

JEFF ZGONINA NG



Jeff is the type of guy you want in your program. Not because he can run, jump or because he can lift heavy weights. It is because he's a competitor. I know he would be in condition if I never watched him a day. He's the type of guy who runs after conditioning.

Jeff is very knowledgeable about a proper diet. He's always trying to have the proper ratio of carbs, protein and fat. Hey! He is human and he has faults, but if you give me 10 guys like him on a team, it would make me look like I invented training!

On the topic of steroids, Jeff knows that people will always say that he is on steroids, I just wish people could have seen the progress over the years. Yeah, he was born with genetic gifts but he works harder than anyone. We run a clean program and our random drug testing program is very tough to fool! We give unannounced drug tests to the entire team all year long. The NCAA has also been in several times over the last two years.

Steve Little: Strength Coach Purdue University

Jeff Zgonina (pronounced skah-NEE-nah) is headed for many post season honors and is one of 12 semifinalists for the prestigious Lombardi Award. Jeff has an amazing Parallel Squat. It's 865 pounds! That puts him at a unique level. Jeff accomplished that feat without a lifting suit but does wear knee wraps when he goes heavy. Remember, 600 pounds is our Pro-Elite level for college lineman. This is difficult to attain if the athlete goes down to a true parallel position. Seven hundred pounds further separates those elite level athletes. I would estimate that there are less than ten football players who can Parallel Squat 700 or more pounds. Now 800 pounds is extremely rare. I know of only three players in college over the last decade to hit the 800 pound level. Terry Long from East Carolina University reportedly did a 900 pound squat in training. Terry was also a North Carolina State Powerlifting Champion, so his squats were probably done at a parallel position. Therefore, our hats are off to Jeff Zgonina, the Strongest Squatter in the 1990's among the college football ranks.

Jeff also has a 475 pound Bench Press with a narrower type grip and a powerful Clean being able to 5 reps with 320 pounds. Jeff states, "The Power Clean helps a lot on my explosion and quickness off the ball."

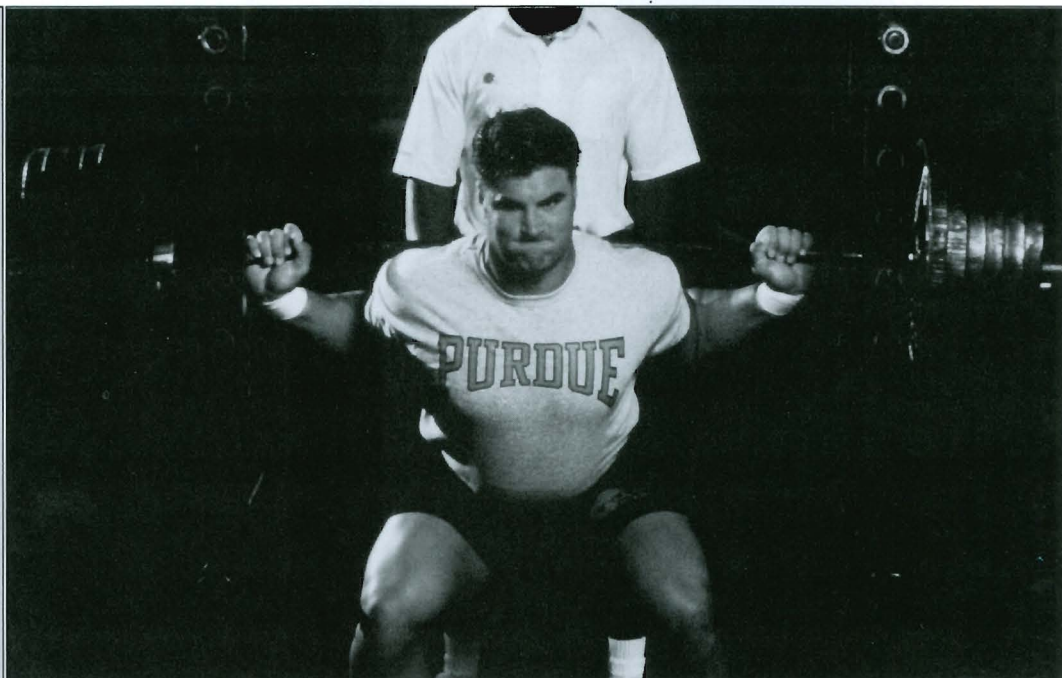
Jeff played high school ball at Carmel High School in Long Grove, Illinois. He was All-State, All-Area, All-County and All-Catholic. Jeff also played basketball, hockey and was a conference shot put champion with a 54-6 effort. In high school, Jeff Bench Pressed 415, Parallel Squatted 510 and even Dead Lifted in a Power Lifting meet. Jeff was already huge at 6-2 260 and received scholarship offers from Illinois, Notre Dame and Purdue. Jeff liked defensive line coach Bill Koller and chose Purdue.

