LESSON VIII

Dear Friend:

Today I am going to teach you the magic secret of V-shaping your upper trunk. This is one of the most important Body-Tone lessons because it affects your over-all appearance more so than anything we have covered thus far. You see being a "W"-man doesn't always mean just having broad shoulders and narrow hips. No sir, it means much more than that. It also means having massive, well-formed Latissimus Dorsi muscles. Some body-builders call them "Lats" for short.

Take a look at today's anatomy chart. I've made six sketches of the Latissimus Dorsi muscles showing you how they look from different angles. The front and rear views will show you what an impressive "W" shape these muscles can give your body.

As you can easily see the Latissimus Dorsi muscles are large, triangular-shaped, and cover almost all of the lower half of the back. There is one muscle on either side of the spinal column. Notice its tremendous size. Far bigger than any muscle we have worked on so far. This means we will find plenty of undersized muscle fibers to work on. Your progress and development in this area should be quite rapid. The bigger the muscle to start with the bigger you can make it with Body-Tone methods.

In fact the Latissimus Dorsi is one of the largest, strongest muscles in the body being outranked only by the Gluteus Maximus of the hips and Quadriceps Femoris of the thighs.

If you reach up about three inches below your arm pit and slightly toward the back you can grab the upper section of this big muscle in your hand. Reach across your chest to do this so that your left hand grabs the right Latissimus under your right arm pit. The part you are grabbing narrows into a tendon which runs under the arm pit and then around the front of the arm bone and attaches, or inserts, on the side of the arm bone just above the insertion of the Pectoralis Major. It is for this reason that the Pectorals and Lats work together in almost all movements.

The main action of the Lats is to draw the arms from a front horizontal position down to the side position rotating them inward at the same time. They also draw the arms downward and inward from a side-horizontal position. And they draw the shoulders downward and rearward.

The Lats are used extensively in crawl stroke swimming and in chinning the bar. In fact they are often called the "swimming muscles." If you are a competitive swimmer you will find that today's lesson can improve your speed in the water by strengthening your pull better than anything else you could possibly do.
Notice how the Lats are attached to a broad, "sheet-like" tendon which originates from the vertebrae of the lower half of the spinal column. They are also attached to the hip bones, the tips of the shoulder blades, and the lower 3 or 4 ribs.

Like many of the other muscles we have worked on, the Lats can be divided into three sections because of the way the fibers run. Notice in the main drawing of Fig. 1 how the fibers of the uppermost section run in a horizontal direction. The middle section fibers run diagonally upward and outward. And the lower fibers run almost straight upward and slightly outward.

Now, again, by using the unique Body-Tone system of lining up insertions and origins with the direction of the fiber grain we can flush each section individually with strong, 6-second contractions. So turn to the exercise pages and I will show you how this is done.

The first thing you probably notice is the small step-ladder. If you have one in the house, or garage that's just fine. If you don't own one see if you can purchase one. They're relatively inexpensive and you will use one many times in your household chores. If you live in an apartment where it is not practical to keep a ladder of this type don't be alarmed because with a little ingenuity you can improvise other household items to serve the same purpose.

Notice also that a small wooden rod, such as the saved off end of a broom handle is used in this exercise. Here again standard equipment is not necessary and you can improvise.

**EXERCISE 1.**

This exercise develops the lower section of the Latissimus Dorsi muscle.

Place the gripping rod across the top of the ladder. The arms will be upward at about a 90-degree angle. Now, holding the rod securely, and keeping the elbows in a locked position start pressing the arms downward harder, harder, and harder for 6 seconds and then relax.

**EXERCISE 2.**

This exercise develops the middle section of the Latissimus Dorsi muscle.

Place the gripping rod across a step of the ladder so that your arms are in the front horizontal position. Now again with the elbows locked start pressing downward as hard as you can, then harder, harder, and harder for 6 seconds—and relax.

**EXERCISE 3.**

This exercise develops the upper section of the Latissimus Dorsi muscle.

Place the gripping rod across one of the lower steps of the ladder so that your arms are at 90 degrees below the front horizontal. Once more start pressing downward, harder, harder, and harder. Hold it for 6 seconds and relax.

If you do these three exercises as hard as you can you will be pleasantly surprised at how the Lats will start "popping out" in just one weeks time. The
Exercises 1, 2, & 3
weight lifters have an exercise that is similar to this when they work on what they call the "Lat" machine. They pull downward on a rod-like handle that is attached by means of a long rope to a ceiling pulley. At the other end of the rope is a weight that rises off the floor as the arms are depressed. The only disadvantage of the "Lat" machine is that most of the power, or strength contractions are utilized in overcoming the initial inertia of getting the weight moving. This makes the lower part of the "Lats" receive most of the emphasis, or flushing. In Body-Tone exercises 1, 2, and 3, all sections of the "Lats" are equally flushed, and therefore equally developed.

On the following page I have again drawn the first three exercises, but this time with a sketch of the Latisimus Dorsi muscles alongside so you can see more specifically the muscle action involved. The arrows indicate the fibers that are brought into play.

**Exercise 1**

This exercise develops one side of the Latisimus Dorsi muscles at a time, plus bringing into play the Internal Obliques, the Quadratus Lumborum, and several groups of spinal muscles.

From a standing position bend sideward, pulling the shoulder on the bent side slightly rearward, and the shoulder on top side slightly forward. Bend sideward as far as you can while contracting all the muscles on the side of the body harder, harder, and harder for 8 seconds. Then relax, and repeat on the opposite side. Try to make your closed fist reach for the floor while doing this exercise.

These four exercises will work the "Lats" from every conceivable angle, thereby giving you as much strength, massiveness, and shape as it is possible for you to attain. Yes sir, you'll start acquiring that V-shape very shortly and there will be an extra added bonus waiting for you.

You see when we measured your chest girth the "Lats" were two of the muscles that vary under the measuring tape. Today's lesson should help you pick up as additional two inches on chest girth alone. Your tape will cross the uppermost section of the "Lats", just under the arm pits. This section can get mighty thick in a relatively short time. So be sure to recheck your chest girth about one week from today.

Now, one more point! If by chance you can't rig up the ladder arrangement for the "Lat" exercises—remember you can get the same effect by depressing your straight arms against any inmovable object such as refrigerators, tables, dressers, etc. The important thing is to have the arms in the proper position as you press with the palms of your hands. You can vary positions of the arms by kneeling or standing. Try to work out the ladder series if at all possible, as I'm sure you will find it much more satisfying.

Next week I'm going to show you how easy it is to develop a strong powerful neck. We will also work on some of the big powerful hip muscles which mean so much on the athletic field.

Yours for a pair of "V"-shaped "Lats,"

Jimm Buckley