


A Closer Look at the *BFS 8-FOOT POWER RACK WITH PLATFORM*

The evolution of two great pieces of weight training equipment

The barbell is the basic tool of resistance training. With just this single piece of equipment, athletes can make significant physical

transformations. Two additional pieces of equipment that help you make better use of the barbell are the lifting platform and the power rack. The lifting

platform enables you to lift weights off the ground safely, and the power rack enables you to position the barbell in various positions to perform a greater



The BFS 8-Foot Power Rack with Platform combines a heavy-duty power rack with a great lifting platform.



The lifting platform, along with bumper plates, help protect the barbell and the floor while providing an ideal surface for performing Olympic lifting movements. And with the lifter-friendly Protect-All® surface, athletic programs can customize their platforms with a logo.

variety of exercises. Those are the basics – now let's take a closer look at what you want to do with them.

The Lifting Platform

In the early part of the century, a platform was a must because weight plates were primarily solid steel. If a lifter dropped a loaded barbell on a cement floor, that floor would be damaged along with the barbell. In the sport of Olympic lifting, spotters were used to prevent such accidents; but as the weights lifted became heavier, trying to catch heavy snatches and clean and jerks became too risky for

the spotters. Then along came rubber bumper plates.

The first bumper plates were primarily smaller-diameter weight plates with a rubber strip attached to the rims. They were certainly an improvement, but as with retreaded tires for your car, those early bumper plates were not as durable as the solid bumper plates that came along later. And now, with steel prices being what they are, solid rubber bumper plates have become much more economical. However, do not make the mistake of thinking that a platform is not necessary, as dropping heavy weights can easily damage a bare

floor. In fact, BFS heard recently of one school that decided that rubber bumper plates would be enough protection – the result was extensive damage to the floor that was extremely expensive to repair.

The early platforms were primarily wood, and in weightlifting competitions this is a preferred surface. The major problem with wood is that it can warp, which creates an unstable surface for the athlete to lift on. Wood can also chip easily (especially around the corners if a frame is not used), and as such often needs to be replaced, as the divots create a safety issue. Because



The power rack provides maximum safety for performing many core exercises such as squats and bench presses.

wood is often not very attractive and is difficult to keep clean, some manufacturers will use coatings that give the wood a shine and make it more durable, but the drawback is that these coatings often become very slick when chalk or water gets on them. Many platform manufacturers use a polyurethane surface, which is sticky (like a basketball court) and as such does not allow the feet to slide easily for lifts such as power cleans and jerks.

The two best coatings are rubber and a special vinyl surface we call Protect-All®, which is placed on top of two layers of heavy rubber for shock absorption. Protect-All is an attractive

gray surface that is easy to clean and extremely durable that has 3-4 times the life span of wood or polyurethane – it is rare that a Protect-All surface ever has to be replaced. Also, the surface allows for the placement of durable logos; and having a school logo provides personality that creates team unity and school pride.

The Power Rack

A power rack, also known as a squat cage, was first patented in 1989 by Karl I. Mullen of Portland, Oregon. The basic power rack consists of four vertical posts linked together to increase its strength (thus the term “cage”) and

has bar catches that can be adjusted vertically. With exercises such as squats, more weight can be squatted than can be lifted from the floor. Portable squat racks will elevate the bar, but they do not have safety catches; so if a lifter misses the weight, the bar will drop on the floor unless the lifter has spotters.

Other basic exercises that can be performed in power racks are bench presses, which are usually not low enough when done with portable squat racks. The bench press is unquestionably the most dangerous exercise that is performed in the weightroom because the barbell can drop across the throat; but the power rack’s bar catches enable

lifters to perform this exercise with maximum safety. One of the major advantages of using power racks is that they allow the performance of heavy partial movements and isometrics.

