

# **Work: The Great Equalizer in Strength and Conditioning**

**Anthony Donskov MS, CSCS, PES**

It's truly sad that in this day and age we have not set a firm bar/measure of strength in the weight room. Bench press, front squat, trap bar dead lift maxes have all been inflated to show unrealistic numbers with sub par form. The truth behind the reality is that coaches inflate their own egos just as much as their athletes' bench press numbers. The results are arbitrary. Want to get your athletes strong? **WORK!** The Wikipedia definition of work states: "In physics, mechanical work is the amount of energy transferred by a force acting through a distance." **In the strength and conditioning world, work is defined as the weight (gravity acting on the bar/object) multiplied by the distance the object travels.** If we as coaches don't set the distance the bar travels, how can we accurately measure our athletes' strength gains? The truth is we can't! In fact not only do we set inaccurate standards, we guess, which further sets our profession back.

The following exercises can all be measured by setting the distance (it's true one size does not fit all, but most of these distances are universal and can be used for the majority of athletes and clients).

**Bench Press: Touch the chest!** If the bar does not touch the chest, the rep does NOT count. I will also expand on the fact that if the spotter touches the bar, the rep does NOT count.

**Front Squat: 12" box!** This is not a traditional box squat, simply a distance that works for the majority of athletes. The athlete simply squats until his glutes touch the box then initiates hip extension and finishes the lift.

**Trap Bar: The ground!** The rep starts on the ground and finishes with the weight touching the ground (NOT resting) before the next repetition.

**RFESS:** The grounded leg is firmly planted on the floor, the contralateral foot (laces of shoe) on the bench, while the knee touches an Airex Pad.

**Single Leg Squat: 12" box+Airex Pad.** This distance is approximately 14 ½". The athlete simply touches his/her glute to the pad and then initiates hip extension.

We need to stop the inflation that rids our profession of credibility and gives sport coaches' a flawed system of numbers to work with. This is dangerous for our athletes and unrealistic for honest coaches searching to build bigger, faster, stronger athletes! We need to set standards, a way of doing things that eliminates the guesswork and harnesses results that are accurate, NOT arbitrary. **We need to set the distance coaches! We need to WORK!**

Anthony Donskov, MS, CSCS, PES, is a former collegiate and professional hockey player, founder of Donskov Strength and Conditioning Inc., ([www.donskovsc.com](http://www.donskovsc.com)) and Head Instructor/Director of Off-Ice Strength and Conditioning for The "OV" Hockey School ([www.ovhockey.com](http://www.ovhockey.com)). He can be reached at [info@donskovsc.com](mailto:info@donskovsc.com).