

Tim Ferriss | Nate Green



How to Gain 20 Pounds in 28 Days

The Extreme Muscle Building Secrets of UFC Fighters

Introduction

Nate Green is a writer, coach, and hero in training. He helped with the research for my book “The 4-Hour Body” and even has written his own books [“Built for Show”](#) and [“The Hero Handbook”](#). After working with John Berardi, PhD (Georges St-Pierre’s nutritional coach) he has learned an incredible amount, definitely check out his books!

In this guide, Nate explains how he gained 20 pounds in 28 days, using techniques an elite fighter such as Georges St-Pierre (GSP) might utilize to move up a weight class. This is a very, very comprehensive post.

If you’ve ever wondered how to quickly gain muscle — or how a GSP versus Anderson Silva super-fight could happen — you’ll want to print this out and refer to it often.

Georges St. Pierre vs. Anderson Silva: The Superfight

For the past couple of years, there have been rumors of a super-fight between current UFC Welterweight champion Georges St Pierre and current Middleweight champion Anderson Silva. If the fight becomes a reality, it will easily be the biggest fight in UFC history. Fans want it. Sponsors want it. UFC president Dana White wants it. The only people who seem like they don’t want it? St Pierre and Silva.

And it’s easy to see why when you look at the stats. St Pierre, who’s 5’10”, fights in the 170-pound division. Silva, who’s 6’2”, fights in the 185-pound division. Elite fighters use weight manipulation to strategically lower their body weight before official pre-fight weigh-ins. They quickly rehydrate to get back up to their real weight. In GSP’s case, that would be about 190 pounds. In Silva’s? 230 pounds.

So for the super-fight to go through, and for it to be a reasonably fair fight, one of two things would need to happen: either St Pierre would have to gain 20-30 pounds to move up a weight class, or Silva would have to lose 20-30 pounds to move down a weight class. Both are very difficult.

In fact, it’s enough of a weight disparity to make even the most enthusiastic MMA fans chalk up the super-fight to a pipe dream, something that will likely never happen. But here’s the thing: That kind of extreme weight manipulation isn’t impossible. Far from it. In fact, it’s entirely possible to gain 20 pounds of quality mass in as little as 28 days.

That’s what Nate did recently with some help from GSP’s nutrition coach, Dr. John Berardi and Martin Rooney, a strength coach who regularly trains UFC athletes. And in this post, we explore how a guy like GSP could gain 20-30 pounds in a short period of time, increase his power, boost his strength, and maintain his athleticism and (mostly) endurance.

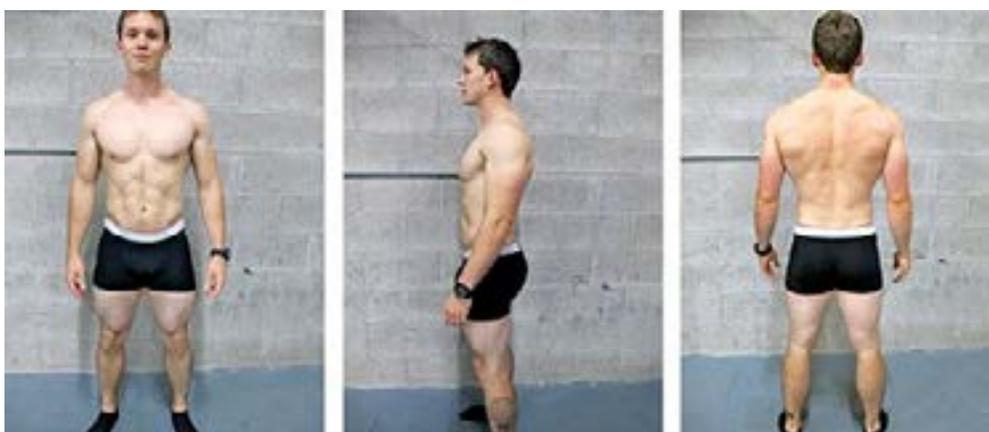
And maybe — just maybe — these techniques will make this super-fight a reality.

Enter Nate

I recently decided to try and gain 20 pounds of quality mass in 28 days. Why?

For starters, a lot of people in the fitness world don't think this is possible without taking steroids. Fortunately, this isn't true. With the right program and world-class advice, it's attainable. I wanted to prove this beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Dr. John Berardi wanted a guinea pig to show exactly how someone like GSP could—if he wanted to—gain enough muscle to move up an entire weight class and take on a fighter like Anderson Silva. I started the official experiment at 169 pounds and 28 days later, weighed in at 190. I'll tell you exactly how I did it.



Enter Nate

Note from Tim: Nate shares the exact meal plan and workout program after outlining the six strategies/principles. Again, after reading once, this is probably a post you'll want to print out for reference.

