



# ***Blizzard of '96- A Hardcore Gym Story***

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*There was a time when gyms were sacred places where the determined few made their regular pilgrimages for self improvement. Now in the days of sports clubs and fancy studios, those halls of steel and sweat are all but forgotten, but they live on in the hearts of those that were inspired by them.*

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Monday 7<sup>th</sup> February, 1996

It was Monday, February 7<sup>th</sup> in the year 1996, and the blizzard was in full force. The storm was one of the worst of the 20<sup>th</sup> century for much of the Northeast, and it left over 24 inches of snow in the New York area. I woke up that morning and stared out into the white world outside my window. All I could think of, was that today was my day for back and shoulders, and that I was going to miss my workout. The entire city was paralyzed by the snow, from cars to NYC Transit, but nevertheless, I called the gym to see if by chance they might be open. The phone rang twice before it was answered much to my surprise. I asked if the gym would be open today and a gruff voice on the other said that is most certainly was, and with an inflection that appeared to be oblivious to the fact that one of the greatest blizzards of the century was still very much raging outside.

I hung up the phone and got dressed. I knew it was insane, but I simply couldn't see myself missing a training day on account of the weather when the gym was still open. I went outside and was immediately assaulted by the wind. The blowing snow made it almost impossible to see anything save the snow at my feet, not that there was truly anything to be seen, as everything was a wall of freezing white, urging me to go back inside. For a moment, I contemplated turning around, and going back to the comfort of my warm apartment, but I pressed on nevertheless. I knew that there was nothing moving outside, and that I would have to make the trip to the gym on foot. Ordinarily it was a 45 minute walk, and I was optimistic about getting there in an hour.

Moving forward, often times knee deep in snow, however, was much more of an exercise in seemingly futile exertion than I accounted for. This was only my second experience of winter, having only moved to New York from the tropical island of Trinidad a year before. I was determined, though, and I trudged forward, face down against the driving blizzard, slipping and struggling forward into the all consuming storm of white. Walking in the middle of the street wherever possible, I kept my ears tuned for the sound of any approaching snow ploughs, and given the roar of the wind, it was almost impossible to hear them before they were about to run me over.

Visibility conditions being as they were, I came very close to finding myself under the wheels of an approaching plough truck on two occasions, just barely hearing the rumblings over the wind and leaping aside just as the plough passed by, and being bombarded by an avalanche of snow in the process. I am certain to this day that the drivers had no idea that I was even there.

After an hour and a half of torturously slow movement, the cold really starting setting in. I couldn't feel my ears about five minutes after I left, even though my head was thoroughly wrapped up, and my hands were numb, in spite of the mittens and waterproof gloves that I was wearing. At this point, I had no

choice but to push forward, but the prospect of having to trek back home afterwards, began to weigh heavily on me as I pressed on. About a half hour later, two hours after leaving the comfort of home, I made it to the entrance of the gym. I took my gloves off as I went inside the lobby, and shook off the layers of snow as I made my way down the stairs into the dungeon that is Fifth Avenue Gym. I was cold, wet and exhausted, and I figured on doing just going through the motions of a quick workout before heading straight home, as I had already felt like I had worked muscles in my legs that were untouched before today.

I opened the door, and I froze. The gym was not at all empty as I expected, but was very much alive with the sound of iron being lifted and muscles being exerted; in fact the gym even looked to be almost crowded with the likes of most of the regular lifters. Just seeing them all there, knowing what each of them must have gone through to be there, gave me an infusion of pure energy. I said my hellos to everyone as I went into the back room to change, and I came out for one of the best and hardest workouts of my life. I was so pumped up afterwards that I didn't even feel the cold on the way home.

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Founder, Naturally Intense System of Diet & Exercise™

Kevin Richardson is a visionary personal trainer, author and the founder of the ground breaking Naturally Intense System of Diet & Exercise™ which has helped hundreds lose weight and get into fantastic shape training only 10 minutes 3 times a week over the past 18 years of his career. For more cutting edge articles on weight loss, health and fitness and to learn more about the Naturally Intense System of Diet & Exercise™ and how you can save time and get better results training less at Kevin's official website at [www.naturallyintense.net](http://www.naturallyintense.net).

