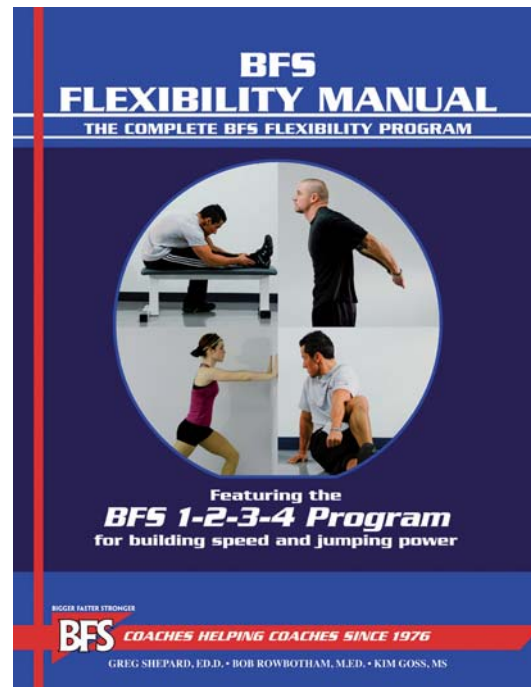


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A New Look at *Flexibility Training*

A look at what's inside the new
BFS Flexibility Manual



After giving thousands of BFS clinics over the past three decades, we've found that stretching is the one component most often missing in an athlete's training. This omission is odd, considering the tremendous amount of research available on the value of stretching – not just for athletes but also for those who simply want to improve their quality of life. Our society is becoming a nation of couch potatoes, and as a result we have made ourselves far less flexible than ever before. BFS is determined to reverse that trend. The only way to make that happen for our athletes is to incorporate

flexibility training into a total program. Let's talk facts.

Flexibility training performed correctly and consistently will increase the range of motion of an athlete's joints. Sport scientists generally agree that an effective stretching program is important in preventing injury and promoting good posture. For these reasons, flexibility exercises should be regarded as a critical part of any athletic fitness or physical education program. That being said, how do you stretch? BFS has the answer in the second edition of the *BFS Flexibility Manual*.

Stretching: the Truth

It is our intention at Bigger Faster Stronger to provide coaches with a stretching program that not only benefits the athletes but also is useful in coaching situations where important considerations are time, facilities and number of athletes. After reviewing the potential benefits offered by a host of stretching exercises, we decided that the best flexibility program for most young athletes would focus on the static stretching method.

The static stretching method is performed in the basic BFS total program, which we call the BFS 1-2-3-4 Flexibility Program, and it has been used successfully by young athletes for over 34 years. This type of stretching involves maintaining a stationary position that enables the muscles to be held at a greater-than-at-resting length. Some advantages to using static stretching with young athletes are that the techniques are extremely safe, can be mastered easily and can be performed without a partner.

In addition to presenting the regular BFS static stretches, the *BFS Flexibility Manual* shows several additional stretches that will add variety to your program. We also include a test to easily



Static stretching is the basis of the BFS 1-2-3-4 Flexibility Program. Shown demonstrating two BFS stretches are Emilie Williams (top) and Sheriann Decker, dance team members at Hunter High School in Salt Lake City, Utah.



measure progress with a large number of athletes. And although we dislike having to condemn any exercise, we describe several stretches that we believe present a higher risk and should be avoided.

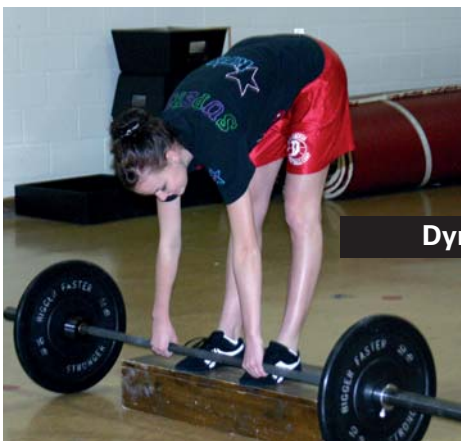
Another stretching method discussed in this manual is called modified proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation (PNF). These stretches are for those athletes who want even better results, have the time to perform this method, and have a good partner. However, it must be understood that for athletes to achieve their optimal potential, they



Flexibility can be measured frequently with the sit-and-reach test.



Modified PNF



Dynamic



Keisha Rogerson



Myofascial



ELDOA

There are many other types of flexibility training, such as PNF, dynamic, myofascial, and ELDOA.

must deal with all aspects of training (strength, speed, cardiovascular endurance, agility, flexibility and skill development) and should not sacrifice one component of a total athletic program to focus on another. So although performing 10 sets of bench presses three times a week may increase an athlete's ability in this lift, such a program would likely interfere with the ability to progress in other lifts or aspects of conditioning.

Dynamic stretching is another popular method of stretching, and it is used to some extent in physical education classes. Jumping jacks, arm circles and freehand squats are examples. The BFS straight-leg deadlift and our power balance drills also belong to this category of stretches. This manual will show you many exercises and how to arrange them most effectively for physical education classes.

Finally, we've included a section called "The Future of Stretching," which describes some of the advanced stretching methods used in many physical rehabilitation programs. Two such methods are called myofascial stretching and Longitudinal Osteoarticular Decoaptation Stretching, which translates from the French acronym ELDOA. These types of stretches involve placing the body in specific postures and contracting muscles to stretch the fascia tissue that is contained around and within the muscles.

The goal of stretching is not to become super flexible but to have muscles that are balanced. We want to make strong athletes more flexible and flexible athletes stronger. When athletes have both assets going for them – flexibility and strength – they have a competitive edge. To learn more, pick up a copy of the *BFS Flexibility Manual* today!

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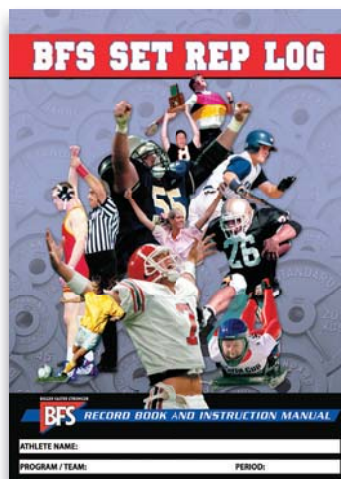
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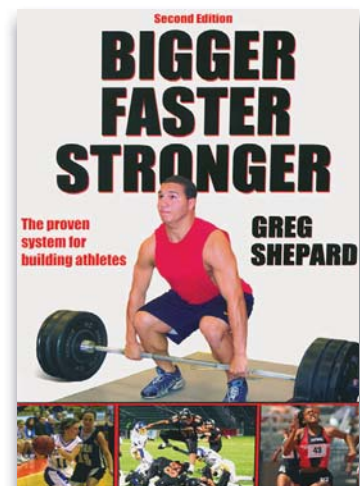
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