Strategy #1: Cycle the amount of food you eat

We kept things simple here. My nutrition plan was split into two different kinds of days: High-Calorie or Low-Calorie. On my weight-training days, I ate more food. This ensured I was getting a huge influx of nutrients on the days where my muscles could put them to use. On the days I did interval workouts or took off from the gym, I ate a little less food. This helped me to add weight without adding lots of body fat.

It's important to note that even my "low calorie" days still involved eating more food than I was previously used to. So, no matter the day, I was always in a positive energy balance. Except for Sundays. Which brings me to the second strategy.

Strategy #2: Use intermittent fasting

Every Sunday I did a 24-hour fast to offset the inevitable fat gain that would normally come with an eating plan like this. The goal was for me to be in a caloric surplus – an anabolic state – six days per week, eating more calories than I burn which would lead to muscle growth.

And then I'd be in an extreme caloric deficit one day per week, which would help reset my insulin sensitivity, boost growth hormone secretion, and help stimulate fat loss while preserving my lean mass.

Strategy #3: Give yourself room to grow

Making a big change is all about small incremental improvements. You try something for a little while, see how it works, and if you need to, make a small change and repeat the steps.

For this experiment Berardi started me off with a lot of food, enough to where I'd be in a caloric surplus and gain muscle. But he didn't overload me as much as he could have. Not at first, at least. He wanted to leave a little wiggle room to make changes if needed. In both Weeks 3 and 4 we strategically added more calories to help push me past a plateau when my weight stalled at 178 pounds. (You'll see how we did that below.)

Strategy #4: Eat more food. Much more.

My weight-gain nutrition plan called for way more food than I was used to eating. So instead of focusing on counting calories — which would have been a nightmare — we turned our attention instead to making sure I was in a positive energy balance.

When you eat more calories than you burn, you gain weight. Dr. Berardi knew all I'd have to do to gain weight was eat more food than I was eating before we started the experiment. And that was easy to do, since I was eating enough to only maintain a 170-pound body. So how much food does it actually take to gain 20 pounds? I went through and added everything I ate in 28 days. Here it is:

- 65 pounds of meat
- 54 bananas
- 84 scoops of protein powder
- 72 pieces of bread
- 36 sweet potatoes
- 7 jars of almond butter
- 5 jars of fruit jam
- 8 jars of sauerkraut
- 144 cups of vegetables
- 36 pieces of fruit
- 72 squares of dark chocolate
- 8 bags of frozen blueberries and raspberries
- 7 cans of coconut milk
- 4 cartons of heavy whipping cream

Strategy #5: Train your ass off

Most guys think the training program is the most important part of gaining muscle. Well, most guys are wrong. If I didn't eat enough food I could have trained as hard or as long as I wanted and not much would have happened.

Of course, the workout program is important. So Martin Rooney hooked me up with a variation of his Training For Warriors routine that he uses for high-level UFC athletes like brothers Jim and Dan Miller.

Here's what it looked like:

Monday: Upper Body Strength

This workout focused on compound exercises and used heavy weights to build strength and target fast-twitch muscle-fibers, the ones most primed for growth.

Tuesday: Hurricane Day - Sprints

An intense total-body workout that promoted rapid fat burning and power development. Martin calls them "hurricanes" because the workouts are like a brief, powerful storm that create disruption in the muscular, cardio vascular, and neurological systems.

They're also some of the hardest workouts I've ever done in my life. (I nearly passed out after my first Hurricane session; I took a 5-minute nap next to the treadmill.)

Wednesday: Off - Recovery

A much-needed rest for my muscles and mind.

Thursday: Hurricane Day - Energy Circuit

A brief, intense workout comprised of five unconventional exercises (like sledhammer slams, medicine ball work, and rope climbs) all done in circuit fashion.

Friday: Upper Body Hypertrophy

A second upper-body day that used less complex exercises and higher reps to promote more muscle growth.

Saturday: Lower Body Strength

Just like the Upper Body Strength day, this workout focused on compound exercises and used heavy weights to build strength and target fast-twitch muscle-fibers.

Sunday: Off - Recovery

Another rest day.

So when you put it the weight-gain nutrition plan and workout program together, this is what you get:

Monday:	High Calorie / Upper Body Strength
Tuesday:	Low Calorie / Hurricane Sprints
Wednesday:	Low Calorie / Off
Thursday:	Low Calorie / Hurricane Energy Circuit
Friday:	High Calorie / Upper Body Hypertrophy
Saturday:	High Calorie / Lower Body Strength
Sunday:	Fast / Off

Strategy #6:

Use strategic supplements

We like to say “Supplements are supplements.” In other words, they’re ingredients you add to a smart eating and training program. They don’t replace them. Despite what the supplement ads say, no guy has ever built a good body by taking a weird powder with a stupid name and doing nothing else.

For this experiment, however, Dr. Berardi decided I should use a few supplements strategically to maximize the amount of muscle I could build on such a short time-frame. With only 28 days to gain 20 pounds, I had to look at every opportunity to take in more calories. The following surely didn’t “make the difference”. But they did help.

