

TRENDS AND IDEAS

This past year I traveled 100,000 miles working with coaches and athletes nationwide. I would like to share my observations and ideas.

Attendance

I reported last year that attendance was generally down. However, this year I did a clinic at Eastwood High School in El Paso, Texas. Coach John Roberts told me about a league game of theirs which was to determine the championship. It was held in the Sun Bowl. Nearly 35,000 people showed up counting the ones not in their seats! However, on the other side, the University of Texas at El Paso didn't get 35,000 people the whole season.

Baseball Feud

Lance Parrish, the catcher for the Detroit Tigers, likes to lift weights for strength and injury prevention. Sparky Anderson, the Tiger Manager, flew into a public rage. He told reporters that Lance was hired as a baseball player not a weight lifer and demanded he stop lifting. Lance told Sparky to take a long walk off a short pier and that he would not stop. That was in April. This season Lance Parrish led his team in hitting and homeruns which is very unusual for a catcher.

With all the publicity about pro athletes snorting cocaine and other drugs; Sparky's worried about one of his players who is dedicated to training his body for excellence and then proving it. I hope an old dog like Sparky can learn new tricks because he really ain't that bad of a manager.

Good Quick Fund Raiser

Because of the economic situation, coaches are becoming more creative in their ways of getting funds for their program. Here's one I really liked. Sell pizzas! Get your athletes to each sell 5 pizzas. Start on Monday getting orders for Friday night delivery. "Save Mom from working and help our team." Now, you either make the pizzas in the school cafeteria from scratch, heat up frozen pizzas with extra ingredients, or get a local pizza restaurant to make them at a reduced rate. Charge \$3.00 per pizza more than your cost. If 50 athletes sell 5 pizzas, which is very easy, your program makes \$750.00 anytime you need it. No candy, candles or working with some other company, and its easier.

Free Weights vs. Machines

The tremendous surge to free weights away from machines continued this year. In fact to such a degree, the bigger companies are quietly going after the more lucrative spa fitness business and away from athletes. Coaches in large masses are refusing to be duped any longer about machines for their athletes. Machines in our schools and universities are being relegated to auxiliary type exercises and for P.E. classes. Makes sense to me. Fortunately for athletes it's taking more than a pro football coach standing by a machine to sell the product.

Improvement of Athletes

Absolutely stunning. Three years ago when I did a clinic I had to start from scratch. Coaches hardly knew a bench press from a squat. On lifts like the clean, it was quite common to have all beginners. Now I've had to revise my clinic presentation because of the great change in knowledge that has taken place. With the tremendous increase in strength of the general athlete, especially at the high school level, I have been in awe. Take Dewayne Kinston, a 1982 graduate of Seventy-First High School in North Carolina, for example. His coach, Bobby Poss, says 'His 402 bench isn't bad for a 190 pounder.' In 1969 there wasn't one Philadelphia Eagle football player who could bench 300! Dewayne's story will be featured in the next BFS Journal in January.

Metrics

The U.S. Metric Board was abolished September 30 as an economy measure. President Reagan has refused to promote anything but voluntary conversion to metrics. I like to see people throw the shot, discus etc. in feet not meters and athletes jump in feet not meters. I also like to lift in pounds not kilos. If you buy olympic sets with the plates marked only in kilos or uneven pounds, I'm sure it has driven you bananas. Let's keep our American system of measuring in sport.

Anabolic Steroids

The use of steroids is on the increase, especially with younger athletes. More alarming is that daily dosages on the average have increased ten fold since 1972. If a coach knowingly allows his athletes to take steroids and something happens, the liability of such an allowance would be staggering. A study has just been completed with subjects taking 100 mgs. by injection followed by 20 mgs. in pill form. Very preliminary results indicate the heart risk factors increase 7 to 14 times and the sperm count goes way down. After the dosage was stopped, the heart risk factor returned to normal but the sperm count remained low for months. There is absolutely no way a high school or collegiate athlete should ever consider taking anabolic steroids to increase performance. Super results can be attained by training on a smart free weight system with great nutrition habits. You simply don't need steroids.

I'm Searching — Help Me

I'm searching for an athlete who can throw the college shot over 60 feet or the discus or hammer throw over 200 feet, who has trained primarily with machines or who has trained with free weights using the system of one set of 7-12 reps. (It used to be 15 or more reps.) I've interviewed 38 athletes who attained the above standards. Every one of those athletes said they would get weaker, smaller and slower on such systems. They also said it would be impossible to attain the above standards. Surely this can't be. If any reader knows and can verify an athlete who can dispute this claim, please let me know. I'd like to publish their story.