



To achieve maximum sprinting speed, athletes need to be tall, as shown here by this Santa Rita High School athlete.

A Closer Look at *Absolute #2*

Why this absolute is the key to good posture and athletic performance

Parents often tell their children that good posture involves standing or sitting up straight and pulling their shoulders back. The medical profession has a more precise definition. In 1947, the Posture Committee of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons came up

with the following definition of good posture:

“Good posture is that state of muscular and skeletal balance which protects the supporting structures of the body against injury or progressive deformity irrespective of the attitude (erect, lying, squatting, stooping) in

which these structures are working or resting. Under such conditions the muscles will function most efficiently and the optimum positions are afforded for the thoracic and abdominal organs.”

In other words, good posture improves your overall health and



After two weeks of a conditioning program that included structural balance training, this gymnast was able to assume a tall position when standing – note the dramatic difference in posture.

athletic performance, and will reduce the risk of injury. An athlete can't slump or lean forward outside their center of gravity and expect to perform well.

To help ensure that athletes have good posture, BFS encourages the use of Absolute #2, which is Be Tall.

Athletes need to be tall all the time, whether they are walking, sprinting, lifting, stretching or even sitting. Being tall produces dramatic

improvements in posture, improvements that will translate into better sport performance and reduced risk of injury.

Here's a simple test to determine if you're standing tall. Stand with your heels, buttocks, back, shoulders and head against a wall. Now try to slide one hand behind your lower back, at bellybutton level or where there is the greatest arch in your back. If you are standing tall, the thickest part of the hand will just fill the gap between the wall and the back. If the hand slides right through or gets stuck, this suggests that you are not standing tall.

A coach can determine if his or her athletes are standing tall simply by observing their relaxed, standing posture. Look at each of them from the side and note the position of the shoulders and head. Does the head thrust forward? Are the knees locked and does the pelvis thrust forward? If the answer is yes to these questions, the athlete is not being tall.

Athletes who stand tall look like winners. When an athlete is tall, their waist will appear flatter and their shoulders broader. In fact, the

common reaction from friends to an athlete who learns to be tall is that they've lost weight! And in sports where there is an aesthetic component, such as diving, gymnastics and figure skating, the postural improvements from being tall will be reflected in higher scores from the judges. Further, the postural improvements from being tall can help prevent lower back problems (which have become epidemic in our population) and other injuries.

If an athlete is slouching, say, "Be tall!" Immediately, good things happen. If an athlete is bending at the waist with a rounded back, the quickest way to correct this problem is to say, "Be tall!" Fine-tuning comes with the other absolutes, especially keeping eyes on target and spreading the chest. All these terms are designed to help any athlete get into a correct and efficient alignment.

The be tall absolute should be used with most lifts in the weightroom. In squatting, every athlete needs to squat with the feeling of sitting tall. You do not want to bend over with the head down and hips high, as this can injure the lower back and does not develop functional strength for athletes. When performing the hex bar deadlift, focusing on being tall throughout the entire lift helps ensure that the spine is in proper alignment and that the legs are being properly used during the lift. Outside the weightroom, the be tall absolute should be used as often as possible. For example, after full speed is attained in sprinting, athletes should sprint tall. When throwing a discus or a ball, if an athlete ignores the absolute by bending forward, inefficiency and technique problems are the result.

At BFS clinics athletes thoroughly learn the absolute of being tall by the end of the day. Coaches in attendance

who coach their own athletes use the six absolutes repeatedly. We always find it rewarding to see the rapid improvements in both coaches and

athletes, especially with coaches who have no significant background in weight training. In just one day they become amazingly skilled in correcting

technique flaws. Coaches should make certain their athletes are being tall in all they do. BFS



Even with squatting, it's important to be tall. Note how much more athletic this young man is in the second photo, which shows him adhering to the concept of being tall.

Canadian Olympian Marilou Dozois-Prévost shows how to be tall during the snatch lift.



Athletes must also think "Be tall" even when they stretch.



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WEIGHT ROOM RULES

MEN'S STANDARDS
Jumping & Sprint

Event	Weight	Time	Score
100m	100	15.00	100
	200	30.00	200
	300	45.00	300
	400	60.00	400
200m	200	30.00	200
	300	45.00	300
	400	60.00	400
	500	75.00	500
300m	300	45.00	300
	400	60.00	400
	500	75.00	500
	600	90.00	600
400m	400	60.00	400
	500	75.00	500
	600	90.00	600
	700	105.00	700
500m	500	75.00	500
	600	90.00	600
	700	105.00	700
	800	120.00	800
600m	600	90.00	600
	700	105.00	700
	800	120.00	800
	900	135.00	900
700m	700	105.00	700
	800	120.00	800
	900	135.00	900
	1000	150.00	1000
800m	800	120.00	800
	900	135.00	900
	1000	150.00	1000
	1100	165.00	1100
900m	900	135.00	900
	1000	150.00	1000
	1100	165.00	1100
	1200	180.00	1200
1000m	1000	150.00	1000
	1100	165.00	1100
	1200	180.00	1200
	1300	195.00	1300

WEIGHT ROOM RULES

- NO FOOD, CHEWING GUM, GLASS BOTTLES OR CANS
- LOAD AND UNLOAD FREE WEIGHTS EVENLY AND CAREFULLY
- DO NOT DROP METAL WEIGHTS OR DUMBBELLS ON PLATFORMS OR FLOORS
- BUMPER PLATES MAY BE DROPPED ONLY ON PLATFORMS WITH CONTROL
- PUT AWAY ALL WEIGHTS AFTER USING THEM AND Wipe DOWN UNIFORMS AS NEEDED
- IMMEDIATELY REPORT ALL ACCIDENTS, INJURIES AND EQUIPMENT FAILURE TO STAFF
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