Multivitamin: Helps fix small deficiencies of vitamins and minerals and enhance energy metabolism. I used Optimen Multivitamin.

Protein powder: Makes eating large quantities of protein easier. I used Optimum Gold Standard Casein (for my Breakfast Pudding) and Jay Robb Egg-White Protein (for my Super Shakes).

Vitamin D: Even though natural sunlight allows our body to create Vitamin D, many of us are still deficient, which can lead to loss of muscle strength and mass and low levels of immunity. I used Vitamin D3 by NOW.

Creatine monohydrate: Helps regenerate muscle energy stores and can improve strength, boost performance, and increase muscle mass. I used Biotest creatine monohydrate.

Liquid fish oil: A key source of omega-3 fatty acids that helps improve mood and motivation while boosting fat-burning and dampening inflammation. I used Carlson’s Very Finest Liquid Fish Oil.

BCAA capsules: Helps reduce the chance of muscle tissue breakdown while stimulating protein synthesis, leading to better recovery and preservation of lean muscle mass. I used Optimum BCAA capsules primarily on my fasting days.

Greens powder: Veggies, fruits, algae and/or grasses that have been compacted and distilled into powdered form and contain vitamins, minerals, fiber, and phytonutrients. All good things for a growing man. I used Biotest Superfood.

Peri-workout drink: Supplies essential amino acids to help re-build muscle and acts as a performance-enhancing stimulant. I used Purple Wrath by Controlled Labs.

Post-workout drink: A mixture of high-quality protein and fast-acting carbohydrates that helps your body recover and rebuild quickly. I used Universal Torrent.

The Weight Gain Menu - Weeks 1 & 2

High Calorie Days: Monday, Friday, Saturday

Breakfast:

Breakfast Pudding

The following was all put into a blender and blended into a pudding.

- 2 frozen bananas, blended until creamy
- 1/4 cup of almond milk
- 3 scoops casein protein powder
- 2 squares high cacao chocolate

Side Dish

- 4 pieces whole grain bread
- 2 Tbsp peanut or almond butter
- 2 Tbsp jam
- multivitamin
- 3,000 IU vitamin D
- 1 tsp creatine in coffee or green tea

Anytime Meal:

- 1 pounds any type of lean meat
- 3 cups of favorite veggies
- 1/2 cup sauerkraut*
- 2 servings of your favorite fruit
- 1 Tbsp fish oil

* Your body has a mixture of good and bad bacteria in it. Fermented foods like sauerkraut are rich in enzymes and help increase the amount of good bacteria in your intestines. You'll notice my diet contained a cup of sauerkraut per day. That's not in

Immediately Pre-Workout:

- 500 ml water
- 10 grams BCAA's

Sip During Workout:

- 1 liter water
- 1 scoop of workout drink

Sip During Workout:

- 1 liter water
- 3 scoops of post-workout drink

Post-Workout Meal:

- 1.5 pounds any type of lean meat
- 3 cups of favorite veggies
- 1/2 cup sauerkraut*
- 2 large sweet or white potatoes
- 1 Tbsp Udo's 3.6.9 oil

Low Calorie Days: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

Breakfast:

Breakfast Pudding

- 2 frozen bananas, blended until creamy
- 1/4 cup of almond milk
- 3 scoops casein protein powder
- 2 squares high cacao chocolate

Side Dish

- 2 pieces whole grain bread
- 1 Tbsp peanut or almond butter
- 1 Tbsp jam
- multivitamin
- 3,000 IU vitamin D
- 1 tsp creatine in coffee or green tea

Lunch:

- 1.5lb any type of fattier meat
- 3 cups of favorite veggies
- 1/4 cup mixed raw nuts
- 1/2 cup sauerkraut
- 1 large sweet or white potato
- 1 Tbsp Udo's 3.6.9 oil

Dinner:

- 1lb any type of fattier meat
- 3 cups of favorite veggies
- 1/2 cup sauerkraut
- 1 servings of your favorite fruit
- 1 Tbsp fish oil

Fasting Day: Sunday

I fasted every Sunday with the goal to reboot my insulin sensitivity and carb tolerance before another 6 days of big eating. The rules were simple:

Rule 1: Stop eating by 10PM on Saturday.

Rule 2: On Sunday, have 3 “meals” consisting of the following:

- 1L water with 1/2 serving greens powder
- 15g BCAA's
- 1 cup of green tea

Why have these fake meals? According to Dr. Berardi, we release a hormone called ghrelin about 30 minutes before our normal meal times, which stimulates hunger pangs and gets us ready for the upcoming meal.

So it was psychologically comforting to have some kind of eating routine. The BCAAs and greens powder made it feel like I was still “eating”, which helped curb those hunger signals. (Plus the BCAAs helped preserve my lean muscle mass.) Also, the caffeine in green tea (or coffee) helped to liberate stored fats. This helped my body eat the “food” that was stored in my love handles instead of requiring me to actually have a meal.

