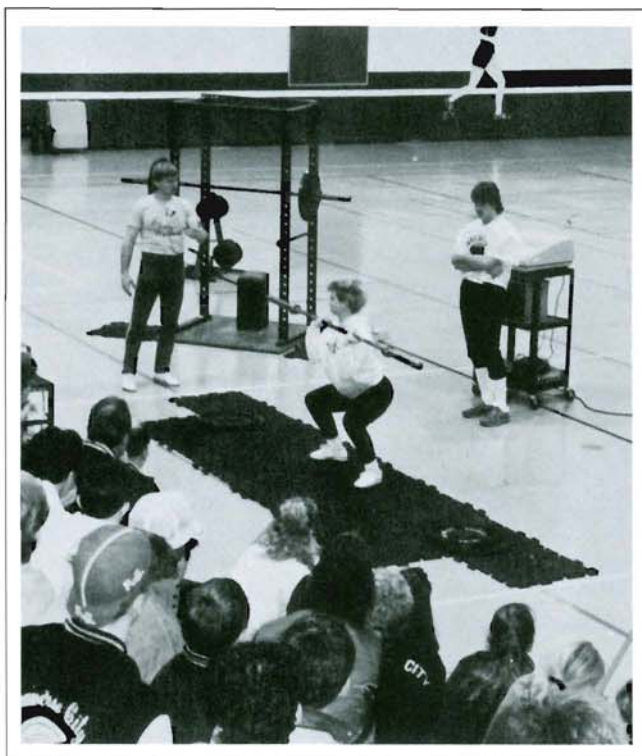


CATCHING THE VISION



Jared Chappel an 8th grader pulls 415 pounds for BFS Clinician Bob Rowbotham.



Coach Rowbotham included the BFS Readiness Program at the clinic. Notice the fine cleaning position of this woman athlete.

Editor's Note: Polly Meredith teaches weight training at both the Junior High and High School levels in Traverse City, Michigan. She is the strength and conditioning coach for the football team as well as the Head Girls Track Coach at the high school. Coach Meredith is a past All Big 10 Athlete for 3 years and the Michigan State Discus Record Holder. In high school, she was a two time All-Star in both the shot and discus. Her personal bests include a 227 Bench, a 300 Squat and a 390 Dead Lift.

The Bigger Faster Stronger program was instituted after a BFS clinic two years ago. It was set up by Polly Meredith's late husband Greg who died in an automobile accident. A second BFS clinic was held last December in honor of him. Polly Meredith has carried on with Greg's commitment to help young athletes. Her article explains the tremendous gains made through this commitment to excellence.

By Polly Meredith

On Monday, after our second clinic my students who participated all came in with their BFS shirts on. Those who took part in the demonstrations and contests got up and talked to the other students in class about how motivated they were by the clinic and about how much weight they had lifted. Our girls sit-up record went from 250 to 1110 just because the young lady decided to push herself.

After our first clinic, we decided to implement the BFS program. We saw a need for an advanced physical education program. high standards were established to be admitted into the class which was labeled an honor class. Students needed to be able to work independently, be trustworthy and mature. We wanted the kind of person who would accept a challenge. Each student also needed permission from a previous physical education teacher.

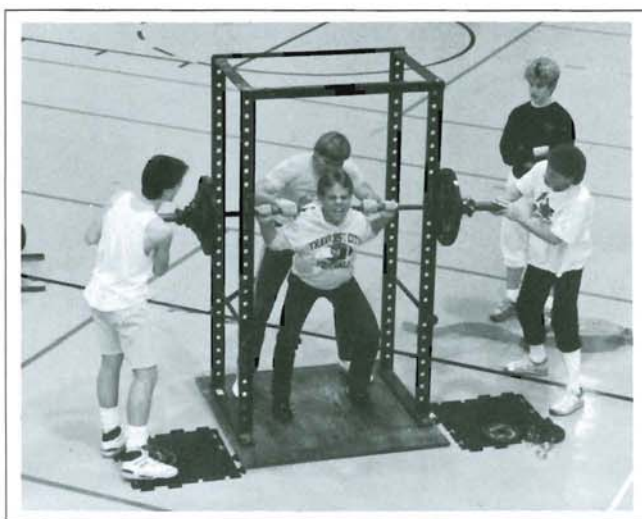
Greg, my husband, had collected information on injuries. We felt that if these kids were taught proper technique and philosophy behind weight training and conditioning that this would help reduce the risk of injury.

The program took 1 1/2 years to develop and implement into our curriculum. Three people worked together very closely to develop the program. Our junior high athletic director, myself and David Reeves the K-12 department head for health and physical education. Coach Reeves has had 24 years of college football. We ran a survey of interest, developed curriculum and then presented this information to the board of education.

