

**BIGGER
FASTER
STRONGER**

THE CORE LIFTS

**THE
TOTAL
PACKAGE**

By Dr. Greg Shepard



PARALLEL SQUATS

Basic Squat Guidelines: Athletes should have two Squat workouts per week during both off-season and in-season. Three workouts are too many and one is not enough.

One of the Squat workouts should be an intensive Parallel Squat routine. If you don't Parallel Squat, you don't have a chance on making your potential happen.

The second workout can be one of several choices. Whatever your choice, the second Squat workout should be different. Variation is the key in overcoming plateaus.

Our choice for the second Squat workout is Box Squats. They create great hip and hip-tendon strength, explosive strength, and confidence. Learning correct lifting form with the chest spread and lower back locked in tight is easy to learn with the Box Squat. Care should be taken to always keep proper form and never plop down on the box during this exercise.

Other choices for the second Squat workout might be a medium to light Parallel Squat workout, Front Squats, Safe-Squat Bar Squats, or Trap Bar Squats. We've had great success with all the above choices. The equipment for these variations is discussed on page 28. The best information anywhere on squatting is on our BFS Core Lift video (see page 8). We spend 20 minutes on just the Squat.

Basic Technique Guidelines: Assume an athletic stance with the toes pointed out slightly, spread chest, lock in lower back, get an even grip with the thumbs behind the bar, take a wide grip, place the bar on a shoulder groove—not on the neck, focus on a point straight ahead, don't look down or up, take a huge breath, descend under control, don't drop down fast, always use three spotters who know and care about you, keep knees in a straight line with toes, knees should not bend inward out of alignment, keep the upper body upright (we say sit tall), at the sticking point bring the hips forward, and remember



there is no substitute for intensity.

BENCH PRESS

Basic Bench Guidelines: Athletes should have two Bench workouts per week all-year round. Three is too many. One of the workouts should be very intensive, while the other should be different. Variations in the Bench will help keep new maxes coming month after month. Our choice for the second workout is the Towel Bench, which is a round cushion made up of three towels rolled up to about a five-inch diameter. The Towel Bench also helps in confidence and helps prevent pain and or injury to the shoulder-joint area.

Other choices for the second workout could be a combination of wide- and close-grip Benches, or a light-to-medium regular Bench workout, or a high concentration of heavy dips and tricep push downs.

Bench Press Technique should include: A wide base for the feet, bring feet underneath the knees with feet flat, bring shoulders toward hips creating a big chest, wrap thumbs around the bar, focus on a point on the ceiling, bring bar down under control, drive bar up several degrees back towards the rack, and keep arms driving up evenly. We like a closer grip for football players a wider grip for basketball.

DEAD LIFTS

Dead Lifts need only be done once a week by football players. We always use a spotter. A spotter can make up for poor technique and prevent injuries by pressing on the lower back and bringing the line of gravity back to the lifters heels. Since the main reason we do this lift is motivation, coaches have the option of doing this lift one, two, or four times per month. Non-football players would make the Dead Lift an elective or an auxiliary lift. Non-football players use light Straight-Leg Dead Lifts for their Core Lift.



POWER CLEANS

Power Cleans are done once a week, all-year round. Cleans are classified as a quick lift and designed to create explosive power. An Upper-Limit program should include at least one quick lift. A narrow stance should be taken with the shins against the bar. The athlete squats down and spreads the chest with the lower back locked in tight. The hands should be placed on the bar right next to the legs. Always start the upward movement under control, and never jerk the bar off the floor. The athlete should then keep the hips back as the bar gets just above the knees, as illustrated in the photo of Stefan.

Now, JUMP! The most result-producing coaching point that I've found while doing clinics is to have everyone yell "Jump." I can talk about double dipping, or using the thighs, or ramming the hips forward, but nothing works like yelling "Jump." When an athlete jumps at the right time, the net effect is good technique at a crucial part of this most-important lift. After the jump phase, rack the bar by popping the feet out to the side (don't split) and squat. The bar should rest on the deltoids and fingers with the elbows thrust forward and up.

STRAIGHT-LEG DEAD LIFTS

This is a top priority auxiliary exercise for football players and a core lift for all other athletes. High school athletes should use between 135 and 200 pounds. It should always feel light. Do two or three sets of 10 reps, always in a slow and controlled manner. You may stand on an elevated bench or platform for an increased stretch. Our objective is to strengthen and stretch the hamstrings and glutes at the same time. Straight-Leg Dead Lifts done this way will greatly aid in speed development.



POWER SNATCH

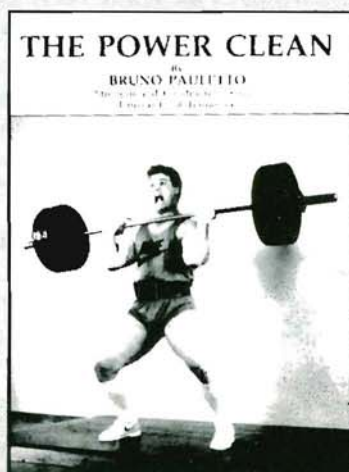
Optional Quick Lifts: Power Snatches could be done in place of, or in addition to, Power Cleans. Learning this movement is not nearly as hard as it looks. Start with just the bar. Bring the bar up just past the knees, slowly and under control, just like the Clean. Now, Jump! Then, rack the bar as illustrated above by Stefan. Another added benefit is the expertise and confidence to lift in an Olympic meet. You don't have to Squat super low in a contest. You can do a Power Snatch.

We like Behind-the-Neck Jerk Presses for creating explosive power in the shoulders and arms. You can Split Jerk the weight or Squat Jerk it. When you get the hang of it, you can do an impressive amount of weight. To start, take the weight off like doing a Squat with the weight on the shoulders. Now, dip down several inches, explode upward, and then quickly drop under the bar.



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