Rule 3: Break the fast at 10PM Sunday night by eating 1 pound of any protein with 3-4 cups of veggies.



The Weight Gain Menu - Weeks 3 & 4

My menu on Weeks 3 and 4 followed the same base menu as above but we strategically added calories. In Week 3, we introduced a Super-Shake (basically a fancy protein shake) because by this time I was tired of chewing. Drinking a shake was much easier. Here's what we added

Week 3: Additions

High Calorie Day (Mon, Fri, Sat)

Super Shake

- 8 oz unsweetened almond milk
- 2 Tbsp heavy cream/whipping cream
- 1 scoop protein powder
- Handful frozen raspberries
- Handful frozen blueberries

Low Calorie Day (Tues, Wed, Thurs)

Super Shake

- 8 oz unsweetened almond milk
- 2 oz coconut milk
- 1 scoop protein powder
- 2 Tbsp cocoa nibs or 99% chocolate
- 1 Tbsp favorite nut butter

Week 4: Additions

High Calorie Day (Mon, Fri, Sat)

- 1 banana to my breakfast pudding (for a total of 3 bananas)
- 1 chocolate square to my breakfast pudding (for a total of 3 chocolate squares)
- 1 scoop Purple Wraath to my workout drink (for a total of 2 scoops)
- 1 scoop Universal Torrent to my post-workout drink (for a total of 4 scoops)
- 2 Tbsp nut butter to my breakfast toast side-dish (for a total of 4 Tbsp)
- 1 Tbsp of jam to my breakfast toast side-dish (for a total of 2 Tbsp)
- 2 Tbsp heavy cream to my Super Shake (for a total of 4 Tbsp)
- 1 scoop protein to my Super Shake (for a total of 2 scoops)

Low Calorie Day (Tues, Wed, Thurs)

- 1 banana to my breakfast pudding (for a total of 3 bananas)
- 1 chocolate square to my breakfast pudding (for a total of 3 chocolate squares)
- 1 Tbsp nut butter to my breakfast toast side-dish (for a total of 2 Tbsp)
- 2 oz coconut milk to my Super Shake (for a total of 4 oz)
- 1 scoop protein to my Super Shake (for a total of 2 scoops)
- 1 Tbsp chocolate to my Super Shake (for a total of 3 Tbsp)
- 1 Tbsp nut butter to my Super Shake (for a total of 2 Tbsp)

Workout Program - Week 1

Monday - Upper Body Strength

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8
- 2 sets of band shoulder external rotation x 10
- 2 sets of band shoulder row x 10
- 2 sets of band shoulder extension x 10

Weights

Bench Press

- Warm-up sets of 5 reps up to the weight of your 5RM (5 Rep Max)
- Perform 5 sets of 5RM.

Weighted Chin-up

- Warm-up set of 8 reps.
- Second set with 25 pounds of 6.
- Perform 4 sets of 6 reps with 6RM.

Weighted Dips

- Warm-up set of 10 reps.
- Second set with 30 pounds for 8.
- Perform 4 sets of 8 reps with 8 RM.

Overhead Press

- Perform 4 sets of 10 with 10RM.

Barbell Curls

- Perform 4 sets of 10 with 10RM.

Abs of your choice

- I did 3 sets of 8 reps of weighted crunches.

Tuesday - Hurricane Sprints

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8
- 5 sets of quick steps for 5 yards
- 5 sets of high knees for 5 yards

Hurricane Category 2

Round 1

- Sprint on treadmill at 10 mph and 10% grade incline for 25 seconds.
- Jump off treadmill and perform the following:
 - 1 x 20 regular crunch
 - 1 x 20 table-top crunch
- Repeat from beginning for a total of 3 rounds.
- Rest 2 minutes before moving on to Round 2.

Round 2

- Sprint on treadmill at 11 mph and 10% grade incline for 20 seconds.
- Jump off treadmill and perform the following:
 - 1 x 20 knee-grab crunch
- Repeat from beginning for a total of 3 rounds.
- Rest 2 minutes before moving on to Round 3.

Round 3

- Sprint on treadmill at 12 mph and 10% grade incline for 20 seconds.
- Jump off treadmill and perform the following:
 - 1 x 20 bicycle crunch
- Repeat from beginning for a total of 3 rounds.

Workout Program - Week 1 (continued)

Wednesday - Off

Thursday - Hurricane Energy Circuit

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8
- 5 sets of quick steps for 5 yards
- 5 sets of high knees for 5 yards

Training For Warriors Circuit

Complete each station of the circuit for 1 minute for 5 total minutes. Rest for 3 minutes and repeat. Rest for 3 minutes and perform the last round for 30 seconds each station.

1. Rope

- Begin standing holding one end of the rope in each hand. Start by performing 10 double arm swings by bringing the arms up and down as violently as possible. Then perform 10 alternating swings by bringing each arm up and down one at a time. Then perform 10 rotations by bringing each arm up and out to the sides and back down. Once all 30 reps are completed as fast as possible, start back at the beginning for the allotted time.

