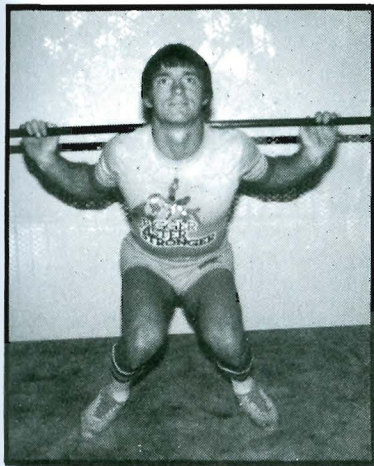


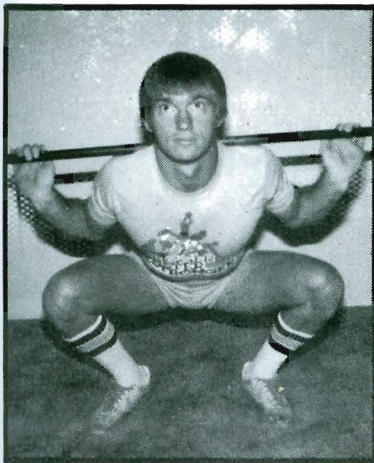
SQUAT CORRECTLY

Part Eleven in a
Series by Greg Shepard



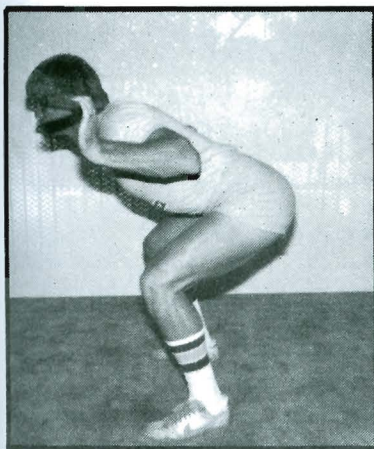
Problem I: Knees In

Solution: Force Knees Out!



Problem II: Knees Out

Solution: Get In Low Power Position. Check Stance. Usually Widen Out.



Problem III:
Leaning Forward

Solution: Drive Hips Forward Thrust Chest and Head Back.

In September's issue we emphasized that correct squatting techniques can actually strengthen the knee joint. We have maintained this for years. There is no dispute that squatting will make the leg muscles bigger and stronger. What is not commonly known is the fact that the ligaments can be made stronger and thicker. The tendons which connect the muscles to the bones surrounding the knee can be made thicker and stronger. In fact, the bone can also be made stronger and amazingly

slightly bigger stemming from increased capillarization. Squatting correctly can also develop the ability of knee cartilage to withstand injury.

However, problems can sometimes occur with incorrect squatting technique. Sometimes, this will produce a weaker and more injury prone knee joint as illustrated with Problems I and II. A coach should make sure that the athlete's knees are **NOT** out of perpendicular or vertical alignment. A most common problem with athletes is the knees coming in or together while squatting. This puts a lot of pressure on the medial collateral ligament. It is also a very weak squatting position and much power is lost when the knees come together. Mark Eaton our 7-4 Jazz Center has this problem. **COACHING POINT:** When this happens I yell "Knees." This is the athlete's cue to force his knees back out to a straight position. When the athlete responds, then power immediately returns and pressure on the inside ligaments is released. I would recommend all athletes be taught this important principle. Athletes should act as coaches, judges and spotters on the squat anyway and this coaching point should be just part of their training.

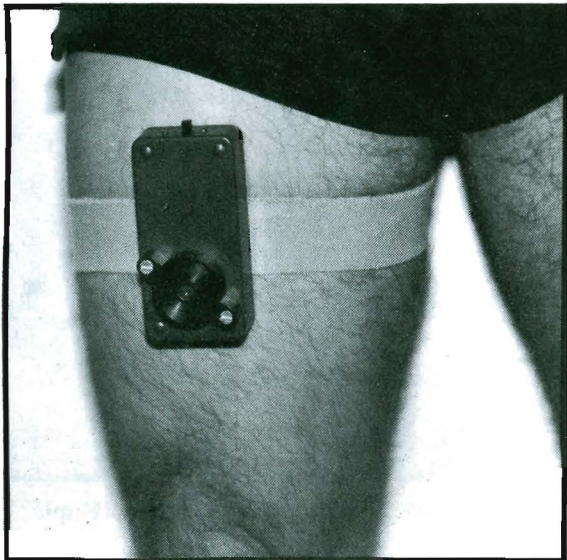
Squatting with the knees out (Problem II) causes unwanted pressure on the lateral or outside knee ligaments. This problem can largely be corrected by a proper stance. The width of the feet should be the same as an athletic stance (like a linebacker, for example). The feet should be flat so the heels are never up. Also, the toes should only be pointed slightly out not out at a 45° angle. **COACHING POINT:** When the knees are out, I think "Stance" and usually widening the stance is the proper correction.

The knees, at times, may be extended forward way over the knees. (Illustrated in Sept. 84 issue.) This is also incorrect and puts the athlete in a weak position. **COACHING POINT:** Go back to the BFS warm-up position. Squat down to the parallel position without the bar, holding onto the squat rack for balance. From this point, a coach can work with the athlete correcting the squat position. (Chest should be upright, lower back "locked" in a concave position, head level, feet flat in an athletic stance with the lower legs and knees in perpendicular and vertical alignment.) An athlete must first "feel" the correct position before he can squat correctly.

Leaning forward, as pictured in Problem III, is a constant problem with many athletes, including myself. **COACHING POINT:** Go back to the BFS warm-up position as described above. The coach or spotters should yell "hips." This is a cue to drive the hips forward under the bar and to thrust the chest and head back. The coach or back spotter may also press his knee forward into the lifter's hips to get him to drive his hips forward.

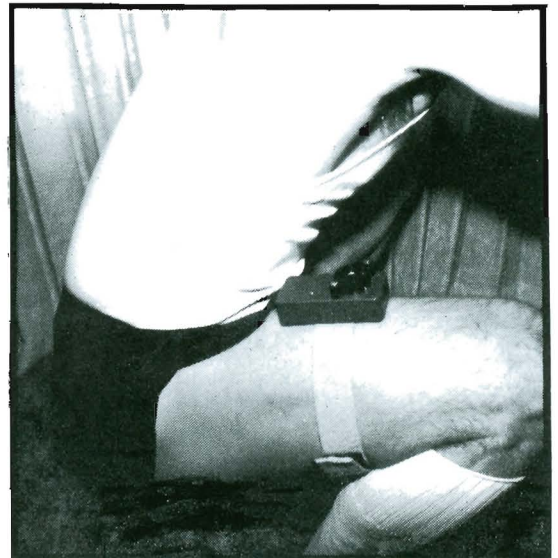
In our next January issue, other problems which may occur during squatting will be discussed. The entire BFS squatting technique is shown on our video cassette, "The Core Program" (see pages 8-9).

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