

The Music of Muscle!

What's the best music to listen to while working out? If you ask most physical education teachers, they will probably say none. But the fact is kids love music and believe it makes them train harder. So, if kids are going to listen to music while they train, what would be the best?

When interviewed by *BFS* Editor Kim Goss, Bulgarian weightlifting coach Angel Spassov said pop, rock and disco music are too distracting to listen to when performing the Olympic lifts. The late Dr. Mel Siff, whose master's thesis

involved converting brain waves into mathematical models,



DESIRAE HOFFMAN

agreed. Here is what he had to say about the subject in his book *Facts and Fallacies of Fitness*: "Besides also producing impaired hearing among regular exercisers, music that is loud or discordant is associated with diminished motor skill and more injuries."

And what type of music did Coach Spassov think was best for elite weightlifters? Why, country music, of course, especially Kenny Rogers. Now you know!



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It's a Bird! It's a Plane! No, it's a *Role Model!*

Character education is a major theme in *BFS* magazine, which is why we like to feature positive role models (and why you probably won't be seeing Britney Spears on our cover in the near future). And because movies and television are major influences on young people, we often point out shows and performances that provide good role models and a positive message.

The CW television series *Smallville*, which chronicles the early years of Superman, is one such show. The latest addition to the show is Laura Vandervoort, who plays Superman's cousin, Kara Zor-El. In addition to her extensive acting accomplishments in both movies and television, Vandervoort holds a second-degree black belt in karate and majored in psychology and English at York University in Toronto, Ontario. Also, unlike Kara's cousin Kal-El on the hit TV show, Supergirl has the ability to fly, which shows that even on other planets, girls mature faster than boys!

Making Certain There's No Bull in the China Shop

At *BFS* we've been in business for over 30 years, always embracing the customer-service motto "You only pay for quality once!" In the interest of ensuring quality, our steel broker is increasing its independent quality control inspections on the yield and tensile strength of raw steel products used in the manufacture of *BFS* exercise equipment, particularly any steel imported from China. Such attention to quality, along with one of the best warranties and return policies in the industry, is why Bigger Faster Stronger is a name you can trust.



NSCA Sues *Itself*?

Coca-Cola developed a bizarre series of commercials in which executives of the company would try to hire lawyers to sue the coworkers who sell Coke Zero on the grounds of “taste infringement.” In effect, the company was suing itself. We’d be shocked if those commercials are nominated for a Clio award, which are given to the best television commercials. But in a case of life imitating art, we found that the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) is, as we understand it, suing itself.

In a message sent by e-mail to NSCA members, we recently received the following announcement from the NSCA

that we’re still trying to figure out: “On September 17, 2007, the NSCA Certification Commission Executive Council filed a lawsuit against the NSCA and its Board of Directors in Colorado State Court. In the suit, filed in Colorado Springs, Colorado, the Certification Commission Executive Council seeks to prevent the NSCA and its Board of Directors from exercising rights that the NSCA Board believes it and the NSCA have with respect to activities of the NSCA Certification Commission....”

We’re going to have to ask Dr. Marc Rabinoff about this one – or perhaps the people at Coke?



DOUBLE TAKES

JONATHAN STEWART STILL GOING STRONG

Last year in our August/September issue we profiled University of Oregon’s strength and conditioning program, led by head strength coach James Radcliff. One of their football stars, and a frontrunner for the Heisman, is running back Jonathan Stewart. In addition to his abilities on the field (rushing for 503 yards, with no fumbles, in his first four games this year), Stewart has put up some of the best strength and conditioning numbers we have ever seen for a running back. Stewart’s bodyweight is 227 pounds. Here are his best lifts and field tests: power clean, 402; squat, 555; bench, 410; 40, 4.34; shuttle, 3.87; and VJ, 38.5. Also, at University of Oregon’s Weightlifting Classic competition on June 2, Stewart snatched 264 pounds and clean and jerked 336 pounds. Phenomenal!



UOSID photo

Wrist Saver Dumbbells!

When an athlete performs a conventional push-up, the wrist is extended backward, a position that can cause pain in some individuals, especially in the case of those who have previously injured this area. Although there are special handles available at sports goods stores that enable you to perform push-ups with less strain on your wrists, the BFS Research Team discovered you can accomplish the same thing with dumbbells.

Performing push-ups holding on to dumbbell handles, as with the special store-bought handles, allows the wrist to be in better alignment with the hands (the same alignment as if you were throwing a punch). A hexagonal dumbbell is the safest, as you are less likely to roll as you perform the exercises. Demonstrating the dumbbell push-up along with her excitement for this discovery is Hunter High School volleyball player Amanda Fehoko.