Purdue is an exceptional university offering nearly 6,700 courses. Founded in 1869, Purdue now has an enrollment of over 36 thousand and has more than a quarter million living alumni. In 1990, the \$9.3 million Mollenkopf Athletic Center was completed. It contains an indoor practice field covered with 92,400 Square feet of "Astro Turf" and weight training room. The field is 420 feet long and 220 feet wide. It's 86 feet high! The new weight training room covers more than 14,000 square feet! It doesn't stop there, Purdue's stadium seats 67,861, the largest in Indiana, which also features a \$1 million electronic scoreboard and message center.

Steve Little is in his second year as Purdue's Strength and Conditioning Coordinator. Coach Little's philosophy is simple: "Work hard and take it one day, one lift, one repetition at a time. Train the entire body and never take for granted that you are too strong or too fast. The harder you work in the weight room, the better athlete you become on the football field."

Jeff has a similar philosophy, "It starts in the weight room. I want to be a strength coach or maybe run my own gym. I'd like to get my guys ready." Jeff has his sights set

SQUAT: 840
BENCH: 475
V.J.: 36 1/2
40: 4.85
ALL-AMERICA
LOMBARDI
AWARD
OUTLAND
TROPHY
CANDIDATE



on ultimately being a strength coach in the NFL. He will graduate in December with a Community Health Promotions and Education degree and has maintained a B minus average.

Jeff red-shirted in 1988 and went down to 230 pounds so he could play linebacker but he lost a lot of strength. He really felt out of place since he'd played defensive line all through high school. Strength Coach Russ Rider, who is now with the Bears, gave Jeff intense workouts starting at 6:00 AM during that freshman year. In-season workouts were really like off-season workouts. Plyometrics and speed workouts were also done. "I like to break down the components of speed down. I watch our fast guys and try to be like them," said Jeff.