2. Kettlebell Swing

- Begin standing with the kettlebell in both hands. Swing the bell between the legs. Extend at the knees and hips and swing the bell forward to shoulder height. Repeat for 10 reps. Then perform 10 more reps using each arm (single-handed swings). Once the 30 reps are completed, start back at the beginning with two hands for the allotted time

3. Medicine Ball Slams

- Begin holding the medicine ball in both hands overhead. Fire the ball into the ground as hard as possible. Recover the ball and repeat for as many reps as possible in the allotted time.
- #### 4. Sledge Hammer Swings
- Begin facing the tire with both feet forward holding the hammer. Bring the hammer back and over one side of the body and hit the tire as hard as possible. Return the hammer over the other side of the body and repeat for as many reps as possible in the allotted time.
- #### 5. Ladder
- Begin standing inside of the ladder with both feet. Jump and land with your feet outside of and forward one box. Jump your feet back into the box and repeat for the length of the ladder and back. Once completed, begin running with high knees using one foot in each box, down and back the length of the ladder. Once this second set is finished, perform side steps through the ladder using two feet in each box down and back up the ladder. Once the third set is completed, start at the beginning and complete as many reps in the allotted time possible.

Workout Program - Week 1 (continued)

Friday - Upper Body Hypertrophy

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8
- 2 sets of band shoulder external rotation x 10
- 2 sets of band shoulder row x 10
- 2 sets of band shoulder extension x 10

Weights

Close Grip Bench

- Do 3 warmup sets of 5 reps.
- Perform 4 sets of 8 with your 8 RM.

Cable High Pull

- Do 4 sets of 10 reps after a warmup set.

Band Triceps Pushdown

- Do 4 sets of 15 reps.

Cable Rows

- Do 4 sets of 8 reps with 8RM.

Dumbbell Curls

- Do 3 sets of 8 each arm.

Abs of your choice

- I did 3 sets of 5 reps on each side of half-kneeling chops.

Saturday - Lower Body Strength

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8

Weights

45-degree back raise

- Perform 1 set of 10 with bodyweight.
- Perform 1 set of 8 with 25 pounds.
- Perform 1 set of 8 with 45 pounds.
- Perform 1 set of 8 with 70 pounds.

Barbell Squat

- Do 3-4 warmup sets.
- Perform 5 sets of 8 reps with 8RM.

Deadlift

- Do 3-4 warmup sets.
- Perform 5 sets of 8 reps with 8RM.

Sunday - Rest

Workout Program - Week 2

Monday - Upper Body Strength

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8
- 2 sets of band shoulder external rotation x 10
- 2 sets of band shoulder row x 10
- 2 sets of band shoulder extension x 10

Weights

Bench Press

- Sets of 6 reps up to the weight of your 6RM.
- Perform 5 sets of 6RM.
- The goal is to use heavier weight in last few sets than Week 1 at 5 reps.

Weighted Chin-up

- Warmup set of 8 reps.
- Do second set with 25 pounds for 8 reps.
- Perform 4 sets of 8 reps with 8RM.
- The goal is to use heavier weight in last few sets than Week 1 at 6 reps.

Weighted Dips

- Warmup set of 10 reps.
- Do second set with 30 pounds for 10.
- Perform 4 sets of 10 reps with 10RM.
- The goal is to use heavier weight in last few sets than Week 1 at 8 reps.

Overhead Press

- Perform 5 sets of 6 with 6RM.

Barbell Curls

- Perform 5 sets of 8 with 8RM

Abs of your choice

- I did 3 sets of 10 reps of weighted crunches.

Tuesday - Hurricane Sprints

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8
- 5 sets of quick steps for 5 yards
- 5 sets of high knees for 5 yards

Hurricane Category 2

Round 1

- Sprint on treadmill at 9.5 mph x 10% grade for 25 seconds.
- Jump off treadmill, grab a 65-pound barbell and do the following:
 - Push Jerks x 10
 - Close Grip Snatch x 8
- Repeat from beginning for a total of 3 sets.
- Rest 2 minutes before performing Round 2.

Round 2

- Sprint on treadmill at 10.5 mph x 10% grade for 25 seconds.
- Jump off treadmill, grab a 65-pound barbell and do the following:
 - Wide Grip Bent Over Row x 10
 - High Pull x 10
- Repeat from beginning for a total of 3 sets.
- Rest 2 minutes before performing Round 3.

Round 3

- Sprint on treadmill at 11.5 mph x 10% grade for 25 seconds.
- Jump off treadmill, grab a 65-pound barbell and do the following:
 - Biceps Curl x 10
 - Cleans x 10
- Repeat from beginning for a total of 3 sets.
- Curl into a ball and try not to throw up.

