost touch with the in part and made it a big part. So I had to take a step back and see how I was going. I mean, come on, the guy's cranking snatches out like there nothing, so I contemplated the statement...and started to critique optimal form and how proper technique equated to maximum endurance, i.e. high repetitions.

### EXECUTION

- When indoors I always perform my Kettlebell exercises barefoot. Outdoors the same, weather permitting.
- Always respect the KB and the potential damage it can inflict upon you through lack of focus, awareness, and/or fatigue.
- Pick your KB up with tension in your abs to protect your back.
- Your stance must be wide enough to let the kettlebell safely pass without hitting your knees, otherwise it should be close to your comfortable stance for a maximal jump.



- The foot position should be comfortable. The knees must track your feet.
- Throughout the exercise your back must remain FLAT. THAT DOES NOT MEAN UPRIGHT. In order to keep your shins near vertical you will have to fold over at you hips while keeping your back FLAT.
  - From the standing position, abs tensed, initiate the swing portion by pulling your hips back and swinging the Kettlebell through your legs attempting to maintain near vertical shins. The bell should swing somewhere between your knees and upper thigh. This is body type justified. You must find the optimal position.
  - Important: efficient, controlled, power breathing. Match the breath with the exertion.
- This step is critical for success: The Swing Factor gives you momentum and loading power, the goal is to fully utilize this factor. No wasted energy. If you go too far out with the KB energy dissipates outward not upward as it should. Go too tight and you are depriving yourself of the Swing Factor. This is body type justified. You must find the optimal position.
- In this step your weight transfer goes from your heels towards your toes, your hips explode forward and up, this is not done passively but very Aggressively, and the KB is going up.
- Visualize a line moving along the centerline of your body, and always keep your energy and focus on keeping the inside of the KB along that line
- On the ascension your elbow is somewhere between 150 and 170 degrees. This is to allow for the punch out that is required at the top of the motion for a smooth landing.
- As the KB reaches the zone between your neck and your eyes, full lock out your knees and maximally contract your glutes for best explosion. If done on the 2nd floor, the force with which you drive into the ground should shake the floor and any objects in the vicinity.
  - If this step is done correctly the KB should feel extremely light to weightless through this portion.
  - As the KB enters eye level manipulation begins. As you are flicking your wrist execute the punch out to elbow lockout. If done properly you will know it. The flick of your wrist is a very subtle move. Your wrist should end up in the neutral position, straight line between knuckles and elbow.
- From the top position, weight on your heels, AGGRESSIVELY flick the KB back over your wrist, pulling hips back, keeping the shins as vertical as possible. Where the grip should be on the handle is body type specific. I personally have long fingers and like to catch it on my fingers for the descent.
- Same factors must be considered as on the way up. The deeper you can squat down, keeping your shins near vertical, good balance and a strong base, the longer you will go.
  - Mental checklist: field of vision, hip initiation, weight on heels, back flat, one fluid motion, explode, and **ENJOY!!!**

## WORKOUT

**Set 1:** 5 reps with a 2.5 KB each arm.

Rest period of 30 seconds to 3 minutes: during rest period execute the lunge hip flexor stretch from [Relax into Stretch](#).

**Set 2:** 5 reps with a 2 pood KB each arm then 10 reps each arm.

Rest period 30 seconds to 3 minutes: during rest execute Karate Stance Groin Stretch from [Relax into Stretch](#).

**Set 3:** 5 reps with a 1.5 pood KB each arm, then 10 then 15.

Rest period 30 seconds to 3 minutes: during rest execute the Crawling Lizard from [Relax into Stretch](#).

**Set 4:** 5 reps with a 1 pood each arm, then 10, 15, and 20.

Rest period 30 seconds to 3 minutes: during rest execute Hip Flexor Quad Stretch from [Relax into Stretch](#).

## VARIATIONS

- (1) Start with high reps and descend to 5 reps each arm.
- (2) Go all out with first set, once you reach 10 with the heaviest KB you work with add in 5 reps each arm. Work up to 20 each side before progressing to the next level.
- (3) The stretches are endless to incorporate. I target stretches that focus on the weak links, taken from Relax into Stretch and [Super Joints](#) for the most part.
- (4) Time yourself taking into account the amount of time you stretched and how you felt after doing 3 minutes vs. 30 seconds of stretching at the end.
- (5) Start with the light KB and go up the pood level with the descending reps.
- (6) Go down and then back up.
- (7) Go down no stretching and back up with stretching and vice versa .
- (8) Attempt with no stretching for time.

A variation of the swing snatch would be to end up on the tips of your toes and remain in that position. This is a great way to critique body awareness at lockout. The goal is to come off your toes because you want to not because you have to. The definition of a snatch: from the deck in one fluid motion bring the weight to a lockout over head. How you accomplish this is your business. The optimal snatch looks effortless. No two swing snatches will be the same: flexibility, strength, mind-body connection, grip strength, lactic acid thresholds, height, weight, etc. all play a role in what you will ascertain as the most efficient technique for you. The least you can do is have someone critique your form, the best you can do is have someone with knowledge experience, and success critique your form. Now whether that means Pavel, an RKC instructor, somebody you train with, a spouse, or just a friend is up to you.

## Conclusion

So there you have it, three hours with Tom. The core elements were first of all insuring you have a good squat because proper kettlebell movements require a powerful extension of the hips. Remember to try that ball drill if you have any trouble with hip extension. We did the two hand swing, the clean, the press, push press and push jerk, and the snatch. Tom showed us preparatory movements for each of the elements such as the deadlift, partial swings, the six gun and the assistance clean and variations on a theme such as one hand swings, walking swings (to which you can add an incline or stairs) thrusters which are a CrossFit staple and the split jerk or split snatch. What became very obvious in our very informative 3 hours was that if you get bored with kettlebells, it's not the fault of the kettlebells. The variations, combinations, alterations, substitutions, and technique adjustments/refinements will keep you busy for years. Oh, and don't forget that you can juggle these things. Check out Jeff Martone's Hand2Hand Kettlebell DVD's. He shows you how to do release and catch moves which add another very fun, interesting and demanding element to your KB training.