

# **The Scoreboard Progression Log**



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My name is Matt Schifferle and I've been training and working out in some form or another for the past 20 years. Out of those 20 years I would guess that I've probably made progress for maybe a half of that time. That means that I've spent well over 10 years of my life working hard without receiving any benefit or additional result for my efforts.

Thankfully those days are long gone. I can confidently say I've been making progress in some way consistently over the past few years. Much of the reason has to do with a simple tool I call the Scoreboard Progression Log. It's nothing fancy, which is exactly why it works. It's a proven way to ensure every workout is as effective as possible.

### **Why you need to keep a workout log**

I admit I used to believe I didn't need to keep a workout log, that it couldn't possibly be that important. Now I know that to train without some form of record keeping is akin to driving a car at night with the headlights turned off. Here are few points to illustrate why this is the case:

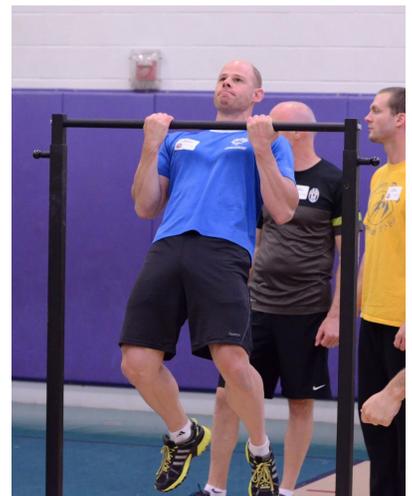
#### **#1 Results come from progression not just hard work**

When I was younger I always thought the path to results was through pushing myself as hard as possible. After all, that was how I made my initial gains for the first few months whenever I tried a new exercise or program. If I wanted to make more progress I simply double down and did more work.

While this plan is effective in the short term it's a very poor long term strategy. You can only invest so much time and energy before you start to run out of resources. As I quickly discovered, I found myself exhausted and stressed out over never ending workouts and programs that would eat up all of my time. Before too long, I was working my tail off and not making any progress.

It took a while for me to learn that results don't come just from working harder but working *better* and improving my capacity to do an exercise. Even though I had been working very hard, I was still doing things the same way and not improving how I was actually exercising. Once I started to understand that progression was the root of success I was able to break through plateaus and make continuous progress even though I wasn't working any harder.

#### **#2 The human mind can be highly unreliable**

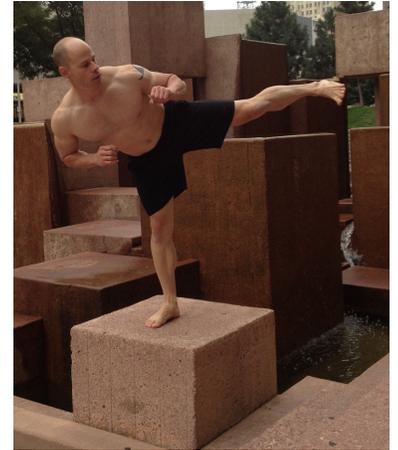


I was once told by a mentor to never trust my success to my own memory. If something is truly important to you you owe it to yourself to write it down. This is because the human brain, as incredible as it is, operates very much like a computer with limited storage and energy to retain information. When you write something down you don't have to rely on the cognitive abilities of your mind to ensure that progress happens.

### **#3 Remembering your last workout is a big red flag**

I used to believe that I didn't need to write anything down because I would always remember what I had done in my previous workout. While this may seem like a good thing it's actually a very bad thing. The human mind best remembers things through repetition and consistency. The reason why I always remembered what I had done in my previous workout was because I had done the same thing in the workout before that and the workout before that. In other words, my workouts were the same and nothing was changing or advancing.

Ideally, you want to be progressing in at least some small way from one workout to the next. If you advance something but fail to remember it you won't retain the information that will make you stronger and you will keep regressing back to where you have always been.



### **#4 Writing down and looking at your workout on paper causes you to reflect**

All progress and results start in your mind. If your mind isn't thinking about what you were doing it won't have any new information to send throughout your body and therefore your body will never change.

The best way to ensure your mental signals continue to progress is to simply reflect on your previous workout and consider what you should do a little differently in your next workout. It's a simple habit yet it can literally mean the difference between gaining 10 pounds of muscle or gaining nothing. Your workout log will give you a mental anchor point, something you can focus your thoughts on so they can be directed towards progressing your exercise as opposed to just going through the motions one week to the next.

I could continue to give you more reasons but I think it's sufficient to say that your entire future and the results you want rest upon your ability to progress and progression is a very tricky thing to do without some sort of record keeping system.

### **Problems with conventional workout logs**

You may ask yourself if keeping a workout log is so darn important than why don't most people do it on a regular basis?

I believe the reason for most people is keeping a workout log is a tedious habit to keep. It means you have to constantly interrupt your workout to fill in little boxes with a pen as you are out of breath and sweating all over the paper.

It's not just keeping a workout log that's difficult but also reading the log can be a bit of a pain in the neck as well. I can't think of many things I'd rather do less than flip through pages of spreadsheets while trying to decipher it all like some sort of secret code. I also didn't like having to always remember to keep a notebook on hand or to remember to go through it at least once a week to understand what I needed to do in order to progress. These are the primary reasons why I didn't keep a workout log for many years. It was these challenges combined with the understanding of how important a workout log can be that led me to create the Scoreboard Progression Log.

The Scoreboard Progression Log combines the benefits of keeping a log without the tedious recordkeeping or reading found with many book style logs. It doesn't involve writing down everything you do nor do you even need multiple pages to carry around. All you need is a single sheet of paper or a whiteboard up on the wall. You can even keep a single screen of notes on a smartphone or tablet.

