

Training Smarter at Mountain View High School

New ways BFS is helping this Utah school develop better athletes

Two years ago *BFS* magazine featured Mountain View High School, a D4 school in Orem, Utah, that has won 84 state championships and earned the title of “Utah Sports Program of the Century.” Some Mountain View graduates have competed in the Olympics, and some have gone on to play in the NBA and NFL. The problem was that few of those state championships occurred in recent years, and the athletic department decided they needed a plan to spark the Bruins athletes back into their winning ways. That spark was BFS.

In the spring of 2010 Chad Blevins, the head of Mountain View’s physical education department, decided to hold a BFS certification to help unify the athletic program. He chose BFS because of its reputation and long history, and because its philosophy fit in with his goals for Mountain View’s athletic programs. Soon, BFS clinicians

Rick Bojak and Kam Shepard arrived at the school to give ten of its coaches an all-day certification clinic.

After the successful BFS clinic, the coaches were sold on the program. To facilitate the new workout Blevins reorganized the weightroom. In the center

“The next step is having the students coach each other in the basic exercises while repeating the six absolutes.

—Blevins

of the weightroom he put power clean and deadlift stations to send a powerful message about what the focus of the strength training program should be, and he painted dots for the dot drill. He also set up an Ironman club and a T-shirt award program to encourage and reward exceptional efforts in the weightroom.

Once everything was in place, Blevins said it was now up to the coaches to go to their respective players to sell them on the BFS program. It was an easy sell. Now, at 6:30 in the morning, twice a week, over 70 athletes show up in the weightroom to ensure they don’t miss a BFS workout supervised by a certified BFS coach. Blevins says they always have at least two coaches supervising the weightroom to maintain a high level of teaching and safety. The school now offers classes during the day to the general student population as well as to athletes.

Another key change is that Blevins has recently been able to implement the BFS Readiness program at one of the feeder middle schools, focusing on technique work with PVC pipes and dot drills. Currently Blevins uses the BFS Readiness program with new students and athletes, or athletes who have transferred from other schools.

Mountain View HS sports that benefit from the BFS program include boys basketball, cross-country, swimming, volleyball and wrestling.



“It’s incredible how much more flexible and technically prepared I can help athletes become in a Readiness program,” says Blevins. “In most of the junior high programs it seems we’re doing a good job teaching the students about the reps/sets principles while using safe machines. This is great, but when kids learn how to squat properly, they are developing flexibility and strength that they won’t get with machines.” Another aspect of the Readiness program that Blevins believes is important is teaching the BFS Six Absolutes.

“While these young men and women are performing the different exercises, I am repeating the six absolutes and requiring the kids to say the same absolutes,” Blevins says. “The next step is having the students coach each other in the basic exercises while repeating the six absolutes. This simple Readiness program has served to unify my individual classes and unify our athletic programs. Sometimes I will say to myself, ‘Why didn’t I do this before?’ It simply works.”

Blevins says that with the PE classes he progresses a bit slower: “With the Readiness program we take about six weeks, but with the athletes I can shorten that to four weeks. The bottom line is that a student has to be able to follow the six absolutes, break parallel in the squat and demonstrate the proper movement patterns in the clean and deadlift before he or she can put any weight on the bar.”

Now that he’s implemented the BFS program, Blevins is finding that the job of coaching has becoming easier as the older athletes in the program begin to mentor the younger athletes.



BFS clinician Kam Shepard with Coach Chad Blevins (center) and Coach Karly Jane.

One key to this mentorship is the use of the six absolutes. Blevins explains, “When your coaches are using the same dialog with the six absolutes and the kids are hearing it, you create a synergy when the athletes start holding each other accountable.”

Blevins says the coaches and athletes are supportive of strength training and that during the off-season athletes have no problem getting to the weightroom. During the season,

however, weight training often takes a backseat due to time limitations and the importance of working on sport skills and strategy. Blevins comments, “First, coaches need to understand that strength training is tied to endurance, and so even if cardiovascular fitness is good with low strength, you’re going to fatigue. Another problem is that coaches are often afraid to do any heavy lifting during the season. A ‘light’ lift – what’s that? Why train your body to be weak?” Blevins finds that the best way to avoid distractions is to work out before practice.

“As I look back on the three-year journey, I am very satisfied in the things I have learned as a teacher and coach in training students and athletes to become healthier and stronger through the BFS program,” says Blevins. Two programs that have really bought into the program are cross-country, which reduced their injury rate by 40 percent in one year, and volleyball.

In the 2012 season the Bruins’ volleyball team lost every preseason game, finishing the season 1-23, but this year they finished the preseason 10-1. Says head volleyball coach Karly Jane, “They have improved so much in the last year – their record in regional competition doesn’t do it justice. Everything has improved: strength, endurance and communication.”

Coach Jane also has had the opportunity to use the OptoJump with her players. “Having the OptoJump



this year has affected our mentality and work ethic, and given us greater motivation to improve daily. It is very helpful to have data to show where we were when we started, and see how we have progressed throughout the season.”

Blevins enthusiastically adds his comments about the uses of the OptoJump: “I have used this machine with numerous athletic programs and will now introduce it to my Fitness for Life classes. With the athletes it has been fun to see their reaction as we analyze their form and symmetry in the way they walk to the nearest 1000th of a second. We have also performed various vertical jump tests to measure their power. The accuracy and professionalism of the OptoJump brings credibility to why I teach and do what I do. We are also hopeful that the OptoJump can help motivate the athletes intrinsically to do their balance, flexibility and march-in-place homework on their own.”

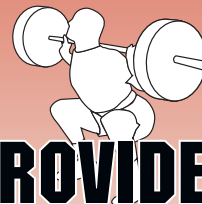
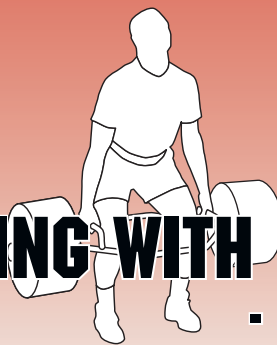
Asked what his goals are for the near future, Blevins replies, “Currently at Mountain View we have about half our athletic programs following the Bigger Faster Program. I hope one day to have the whole school united in teaching the student athletes the same cues and techniques at the same progression.” **BFS**



Using the BFS program has helped to unify the Bruins’ athletic program.



Head volleyball coach Karly Jane uses the OptoJump to assess the jumping ability of her athletes.



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BFS SCIENCE LAB

BFS is committed to advancing every coaches and teacher's ability to track the improvement of their students and athletes. On November 1, 2011, BFS opened the "BFS Science Lab" with Dr. Peter Gorman, President of MicroGait USA, at his facility in New York.

"This will be a great addition to the BFS organization," says BFS President Bob Rowbotham. Look for more details about this exciting facility in future issues of BFS and on our website, www.biggerfasterstronger.com

Using top quality BFS equipment and the OptoJump system the BFS Science Lab is developing systems and protocols to continue the advancement of youth training and performance!



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