Workout Program - Week 2 (continued)

Wednesday - Off

Thursday - Hurricane Energy Circuit

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8
- 5 sets of quick steps for 5 yards
- 5 sets of high knees for 5 yards

Training For Warriors Circuit

Complete each station of the circuit for 1 minute for 5 total minutes. Rest for 3 minutes and repeat. Rest for 3 minutes and perform the last round for 30 seconds each station.

1. Farmer's Walk

- Begin standing holding a heavy dumbbells in each hand with the elbows extended. Walk for 20 yards down and back as many times as possible in the time allotted.

2. Sandbag Drag

- Begin facing the sandbag while gripping the bag with both hands. Drag the bag backward for 20 yards, using a toe-heel foot contact. Repeat for the distance as many times as possible in the time allotted.

3. Hand-Over-Hand Rope Pull

- Begin standing with the single rope in each hand. Pull the rope to the hip with the far hand and then grab further down the rope with the opposite hand. Repeat for as many times as possible in the allotted time.

4. Prowler Push or Sled Push

Begin using the high grip on the Prowler. Taking as big of steps as possible, push it 20 yards. Run around to the other side and push it back using the low grip. Repeat for as much distance as possible in the allotted time.

5. Tire Flip

- Begin facing the tire. Bend down and grab both hands under the bottom rim. Using the legs, lift the tire onto one side while keeping the elbows extended. Turn the hands over and push the tire down as hard as possible. Run to the opposite side of the tire and flip it back to the other side. Repeat for as many reps as possible in the allotted time.

Workout Program - Week 2 (continued)

Friday - Upper Body Hypertrophy

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8
- 2 sets of band shoulder external rotation x 10
- 2 sets of band shoulder row x 10
- 2 sets of band shoulder extension x 10

Weights

Close Grip Bench

- Do 3 warmup sets of 5 reps.
- Perform 4 sets of 10 with your 10RM.

Cable High Pull

- Do 4 sets of 8 reps after a warmup set.

Band Triceps Pushdown

- Do 4 sets of 20 reps.

Cable Rows

- Do 4 sets of 8 reps with 8RM.

Dumbbell Curls

- Do 3 sets of 8 each arm.

Abs of your choice

- I did 3 sets of 6 reps on each side of half-kneeling chops.

Saturday - Lower Body Strength

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8

Weights

45-degree back raise

- Perform 1 set of 10 with bodyweight.
- Perform 1 set of 8 with 25 pounds.
- Perform 1 set of 8 with 45 pounds.
- Perform 1 set of 8 with 90 pounds.

Barbell Squat

- Do 3-4 warmup sets.
- Perform 5 sets of 8 reps with 8RM.

Deadlift

- Do 3-4 warmup sets.
- Perform 5 sets of 8 reps with 8RM.

Sunday - Rest

Workout Program - Week 3

Monday - Upper Body Strength

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8
- 2 sets of band shoulder external rotation x 10
- 2 sets of band shoulder row x 10
- 2 sets of band shoulder extension x 10

Weights

Bench Press

- 5 reps up to the weight of your 5RM.
- Perform 5 sets of 5RM.
- I used [mini-bands](#). Here's a [video](#) of how they work.

Alternating Grip Weighted Chin-up

(One hand using a overhand grip, and the other hand using an underhand grip.)

- Warmup set of 8 reps. (4 reps with each grip.)
- Do second set with 25 pounds for 8 reps. (4 reps with each grip.)
- Perform 4 sets of 8 reps with 8RM. (4 reps with each grip.)

Weighted Dips

- Warmup set of 6 reps.
- Do second set with 40 pounds for 6 reps.
- Perform 5 sets of 6 reps with 6RM.

Overhead Press

- Perform 5 sets of 5 with 5RM.

Barbell Curls

- Perform 4 sets of 8 with 8RM

Abs of your choice

- I did 3 sets of 10 reps of reverse crunches.

Tuesday - Hurricane Sprints

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8
- 5 sets of quick steps for 5 yards
- 5 sets of high knees for 5 yards

Hurricane Category 2

Round 1

- Sprint on treadmill at 9.5 mph x 10% grade for 25 seconds.
- Jump off treadmill, grab a 65-pound barbell and do the following:
 - High Pull x 10
 - Bent-over Row x 8
- Repeat from beginning for a total of 3 sets.
- Rest 2 minutes before performing Round 2.

Round 2

- Sprint on treadmill at 10.5 mph x 10% grade for 25 seconds.
- Jump off treadmill, grab a 65-pound barbell and do the following:
 - Close-Grip Snatch x 10
- Repeat from beginning for a total of 3 sets.
- Rest 2 minutes before performing Round 3.

Round 3

- Sprint on treadmill at 11.5 mph x 10% grade for 25 seconds.
- Jump off treadmill, grab a 65-pound barbell and do the following:
 - Cleans x 10
- Repeat from beginning for a total of 3 sets.

