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WEEKLY MUSCLE BUILDING EXPERT *Interview Series*



Luke Allison Interviews [Chandler Marchman](#)

Strength Coach Leads The Way



Chandler Goes from 15% Body Fat to 6.5%

LA: This is Luke Allison here with the [CriticalBench.com](https://www.criticalbench.com) weekly Muscle Building Expert interview series. Today I'm here with Chandler Marchman. Chandler, how are you?

CM: Doing good, man, doing good.

LA: I definitely appreciate you joining us today. I want to give you a chance, before we get started too much in depth, to sort of introduce yourself and tell people what they should know about your background.

CM: Well, first off, my name is Chandler Marchman. I had a background beginning in college strength and conditioning. That ran dry so I decided to do the high school power athlete thing. So, I work with a bunch of young football players, a bunch of knuckleheads, trying to get them bigger, stronger and faster. I'm just starting to get into the whole internet business and a little bit of hustle, it's finally starting to work out for me.

LA: Very good. And I hear that you have your own facility. Talk a little bit about that.

CM: Yep, we've got the man-cave going. The gym is called Elite Strength and Conditioning, or Elite SC. We're actually...I've been in the facility right now for about a year and a half and it's kind of an incubator. I'm now growing out of it and moving on to a bigger, better, more bad-assed facility just around the corner. It's going from 2,400 squat feet to now 6,700 square feet. So, we're going to be able to do a lot more things there and hopefully provide our service to a lot more people.

LA: Always exciting when you can have a little bit of growth going on. That's good time, certainly.

CM: Absolutely. My biggest thing is I want to keep it small. I never want to be the global gym guy, but at the same time, I want to be able to maximize growth ability and really share what I've learned and come to love with everybody I can. So, real exciting for us over here and I'm really happy with the way things are moving along.

LA: One of the things that I thought about in terms of sort of having your own facility would be...well, we'd go into that. And I came up with three things. You have your own training, obviously. You have a business side and then your training and coaching athletes. How do you put all those pieces together in what you're doing?

CM: It's one of those things... I was not a business major, so I had to kind of learn everything on the go. So, honestly, I like to think I'm a coach first, because I honestly believe if you don't put out a good service, then you're not going to get people the results they want and if they don't get the results they want, they're not going to keep coming back. But ultimately, coaching comes first. Get them the results and communicate well with the kids, make it fun for them and make it different. If you've seen any of my stuff you can clearly see what we offer is very different than most things around here in the South Tampa area. It all kind of comes together. I've learned through my mistakes over time and ultimately, like I said, it's all piecing together and we're looking pretty polished right now.

LA: What's the motivation and the inspiration to sort of do what you're doing? You mentioned just a second ago that it wasn't necessarily the business. Is it sort of what you fell into, or how much motivation and inspiration?

CM: For me, I played baseball in high school and was... Well, it was good enough to play, but I had a coach that was just... You know, when it came to the strength and conditioning side of things, it was very old school and it didn't really warrant any benefits. We busted our ass, but we didn't really get the results that we deserved for the amount of hard work we put in.

I knew there was something to the strength and conditioning side, I just didn't know what it was. And it was that passion to find out what it was and how quickly I responded to proper training once I did do it, that really wanted the...you know, to kind of help the kids that were in the same place that I was, very frustrated with the lack of results I was getting.

So, ultimately, I want to give kids the best they can receive and give them the best results for the amount of effort they're putting in. I don't want to see them frustrated. You want to see their confidence grow with it. It's a funny age. You're

working with 14 through 18-year-olds, there's a lot of growth and development, not just in their body, but how they mature as adults and you want to see them get the most out of everything. You want to teach them certain values in life. So, basically, I want to give them the right track and make sure they get everything they deserve.

LA: Certainly. It sounds like a noble pursuit, certainly. Your comments bring up two things. Just the idea that strength and conditioning in terms of mainstream American sports is just not that old, the idea is maybe 60-years-old, maybe a little bit more. And so the idea that we're still kind of figuring it out seems very possible. Does that sort of resonate with your experience?

