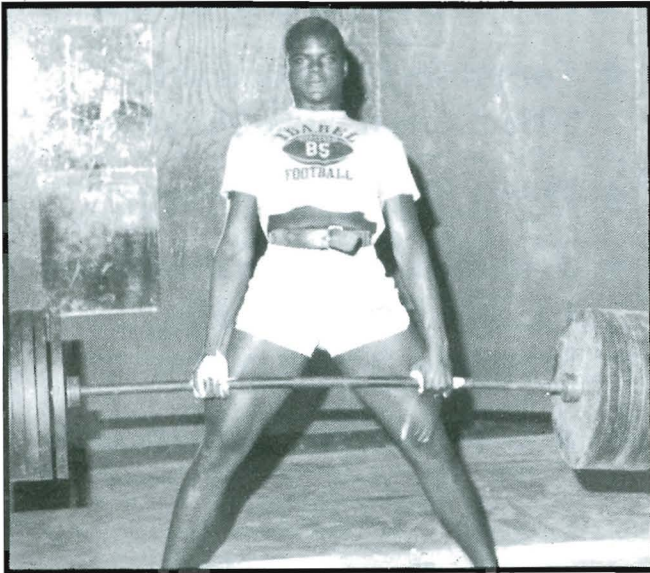


THE DEAD LIFT

By
Dr. Greg Shepard



Bobby Raynor Dead Lifted 600 pounds. It was a new national BFS Clinic record for a 9th Grader! Bobby is from Idabel, Oklahoma and is coached by Fred Willis.

I like the dead lift and will always include it in the BFS core lifts. I realize most college strength coaches do not include the dead lift in their programs. Admittedly, there are some negatives with the dead lift. First, it is a grueling exercise. It can cause muscle spasms in the lower back. It doesn't feel good on the hands and it just isn't much fun to do dead lifts. However, our primary reason for including the dead lift as a core lift is for motivation. There is nothing to match the dead lift when it comes to developing pride, enthusiasm, confidence and a belief that all things can be conquered. We therefore recommend the dead lift especially in the sport of football and especially at the high school level.

The college strength coach is many times put under a lot of pressure. I know one Big Ten head football coach who unwittingly told his strength coach "Go ahead and make my guys stronger but you hurt anybody and you're gone." This extreme situation is shared in some degree by many college strength coaches. If I were placed in this situation and a winning tradition prevailed at the university in football, I probably would not do the dead lift. However, because the benefits are so great and if the BFS guidelines are followed then the dead lift can be an extremely rewarding experience.

THE BFS DEAD LIFT GUIDELINES

1. Only train once a week. This lift isn't like doing curls. It would be suicide to do this 3x per week.
2. We highly recommend using the BFS spotting technique (see the pictures on page 60). A coach or



The Correct Concave Position

spotter will put one hand on the lower back and one arm in front of the lifter's shoulder with the fist in middle of the chest. Then push a little on the lower back and pull back on the shoulder so the weight falls back on the lifter's heels. To really understand this spotting technique I suggest attending a BFS clinic or viewing our BFS video cassette "The Core Program."

3. Always use a belt and always have lifting chalk available.
4. Always keep your reps to **FIVE** or less.
5. Always bounce the weight while doing reps. If a lifter pauses and starts "cold" between each rep, then your chances of straining the lower back multiply greatly.
6. Always lift in flat shoes or socks to keep the weight back on the heels. Never dead lift in cowboy boots or shoes with a big heel.
7. Demand correct position! The lower back must be in a concave position with the shins touching the bar. Do not allow a rounded back.
8. Most athletes do better, especially with the spotting technique, with a narrow stance. However, a wide stance with the hands inside sometimes works well as with Bobby Raynor in the above picture.

Modifications of the BFS set-rep system can be incorporated for the dead lift to make the training less grueling. For example, instead of 5 sets of 5 reps on week two, the workout can be shortened to 3 sets of 5 reps. On week three, instead of 5-4-3-2-1, simply do 5-3-1. Also, the 4th week, rep record week, can be eliminated altogether. Remember, the primary reason for dead lifts is for the motivational value.