

Championship Weightrooms

Toole and Associates Physical Therapy and Wellness

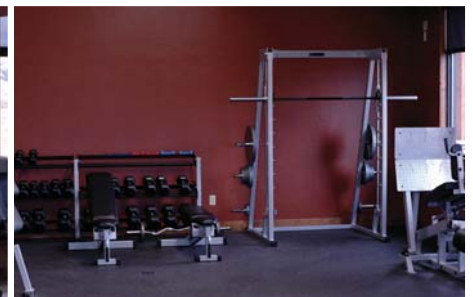
A look at a progressive rehab and training facility for athletes

In the past, talented athletes could often reach the highest levels of performance by just practicing their sport a few times a week – and throwing in some calisthenics and a bit of running at the end of practice. But this

idea of “Talent prevails” is an outdated concept, as the level of competition at all levels has reached a point where athletes must train harder, longer and, most of all, smarter. And that’s where the Toole and Associates Physical Therapy and

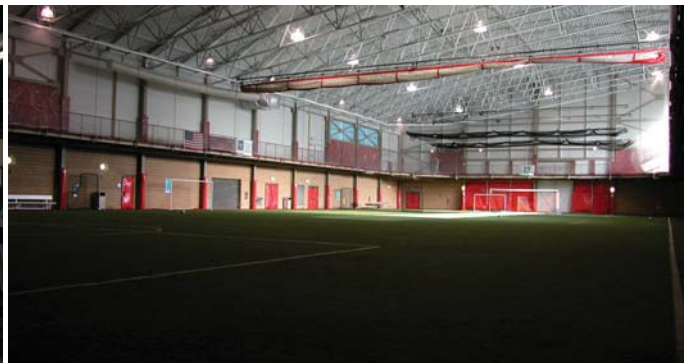
Wellness comes in.

Located in the scenic Park City area of Utah, Toole and Associates utilizes four training facilities, three that contain rehabilitation services. It was founded by physical therapist Doug Toole, a



Toole and Associates and MountainTop Physical Therapy have four training facilities between them available for their clients.





One elite facility that is used to help the staff train athletes is the Silver Mountain Sports Club in Kimball Junction, Utah. Below is pictured a group of athletes trained by Coach Jason Bell.

graduate of Stanford University. Prior to opening his training centers, Toole was the director of physical therapy at Holy Cross Hospital in Salt Lake City. He started working with high school athletes 30 years ago and saw a need for a new approach to developing young athletes. “We needed a way to make kids stronger,” says Toole. “We wanted to get them on a program that would give them overall



strength, quickness and agility.”

In 2000 Toole started working with Preston Hall and, later, Jason Bell. Hall

is a physical therapist with an extensive background in strength and conditioning. Hall is the founder of MountainTop Physical Therapy and Wellness Center in Park City, which he opened in 2002, and has been working with athletes for 12 years. Bell is an experienced strength coach and corrective exercise specialist. In addition to working with Toole and Hall, Bell also works with the University of Utah and many NFL and NBA athletes.

“A lot of times we think the main goal of a strength and conditioning program is performance, but for the past decade there has been a big push on injury prevention,” says Bell. “What we want to do is provide our clients with a combination of services, an integrated care model that includes nutritionists, strength and conditioning coaches, physical therapists and massage therapists.”

The number of services offered by Toole and Associates is impressive: Back and Neck Pain, Orthopedic and Sports Injuries, Pre/Post Surgical Rehabilitation, Work-Related Injuries, Geriatric Rehabilitation, Women’s Health, Sports Conditioning and Performance Enhancement, Manual Therapy, and Gait and Balance Training. And the concept has caught on in the community.

“Between our two clinics we see quite a range of patients,” says Hall. “We work with quite a few high school athletes during the season, we see a lot of middle-age people who are still trying to be fit, and we also have a fair number of elderly patients. We see Olympic athletes during the year and professional athletes, including those in the NFL.” Preston says that in the Park City areas where their facilities are located, their patient population is often quite active overall, with few being obese or sedentary. In fact, it’s quite the opposite. “With most of our patients, we have to ‘put the brakes on’ rather than trying to motivate them. This makes it fun to work with them, and as a result we see a high rate of success with those patients.”

Asked about their philosophy about strength and conditioning, Bell says that one problem he sees with young athletes is that they often get enthusiastic about trying advanced training methods before working on the basics. “An athlete needs to start with a foundation of training



Coach Bell working with NBA player Gerald Green.

– they need base levels of mobility, flexibility, stability and strength performed in a progressive manner.” Bell says that even with athletes he is preparing for the NFL combines, he often has to go back to some foundation training to resolve any weak links in their conditioning that could be holding them back. Which brings up the controversial concept of specificity of training.

