

(Editor's note: Having been involved with BFS for nearly a quarter of a century, I find it interesting that a lot of coaches I've talked to have kept every issue of BFS magazine. The reason is that much of the information, particularly the training physiology and ideas about character development, is timeless. To prove it, we've decided to reprint this article about strength standards written by Dr. Greg Shepard more than a decade ago. As you read it – or reread it, depending on how long you've been following BFS – note the standards that Dr. Shepard expected from his athletes, such as the 250-pound power cleans and 500-pound deadlifts that his athletes at Sehome High School performed. Compare those lifts to your standards, and if your athletes don't measure up, consider making BFS a part of your future.)



Dr. Greg Shepard at Sehome HS in the late '60s

How Good Is Good?

The BFS standards bring relevance to achievements

I first started thinking about standards in 1964 when I trained my first group of high school athletes. I felt, at the time, if 20 football players could bench press 200 pounds or more, you could win a state championship. As I shared my idea, others scoffed. "It's a lot more complicated than that," they said.

I was naive. They were right, of course, but I also felt that I was on the right track. I just had to dig a little deeper. I began to observe good high school, college and pro football players (San Diego Chargers). I also observed the world's best throwers (discus, hammer, shot put).

I always made it a habit to ask these great throwers what they could lift, how fast they could run and how high they could jump. I matched these results with how far they could throw. Sometimes an individual thrower would try to add a lot of weight and

strength in order to improve throwing performance. Almost every time with the elite strength/throwing athlete, this strategy did not work. In other words, if a thrower could already parallel squat 600-plus, power clean 350-plus and bench 450-plus at a bodyweight of 270 pounds, would gaining 20-30 pounds while increasing his strength by 15-20 percent make a difference in throwing performance? With discus throwers and hammer throwers, it rarely made a difference, and sometimes it actually hurt their performance. With shot putters, this increase made only a little difference. The downsides were the tremendous stress on the body to make such gains and also the chance for injury. Often agility and speed would be lost. I learned there was a limit on the profitability of strength and weight gains.

By 1970 I had the elite performance standards I felt were essential for success at the highest level for big

men involved in football or track. These standards are still relevant over 30 years later: parallel squat 600, bench 400, power clean 350, deadlift 600, forty 4.6, vertical jump 35 and standing long jump 10-6. I figured a 6-foot-5 man with good, but not necessarily great, athletic ability could weigh 270 pounds and achieve the above performance standards.

I was a football strength coach at Oregon State ('65), University of Oregon ('67) and Brigham Young University ('71-'73). This helped me fine-tune elite standards with skill athletes. I coached at the high school level from 1967 to 1971. At Sehome High School in Bellingham, Washington, we had bunches of athletes who could parallel squat 400, bench 300, power clean 250 and deadlift 500. We had 50 players run between 4.5 and 5.0 in the forty. These results helped pave the way for the high school standards. A feature



Using the BFS Safety Squat device is one way to ensure accurate testing in lower body exercises such as the squat.

story was done on these players in the old Bob Hoffman *Strength and Health* magazine. We easily won the mythical state football championship. We were the smallest school (1,400) in the biggest classification. The other team had minus 77 yards rushing, but at that time in history most teams did hardly anything in strength training.

I also coached the throwers at Sehome. We had 11 guys who could throw the discus between 140 and 180 feet. If you could not throw 155, you were on the JV team. I don't think any high school before or since can match that.

Those standards gave me a direction and, more importantly, an

expectation. Later, through working with Stefan Fernholm, the Utah Jazz and my partners Rick and Bob, we added the Sit & Reach and Dot Drill standards. We also have improved our ability to accurately test these standards through tools such as the Just Jump, Safety Squat and Speed Trap. We also developed standards for women and younger athletes. In addition, we have a graduated scale of excellence to help all athletes achieve with a step-by-step formula of excellence through standards.


When I coached high school football, I expected every varsity high school football starter and thrower, except some skill athletes, to achieve at least the All-State standards. At the Division 1 college



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Record boards, progress charts, and posters showing national standards are all ways to motivate athletes to work harder.