### **How the scoreboard progression log works**

The progression log is simply a single sheet of paper with the exercises you perform written on the left. Underneath each exercise you write down the details of how you do the exercise including technique, weight, or equipment used. To the right of that all you do is record your personal best performance of that technique.

**Pull ups**

w/ 50# assist 10 10 8

**Squats**

Goblet with 30# KB 20 20 15

**Push ups**

Close hands 12 12 12

**Leg raises**

15 14 14

In this example I'm doing pull ups on an assistance machine with 50 pounds of assistance and I'm getting two sets of 10 and one set of 8. The squats are done goblet style with a 30 pound kettlebell and I'm getting two sets of 20 reps and 15 reps on the third set. I finish the workout with close hand push ups for 3 sets of 12 and a few sets of leg raises.

**Setting up for circuits or super sets**

I keep exercises bunched together if I'm doing them in a circuit and ones with a space between are done individuals.

**Push ups**

Gymnastics rings 15 15 15

**Rows**

Gymnastics rings 12 12 12

**Lunges**

BW length of basketball court 1t 1t 1t

**Jump squats**

10 at each end of the court.

In this example I'm super setting push ups and rows on a set of gymnastics rings for 3 sets. After that, I'm combining lunges and jump squats on a basketball court.

**Tracking technical progress**

Most of your progress won't come from doing more reps or lifting more weight, but rather how you technically improve an exercise. This is especially the case with Progressive Calisthenics. It's easy to account for this in the Scoreboard. Under each exercise I put any technical considerations I need to keep in mind which are marked with a - or \* as you can see in this example:

**Push ups**

Gymnastics rings 15 15 15

- Keep shoulders down and back

**Rows**

Gymnastics rings 12 12 12

**Lunges**

BW length of basketball court 1t 1t 1t

- Maintain tension in glutes at the bottom of each step

**Jump squats**

10 at each end of the court.

- Keep a smooth rhythm and land softly on the balls of the feet.

**Use one sheet or multiple sheets for various workouts**

Usually I just have one sheet for all of my workouts but some folks like to make a separate log for each individual workout with maybe one for leg day, one for push day and so on.

*Push day***Dips**

Gymnastics rings 12 12 10

**Push ups**

3 minute test 34

**Triceps extensions**

On floor 13 13 14

**Hand stands**

Holding for 20s 15s 14s

*Pull day***Rows**

3 minute rest 43

- Keep legs straight and hamstrings tight

**Pull ups**

5 5 4

**Strap curls**

12 12 12

- Keep elbows turned in and forearms tense

**Rear fly**

10 10 10

**Front lever**

Holding for 10 count

This is also a great way to track workouts in a periodization format. You can have individual scoreboard for each micro phase of your training and keep them together for each macrophase.

**What about change over time?**

One of the benefits of keeping multiple sheets is you can see a change in performance over time. Personally, I've always come from the idea that It's not so much about where I've been but where I'm going sort of mindset. Even so, I know it can be helpful to record when you've made a change or made some progress. In this case I just put the date for the latest change.

**Push ups**

Gymnastics rings 15 15 15

- Keep shoulders down and back 1/12/16

**Rows**

Gymnastics rings 2/9/15 12 12 12

**Lunges**

BW length of basketball court 1t 1t 1t

- Maintain tension in glutes at the bottom of each step

**Jump squats**

10 at each end of the court. 12/23/15

- Keep a smooth rhythm and land softly on the balls of the feet.

**Building a workout menu**

Some folks like to do something different each workout. This is one of the reasons why they might shy away from keeping a log because a log usually requires following a strict routine. The Scoreboard is the perfect solution because it allows you to record multiple exercises and variations at the same time. This gives you a sort of workout menu where you can pick and choose something different from each category to create new workouts. This gives you both the freedom to keep changing things up, yet you'll still have enough structure to ensure progression.

**Push ups**

As many as possible in 3 minutes 37

Close 12 13 14

Wide 15 15 15

Straps 17 10 10

**Pull ups**

18 17 17

W/ 20# 10 9 9

- Touch chest to hands

3 minutes 23

**Squats**

Single leg 8 8 5 each leg

Jumping 20 20

Bulgarian squats 20 DBs 10/ side 10 10

With all of these examples, the only time you make a change is if you make a progression. So if you have 3 sets of pull ups ( 12 10 10) written down but you do (11 10 9) in your next workout you wouldn't change anything. However, if you do (12 11 10) then you would simply change the middle number to reflect your new level of performance.

**Resetting your scores.**

Sometimes you might make a progressive change in your technique which will greatly change how much work you can do. For example let's say you can do 3 sets of 15 pull ups.

Pull ups

15 15 15

You're making progress but one weekend you attend a pull up seminar and learn you're only coming half way down with each rep. When you use a full range of motion you suddenly find even 10 pull ups to be a big challenge. Now your previous numbers are greatly inflated from your new advanced technique. Rather than keeping your old numbers I recommend resetting

your pullup numbers to reflect your new technique. This way you won't spend a lot of time chasing your old performance which doesn't relate well to your new technique.

Pull ups

10 9 7

- Use full ROM at bottom of each rep

The most important thing to remember about the Scoreboard is to keep it simple and easy to use. You don't have to stick exclusively to the way I have mine set up. Be creative and make any changes you want to make it work for you.

If you have any questions or concerns feel free to contact me at [RedDeltaProoject@gmail.com](mailto:RedDeltaProoject@gmail.com).

Before you go, don't forget I've got more for you including the [Chain Training](#) and the [Veterano Plus Workout Program](#). Also, Check out the first official book of the Red Delta Project, [Fitness Independence](#) now available at Amazon!

Be Fit & Live Free,

-Matt Schifferle