CM: Yeah, there's... I feel like fitness is always evolving. But, the more evolved, the more people realize the basics are what really builds the foundation and really gives you the results you want. I think a lot of people try to make it out to be more than it really is. I mean, once you get into the fine-tuned athletes, then you can really pinpoint where their weaknesses are and do some of the kind of sexier looking things, working with bands and stuff like that.

But ultimately, what I've always found is the more and more I try to venture out and do different things, the more and more I realize that the basics, the basic movement patterns...let's say bench, squat, deadlift and overhead and all their different variations, that's what really gives you the results that you want and need.

LA: Which is a really interesting point, because you could be an athlete, you could be a baseball player or a football player and you could be in high school and you could have a strength coach. You could have a position coach, all of these things and you would think, yes, I'm in this program. I'm going to get this information. And it just isn't the same, school to school, state to state, is it?

CM: It's really not. I feel like there's...much like any profession, there's a defined line of the people that know what they're doing and the people that don't. But, ultimately, I have found that unfortunately in strength and conditioning, I feel like a lot of it has been infiltrated by just kind of people that are trying to make a quick buck with just...kind of the sale-zy types. They promise you the world and don't really deliver. It's the ones that really focus on what the people really need, those are the ones that are really quality trainers. And I focus more... Ultimately it's a business. you need to make the numbers, but I feel like you need to, more than anything, put out a good service.

And in my industry, more of the power athlete side of things, you always feel the like the sparks stuff, come along, and that stuff's great. But, I really feel like, and especially with the caliber of athletes I work with, the young developmental power athletes, that it's really that foundation that you need to work on. and a lot of times it's the stuff... The stuff they need they're not really getting from a lot of the coaches. And

God bless their soul, the just...they want them to do good, but they don't really know exactly what they're doing, a lot of times.

So, it can be frustrating at times, but ultimately, what I've found these kids need most is just building that foundation. Getting a good foundation of strength, balance and flexibility and just keep them from any injury. You're going to need to do the things that are delivered when you do the power lifts and the overhead and basically the simple movements.

So, I always say, if it's not broke, don't fit it. It's funny. History has showed us in the past 50-60 years, that it's the simple things that give the most results. I can't harp on that enough. But, for some reason, people always want to...you know, that version 2.0, that next best thing that makes you not have to work out as hard, but somehow, gives you better results. It's just not out there. But, there's going to be an endless pursuit to that and I think research is good, but ultimately you need to focus on what works. And what I do know works without a shadow of a doubt is the stuff we're doing. It might not be really flashy, but you cannot argue with the results.



LA: Right, and that's sort of very much, I think, germane to the power athlete. You're just not going to get away from that. It couldn't possibly be very different and be successful at the same time. I think that makes a lot of sense.

One of the thoughts that I had, and then I wanted to ask you, a lot of people like to say that they work with athletes. That's sort of a popular thing to say. "I work with athletes." Maybe it's true, maybe it's not. Is that a limit that you only take athletes, or would you expand in other directions to work with other populations? Do you have any feelings on that?

CM: Well, you know, I do work with athlete, but I feel like people that aren't in any current competitive sports, they are willing to do the things that I am implementing with my athletes. I always say, if you want to look like an athlete, train like one. That does not mean I'm going to get Joe Schmo, a guy who's a stock broker or a banker, to do power cleans or anything like that. But ultimately, I can cater my program to fit his needs and desires.

A lot of times people outside of competitive sports, they still have that desire to compete, it's just their ability to that has kind of waned. So, they naturally flock to a gym like this where we do different things just to kind of foster that desire to compete.

I always say, if I want to train someone, it's going to be someone that wants to work hard and try different things. There's a lot of people out there that are unwilling to change what they're doing and it's kind of funny, because they look the same and they perform the same for years. I don't know why they do it, but it's funny. But ultimately I have no restraints on who I train, as long as they're willing to work hard and conform to the way we do things here.

LA: Which I think is a really interesting point because you're sort of making a comment on psychology and personality. Someone that's willing to get under heavy weight and work hard and develop power and take instruction and things like that. That's just not everybody, is it?

CM: Right.

LA: You're going to self-select. You're going to say, this is for me or it's not.