BIGGER FASTER STRONGER

MEN'S STANDARDS

Jumping & Speed

	BODY TYPE		Up to 5'8"		5'9" to 5'11"		6'0" to 6'2"		6'3" & up	
	Standard Solid Heavy Build		less than 180 180 or more		less than 200 200 or more		less than 220 220 or more		less than 240 240 or more	
40 YARD DASH	Good	5.25 5.5	5.2 5.4	5.1 5.3	5.0 5.2	4.95 5.2	4.9 5.1	4.85 5.05	4.75 5.0	4.7 4.9
	Great	4.95 5.2	4.9 5.1	4.8 5.0	4.75 5.0	4.7 5.05	4.65 4.95	4.6 4.9	4.55 4.8	4.5 4.8
	All State	4.75 5.05	4.7 5.0	4.65 4.95	4.6 4.9	4.55 4.85	4.5 4.8	4.45 4.75	4.4 4.7	4.35 4.65
	All American	4.65 4.95	4.6 4.9	4.55 4.85	4.5 4.8	4.45 4.75	4.4 4.7	4.35 4.65	4.3 4.6	4.25 4.55
20 YARD DASH	Good	3.25 3.5	3.2 3.4	3.1 3.3	3.0 3.2	2.95 3.2	2.9 3.1	2.85 3.05	2.75 3.0	2.7 2.9
	Great	2.95 3.2	2.9 3.1	2.85 3.05	2.75 3.0	2.7 3.05	2.65 2.95	2.6 2.9	2.55 2.85	2.5 2.8
	All State	2.75 3.05	2.7 3.0	2.65 2.95	2.6 2.9	2.55 2.85	2.5 2.8	2.45 2.75	2.4 2.7	2.35 2.65
	All American	2.65 2.95	2.6 2.9	2.55 2.85	2.5 2.8	2.45 2.75	2.4 2.7	2.35 2.65	2.3 2.6	2.25 2.55
VERT. JUMP	Good	18 15	20 17	22 19	24 21	26 23	28 25	30 27	32 28	34 30
	Great	26 23	27 24	28 25	29 26	30 27	31 28	32 29	33 30	34 31
	All State	29 25	30 26	31 27	32 28	33 29	34 30	35 31	36 32	37 33
	All American	32 27	33 28	34 29	35 30	36 31	37 32	38 33	39 34	40 35
5. LONG JUMP	Good	7'6" 7'0"	7'9" 7'3"	8'0" 7'6"	8'3" 7'9"	8'6" 8'0"	8'9" 8'3"	9'0" 8'6"	9'3" 8'9"	9'6" 9'0"
	Great	8'3" 7'9"	8'6" 8'0"	8'9" 8'3"	9'0" 8'6"	9'3" 8'9"	9'6" 9'0"	9'9" 9'3"	10'0" 9'6"	10'3" 9'9"
	All State	8'9" 8'3"	9'1" 8'7"	9'6" 9'3"	10'0" 9'6"	10'3" 9'9"	10'6" 10'0"	10'9" 10'3"	11'0" 10'6"	11'3" 10'9"
	All American	9'3" 8'9"	9'7" 9'1"	10'0" 9'7"	10'3" 9'9"	10'6" 10'0"	10'9" 10'3"	11'0" 10'6"	11'3" 10'9"	11'6" 11'0"
DOT DRILL	Good	69 74	66 71	63 68	60 65	57 62	54 59	51 56	48 53	45 50
	Great	64 69	61 66	58 63	55 60	52 57	49 54	46 51	43 48	40 45
	All State	59 64	56 61	53 58	50 55	47 52	44 49	41 46	38 43	35 40
	All American	49 54	46 51	43 48	40 45	37 42	34 39	31 36	28 33	25 30

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level, I would now expect every starting lineman to parallel squat 600, bench 400, power clean 350 from the floor, dot drill 45 seconds, run 4.6 on defense and 4.8 on offense, vertical jump 35 inches on defense and 33 inches on offense, standing long jump 10-6 on defense and 10-0 on offense, and Sit & Reach five inches past the toes.

As I've been telling athletes for many years, "If you can't or won't achieve our highest standards, you will hold our football team back. If you are a thrower at the college level and you can't or won't do at least the defensive lineman starter requirements, you can't compete at the national level. You see,

a thrower is different from a line-
man because nobody can make up for



Even flexibility should be tested to ensure athletes are performing daily stretching to run faster, jump higher and help prevent injury.

your weaknesses. I just can't say it any plainer than that.

“Achieving these standards is what we have to do to make our success happen. We will spend the necessary time and effort to get there. I can’t guarantee that we will win a state or national championship. But I can guarantee that we will never lose because we lack strength, speed, explosive power or quickness. We will be bigger, faster and stronger. We will be extremely confident in that fact. I will do everything in my power to help you achieve these reachable standards. If everyone will do their part, we will physically dominate our opponents.” **BS**

TRAINING POSTERS

5 POSTER SET \$50

5 POSTER SET \$50

8 POSTER SET \$75

3 POSTER SET \$30

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OPER WORKOUT NO SANDALS	NO FOOD, CHEWING GUM, GLASS BOTTLES OR CANS
FORSEPLAY NO WEAPONS NO SHOOTING NO SPOUTING NO SPITTING	LOAD AND UNLOAD FRESHLY EVENLY AND CAREFULLY
BE SFS KICK ALLS OF PERFECT E WHEN LIFTING	DO NOT DROP METAL WEIGHTS OR DUMBBELLS ON PLATFORMS OR FLOORS
HS ON BARBELLS JLY ON SAFETY IN MACHINES	BUMPER PLATES MAY BE DROPPED ONLY ON PLATFORMS WITH CONTROL
I DOUBT, SEEK INSTRUCTION	PUT AWAY ALL WEIGHTS AFTER USING THEM AND WIPE DOWN UPHOLSTERY AS NEEDED
EMENT FOR ITS USE - DO NOT THE EQUIPMENT	IMMEDIATELY REPORT ALL ACCIDENTS, INJURIES AND EQUIPMENT FAILURE TO STAFF
SPOTTERS VOTERS RACKS	
HELP AND ENCOURAGE EACH OTHER! MAKE YOUR TEAMMATES GREAT!	

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