Workout Program - Week 3 (continued)

Wednesday - Off

Friday - Upper Body Hypertrophy

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8
- 2 sets of band shoulder external rotation x 10
- 2 sets of band shoulder row x 10
- 2 sets of band shoulder extension x 10

Weights

Incline Barbell Bench Press

- Do 3 warmup sets of 5 reps.
- Perform 4 sets of 10 with your 10RM.

One-Arm Dumbbell Row

- Do 4 sets of 8 reps after a warmup set.

Cable Triceps Pushdown

- Do 4 sets of 12 reps.

Bent-Over Reverse Fly with Dumbbells

- Do 4 sets of 8 reps with 8RM.

Dumbbell Curls

- Do 3 sets of 8 reps.

Abs of your choice

- I did 3 sets of 8 reps on each side of half-kneeling chops.

Thursday - Hurricane Energy Circuit

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8
- 5 sets of quick steps for 5 yards
- 5 sets of high knees for 5 yards

Training For Warriors Circuit

Same as Week 1 but with different times. Complete each station for 30 seconds for 2.5 total minutes. Rest for 1 minute and repeat. Do 4 total sets.

Saturday - Lower Body Strength

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8

Weights

45-degree back raise

- Perform 1 set of 10 with bodyweight.
- Perform 2 sets of 8 with 45 pounds.
- Perform 2 sets of 8 with 90 pounds.

Barbell Squat

- Do 3-4 warmup sets.
- Perform 5 sets x 6 of 6RM.

Deadlift

- Do 3-4 warmup sets.
- Perform 5 sets x 6 of 6RM.

Sunday - Rest

Workout Program - Week 4

Monday - Upper Body Strength

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8
- 2 sets of band shoulder external rotation x 10
- 2 sets of band shoulder row x 10
- 2 sets of band shoulder extension x 10

Weights

Bench Press

- 8 reps up to the weight of your 8RM.
- Perform 5 sets of 8RM.s.

Weighted Chin-up

- Warmup set of 8 reps.
- Do second set with 25 pounds for 8 reps.
- Perform 3 sets of 6 reps with 40 pounds added.

Weighted Dips

- Warmup set of 6 reps with 25 pounds added.
- Do second set with 40 pounds for 6 reps.
- Perform 5 sets of 6 reps with 80 pounds added.

Overhead Press

- Perform 4 sets of 8 with 8RM.

Barbell Curls

- Perform 4 sets of 10 with 10RM

Abs of your choice

Tuesday - Hurricane Sprints

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8
- 5 sets of quick steps for 5 yards
- 5 sets of high knees for 5 yards

Hurricane Category 2

Round 1

- Sprint on treadmill at 10 mph x 10% grade for 30 seconds.
- Jump off treadmill, and do the following with light weight:
 - Cable Row x 10
 - Cable Triceps Pressdown x 8
- Repeat from beginning for a total of 3 sets.
- Rest 2 minutes before performing Round 2.

Round 2

- Sprint on treadmill at 10.5 mph x 10% grade for 30 seconds.
- Jump off treadmill, and do the following with light weight:
 - Cable High-Pull to Chin x 10
- Repeat from beginning for a total of 3 sets.
- Rest 2 minutes before performing Round 3.

Round 3

- Sprint on treadmill at 11.5 mph x 10% grade for 30 seconds.
- Jump off treadmill, and do the following with light weight:
 - Cable Lat Pull-Down x 10
- Repeat from beginning for a total of 3 sets.

Workout Program - Week 4 (continued)

Wednesday - Off

Friday - Upper Body Hypertrophy

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8
- 2 sets of band shoulder external rotation x 10
- 2 sets of band shoulder row x 10
- 2 sets of band shoulder extension x 10

Weights

Incline Barbell Bench Press

- Do 3 warmup sets of 5 reps.
- Perform 4 sets of 6 with 6RM.

One-Arm Dumbbell Row

- Do 4 sets of 8 reps after a warmup set.

Cable Triceps Pushdown

- Do 4 sets of 10 reps.

Bent-Over Reverse Fly with Dumbbells

- Do 3 sets of 10 reps.

Dumbbell Curls

- Do 3 sets of 8 reps.

Abs of your choice

- I did a basic plank for 3 sets of 30 seconds.

Thursday - Hurricane Energy Circuit

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8
- 5 sets of quick steps for 5 yards
- 5 sets of high knees for 5 yards

Training For Warriors Circuit

Same as Week 2 but with different times. Complete each station for 30 seconds for 2.5 total minutes. Rest for 1 minute and repeat. Do 4 total sets.

Saturday - Lower Body Strength

Warm-up

- 3 sets jumping jacks x 10
- 3 sets pogo jumps x 50
- 3 sets of wide outs x 10
- 2 sets of 20 yard skips
- 2 sets of 20 yard side shuffle
- 2 sets of 20 yard carioca
- 2 sets of 20 yards backward run
- 1 set of fire hydrants x 8
- 1 set of forward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of backward hip circles x 8
- 1 set of side leg raise x 8

Weights

45-degree back raise

- Perform 1 set of 10 with bodyweight.
- Perform 2 sets of 8 with 45 pounds.
- Perform 2 sets of 8 with 90 pounds.

