THE POWER OF THE WORKOUT LOG

Words by

RYAN FARRELL

Octavia “Opi” Payne (left) was a 2013 World Games teammate of Ryan Farrell and is a member of the 2016 U.S. Women’s National Team, along with Lauren Sadler (right). **Photo: Billy Dzwonkowski/UltiPhotos**

» **Car broke down in the wee hrs ~3am**

» **no cell reception, dirt road ~8,500ft**

- decided to run for home ~4am
- made it ~4 miles, mostly downhill through 35* and ~35mph winds blowing snow around, in my trusty slippers...
- got picked up ~4:45 am and rode the last mile or so home in comfort.

I've been posting on a workout log for six years. In that time, the most notable and consistent poster was Callahan Award winner Joe Kershner, aka The Koosh. The Koosh challenged himself to post on the log every day. I've never played with anyone who did so more diligently, and I've also never played with anyone who amassed a more absurd collection of physical activities, aka cross-training.

People say that the teams that touch each other the most also win the most. But touching doesn't just mean high fives and butt slaps. The Koosh touched by reporting everything from his frigid mid-night misadventures to moving an aggregate 15,000 pounds of rough-edged flagstone.

But we were no less with him on the slow days:

- sickness
- sleeping
- soup

That's important; there are slow days, but there are no off days.

I fell in love with the log after I read that when Jerry Seinfeld was trying to make it in comedy, he knew he had to write every single day. He had a calendar, and he'd make a mark on each day he wrote. He used the calendar to hold himself accountable; there were many days when he did not want to write, but he never wanted to break the chain.

More than 400 athletes tried out for the men's, mixed and women's teams that will represent the U.S. at WUGC this year. **Photo: Billy Dzwonkowski/UltiPhotos**

I like making the marks, and the blank days make me uncomfortable. Of course, I can't work out every day, but I can almost always do something to prepare for competition and show the team that I'm thinking about them. The Koosh taught me that.

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SLOW DAYS, BUT THERE ARE NO OFF DAYS."

And when I come home after a long day, sometimes it really is the thought of logging those bullets that gets me off my butt and under the bar.

10/5 – Monday after Nationals 2015, where Johnny Bravo lost in pre-quarters (for the record, because we got outplayed, not because of an overzealous observer):

- anything more depressing than being so depressed that I went to a hotel gym as my first off-season lift? 50lb dumb bells was the heaviest thing
- ab ball rolls 3x10
- 1/2 kneel press 3x8 @40
- med ball diagonal lift 3x20 @10

- cable rotations 3x10e @14
- face pull 3x10 @14
- RFE goblet 3x8 @50
- single arm db snatch 3x10 @50
- felt better after.

For a national team, the workout log becomes even more important. The majority of your training is done while isolated from your teammates. You endure month-long stretches where you don't see each other, and it can be easy to drift from one another's thoughts.

The log can bridge that gap.

U.S. Men's National Team head coach Alex Ghesquiere talks strategy with athletes at the west-coast tryouts.
Photo: Alex Rentzis/UltiPhotos

When writing this article, I looked back at the log from the 2013 World Games team. I was impressed by the diligence of that team in recording their workouts. It reminded me of what it takes to win a world title.

Here's one entry from Cara Crouch (seriously, this is one entry):

- **4 x 400 @ (75, 75, 75, 80);**
- **lifting routine (deadlifts, squat jumps, weighted split squats, calf raises, barbell bench press, shoulder press, bicep**

curls, hamstring bridges on ball, 4 min. core).

- 1.5 hour co-ed 3 vs 3 indoor mini.

Here's one from Dylan Tunnell (he's a firefighter):

- 2 hours of turning hydrants.
- Sprinted between hydrants - usually 150-250 yards.
- Lots of hills.
- About 25 sprints at 70-95%.
- Rest was turning and painting the hydrant. Stretching. Lifting routine.

When I think about 2013, I don't remember most of the workouts I read (except maybe Sandy Jorgensen's "Took two naps during day. Fell asleep at 9:30 p.m."). What I do remember is reading the log and being inspired by the fact that everyone was taking the time to share a little piece of themselves each day, making the team part of their daily routine, preparing to make the most of the short time we had together.

Alyssa Weatherford (right) is one of seven Seattle Riot athletes to make the 2016 U.S. National Teams. **Photo: Billy Dzwonkowski/UltiPhotos**

Within a few weeks of learning we were teammates, the 2016 World Ultimate and Guts Championships men's team had an email thread that served as our workout log. This shouldn't surprise, but Kurt Gibson is working his butt off:

- **arrived in mexico city. can't say too much. darkhorse.**
- **smoked brodie on the sprint to the city plaza**
- **ran into center of large mariachi band, found the trumpeter who wasn't playing.**

That email thread has driven me to challenge myself in the gym. Goose [Jonathan Helton] is cleaning 225 pounds, and I just want to stay within 100 pounds of Cassidy [Rasmussen]'s deadlift. These guys are already pulling the best out of me, and we haven't

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even had our first practice yet. I know that when Tyler DeGirolamo found out the decision to have surgery on his knee would mean not being able to play with the team, it was no decision at all; he'd endure the pain and rehab around the knee. He's sacrificing to be a part of the team, and I can't wait to sacrifice for him. That is the power of the workout log.

