



SAFETY TIPS

by Rick Anderson

WEIGHT ROOM SAFETY

Maintaining a safe weight room is a responsibility all coaches have to protect their athletes from injury and themselves from liability. This article will offer some guidelines to coaches which I hope, will help in running a safe and efficient strength program.

Attitude of the athlete is by far the most important factor in weight room safety. Young people need to know exactly "why" they are in the weight room and specifically "what" behavior is expected of them. They also *must* know that any rules a coach has set forth will be *strictly* enforced.

Teaching proper attitude is a simple task and takes very little time. Before students ever touch a weight they should listen to what I call, a pride and safety talk. First students need to know that your strength program is "special" and that it is a privilege, *not* a right, to work-out in the weight room.

The students also need to feel that the strength program is a place for them to improve themselves and in effect is "theirs," not the coaches. When students feel the weight room really belongs to them its amazing how much pride develops and behavior improves. Usually at this point I would talk about how much work and money went into "their" weight room to help them appreciate further the value of the program. This is also a good time to talk about some athletes at your school who have accomplished great things with the help of strength training. *Anything* which helps develop pride also helps with safety.

The next step is actually discussing weight room rules. It is important that students understand the

rules are there for their own protection and to keep the weight room neat and clean. I have compiled the BFS "Code of Conduct" which I believe should be posted and discussed point by point.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- I — **Absolutely no horse play! If you think it might be horseplay, don't do it! It probably is.**
- II — **Never interfere with a person who is lifting!**
- III — **Make sure your area is clear of equipment before lifting.**
- IV — **Make eye contact with those near you before lifting.**
- V — **Make sure collars are snug.**
- VI — **Pick-up after yourself.**
- VII — **Spot carefully! Concentrate on the lifter.**
- VIII — **Keep it clean! No food, pop etc.**
- IX — **Use correct lifting technique.**
- X — **Help and encourage each other. Help make your friend great.**

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