

**BIGGER  
FASTER  
STRONGER**

## **READINESS PROGRAM**

**YOUR  
TOTAL  
PROGRAM**

**By Dr. Greg Shepard**

### **Question No. 1: When Can We Start The BFS Flexibility Program?**

I taught my 3rd grade daughter our flexibility program. She had it mastered in 15 minutes and began teaching the neighborhood kids. There is absolutely no reason why the BFS flexibility program can't be taught to all athletes in junior high. If I were the head football coach at a high school, I would have all the little league teams do the flexibility program, even if it went down into the 2nd or 4th grade levels.

Wouldn't it be nice to have every athlete come into high school with great flexibility with a 10 minute daily flexibility habit already formed. This means injury prevention and this means speed! In our country, no one does flexibility training properly at early ages. Any coach that can influence the right people to install the BFS flexibility program at the junior high and grade school levels will most certainly have an edge, besides providing a great service. We have a brand new video (page 12-13) to show exactly how and why the BFS flexibility program is to be done.

### **Question No. 2: When Can We Start Plyometrics?**

We generally do not teach athletes at any level in this country just how to jump. All we do when we test an athlete on a vertical jump is say, "Jump as high as you can!" Coaches, there are definite techniques to be mastered to reach a maximum. Our new video on Plyometrics (pages 8-9) teaches you that technique. We can and should teach grade school and junior high athletes the techniques of the vertical and standing long jumps.

As for plyometric drills, I can see no reason why basic plyometrics drills cannot be incorporated in the total junior high conditioning program. Two 10 minute sessions per week on plyometrics can pay big dividends by the time these athletes come into the high school program.

### **Question No. 3: When Can We Start Teaching the BFS Sprint Technique System?**

I don't believe you can start too soon! The longer an athlete is allowed to run incorrectly, the harder it will be to unlearn bad habits and to learn correct technique.

As I worked with NBA hopefuls at try-out camp for the Utah Jazz and players for the Sacramento Kings, I asked them about their previous work with flexibility, plyometrics and sprint training. It was zilch. Zero! NBA players are usually quite poor in flexibility. LaSalle Thompson of the Kings was an exception. I asked them if they'd like to have more flexibility and be taught how to run. Of course, they

all agreed. I also asked them if they would have liked to have been taught these techniques when they were in the 7th grade. Of course, they all agreed.

We have an excellent video (page 12-13) on the BFS sprint technique system. We take good athletes and slow athletes and do a complete analysis of their form. It is a most excellent way to really internalize great sprinting technique. The bottom line is don't wait; you can't start too early!

### **Question No. 4: When Do You Start Lifting?**

The foundation of the BFS Readiness Program is its lifting aspect. It is unique. We know the proper time to begin technique lifting is the 7th grade. It is not the proper time to load up the bar for maximum lifts. We begin each core lift with the Olympic 45 pound bar. The core lifts for the Readiness Program are as follows: Box Squat, Towel Bench, Hang Clean, Straight Leg Dead Lift, Bench and Squat. When the athlete can perform 2 sets of 10 with great technique, he may increase 5 pounds the following week. If he does the lift easy but with poor technique, he is NOT allowed to increase. This method forces the athlete to lift correctly.

There are graduation requirements. When the athlete attains these levels, he can graduate and progress to the high school program which uses the BFS Set-Rep System. This information is outlined completely in our Readiness Program Record Book. (See next page.)

### **Question No. 5: How is the Readiness Program different than the high school program?**

There is really very little difference. The 7th grader can do the same flexibility program, the same agilities, the same beginning plyometrics and exactly the same sprint technique system. The only real difference is in the lifting program, although the same core lifts are done and with the same concept in the selection of auxiliary exercises.

### **Question No. 6: What Can be Expected?**

If the BFS Readiness Program is utilized by upper limit coaches then great things will be accomplished. I can promise that a high school with an enrollment of 1,000 can expect 25 athletes will come from the junior high each year with these abilities: a minimum 300 pound parallel squat with great form, a minimum 200 pound bench and a minimum 175 pound clean with great form. They will also possess great flexibility, plyometric abilities and correct running form. With these abilities come great side benefits such as self confidence, great work habits and a winning attitude. The one thing that does amaze me is the great number of schools who will again this year do nothing. We have the technology available. Let's use it! Get the edge!