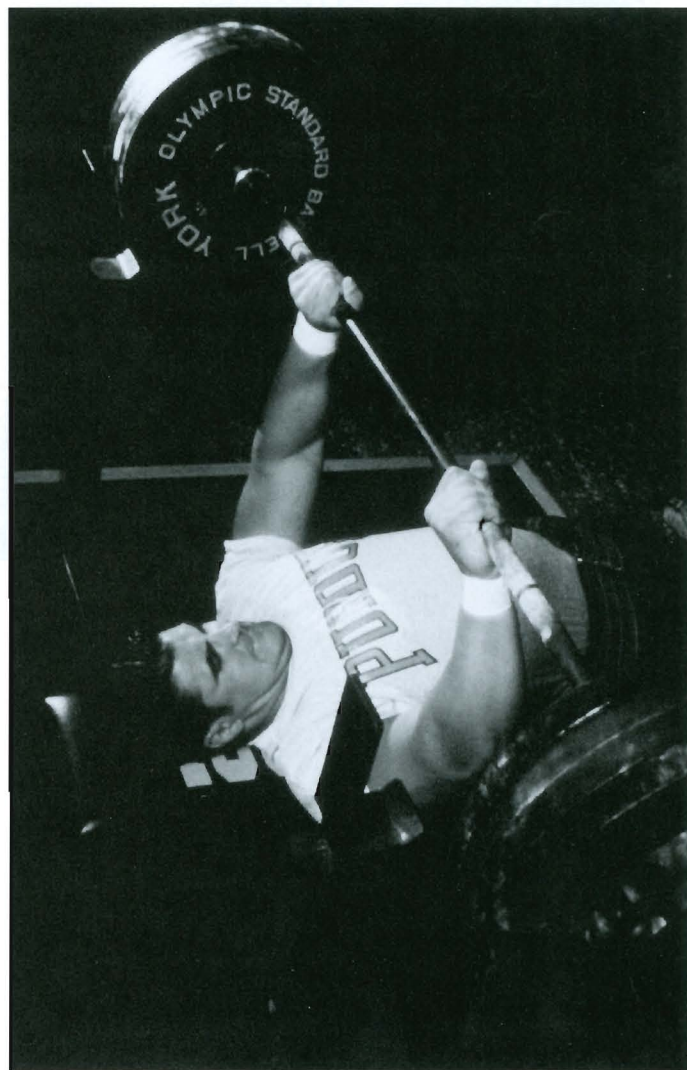
In the weight room, Jeff's philosophy is intense, "I push myself to the limit. I want to blow everyone away on the team. I want my records to last. In my freshman year, there were guys stronger, so I had to beat them."

Jeff has long been an admirer of famous nose guard Chris Zorich and says, "I want to be bigger and someday be as good or better. It'd be nice to be in an elite group like that."

Jeff's parents have not missed a game and have provided a wonderful model for him to follow. He has two

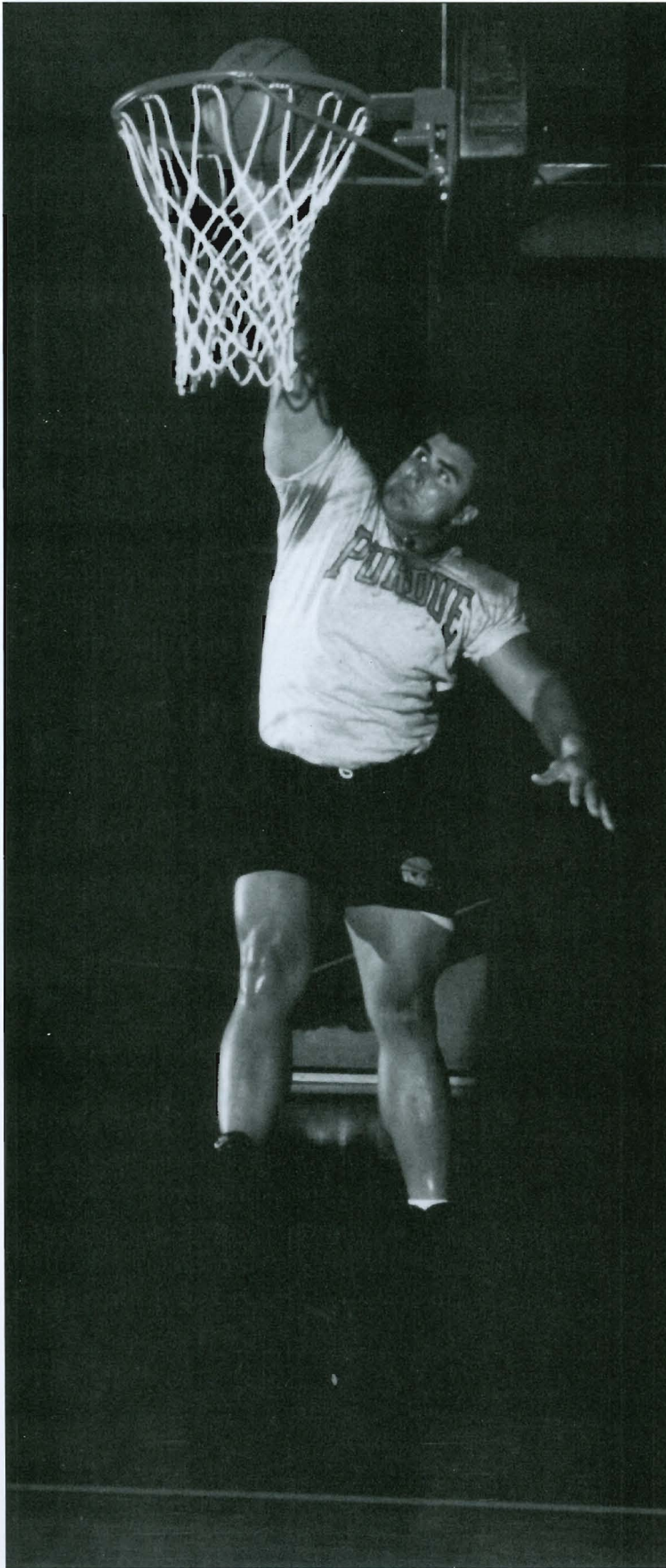
"Jeff Zgonina's a tough guy to block one-on-one. We have some decent offensive linemen, but we can't pass block the guy one-on-one. Maybe there are guys in the league who can, but we're going to try and get him in a position to make plays. He's physically good enough that if he plays at a high level of intensity and the offensive lineman doesn't get much help, Jeff has a chance to make a lot of plays."