CM: It's one of those... I mean, you know. You had time at Strength Camp. It's Strength Camp, and at my facility, they're not your run-of-the-mill places. There's a certain type of person that is going to...they're going to prosper here and there's a lot of people that won't. I'm not knocking those that won't, but ultimately if you are willing to try different things and work hard, you will flourish at a place like this a lot faster and more efficiently than kind of doing your own thing at a regular gym, at a globo-gym.

LA: I think the only reason to sort of have that level of discussion is not everyone has that type of gym down the street, which is I think what internet presence and things like that and why people aren't maybe entirely sure that they want to train outside and flip tires and things like that. Because, it's just, you know, you have to interact with it.



CM: Yeah. I'll be honest, when I first started my place, people around here, it's a little posh area around Tampa, and people thought I was kind of crazy. But ultimately, I really feel like that's the type of person it takes to start a place like this. You've got to have balls and you've got to be willing to acknowledge the fact that the masses aren't going to be the type to come here. It's going to be a special person that comes here and is willing to just do whatever to get what they want. They're going to be action-takers and they're going to be the types that bust their ass and truly, truly want to get the results they say they want to get.

A lot of people want the results, they just don't want to work for them. And it's just...it's not going to happen that way. There's no miracle pill and I always tell people that. The miracle pill is hard work and consistency. That's it.

But ultimately, to start a place like this, you're right. There's not a lot of them and it's unfortunate, but I do feel like they are on the rise and there's a market out there for them. There is just a shortage of people that have the means, maybe right now, or that know how to do it. Ultimately, I had no business background at all. I just...I mean, I had the dream of doing it, the balls to do it, the means to do it and kind of...I don't want to say stupidity to do it, but ultimately a little bit of that as well. So, lucky for me it's worked out this far and it's moving in the right direction.

LA: Certainly. So, a little crazy, willing to take a risk, certainly. That's always a part of it. You mentioned just briefly, just the idea that there aren't many and that there's a trend of people sort of moving away from what the mainstream is offering, Lifetime

Fitness, 24-Hour Fitness. People are just not satisfied. Can you sort of put your finger on maybe why that is?

CM: I think people are starting to see there's other means to exercise. I mean, you see like the Tough Mudders and all these adventure races and things like that, people are getting bored just sitting in a gym and doing the run-of-the-mill stuff. People want to get outside. They want to do something different.

That's why I feel like you're seeing different things like the Tough Mudders, you have the Tri-Fit. That's starting to get big. The Crossfit has already exploded, and warehouse gyms like the one that I run and also at Strength Camp. I mean, there's people that want them, you've just got to build a place and market it right and once you do that, get some people in here and get them the results they want and get them talking, it's...the people will come. It's just a matter of having the balls to do it and put it out there for people.

But, yeah, I definitely think people are getting very bored with the average-Joe type gym and it's boring. You know what. I mean, who wants to sit on a treadmill and just, you know, run for like 30 minutes on end? That's terrible. I could think of a million things I'd rather be doing.

I enjoy being outside. I grew up in Florida and I love the sunshine. I think you should be outside doing things differently. I have short attention span, too. That's why I got into Strongman. I'm terrible ADD and I need different stimuli, so why not? That's what's perfect about our gym. We always keep you guessing and we never let you get comfortable with what you're doing.

So, I think just the boredom that people are having and the desire to get out there and do something different is what we really have going for us.

LA: Yeah, I like it. I think it's a good message. I'm just not sure how to get it out there more. I think that's sort of an ongoing mystery, something that can be picked up at a later date. I'm not 100% certain.

CM: I definitely think the videos that we have done have helped. When I first started I did some just crazy, ridiculous videos just to kind of be seen, but it's kind of morphed into more instructional stuff. But, ultimately, it took time for me. There was probably a six-month period where I just had to get the initial couple of people in here, get them results and let them just talk to their people. And ultimately, you create a web of influence and it happens. It might take a little bit of time, because ultimately when you run a small gym, you don't have the same budget as, let's say, the Gold's or the Lifestyles or the 24-Hour Fitness, like you mentioned. But, what you have to do is do a little bit more hustling.

