

PORTA POWER

By Len Onken, FB Coach PORTA High School



Eric Jones, QB for PORTA High School in Petersburg, Illinois led team to playoffs.

To the staff at Bigger Faster Stronger:

Here at PORTA High School in Petersburg, Illinois my staff and I are convinced that the BFS set rep program was an important key to the success we experienced this past football season.

Bluejay football had been struggling for the last five years when I arrived in 1985. From 1980 through the season of 1984 they had compiled a disheartening 9-36 Record. We struggled through my first year managing to win only 1 game. We knew that we had to make some big changes in order to turn the football fortunes at Petersburg around. That is where the Bigger Faster Stronger program entered the picture.

I received a sample issue of your journal in the mail and read an article titled "Success at Rio Linda." It fit our situation so completely I immediately ran off copies and distributed it at our next team meeting. We emphasized the importance of weight training and off-season preparation. We began to stress dedication and commitment to a single goal; the playoffs. By February, with your help, we had purchased 3 sets of BFS Olympic weights and had built our own squat rack and benches. The players had earned the money for this equipment through various fund raisers. PORTA now had a weight room that generated some enthusiasm.

By using your set rep program, our athletes began to see amazing improvement. They were encouraged and excited about the limitless possibilities for success. Word spread quickly throughout the school and soon we had athletes from every sport using your program. Our Basketball Coach and A.D. began a plyometric and agility program on Tuesdays and Thursdays to compliment the lifting schedule. Being from a small school (380) we have to share several of the best athletes. By having the basketball team involved as well as track and wrestling we

were on our way to a united drive for success.

In the spring, part of the track workout three days a week was lifting. As a result of our track coaches efforts several football players went out for track so they could also get in the running they needed. We could all see the benefits our athletes were reaping from the joint effort. We organized a lift-a-thon in the late spring to raise money for more equipment and also to give our athletes (from all sports) a chance to be recognized for their increased strength.

The athletes continued to work out, lifting three days a week through the summer. Basketball players were able to fit their lifting in between summer league games. Some of the football players in specialty positions worked on pass patterns, kicking, and other techniques. By the time the season arrived, we felt we were ready to find out how far we had come. We won our first two 1986 games, beating a team in the opener we hadn't beaten for 12 years. We lost our third game of the season to the 8th rated team in the state. We went on to win five of our next six games including a big win on Homecoming over a 3A school; (we're 2A). We finished 7-2 and qualified for the playoffs for the first time in 12 years. We lost in the first round but the players knew they had come a long way. They are already planning on going farther next year and have begun lifting in the off-season program to prepare.

The Basketball team was also successful winning over 25 games. We believe the seed is planted and hope to experience even more success in the future. Thanks for your help in presenting a sound program that can work for everyone.

UPDATE: PORTA is on its way to another year in the playoffs for 1987.