How to Bulk Up Your Weightlifting Library

Often we get asked what the best books are about Olympic lifting, and it just so happens that a unique and extremely interesting book came into BFS headquarters recently. It's called *Essentials of Weightlifting and Strength Training*, 2nd edition, by Mohamed F. El-Hewie, MD. It's a monster book that weighs 4 pounds, 11 ounces, and has 594 pages and 931 colored photos, illustrations, charts, tables and drawings.

The book deals with all aspects of weight training: bodybuilding, fitness training, powerlifting, Olympic lifting and nutrition. But what really caught our attention were the hundreds of photos of elite male and female Olympic lifters performing the snatch and the clean and jerk. Often weightlifting textbooks show just one athlete performing the lifts, which is fine if you or your athletes happen to have the same body type as that athlete. Not a problem in this book – tall, short, slender or muscular...they are all here.

If you'd like to purchase *Essentials of Weightlifting and Strength Training* or learn more about it, then go to www.shaymaa-publishing.com or simply ask your local bookseller to order it, as we did. It's worth it!

PLAYER PROFILES

Katie Simanovich



BFS Clinician Jim Brown recently sent us a DVD of Katie, a junior at Bunker Hill High School in Claremont, North Carolina. The video showed this talented athlete lifting some extremely heavy weights, jumping over huge boxes, performing lightning-fast footwork drills, and then putting on a basketball shooting exhibition that was nothing short of spectacular. We wanted to know more.

We learned that Katie has been a starter on the varsity team since her freshman year and also plays AAU basketball in the summer. This past June she competed in the Catawba Valley Athletic Combine, winning three individual events and performing 36 reps with 75 pounds in the bench press. As for other numbers, Katie is 5-foot-7, weighs 148, and has the following best lifts: power clean, 105; back squat, 185; box squat, 200 (six times); Hex bar deadlift, 245; and bench press, 140. She also does 51 seconds in the BFS Dot Drill.

An excellent student with a 3.9 GPA, Katie works with the Special Olympics, is involved with her local church and enjoys training her German Shepherd, Ilja.



PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Hex Bar Jumps



One way to improve your vertical jump is to perform the weighted squat jumps, of which there are several types. There are major types of squat jumps, usually performed with weights that are about 15-25 percent of your best squat. One type is simply to jump as high as possible and land in a quarter squat, and in another you simply jump so that your feet just clear the ground as you jump and then land in a quarter (or lower) squat. A second type of exercise focuses on eccentric strength, which is often deficient in athletes in sports such as gymnastics. The problem with both these exercises is that holding the barbell on your shoulders can be harsh on your lower back, especially when performing high reps, and there is a tendency to lean forward as you land or allow the weight to separate from your shoulders and crash on you.



A better alternative is simply to perform the same exercises with a Hex bar, as shown by Ashley Gastil and Lusiana Angilau, volleyball players at Hunter High School in Salt Lake City, Utah. The design of the Hex bar encourages you to stay more upright throughout the entire exercise and works the traps harder as you jump; also, because you are holding the bar at your sides, there is no crashing.

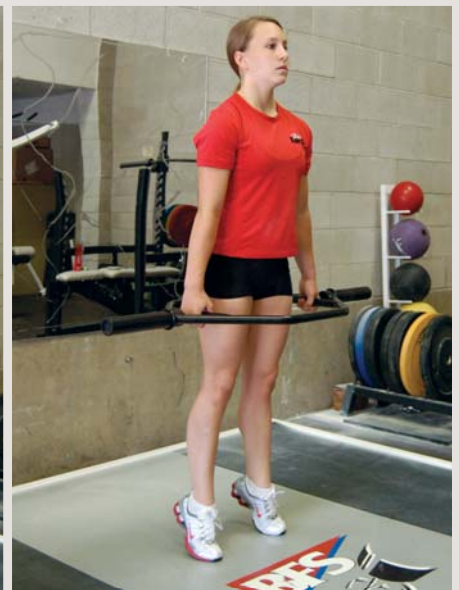
Below is 14-year-old Chloe Van Tussenbroek demonstrating proper performance of a Hex bar jump and an eccentric Hex bar jump with the BFS Junior Hex bar. A Level 10 gymnast who has been undergoing “special preparation” by *BFS* Editor Kim Goss, Chloe recently did a 26.5-inch vertical jump and a 27.5-inch vertical jump with a step. *BFS*



Start and Catch Position



Hex Bar Jump



Eccentric Hex Bar Jump