We do a lot of events like Strongman. We'll have parties, dinners, just anything to really get the word out. More of the grassroots marketing, I've found, is what's worked best for me, and I'm sure everywhere else, too.

But, I would say a lot of it is it's just a personality-driven business. I could never separate myself from mine, just because so much of what we do is kind of contingent upon me being there, me programming, me showing kids what to do and just being around, kind of laughing and joking around with the people I work with. They want to see that. They want a place where they can kind of be a part of.

I don't want to say it's cult-like, but a lot of people want to feel that they're a part of something. That kind of builds upon the competitive sports as well. A lot of people miss that comradery and when you build that kind of team atmosphere, people really feed off that. So, with kids, they love it. But with adults, I'm finding they're starting to really thrive upon it, too. They don't like the fun-of-the-mill gyms because they don't feel like they're really a part of it. They just feel like they're a number.

When they come here, they know everyone they're going to be working out with and they know that they're going to be having a fun time and that we genuinely care about them. So, we definitely have that going for them and that kind of feeds off what I said about the boredom and people getting kind of fed-up with the larger gyms.

LA: Well, and that speaks to a larger point. There's been a movement in sort of similar type gyms, Joe DeFranco, a lot of people like that, who like to train similar athletes, but is sort of small to medium sized groups. They can come...if they're a track team or a baseball team or they're a football team, and you can sort of all work out together and sort of reinforce a lot of that. It seems to really make sense and be something that can be applied in various locations.

CM: Oh, absolutely. As far as the warehouse gym movement, no one could have done it without probably Joe DeFranco's influence. I mean, now it's Joe DeFranco, Zach Evanish, Elliott now, I mean, has really emerged. I feel like he's just kind of taken over the South. Guys like that, they're really the reasons why and the guys that gave people like me a vision to do what I'm doing. If it weren't for them, I would have no idea what I'd be doing. They are the ones that pretty much had the balls to do what they did and influence a whole generation. I feel like they're pioneers and they should be given their due respect.

LA: I think that makes a lot of sense. It's very fair, you know, if you're going to be out in front like that, you know, for so long, on your own, worried that this is going to pay any of your bills, and to sort of get the congratulations and the respect, like you said. It's very fair.

CM: Oh, absolutely. Like I said, I remember the first six months. That was rough for me. A lot of work and not a lot of sleep. A lot of worrying if you were going to pay the bills this month, but ultimately, I kept at it, kept grinding and it's working out for me now. Thank God!

LA: Absolutely. To change gears just really quick. Talk a little bit about some of your sort of influences in terms of strength and conditioning, sort of the things that you like to do. You can sort of...I know you can talk about the science behind a lot of it, but talk about some of the things that you really like, that you like to do.

CM: Well, when I started out, I mentioned in high school, I did respond very well to any training I did. I put on size really quick and I want to say I probably trained more like a bodybuilder than anything, which didn't really warrant me many performance results. It was really in college when I got into doing Strongman with one of my friends who brought me out to a guy at UF, University of Florida, that did Strongman, Matt Delancy, who is a strength coach in Florida.

He really showed me the Strongman side of things and showed me that you can kind of build everything you want. You can build size, strength and also performance at the same time, really. So, I would say that was the first thing that really got me going into the performance side of things.

Once I started getting performance results while still getting the aesthetics that I liked, size and just being lean, I really kind of dug deeper and that's when I started hearing about Westside Barbell. That's when I looked into the Westside Method and really tried to build a formula that would allow me to implement that along with the kind of...the benefits of bodybuilding and Strongman.

So, I knew I wasn't a powerlifter. I didn't really want to do that. I loved the training side, but it's just the competition side I'm not as stimulated as let's say Strongman. It's different and it's something that's going to keep my attention.

So, ultimately, I wanted something that was just different and would warrant the same result that I got from every aspect of those trainings. So, you have your Strongman, you have powerlifting. You have the bodybuilding and ultimately the people I work with, they really want to build speed.