Jim Colletto: Head Football Coach, Purdue

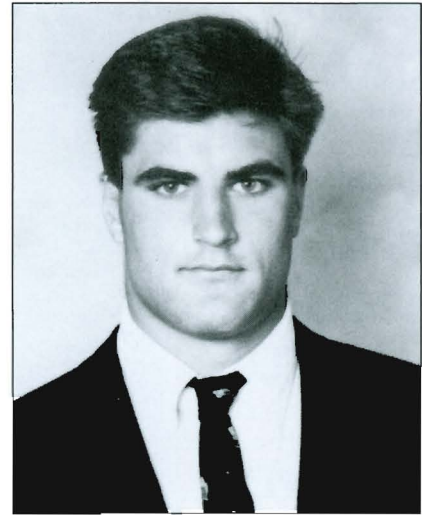


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JEFF ZGONINA: PURDUE NG 6-2 280



Big Body + Big Squat = Big Dunk



sisters and one is a bodybuilder. Jeff who wants to have a nice big family of his own someday has developed strong feelings against negative peer pressure. "I went to a private high school and a lot of kids did street drugs. It screwed them up mentally. They had no edge. It told them that drugs weren't for me. I really didn't have that many true friends in high school. If kids did drugs I really didn't associate with them. My one true friend and I stayed away from it and we're best friends today. If I did go to a party, I ended up being the driver. I didn't allow peer pressure to control me. My parents brought me up that way. You know, one of my motivations for staying clean was my parents. I would never want to disgrace my family. I could never stand my parents coming to the hospital or down to the police station."

At Purdue, Jeff does a lot of volunteer work in helping high school kids "Just say NO to drugs." "In college," says Jeff, "I just walk away and do something else. I believe God gave me my mind and body for a purpose. I want to be a good example and role model."

Jeff fits our definition of an Upper Limit athlete and offers this advise, "Set your goals high and go for it. I set new goals everyday. I think about what I want to accomplish. It pushes me harder in every practice and every game. I write in my journal everyday about what I did that day and what I want to accomplish. To wind down, I write in my journal maybe for 30 minutes. Once I start it flows. It clears my mind."

The Lombardi Award is goal Jeff has worked hard for the last four years. This goal helps me play harder every Saturday. He'd like to bring the trophy to Purdue as they've never had a major individual football award winner before.

Vince Lombardi died an untimely death by cancer in 1970 and the trophy named for this legendary coach is a 40-pound block of granite atop a silver pedestal built over a foundation of discipline. I know Coach Lombardi would be proud to give it to Jeff Zgonina.

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