“We’re seeing specialization as being a problem with many 12-to-15-year-olds when they pick a sport and that’s all they play the entire year and they don’t take time off, which often results in overuse injuries,” says Bell. “My feeling is that young athletes need to take at least three months off from a sport at that young age so they can let the body recover and let things heal.” As for nutrition, Bell says they focus on encouraging athletes to eat well, to avoid fast food and to not get too caught up in nutritional supplements. “I tend to stay away from them as much as possible, rarely going beyond recommending a multivitamin/mineral and whey protein.”

One interesting fact about Doug Toole is that he was a game official in the NFL for 19 years. Asked about how the NFL is working to promote a positive image of their organization, Toole replied, “The NFL has really been clamping down the last few years on taunting and the type of demonstrations the players can do – they don’t allow any group celebrations at all, and a group is two or more. They would rather have their players act like they’ve done it before.” And as for his advice to high school coaches: “Let the officials officiate, and let the coaches coach. Too many coaches place too much emphasis on officiating. My experience over the years is that if a coach can stay calm and not get excited over a penalty over the length of a game, most of those penalties tend to balance out. It’s part of the game, and you have to learn to accept it or you will do a poorer job of coaching.”

Toole and Associates is growing rapidly, but its founder says he is concerned about expanding too rapidly. He says that in his profession, you have to hire a staff of highly educated professionals who are on the same page regarding their approach to the business. And as for advice for getting young athletes to succeed, Toole says that there are two important things to consider when working with kids: “They have to have fun, and they have to see progress.” **BTB**



Doug Toole, P.T.

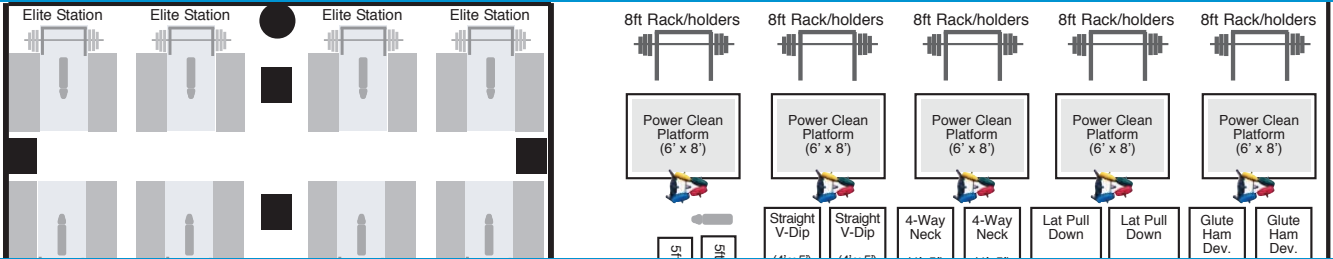
Preston Hall, PT, CSCS

Jason Bell CSCS, NSCA-CPT, COTA/L, LMT

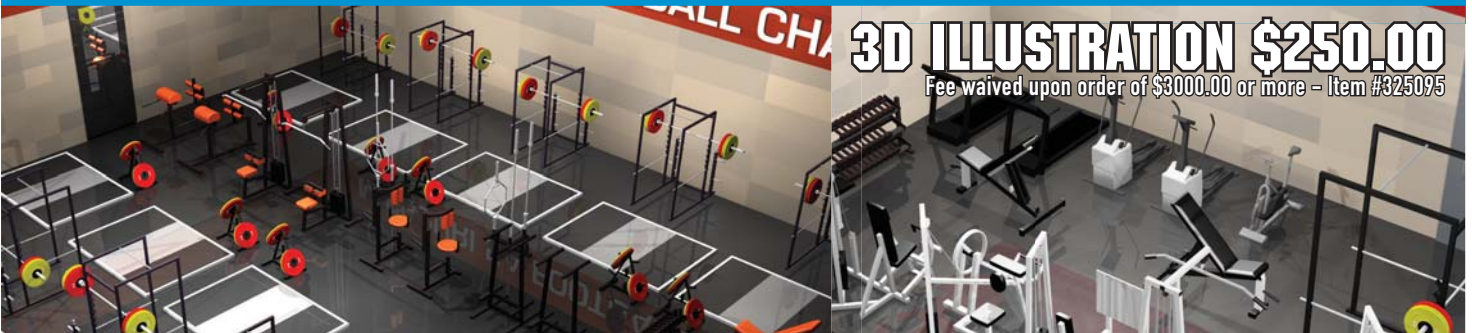
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