GP COACHING
BUILT THROUGH DISCIPLINE

Five principles from my Training System.

Building muscle isn't a contest to lift the most or get the most tired. It's creating a quality stimulus in the muscle you're training, recovering from it, and improving the performance you can repeat. These five principles are the foundation of every programme I write.

1. Choose exercises for the muscle, not for tradition

A good exercise lets you put tension where you want it, set up the same way every time, work through a useful range of motion and measure your performance without beating up your joints. You don't have to barbell squat because it's a staple. For some people a hack squat, pendulum squat or leg press is the better quad builder. An exercise earns its place by what it does for you and how reliably you can progress it.

2. Execution is the measuring stick

- **Set-up:** lock in seat, pads, grip, feet and brace before the weight moves.
- **Lowering:** control it. Roughly 2–3 seconds is often useful. No dropping or bouncing.
- **Bottom position:** own the stretch. Don't rebound out of it.
- **Lifting:** drive hard with the target muscle while the rest of you stays stable. Hard doesn't mean sloppy.

If your technique changes every time the weight goes up, your logbook is no longer measuring the same thing.

3. Push hard, but match the effort to the exercise

Effort creates the stimulus. "Reps in reserve" (RIR) is how many more good reps you could have done.

Exercise type	Stop at	Why
Technical compounds (squats, presses)	About 1–2 RIR	Stop before technique breaks down.
Stable machines	About 0–1 RIR	Close to the last controlled rep.
Isolation work	About 0–1 RIR	Failure is fine if it stays safe and controlled.

Failure is a tool, not the goal of every set.

4. Progress with double progression

Work within a rep range. Add reps first, then add load. For example, on an incline machine press with a 6–10 rep target: 100 kg × 8, then 100 kg × 9, then 100 kg × 10. Don't stop a set at the top of the range: keep going while the reps stay clean. Once you're at or past the top with the same execution, add weight and build back up, for example 105 kg × 7.

Progress can also be better execution, more usable range or the same work with less wasted fatigue. More weight isn't progress if the movement changed to get it.

5. Log the truth and read the trend

- Log every working set with the real weight and reps, even when you miss the target. Don't log warm-ups.
- Note machine settings, grips and anything you'd need to repeat the set exactly.
- One bad session is information. A pattern over several sessions is a trend worth acting on.
- Before adding sets when progress stalls, check execution, sleep, food, stress and fatigue first. Then change the smallest thing that could help.

Want this applied to you?

Coaching turns these principles into a programme built around your goals, experience and equipment, with weekly check-ins and a personal video review. I reply to every application within 48 hours.

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