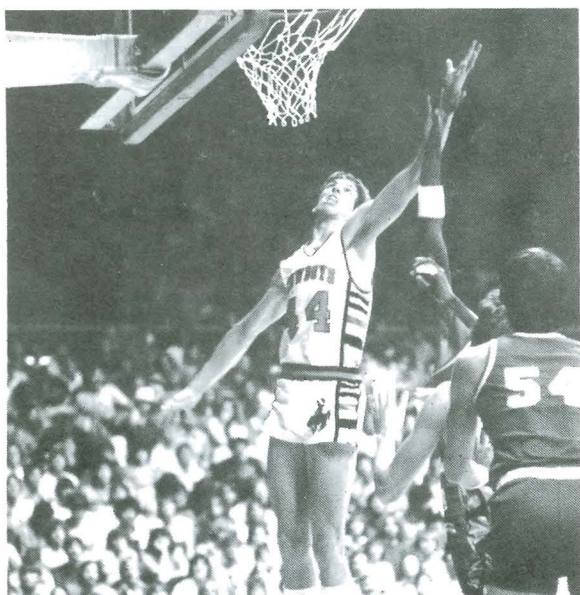


# Wyoming Basketball



## Bill Garnett: 1st Senior Drafted by the NBA

Jim Brandenburg, the University of Wyoming's head basketball coach, was a refreshing delight to interview. I was impressed with his knowledge and commitment to weight training for basketball players. Coach Brandenburg, who is starting his fifth year at Wyoming, is a coach who is ahead of his time and reaping great rewards for his foresight.

The University of Wyoming qualified for the 1982 N.C.A.A. tournament for the second straight year with a 23-7 record and a conference title which ranked them 15th nationally. At the N.C.A.A. tournament, Wyoming beat U.S.C. but then lost to Georgetown.

"We started our players lifting to compensate for our lack of size," states Coach Brandenburg. "The idea basketball players are muscle bound is ridiculous. It won't if you do it right," he emphasizes. "We lift because we know we are improving our jumping, rebounding, speed, quickness and balance. We must lift with free weights for balance. Kids who are stronger maintain their balance better."

Wyoming shot 53.3% from the floor, so obviously the weights did not affect their shooting. They were also number one in the country in field goal percentage defense (39%) and also number one in rebound margin (11.7%). Brandenburg says, "Weight training has improved all of my players jumping ability and rebounding efficiency. We do it all year around." He further explains, "It doesn't make sense not to have an in-season program. We need to be stronger at the end of the season—not weaker. It only takes us about 20 minutes per workout!"

Wyoming's off-season program takes about fifty minutes. Parallel squats are considered to be a key exercise. Coach Brandenburg says, "We've got to be strong in that position, that's why we do parallel squats." Past Wyoming great Charles Bradley came to Brandenburg with knee problems. Coach Brandenburg believes knee problems come about by weak knees. So Bradley went through the weight program like everyone else, overcame his knee problems and was the first round draft choice of the Boston Celtics.

Other lifts done are the bench press, military press, leg extensions, leg curls and cleans. Nautilus is used for auxiliary lifts and flexibility. Depth jumping or negative jumps (plyometrics) are also used to teach the players proper balance with their center of gravity. The Cowboys running program consists of 2½ mile runs, sprint interval training, form running, and stadium stairs for basic stamina. Care is also taken to measure percent of body fat of players. Pre- and post-tests on a strength, speed, endurance and agility are given because Coach Brandenburg wants to know exactly where each player stands.

One unique feature of the Wyoming program is the annual car push contest. A car is pushed up a spiral staircase before homecoming week. The wrestlers, basketball players and other sports join in on the fun. They have different weight classifications. The kids really look forward to it. "Our basketball players really get psyched and always win this contest in the heavyweight division," states Brandenburg.

"I love the way our strength program improves our players mental aspect of physical tolerance and mental toughness. It helps us play more aggressively. Our older guys teach the younger guys. The younger guys when they come in know they'll have to weight train just to compete," Coach Brandenburg further explains.

A perfect example of a before-and-after story is about Bill Garnett, the 1982 Western Athletic Conference MVP and the NBA's first drafted senior. When Bill came to Wyoming he weighed 190 pounds as a freshman. As a senior, he weighed 223 pounds and averaged 18.8 points per game with 8.5 rebounds. "There is no question that talent and coaching being equal, the team with the good weight program will be superior," concludes Coach Brandenburg. I couldn't agree more. My congratulations to Coach Jim Brandenburg and the University of Wyoming for their commitment to excellence.

## NEWS FLASH!

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