

# Competition (Part 2)—the Struggle for Excellence or Victory?

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## An Alternative to the Hyperplasia Challenge

My studies on competition, intrinsic motivation, and goal orientations have literally changed my life. Applying these principles has improved my performance, my enjoyment, my intrinsic motivation, and allowed me to help so many people. And it has made me a much better leader of this website, and also, a better Christian.

But one thing I have struggled with is how to apply these concepts in a game on our website. I have thought and thought, of how to incorporate cooperation in a game format, but the answer has eluded me.

Recently, however, I believe I found at least one effective alternative. And I am excited to share it.

Since early October 2006, till now (early November, 2006) I have been trying a new dieting program. It is extremely brutal, and often times depressing. Well, I was accompanied in this task by two of our members: dashforce, and calvin.

During this diet, we have discussed how it has worked for one another, discussed strategies to improve our programs, and also been able to help several other members in the process.

Together, we have applied the concept of cooperation with great success. My personal thoughts during this experience is that it has strengthened our relationships, we have gotten to know each other better, it has increased our knowledge, and it has pushed us all to higher levels of performance. I quite honestly, cannot think of one side effect from this experience—not one. I very well may have quit this program right now, without their support. And it certainly would not have been as fun or successful than what it has been. You can read all 3 of our journals in the journal section of our forums.

Here is additional commentary by dashforce on this:

I was thrilled to find that you and Calvin would be trying out the AD alongside with me, and it has definitely strengthened my resolve to "stick it out" for the duration of my "test run" (ending December 14th, the day I leave to visit my family for 3 weeks in Puerto Rico).

I think that the posts and experiences of others participating in similar programs would be invaluable to one's own progress. There's nothing in the world like seeing that someone else is going through the same trials (and hopefully seeing the same successes) that you are.

Further, if we could get enough diversity in the types of programs being experimented with, it could be a real eye-opener (at least anecdotally) to the most effective training styles and diets for us "natural guys."

With this in mind, here is my proposal for implementing cooperation on our website.

## **ABC Teams**

What I have proposed here, is to start having ABCbodybuilding.com teams. The way this will work is that any members on our site can start their own team as long as all the members in the group have at least one common goal in their training program. This thought arose from my above interactions.

The only requirement would be that you would have to have one specific common trait in your programs, so you could relate to each other, and help motivate each other. It can't be that you are bulking or cutting...that is much too broad, and you will not get as much out of it. It has to be something more specific such as, you are all doing the [4th horseman routine](#), or the [13-week diet](#), etc. It could even be something as simple as doing an 8 week calf program together.

Also, you can be in several groups at once. You could be doing the 13-week diet in one group, and cliff hanger with another group.

As far as dependent measurements, that is up to the people in the group. Whatever they are comfortable with. We advise that you record your [body fat percentage](#), because it is an objective way to monitor your progress. But if you do not want to do this, you do not have to.

The only other requirement would be that we would like a summation of how the program went, what you learned, and what you feel about cooperation after you are all done with the routine.

Much of the rationale behind this game, is to avoid problems we have had in the past with the hyperplasia challenge. The HP challenge is high maintenance. It takes a ton of work on the moderates of the site to organize everything, and record the results of everyone, and then make decisions on how things are going to be run. With this game, it is completely self run. You start a team when you want to, and you end it when you want to.

Another major problem has been adherence. Adherence in the last HP challenge was horrendous. I talked to the competitors, and many of the reasons for these struggles was because they were going through difficult times, and the HP challenge took place at a bad time for them. This can happen to any of us. So the great thing about this game, is that it should improve this issue, since the athletes can train for however long they want—a week, or 3 months—and stop, and start back up whenever they want; as long as they coordinate it with others.

To further enhance adherence, I also thought it would be wise to limit external barriers, such as forcing people to do caliper measurements.

So let me summarize how this will work, and feel in some more detail:

1. Coordinate with other members on the said website, about a training program you can work on together. Say you decide you want to all go on a 13-week cut, using the 13-week diet program.
2. After you have decided this, have one member of your team email me at [Venom@abcbodybuilding.com](mailto:Venom@abcbodybuilding.com) or send a pm, asking permission to start a team up.
3. After permission is given, post your guys journals in the cooperation team forum. If you already have a journal, you can ask me, and I'll move your journal to that forum.
4. In the title of your journal, put the name of your team—e.g. "The Monster Squad" and whatever else you would like to put in your journal title.
5. Decide before hand if you want to take any measurements or report any particular results.
6. At the end of this, please make a post summarizing how the program went, what you learned, and what you feel about cooperation after you are all done with the routine. This way, everyone can benefit from your experience.

If you are not a member but would like to become one, and perhaps start a team, click [here](#).

## **New Forums**

We have created two new forums for this game.

**Forum 1:** This forum contains the journals of teams only. No other threads will be created in this journal, except by administrators. To access this forum, click [here](#).

**Forum 2:** In this forum, people can form teams. For instance, say you want to do Cliff Hanger. You can make a post in this forum, and ask if people would like to form a team with you, and do the Cliff Hanger Program. Also, in this forum, you can post ideas for modifications to this game, or, propose a new game. To access this forum, click [here](#).

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

Below is a list of frequently asked questions about this game.

### **Can I be on two teams at once?**

I don't see why not! Let's say you are doing the 24 week mass diet, and Cliff Hanger. You might be on two teams—one team has members which are also participating in the 24 week mass diet. While another team you are on is participating in Cliff Hanger.

### **What do I post about in my team journal?**

The minimum you have to post is anything relating to the program you are doing with your team. How much you post about that is entirely up to you. Whether it is 5 posts, or 100.

However, you can carry on a full blown journal in these forums. So you can discuss your diet, training program, etc. It is up to you.

### **What about this training program?...**

One very attractive outcome of this game is that it is an excellent way to get reviews of training and dieting methods. Teams that participate in this forum can edify the viewers by giving them feedback on the programs they design, and motivate others to try these programs themselves, or perhaps save people the time of trying a suboptimal routine.

### **Can My Team do a Program that is not from ABC?**

Absolutely! If you want to start a team, and do a training program from another website, or something that you made up by altogether, that is absolutely fine.

### **Can I join a Team late?**

Again, why not?! Of course, you will have to ask permission from the team, but it should not be a problem. This method is non evasive, and there is no "winner" or "loser." The only goal is to optimize performance. So let's say, there is a team half way done with the 13-week fat metabolizing diet. And then, another member wants to do this diet. Simply ask the team if you can join them, and then, start your own journal and start interacting with each other. As you do the diet, you can post in their journals and ask them questions such as how is the diet working for you? What methods do you suggest? Etc.

### **Are there other games we can play?**

Absolutely! That is one of the primary purposes of this article. I want to motivate people on this website, to start thinking of ways we can build strong relationships in the community. So if anyone has an idea for a new game, then this idea can be posted in the aforementioned forum that I proposed.

### **So what do I do Now?**

Start a team, have fun, and grow!

Keep it Hard-core,

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