



BFS Helps Women of All Ages

Lady of America, Napa, brings BFS protocols and equipment to a new generation of women

Two worlds have collided at Lady of America health club in Napa, California. While we carry on the corporate mission of the international franchise by providing women unique and custom-designed workouts, my club has taken things a giant step forward. My long association with Bigger Faster Stronger has brought the expertise of the BFS coaches, programs and equipment to a new generation of women from ages 13 to 91.

In our circuit – a 30-minute easy-to-learn aerobic workout performed on hydraulic equipment – I've inserted two BFS dot drills. I tell our members that it's like playing hopscotch as children – it develops basic motor skills and coordination. As mature women, we've seen those skills deteriorate. The dot drills are helping many of our members reclaim the coordination and balance that time has eroded.

The club is designed to be female friendly, as are all Lady of America franchises. Welcoming pastel colors greet our members, along with a selection of color-coordinated equipment. The centerpiece of our weight training area, however, does not come from the franchise. It's the BFS cross cables, offering our

members an endless variety of new angles and intensities to keep their workouts progressive.

Contained within our weight training area is our designated Elite Room. This features BFS



Laura Dayton, owner of the Lady of America in Napa, California, does the honors at the ribbon cutting ceremony of her women-only health club.

equipment that helps our members accomplish a measurable degree of muscle hypertrophy. We let the women "graduate" to this room, and we teach them respect for the serious anaerobic training that is necessary to boost slowing metabolisms and prevent or reverse the bone-eating effects of osteoporosis.

A Woman's Story

Women are born with less lean muscle tissue than are men, and unless we're engaged in regular anaerobic exercise we start to lose what we have from about age 30 on. This progressive loss of lean

body mass slows the metabolism and results in the female body gaining an excess of body fat with each passing year.

BFS has a tried-and-proven formula for increasing lean muscle mass, and that's why it's the program I've chosen for the members at my club.

If you look at societies over the centuries, women have always lifted weight in the course of their daily

Club Manager Julie Brooks and Laura Dayton during the early stages of construction

activities. Just look at women in underdeveloped nations and you'll still encounter

many with yokes over their shoulders carrying food and other necessities from market and farm to home. We see women balancing heavy loads upon their heads, toting water uphill, and doing the kneading, churning and scrubbing that was necessary everywhere on the planet not so long ago to keep a home stocked with fresh food and clean clothes.

The muscles used in BFS core lifts, most importantly the deadlift and squat, used to be a part of a woman's daily chores. But now, women in industrialized societies are not working these muscles at all. Should it be any wonder that mature women today suffer from osteoporosis and obesity? In my opinion, as we women reach our more sedentary years – after age 40 – every one of us should have a physician's prescription for anaerobic training.

At my club, anaerobic exercise is not just a novelty for mature women but a necessity. We work hard at developing the neuromuscular pathways to achieve dynamic strength, and I rely on BFS for the programs and equipment to do this.

BFS Does It Best

We utilize the core lifts in our Elite Room, including the Olympic lifts, to help women improve

neuromuscular function and improve posture, strength and balance. The lightweight BFS Olympic bars, available in 15- and 30 pounds, greatly facilitate this training.

One of the BFS machines I particularly like is the lever lat pulldown. If I had my way, I would put a hat with rear-view mirrors on my members for the first two weeks they come in the club. Women notoriously under-work their backs!

Women are front-fixated. We spend hours in front of mirrors with our makeup and hair. We carry our breasts and our babies in front; we wear obnoxious high heels that push us forward; and many of us spend hours in service work that has us leaning over counters and in front

of computers for 40 hours a week.

I love to put women on the lat machine for the first time and ask them what body part they are working. They always answer "the arms." Once they're introduced to the lat machine – which is a no-brainer because you can only work in the proper position and you don't have to worry about members dropping the pulldown bar on their heads when they pull the pin from the weight stack – our women are addicted.

As any woman over 40 knows, one of the first places to show age is in the back. We affectionately call the area "back boobs." The lat machine not only strengthens the back but also tones it to get rid of the fat gain that accumulates in the back during and after menopause.

Unique Applications

I have also found a wonderful therapy device in the BFS chest press. Many of our mature members suffer from MS, fibromyalgia and knee pain. In all these cases, there is an atrophy of the quadriceps brought about from the use of walkers, canes or just avoidance of any knee flexion.

The BFS chest press equipment can be opened by pulling the lever to the floor so that women with limited knee flexion can step freely into the machine.



I've worked with many women with this limitation, having them use just the foot pedal once they're seated to begin restoring strength in the quadriceps and in particular to help stabilize the knee. We have women who have gone from walkers to canes, and women who have gone from canes to the treadmills.