Ryan Farrell won a gold medal at the 2013 World Games, captained Johnny Bravo to a national championship in 2014 and is hoping to help the U.S. Men's National Team win gold at WUGC this summer.
Photo: Alex Rentzis/UltiPhotos

I used to think that the primary factor that bonded teammates together was the collective hard work, and I'll always believe that's a vital piece. The workout log facilitates that, but if you do it right, it's far more than that; it's a free glimpse into who your teammates are.

I believe The Koosh understood that, in his own words:

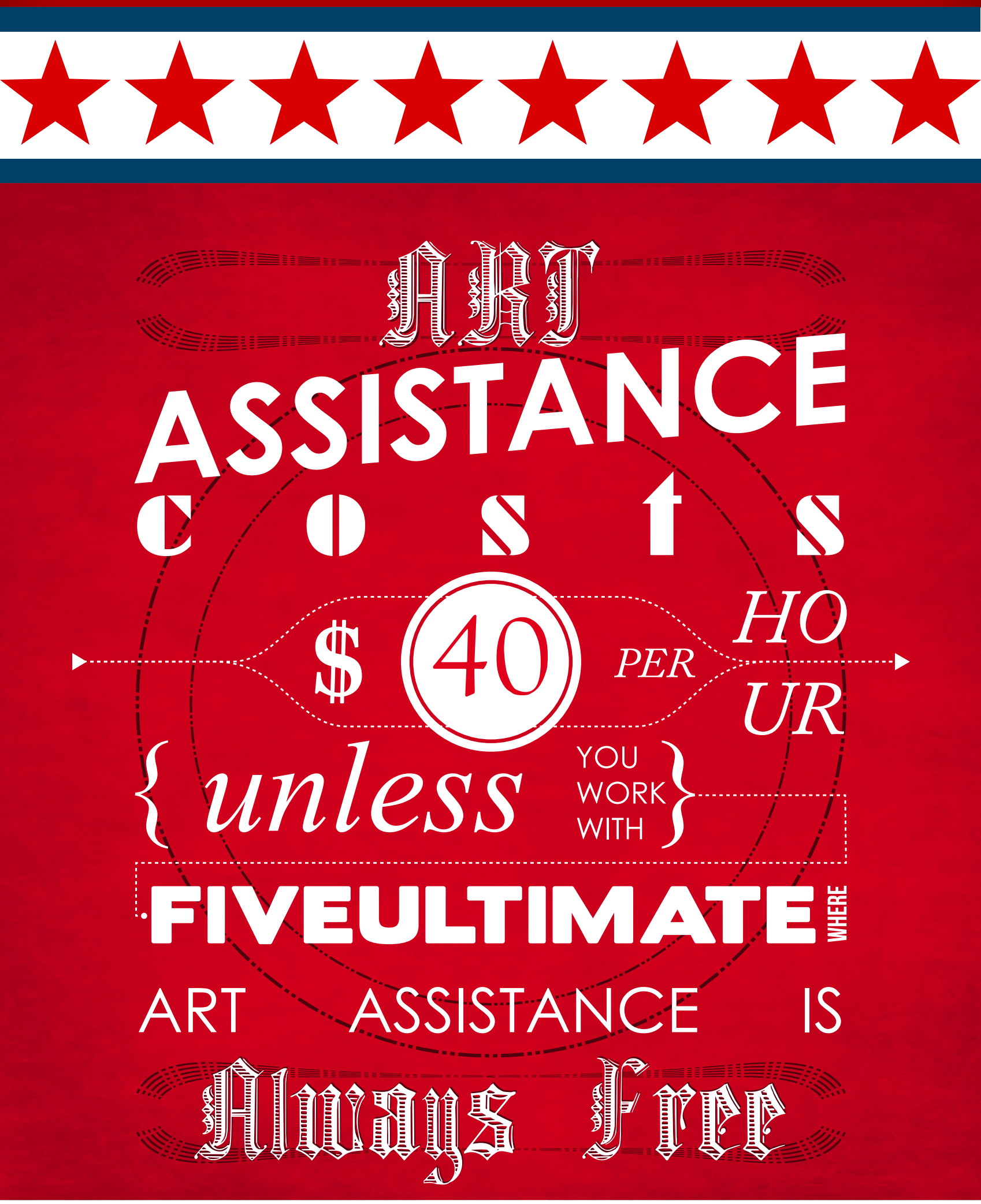
- **Free windows, lots and some heavy big ones. load em in a truck, sandwich with blankets real careful. they're fragile so focus on control and form. and still broke a couple...**
- **unload the windows too**
- **roll and stretch**

With that, I'll leave you with today's workout:

- **6:15am workout with Jerry [Jack] McShane**

- Rolling, static, mobility, dynamic
- Band-resisted lunges 2x20yds
- Band-resisted sprints 2x20yds
- Band-resisted bounds 3x5
- 150m shuttles x8 (30yd increments), 3:1 rest:work
- Tried to write article. Instead, did the following x 3 sets:
  - Mini frisbee living room disc golf with C [Carolyn Matthews]
  - Walked dog
  - Called parents

» 1:15am – Finished article



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