

MARK EATON
NBA SHOT BLOCK CHAMPION

MARK EATON

The Popular Utah Jazz Center Continues to Rise!

Mark Eaton continues to be one of the most remarkable success stories in the history of basketball. He is the only player in the NBA who sat on the bench in high school and college. That's guaranteed! We at BFS train the Utah Jazz and are also the training consultants for the Sacramento Kings.

More and more basketball coaches and players are realizing the importance of training properly on a total program. When Mark Eaton was at U.C.L.A., they forbid him to lift weights. So when he came to the Utah Jazz five years ago, he weighed 285 pounds, stood 7' 4" and could only bench 125, clean 115 and couldn't squat with air! In his first year with us, he broke 275 personal weight training records and finally became a starter. Also, he was the lowest paid athlete in the NBA making only \$40,000 per year.

In his third year in the NBA, Mark Eaton was named the Defensive Player of the Year in the NBA. He broke the block shot record for a season and had the most defensive rebounds of anybody. His bench had gone to 300, his clean to 235, his box squat to 500 and his parallel squat to 300 pounds. Mark's body fat percentage dropped from 18.5% to 9% while his body weight remained the same. The Utah Jazz won the Midwest Division Championship and Mark's salary rose to \$500,000.

However, he suffered a slight knee ligament tear which required an operation. Despite intensive rehabilitation efforts, his knee never fully recuperated for last year's season. Manute Bol, the 7'7" giant, blocked more shots and Mark didn't like it. We set a goal in the off-season to regain and even surpass what had been accomplished in the past. All I had to do was mention Manute's name and I could get a couple of extra reps out of Mark.

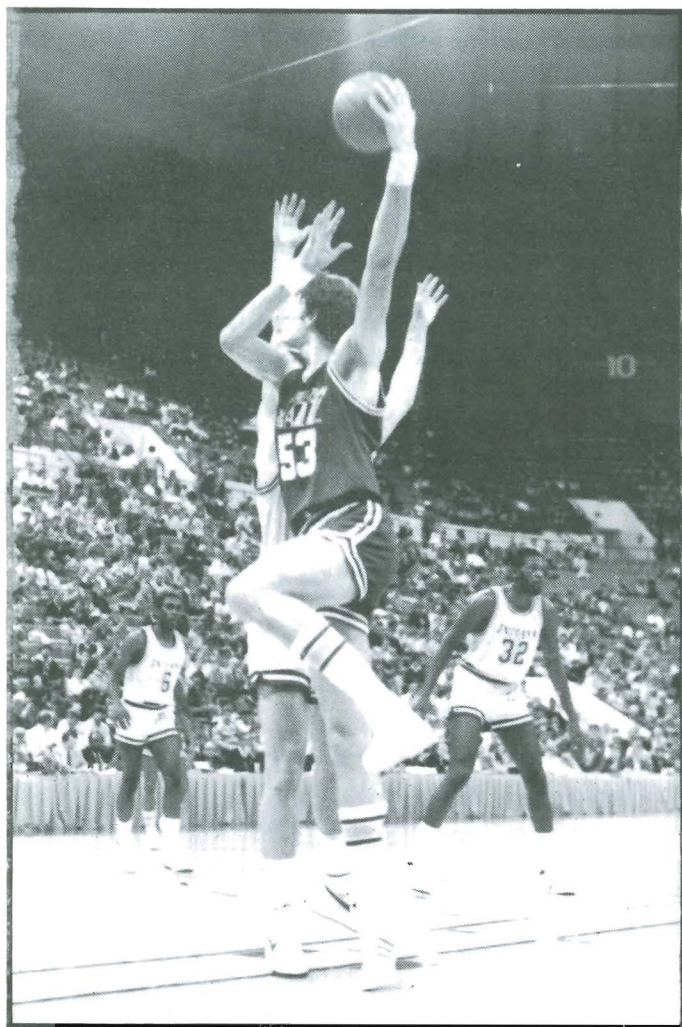
Mark's bodyweight went to 300 pounds, while his percentage of body fat remained the same. He practiced hard on his hook shot and going to the basket. As far as Manute, the duel for block shot champ never materialized. The Washington Bullets acquired Moses Malone from the 76er's and Manute's playing time was drastically reduced.