One of our best examples is Judy Perez. Judy has suffered from lupus for 17 years, and she's skinny as a rail. When

she came into the club, she asked if I could do anything to strengthen her muscles. I laughed good-naturedly. "Judy," I said, "If you asked me to help you take off 20 pounds, I'd just say I would do my best. But if you ask me to strengthen your muscles, I can do that with a money-back guarantee!" I thank BFS for giving me the confidence to say that.

Judy began with ankle weights and seated extensions, then graduated to the chest press exercise described above. Within three months Judy left her walker and got a cane. She now does 20 minutes on the treadmill, and performs the chest press for her pecs. When she first came into the club, her daughter held her hand between each exercise. Judy now comes and does her workouts unattended.

And you thought BFS was just for college jocks!

Young Women Today

In addition to catering to the mature women's market, Lady of America does not forget our young women. Every Lady of America club participates in a *Fit Teen* program that allows members' daughters ages 13 to 17 a free membership during the summer from June to September.

Many of our members have enrolled their daughters in our Fit Teen program. We have introduced these young ladies to the importance of a

program of both aerobic and anaerobic exercise based on the BFS principles, which have always included a healthy, clean lifestyle for optimum results.

With Julie Brooks, assistant editor of *Fit Body* magazine and the morning manager at our club, we are in the process of developing a program aimed at young women through the

BFS Be An 11! program. Our young members and their mothers have expressed a strong desire to see this program put into action in our local community. We are working closely with two Napa high schools, Vintage and Napa High, as test grounds for our Be An 11! program aimed just at young women.

Why a

separate curriculum?

Nationwide, girls have embraced the Be An 11! program since its inception five years ago. We are looking forward to bringing an extension of that program to young women in Napa, in the same way that we have brought BFS to a new audience of mature women at our club. Girls need the program to address concerns specific to them, just as the mature women in my club have approached muscle hypertrophy not as a means to a football scholarship but to quality longevity.

BFS also introduced me to the Pharmanex company and its bio-scanner that measures the amount of antioxidants in a person's body. It's a well-known fact that most Americans do not eat their six servings of fruits and vegetables a day, and low levels of antioxidants can contribute to premature aging and a less-than-optimal autoimmune system.

In addition to providing the scanner for periodic antioxidant level testing, Pharmanex also offers a superior line of nutritional and personal care products available to members via online subscriptions. By having our club members use the Pharmanex scanner for periodic testing, we get to "see" how positive changes in their diet, supplementation program and lifestyle are making them healthier and fitter.



Photo: Becca Pronchick



Here Shelley Gittings performs squats on the BFS Elite Station. Lady of America has a special room devoted to sport specific training called the Elite Room.



Photo: Becca Pranchick

Free-weight training exercises, which includes cable flys as demonstrated by Shelley Gittings, are key to weight control and physical fitness at Lady of America.

A Cinderella Story

When I first looked at the torn cement and cavernous vacant space that would become Lady of America, Napa, I had a dream. BFS was essential in making it a reality.

As equipment began to arrive, construction was behind schedule, so I was faced with the dilemma of where to place the equipment while construction continued.

I had ordered the BFS rubber mat flooring, and it suddenly became essential to get the flooring down so that I would have a space to put the incoming equipment. I couldn't get contractors on a moment's notice, so several of my friends offered a hand. BFS gave us the basics of how to lay the flooring, and late one night we decided to unroll it.


The flooring laid down like a dream. There is no "memory" to the flooring, so as it unrolls it lies flat, even down to the last two feet. During the construction we tracked a lot of dust onto the flooring, but we brought it back to its original sheen with a combination of light detergent and Murphy's Oil Soap.

We also received our shipment of BFS equipment wrapped in so much padding that it took three of us to throw the wad of wrap around for half an hour to unwrap each piece. At the time, we

thought this was overkill. However, as other manufacturers' products arrived packaged in far less padding, we were disappointed as we unloaded equipment with dents, chips and torn upholstery. We learned to appreciate the care that BFS puts in the shipment of their equipment so that it arrives looking new, not used.

Of all the equipment manufacturers I have dealt with, BFS has been by far the most supportive and professional. They know what a gym is supposed to be, and they help you to make certain yours is world class. They are there to work out the things you may not understand (like square footage of flooring) and are ready to advise you on how to best utilize the equipment.

Here in Napa, we're firsthand witnesses to the fact that BFS has turned an important corner. While I know their hearts will always be in the high school and collegiate football programs, they have reached out to every facet of the strength training field to bring people of either gender and of any age the benefits of their 30+ years of professional expertise.

I'd like to welcome travelers coming to the Napa Valley to visit our Lady of America health club (exit in Napa at Imola Avenue). Ladies, you're always welcome for a free workout; and men, well, you're welcome to look but that's it. Sorry guys, in our gym, it's a woman's world. 

MORE WOMEN WIN WITH BFS!



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