So, winding that all together into one program, that's when I really kind of almost did a parallel with Joe DeFranco and created what I call the Elite Method for the Meatheaded. The one difference, I think, I have from what Joe DeFranco does is I really focus on percentages and one the repetitive days, I have a certain number of reps total that you need to get on your core lift for each particularly percentage. I focus on a little bit more heavy than some people are willing to do, but we really harp on form. So,

that keeps from injury and ultimately my kids, around here, are getting bigger, stronger and faster at a faster rate than anybody else that's doing any strength and conditioning in the Tampa area.

So, we've found it worked regardless of your experience. It's continued to work and we haven't slowed down yet. I haven't had anyone who's plateaued and not even myself. I'm still amazed at some of the results I'm getting compared to where I was. By no means do I feel like will it ever be completely polished and perfect program, because I feel, like I said, fitness is always evolving and you need to always educate yourself on what's new out there and what works, and always implement the new stuff and kind of get rid of what doesn't work. But right now, it's working for us and until it doesn't, we're going to continue using it.

LA: I definitely want to direct people to your YouTube channel because you have a video that I think explains the Elite Method for the Meatheaded very well, sort of better than I could do sort of talking to you, because it also has the visuals. So, tell them to go there and look at that, but also to keep in mind that sort of all the things that you mentioned really do go quite far back and do involve Russian/Soviet sports science and people that have decade's worth of records and thousands of athletes. It's as serious as you want to be. Do you feel that it's pretty well grounded? I think you would agree with that.



CM: Oh, absolutely. I mean, I don't want to say it's very simple because it's...there is a lot of science and numbers put into it. But, let's say you take the time to get organized with it, it's a very self-explanatory system, and it's foolproof. Real simple, if you do it correctly, you will get results. Not many programs can say that, but this one is bullet proof and if you do it right, it will work for you. it will get you everything you want out of

it. It will get you bigger, stronger, faster and it's going to make you dominate on the field or wherever you want to. Honestly.

LA: Absolutely. That's really important. I think it sort of has the potential to sort of cross a bunch of boundaries. I'm going to try to finish up here, but give people an idea. We're about half way through 2011, tell them what you have sort of on the horizon and maybe what to expect from you.

CM: Big things, man. Once we get into the new facility, which I mean, like I said, it was a little tough for us to kind of get all the funding together, but ultimately once we move into the new facility, which will be either the end of this week or early next week, that's when it's really going to start happening for me. That's when we're going to start doing training seminars, business, like gym business seminars. That's when I'm going to launch my membership site for those that want to be pretty much a part of what we do, they just don't have the proximity to me to be able to train. So, a lot of programming, a lot of interviews, just different things to really get people what they need to become a better version of themselves in the weight room and outside of it as well.

But, ultimately, just really building upon what we've already laid the foundation for at our current location and just trying to always move forward. That's the one thing. Every day I was told just to try to do one thing to improve your business. So, it's all kind of contingent right now upon moving into the new facility. But once we do, we're going to hit the ground running and it's going to be big, man. Really excited about it.

LA: Sounds good, certainly something to keep on eye one. Everything listening, it should be good times.

I think finally, I'm out of questions, but give people information on how they can get a hold of you and how they can follow you online.

CM: Right now it's kind of under construction right now. But, what we do have is our YouTube page, just [YouTube.com/GoEliteSC](https://www.youtube.com/GoEliteSC) and the same for our facebook fan page, [Facebook.com/GoEliteSC](https://www.facebook.com/GoEliteSC). I mean, we always put out a video every day with our email as well, so pay attention to that. And also, pay attention in the next few weeks when we're going to be launching the membership site.

There's going to be news on the seminars we're going to be doing, teaching the Elite Method for the Meatheaded and also how to start your own man cave. It's pretty much going to be able to keep you from making the same mistakes I did, both in the lifting, training and also business. So, why make mistakes when you can learn from me.

Ultimately that's the best way to keep updated with me. Once we get the membership site going, that will be a far better means to stay up to date with us. But

until then, the Facebook and the YouTube are the best ways to stay in contact with us here and just kind of keep along with what we're doing.

LA: Sounds great, man. Chandler, I appreciate the time. Thank you so much.

CM: My pleasure, buddy. Have a good one.

LA: All right. Take care.

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