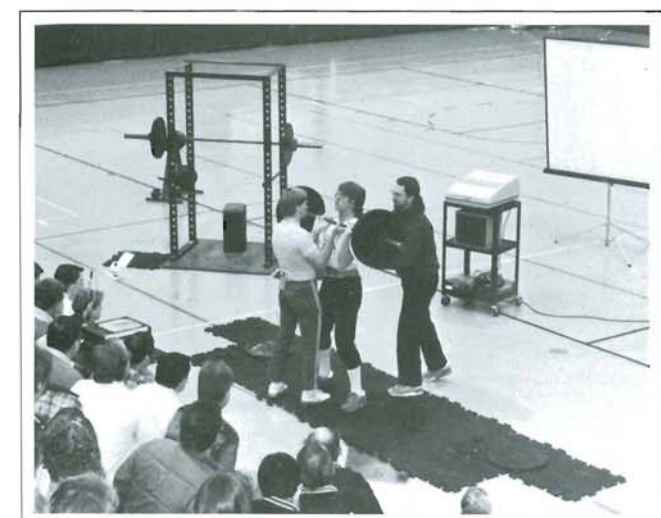
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Coach Rowbotham teaching proper lifting technique at the clinic.



Great Intensity was experienced and thus learned at Coach Rowbotham's clinic at Traverse City.



Coach Rowbotham giving "Hands On" instruction at Traverse City clinic.

As a result, we run 3 sections of weights and conditioning everyday. Each class is 45 minutes long. Two groups (A and B) are formed in each class. Group A lifts on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Group B lifts on Tuesday and Thursday. The following week the groups switch their days. Plyometrics, sprints and games are done on the off days. The BFS Dot Drill is done everyday as part of our warmup. If this isn't done, the consequences are placed on the entire class. This is known as peer pressure.

Besides the core and auxiliary lifts, we include and test on the following: Dips, Push-ups, Sit-ups, Chin-ups, Pull-ups, Cross Country Course, One Mile, 20 Yard Dash, Vertical Jump and Standing Long Jump.

OUR EXPECTATIONS

1. To Develop Intensity and Discipline.
2. To Learn the Different Muscle Groups.
3. To Learn How to Set Up a Sport Specific Strength and Conditioning Program.
4. To Enhance Self Concept.
5. To Improve Strength, Speed and Flexibility.
6. To Reduce Injuries.
7. To Learn Proper Lifting and Spotting Techniques.
8. Establish Record Keeping Habits.
9. Establish and Reach Individual Goals.
10. Know Why the Body Needs Rest and about Recuperation.
11. To Discuss Myths of Weight Training, Steroid Use, Nutrition and Muscle Growth.
12. To Be Able to Work with Partners and Learn How Much They Can Help One Another and be Responsible For Each Others Safety.

JUNIOR AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

I am now working with the High School football team during a 50 minute class. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays the team lifts while on Tuesdays and Thursdays the team does plyometrics, works on technique, gets timed on runs and plays competitive games. We are also including a program for our 8th and 9th graders and we are finding that their mental attitude is being developed. When these athletes get to the high school their intensity is better than those who have not participated in weights and conditioning at the junior high. The total program will be continued throughout the summer and the kids will be able to receive credit for this which will count towards graduation. The summer 3x per week program consists of 60 total hours. We use the BFS Program at both levels. The kids are really getting to know and understand how the program works.

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About 300 Caught the Vision last December at Traverse City.

PROGRESS REPORT

1. Those athletes who are developing intensity are seeing tremendous gains.
2. They are developing confidence and a positive self-image.
3. They are becoming much more aggressive because of the gains in strength, speed and confidence.
4. They are not "Afraid" to train in-season. They want to continue year-round.
5. Their BFS Dot Drill times have improved considerably.
6. Their running form and lifting technique is improving and allowing students to make gains.
7. Our kids are starting to "Teach" each other and making each other push themselves to achieve higher goals.
8. We feel the knowledge that they have gained will help them throughout their lives.
9. They are setting new records constantly.
10. They want to see their names on our record board in the main entry of the gym. Individual records start with our 8th graders with both boys and girls.

I have guest speakers come in and talk to the kids about the different ways of training: Steroid free bodybuilding, Olympic lifting, power lifting and training to be the best athlete you can be. We also take

field trips to area gyms to see what is offered.

OUR GIRLS PROGRAM

We are gradually adding more women to the program. They want to learn and are becoming very aggressive in our weight room. Our best Dot Drill time in the junior high is 44.9 seconds by Joanne. One of our 9th grade track athletes, Jayna, can do 5 x 5 with 155 pounds on the Squats. We have two 10th grade girls that can Dead Lift 315 pounds, Bench 135 plus and Clean with 120 pounds or more.

Editor's Note: Coach Meredith is a master record keeper. She sent me pre and post test results of all her 8th and 9th grade students, her football players and a list of school records. It was most impressive. Space does not permit to list everyone's performance but here is the result of one 13 year old 8th grader over one semester. Knute Z. weighs 115 and did well but is not a record holder: Bench 80 to 125, Squat 100 to 155, Incline 70 to 100, Dead Lift 120 to 190, Dips 13 to 20, Chin-ups 10 to 16, Standing Long Jump 7-6 to 8-3, Sit-ups 300 to 378, One Mile Run 6:14 to 6:05, BFS Dot Drill 87 to 50.8 sec.

This is typical of the improvement made on Coach Meredith's program. She is doing Upper Limit Coaching and has indeed "Caught the Vision."