



At B32, we like our clients to like their shoulders. We like our clients to *love* their shoulders. We love your shoulders. You should too.

In the aim of balanced fitness (and it follows, the sport of fitness) our perspective is that it's super important to build the structural foundations, the stability and the base strength before adding any ballistic movement under loading. While it may seem like a process, this is the way to keep folks injury-free, consistent with their training and bearing some aspect of longevity in mind.

Throwing people into dynamic, heavily loaded movements (over and over, mind you) on joints and structures that are not yet conditioned to support even themselves appropriately is a surefire prescription for disaster... and a longstanding love affair with kinesio tape, physios and chiropractors.

This is especially true when it comes to the shoulder girdle. It is even more true when it comes to the more delicate *female* shoulder girdle. More attention needs to be paid to suring up the female shoulder before attempting to move into greater complexity of movement.

At B32 we build folks through progressive levels of movement and strength, particularly when it comes to upper body pulling. Scapula strength & control, horizontal pulling strength, eccentric control at body weight, eccentric control with added weight, strict chins at body weight, strict chins with added weight... *then...* consider kipping and other ballistics on the shoulder (if that person's goals require it.)

You'll notice no mention of bands. No, we don't use bands for chin ups - they provide the most assistance in exactly the place you need to build the most strength, control and coordination for safe and stable UB pulling... bands are great for mobility and a host of other things... but not so great for building healthy, strong, bulletproof shoulders.

You might also be thinking, "hey wait a minute, how do you do pull ups in a WOD or high-intensity session?" ... well... exactly - if you don't have enough strength and control of your shoulders to string a few strict chins together under your own body weight, in a controlled, static environment, then perhaps flapping around through kipping pull ups under high heart rate and the duress of high intensity isn't the best idea...

Anyway, the B32 process of building strength, control and stability first, coupled with a good dose of patience has paid off for a number of our chicks round the gym lately, and I couldn't be more proud! I talked to a couple of them about their experiences in nailing their first chins...

Before joining us at B32, Alicia wanted chin ups for last Christmas and the Christmas before that. "My process started 3 years ago, I joined a gym, had a personal trainer and had a chin/pull up on my list (just like Linda Hamilton)". Sorting out Alicia's pretty extreme internal shoulder rotation restrictions has been a big factor in getting her a strict chin "I never really got close during this time... lots of bands were used, and looking back, structurally what I had going on, I was never going to get there (only strong in the chest and no where else.... palpated shoulder anyone?)" A couple of weeks ago... on pull up Monday... bang! She nailed it.

"The last 10 months at B32 have really been where, through your programming, you've fixed the issues I had with my upper body (internal rotation issues, palpated scapula, lack of scapula control & strength etc)."

Ceilidh's been with us here for a while now, and is one of the most consistent, patient and pleasant folks I've had the pleasure to coach. "Putting your trust in someone/something (coaches/a journey) allows you sit back, listen, ask questions, laugh (dance if the opportunity presents itself) and enjoy the ride. Why the rush? Why

the hurry?” Ceilidh says. Her consistency and trust in the coaching and the process all came together one morning, during a warm up, to her (and everyone else’s) delight - “My first chin up was so unexpected, so smooth and felt so strong that I smile just thinking about it... one of the other girls was assisting me in a three position chin up-warm up combo one morning at B32 (about nine months after joining I think), she put her hands on my back and before she pushed, I pulled, I went up and my chin went over the bar... “I think I just did a chin up!”... IMMENSELY satisfying”

Alicia’s reaction was not so underrated... “a heel click and happy dance all around the gym screaming.... “did I get it? did that count? was my chin over the bar long enough?” (If you know Alicia, this reaction is definitely fitting of her open, vivacious and warm personality!)

These are not just haphazard events. Make no mistake they were worked for with purpose and intent across a period of intelligent phasing and building.

“I accepted early on in the process that getting a chin up one of those things that was going to take a while. The thing that “clicked” for me was showing up at training regularly, being positive, the love of learning and immersing myself in the atmosphere.” Ceilidh says.

“I can see the method to your madness and the things I’ve been able to work on and build upon the last couple of months got me there” says Alicia. “Before today, I could never start the initial pull at the bottom. For me bicep strength and scapula strength were the last pieces that fell into place that finally got me ‘over the bar’. So the loaded lowering work was pretty crucial for me.”

So what’s next on the list for these girls?

Ceilidh’s list is varied... “A long string of strict pretty chin ups! And a 5kg weighted chin up (I’ve got a 1kg chin but bring on a fiver!) A legit body-weight squat under tempo. Throwing 50kg overhead. Picking up 100kg. Snatching 40kg. Training my lactate system... the list goes on. I feel excited just thinking about it!”

Alicia was a little more reflective... “It’s been cool to look back and really think about how long I’ve wanted and worked towards my pull up goal” she says. “To be honest... I’ve felt relieved I did it - and in shock (I had mentally prepared myself that it was ok if I didn’t get it - while with the other mental hand, I was slapping myself in the head saying - YOU GOT THIS!). Now the shock’s worn off - I’m freaking proud of myself, this has been a long time coming and I did the work and got it!”

J.