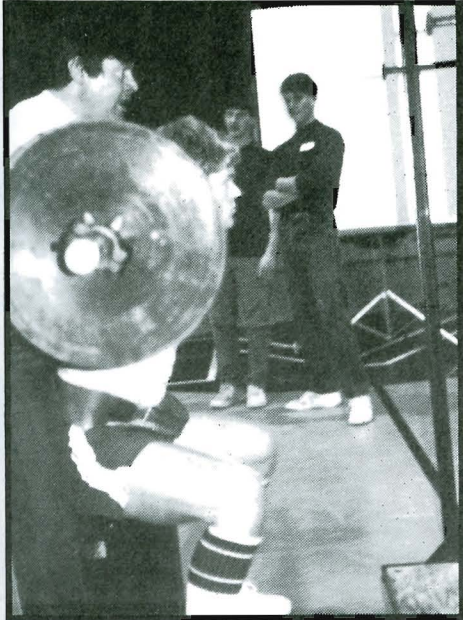


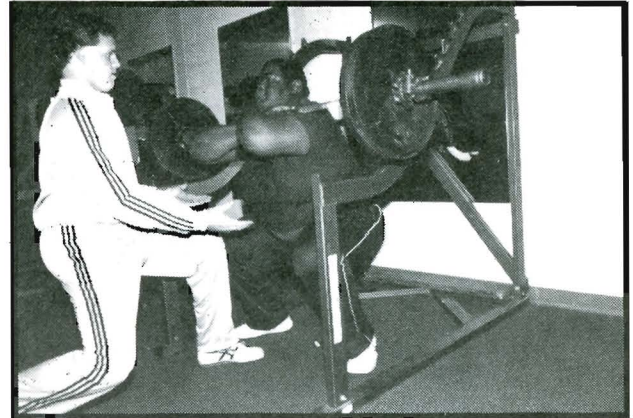
# SQUAT CORRECTLY

Part Fifteen  
In a Series by  
Dr. Greg Shepard

## THE BOX SQUAT



## THE FRONT SQUAT



## GREAT VARIATIONS

Two great variations to the parallel squat are the box squat and the front squat. I recommend very highly these variations be used. An athlete should only have two heavy squat workouts per week. It is a big mistake to squat heavy three times per week, especially when an athlete starts becoming stronger. (300 plus max) Squatting heavy means heavy poundage,

exhausting reps or high intensity. With all the other time and energy demands placed on the body, squatting heavy three times per week is too exhausting. An athlete just cannot recover sufficiently for optimal progress. We at BFS have taken this trial-and-error fact one step further by eliminating one of the two heavy squat workouts and adding either the box squat or the front squat.

Through trial and error with thousands of athletes over the course of 15 years, I am absolutely convinced that an athlete will have a higher parallel squat and get to high standards faster by using these recommended squat variations. Athletes also recuperate faster under this method which leaves more energy throughout a workout week for speed development, plyometrics, agility and development of athletic skills.

Box squats have the following advantages: An athlete gets used to a heavier weight, builds superior hip and hip tendon strength, helps eliminate plateaus, makes coaching great squatting position easier, creates explosive power better than parallel squats and recovery is almost immediate.

As the athlete sits on a box, his thighs should be a little above parallel as illustrated. The athlete should actually sit on the box **UNDER CONTROL**. Then settle back slightly keeping the lower back **LOCKED IN TIGHT**. Then the athlete drives forward, thrusting the hips up in an explosive type movement. The athlete should also have the feeling of rising up on the toes.

Some athletes box squat much too heavy. For example, an athlete who parallel squats 250 pounds is doing box squats in the 600 pound range. This is absolutely incorrect. The results will be minimal and chances for injury much greater. The height of the box should be lowered and the athlete should work more intensely on the parallel squat in this situation. The difference in poundage is far too great in the above example. **BOX SQUAT POUNDAGE GUIDELINES:** Get to 400 pounds as soon as possible with great technique; never box squat more than 150 pounds over your parallel squat max; and when you reach a 400 pound plus parallel squat max, keep the box squat poundage within 100 pounds of your parallel squat even though you can do more. When you reach this upper level and you're using the BFS Set-Rep System, you can only break box squat records when the parallel squat records are increased.

The front squat can be a great squat variation. It too helps eliminate parallel squat plateaus. It gives superior hamstring and medial thigh development. Front squats really help in parallel squatting technique as far as keeping the lower back in tight and keeping an upright position. They also help an athlete recover quicker because lighter poundages are used.

Mark Eaton, our Utah Jazz Center, used front squats throughout this past off-season for his variation. He really liked them. His hamstrings were strikingly more developed and he commented, "After my first day of practice, I really noticed that my quickness had improved." All Star teammate Karl Malone remarked, "I don't know what you did, but you're quicker." We feel it was front squats.

The problem sometimes with front squats is just trying to support the bar. You can cross your arms as shown in the above photo of NCAA wrestling champion and movie actor Tab Thacker or you can do what Mark Eaton did. He used the EZ Squat as shown on the next page. It is especially good for beginners. You can be successful immediately!