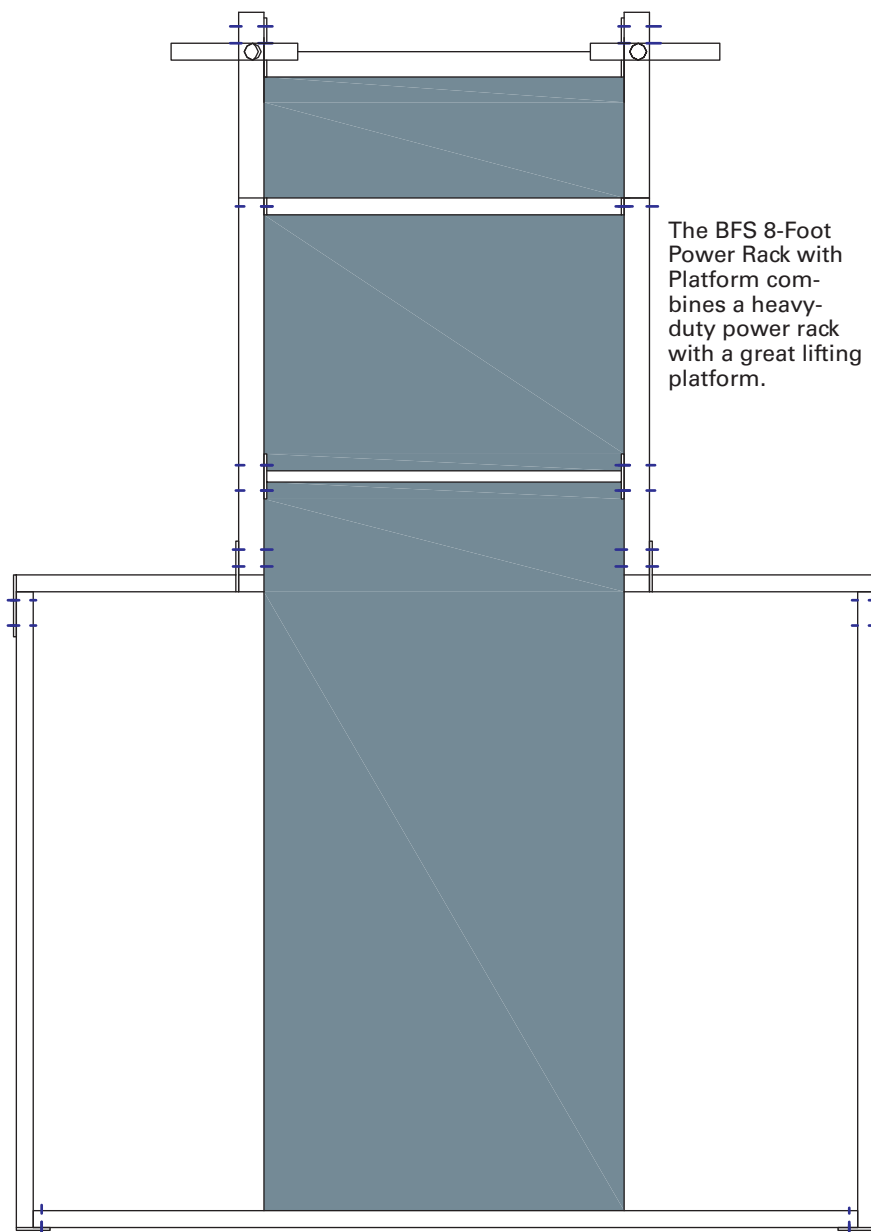
Partial movements are often used by powerlifters to work on a specific range of motion in a lift, such as the finish of a deadlift, or to overload the strongest positions of a lift. Partial movements are often used in the later stages of rehab; for example, an athlete who is overcoming a pectoral injury may be able to perform the end range of the bench press. As the injury heals, the range of motion can be increased. Carl Miller, a former coach of the World Championship Team who now runs a successful gym in Santa Fe, New Mexico, often has his clients use partial ranges of motion to rehab their injuries.

Isometrics are another popular training method to work specific ranges of motion. Although isometrics are not as popular as they were in the '60s, many strength coaches who work with elite athletes find that isometrics can help them achieve greater strength gains. To perform isometrics in the bench press, for example, the safety catches will be placed at a specific height, with the barbell supports set below them. The lifter removes the barbell from the supports and then presses the bar upward against the bar catches. A typical protocol is to hold the contraction for six seconds for several sets.

Best of Both Worlds

One of the safest, most stable and practical types of equipment is to combine a lifting platform with a power rack. At BFS we call this the *8-foot Power Rack and Platform* because that's exactly what it is. The platform, which can be installed with a coating

#041B 8' POWER RACK WITH PLATFORM



of Protect-All, measures eight feet wide by six feet long and sits flush against an 8-foot power rack. The crossbar in the front of the power rack can be used for chin-ups and pull-ups.

The BFS 8-foot Power Rack and Platform has weight pins attached to the outside of the cage for convenience and to save space that would be needed for these lifts. Further, the fixed bar catches on the vertical supports eliminate the need to make adjustments

for different-size athletes, reducing the amount of time between sets. And because they are fixed to the supports, they cannot be misplaced or lost.

The barbell is certainly the kingpin of weight training apparatus, closely followed in the strength training hierarchy by the lifting platform and the power rack. And now, with the BFS 8-foot Power Rack and Platform, these three tools have reached a higher level of evolution. BFS

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You need to capitalize on your training program by getting maximum results from your athletes within a limited schedule. BFS can help with versatile equipment designed to make the most of the space you have so you can make the most of the time you have. With features such as pre-fixed bar catches the 8' Power Rack With Platform will help you move athletes and students through their workouts quickly and efficiently. Call a BFS professional to learn how proper weight room configurations can improve safety and efficiency in your program. **MAXIMIZE YOUR SPACE**

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