

# OUTSIDE OF THE BOX

With the ever-evolving influence of social media and the endless opportunities for exercise variations available at the scroll of a screen or click of a button, have we lost our way?

By Nathan Parnham

As an S&C coach I'll put my hand up firstly and say I'm guilty of sometimes trying to progress an exercise more for my interests sake than entirely for the needs of my athletes. I think we all are in some capacity.

It also works the other way, many a time we have those athletes whom let's face it just love a challenge and will jump to a progression maybe provided to another team mate just to compete against them. Not to mention one they have seen online somewhere. Heaven forbid should the athlete successfully pull it off, no matter how ugly it may look we then have the challenge of trying to explain why they can't continue to do it when they clearly completed it in some capacity!

The 'light bulb' moment came on a recent trip overseas. For those who know me would understand my passion/hobby of photography. As with many S&C coaches we don't just dabble in something, but rather go full throttle into the subject matter. With this in mind,

naturally as soon as I bought my camera I immersed myself into it finding every possible option to best utilise it in the 'manual' setting- because any photographer knows 'auto' just isn't an option!

However as frustrating as it was I did hit a roadblock. This happened when my partner quickly requested a photo at a landmark. I quickly drew my camera like Clint Eastwood in a cowboy flick ready to shoot! There was one problem; the simplicity of the shot combined with the limited time prompted me to switch into 'auto' mode. To the average tourist this is the only way to take a photo, to me I was completely stumped! I couldn't believe it... How could I have mastered the craft over the last 12 months and invested so much time into it, yet couldn't take a single photo in its simplest form!!!!

As S&C coaches how many times have we looked for a new way to hit a particular muscle group or movement to the point we forget the simplicity of our craft. Training has evolved so much over the last decade, and with the abundance of training opportunities available (gymnastics, cross-fit, Olympic lifting etc.), sometimes we need not look too far for a positive transfer effect to take place.

How many times as coaches have we regressed a movement/or exercise to ensure a positive transfer effect of where our athletes are at, rather than shift to the side with an equivalent funky exercise?

As coaches our priorities should always be our athletes needs combined with an element of their desires to produce successful training outcomes. Continually chasing the next YouTube clip to appease our own exercise repertoire may need to be given a reality check. There is no problem with evolving as a coach- we all need to be. There is also nothing wrong with sticking with an exercise or training system with a proven track record to successfully progress our athletes. It's one thing to know how to use the 'manual' mode; it's another to be able to appreciate 'auto' in its simplest form....