

THE TOTAL CONCEPT

By Dixie Jones, Football Coach, Trigg County High School, Cadiz, Kentucky

Dear Dr. Shepard,

I study your magazine every month and this month I saw your article about your son's 7th grade team. I noticed in bold letters the Question "What are Your Seventh Graders Doing?" and felt compelled to write and give support for the BFS Readiness Program.

It Works! We began our 7th and 8th grade "MIDCATS" on the Readiness Program 3 years ago and it is unbelievable. Those kids are sophomores now and a 250 bench, 375 squat, and 475 deadlift is common, not rare. (All our records come from competition, so they are strict and true) We have some that lift even more.

Our Readiness Program is set up following the guidelines and principles you advised (sets, reps, progressive system, start with bar, and great emphasis on technique). Ours varies somewhat in the lifts we do to meet our needs. The following is an explanation of our Program, maybe it can be of help to you –

Bench	2x10	*Note: Not only do we get the obvious benefits from a strength program, it also gives me, as head football coach an early contact with our future players and a great chance to stress grades, develop good work habits, and build a proper attitude toward life in general.
Squat	2x10	
Dips	2x10	
Leg Press	2x10	
Hang Clean		
and Press	2x10	
Stiff Leg Dead	2x10	
Incline	2x10	
Hyper Extension	2x10	

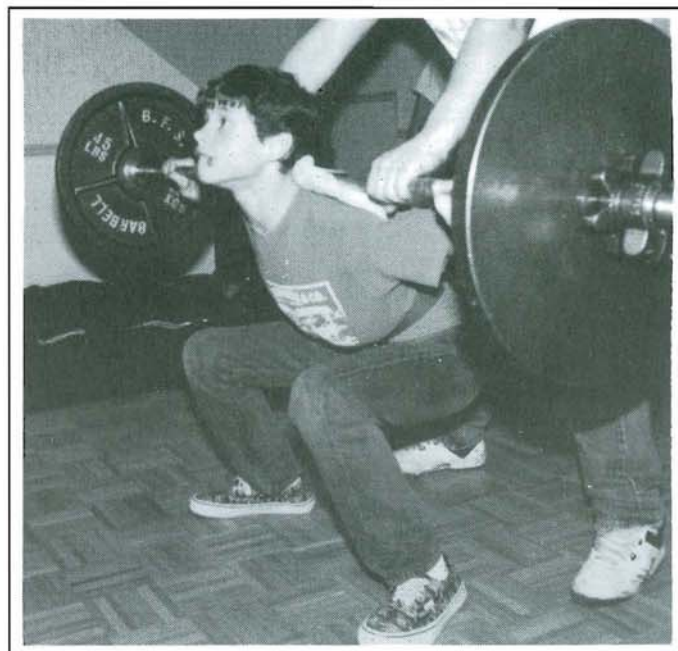
Our kids are allowed to increase weight exactly like you advised and everyone begins with the bar. The kids love it! Our High School is a tremendous DEADLIFT TEAM, (one of our players has won the Best DEADLIFT at the State Meet for 5 straight years). So our kids beg to do the DEADLIFT in Middle School, but we do Not allow them to until they can stiff leg 185 correctly for 2 sets of 10 reps.

We really emphasize technique. After we have been working for about a month, we do a video tape of their workout and then sit down and talk technique and just have a good time watching ourselves on T.V. This is a great way to improve technique.

We award T-shirts based on attendance, we have set up a special MIDCAT IRONCAT club that is great. You must meet All requirements to get in and here they are –

Bench	115 x 10	Dips	10 correct
Squat	155 x 10	Leg Press	225 x 10
Pushups	30 Correct		

The Program runs from Dec. 1 to Spring Break and around Feb. the names really begin to pop up on the Goal Board. Each time a goal is achieved, that person gets his name announce on the school intercom during Homeroom. They love it! We also keep our community informed about our players, their progress, and accomplishments in all



Matt Shepard graduated from the Readiness Program on February 16, 1988. Bodyweight, 109 in 7th Grade. Parallel Squatted 145 pounds for 2 sets of 10 reps! WHAT ARE YOUR SEVENTH GRADERS DOING?

areas with a monthly publication called "Paw Prints".

Just before Spring Break, we test one Rep Max and time our kids. Our records are –

Bench Press	225 (three tied)
Squat	295
Deadlift	395
40 Yd. Dash	4.74
Vertical Jump	1st year to test

Not bad for a school with only 400 kids in the High School. We have about 25 who are faithful in attendance in our Midcat Readiness Program.

We also include running technique, agility, stretching, and jumping drills. We really believe in the dot drill and box jumps. We begin every workout with a warmup and a 10 minute stretching program, and we always finish with team pushups, situps and prayer. The dot drill and box jumps are done as a team to stress their importance. I stand in the middle and the stations form a triangle around me. We do 2 sets each time we workout.

The only thing we neglect somewhat is running, but we do try to work on technique during our warmup by running in place, but we do not have access to a gym to do what we need to do.

Our Readiness Program, we feel, will give us an advantage over our opponents on the field. It is also a great time to educate, motivate, and shape attitudes and habits. And the best thing about it is It Really Does Work!