Barbell Squat

- Do 3-4 warmup sets.
- Perform 5 sets x 6 of 6RM.

Deadlift

- Do 3-4 warmup sets.

Sunday - Rest

Girth, Body Fat & Performance after Weight Gain



	Baseline	After Weight-Gain
Weight	169.6	190.2
Girth Measurements		
Neck	15.25	15.38
Shoulder	48	49.25
Chest	41.5	44
Upper Arm	14.75	16
Waist	31.5	32.25
Hip	38	39.5
Thigh	23.13	24.25
Calf	15.5	15.38
Body Fat Measurements		
Mid-Ax	2.8	3.8
Cheek	2.8	5.7
Chest	2.8	4.7
Ab	7.6	3.8
Subscap	5.7	7.8
Triceps	2.8	3.8
Suprailiac	2.8	4.7
Knee	5.7	2.8
Hamstring	3.8	4.7
Calf	9.5	6.7
Body Fat (%)	3.03 (probably ~6)	4.1 (probably ~7)

Girth Measurements

Expected: We were confident every part of my body would increase in size, and for the most part, that was true.

Surprised: My calf measurements actually went down. We believe it had something to do with the resultant fat loss from doing the Hurricane sprint days.

Body Fat Percentage

A quick note about the body fat test: We used calipers and a 10-site skinfold test. All measurement days were done at the Missoula Underground Strength Training Center and performed by trainer Mike Scialabba.

When testing body fat with calipers, there's always a 2 – 3 percent margin of error. Mike, who's done this same test on hundreds of his clients, ended up with skinfold measurements that indicated the obviously wrong numbers of 3.03 and 4.1 respectively. Adding a 3% margin of error, the real numbers were probably more like 6-7% and 8-9%. All of this to say, my body fat percentage went up, but very minimally.

Surprised: I expected to gain more body fat than this (but was pleasantly surprised that I didn't). Also, while most of my individual sites increased, there were a few that went down (ab, knee, calf). Those were three of the places that had the highest body-fat percentage on the initial Day 0 test.

And here are the performance metrics:

Strength Test: Deadlift Maximum

Baseline: 405 pounds

After Weight: Gain: 475 pounds

Power Test: Vertical Jump

Baseline: 28 inches

After Weight Gain: 31.7 inches

Strength Endurance Test: 225-Pound Bench Press

Baseline: 8 reps

After Weight Gain: 15 reps

Endurance Test 1: Max Velocity on Treadmill (V-MAX)

Baseline: 9 minutes and 32 seconds of sprinting at 8mph, working up to an incline of 8%

After Weight Gain: 7 minutes and 38 seconds of sprinting at 8mph, working up to an incline of 6%.

Endurance Test 2: Max Time on Treadmill (T-MAX)

Baseline: 3 minutes and 11 seconds of sprinting at 8mph with 6% incline

After Weight Gain: 3 minutes and 14 seconds of sprinting at 8mph with 6% incline

Strength / Power / Muscle Endurance Tests

Expected: We expected to improve performance dramatically in all three of my non-endurance tests (vertical jump, 225-bench, max deadlift).

Surprised: No surprises here.

V-MAX and T-MAX

Expected: I wasn't too sure what to expect here, honestly. I felt like I was in better shape than on our baseline testing day, but I didn't know if my short duration Hurricane sprint training (25 second sprints) would translate to better endurance.

Surprised: What surprised me about both the VMax and the TMax was that I actually felt like I had more endurance. However, I was much heavier and I felt it during the endurance testing. Perhaps I didn't have enough time to adapt to my new body weight.

Now, this is something GSP may not have to deal with, since he'd likely gain weight over a longer period of time and his body would have more opportunity to adapt.

Closing Words

During each phase of my experiments, I pushed my body to its physiological limits.

I ate as much as I could for 28 days straight. I fasted for a full 24 hours multiple times. I purposefully dehydrated myself and robbed my body of water. I lifted heavy weights and sprinted as fast as I could.

I proved that it's possible to for a regular guy to gain 20 pounds of (mostly) lean mass in a month. That it's possible to then lose those 20 pounds in a week. And that it's possible to gain them all back in a day.

In the process, I hope I've demystified the process of muscle building, weight cutting, and rehydration. In the end, there's no voodoo and witchcraft here. Just the right advice, expert guidance, and a ton of hard work.

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For more about Nate, Dr. Berardi, and their work on building muscle and gaining strength, check out [Scrawny To Brawny](#).

Additional resources: You can download the entire weight-gain nutrition plan Nate used here: [Muscle-Building Nutrition Plan](#). And you can download the entire training program he used here: [Muscle-Building Workout Program](#).