But no matter; at this writing in January of 1987, Mark Eaton leads the NBA in blocked shots by an incredible margin and is ahead of Kareem Abdul Jabbar in the All-star center voting. From a non-starter in high school and college to an NBA All-Star has got to be a phenomenal achievement.

Mark is very popular, as he donates a lot of time to help kids. He has publicly taken a strong stand against drugs of any kind and appears on our new video "Drugs: A Positive Approach." I also believe the weights and commitment to succeed have the same effect, whether it be at the pro or high school level.

For example, the Jazz had just beaten the Cleveland Cavaliers on the road. In that game, Mark suffered a strained hamstring. He had to be taken out of the game.

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**Eaton has more All-Star
votes than Kareem of the Lakers**

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great work ethic. We don't know what we would have done without it. In strength training, a person has success and failures. A young athlete learns how to overcome failure. Hard work will get you everywhere. Every day when we leave the weight room we "tap" a sign that says "CHAMPIONS WORK LIKE CHAMPIONS."

From start to finish of our weight room and football season, there have been many, many champions.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

I was there at that 40-7 loss to Skyline. It was the Bobcats 3rd straight loss. It was homecoming and I had arranged a special dinner for all ex-players who had played for me from 1973 to 1975. We had almost fifty people and it was very rewarding for me. I saw the children of my players and their wonderful wives. I learned of their college degrees and their successes in the business world. I was truly proud of each one of them. I inwardly hoped that their football and weight training experience had added and not detracted from their successes. Somehow, the wins and the championships that were won 13 to 15 years ago seemed unimportant. What was important? It was simple: Were they happy and successful? Were they productive? Did they still value my friendship? I left the banquet with a very warm feeling.

After the dismal homecoming loss, I waited about 15 minutes before going into the locker room to console Coaches Thompson and Sonderegger. What I witnessed was remarkable. I saw a lot of emotional tears. I did not see anyone yelling in anger or kids swearing in disgust. What I did see was Coaches hugging their players. I'd love to have my own sons play for such coaches.

I looked at the remaining schedule and thought, "They might not win any this year." Instead, they won all the rest. Once again I learned that high school football goes far beyond X's and O's. It goes far beyond doing a few benches. Will the players at Madison remember their coaches? Will they have learned valuable lessons for life that would have not otherwise been learned? I say "Absolutely." I warmly congratulate Coach Kelly Thompson and Coach Ferron Sonderegger for being Master Upper Limit Coaches. They should have quite a banquet twenty years from now!

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Everyone thought that Mark would be out a week or two. However, Mark believed that his hamstring was strained because his back was out of alignment. After consulting with the team's local chiropractor, Dr. Craig Buhler in Salt Lake City, Mark Eaton contacted a Chicago chiropractor. After the treatment, Mark's hamstring loosened up. It had only been 18 hours since the Cleveland game.

"At four o'clock" head Coach Frank Layden said, "Mark called Sparky (trainer Don Sparks) and asked to play against the Chicago Bulls and Michael Jordan that night. It was a very unprofessional thing to do. It was more like something a college kid would do. It was something like Pete Rose would do."

"It was certainly an extra effort on Mark's part. A lot of professionals would have probably thought that it was going to be a tough road game and we'd lose anyway. So, they'd figure, why do it? But, here's a guy who wanted to play. And he played a great game. It was an All-Star performance! I think it was something very special."

Eaton played 39 minutes and hit 6 of 8 shots and stole the ball from Michael Jordan with six seconds left to seal the 91-89 victory over the Bulls. Mark finished with 16 points, 13 rebounds and 9 blocked shots!

"I was shocked when he called me," Sparks said. "I had written him off," added Layden. "So did I," said Sparks. "Hey," continued Layden, "we don't needle guys about things like this. We respect their careers. If they can't play, they can't play. We use somebody else."

Layden just shook his head. "Mark has a toughness about him that most people don't see. I think it stems from the fact he didn't play in high school or college. He didn't have all the glory our other guys have had. For him, this is it."

We at BFS believe Mark Eaton's hours in the weight room also play a significant role in his desire. "If you pay the price, you want to play. You don't give up. You look for extra ways to get the job done. You don't look for excuses as to why you can't but look for solutions as to how you can. You are not content to wait for success but surge forward to make it happen."

We thank Mark Eaton for his inspiration and the lessons he has retaught everyone.

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