

PLYOS BY STEFAN

Part One In a New Interview Series with Stefan Fernholm

BFS: What are Plyometrics?

Stefan: Exercises that involve strong eccentric muscular contractions.

BFS: Please elaborate

Stefan: An Eccentric Contraction is a stretching out of the musculature. This initiates a stretch reflex that allow muscles to contract at a very high rate of intensity. The speed of the stretch is more important than the force of the stretch.

BFS: C'mon Stefan! Maybe I'm stupid but I need some concrete examples of that textbook jargon.

Stefan: If I were to jump off a 6 foot box, the impact of the landing is exactly equivalent to the force exerted in a 6 foot vertical jump. (Newton's third law of motion)

BFS: But Stefan even you don't have a six foot vertical jump.

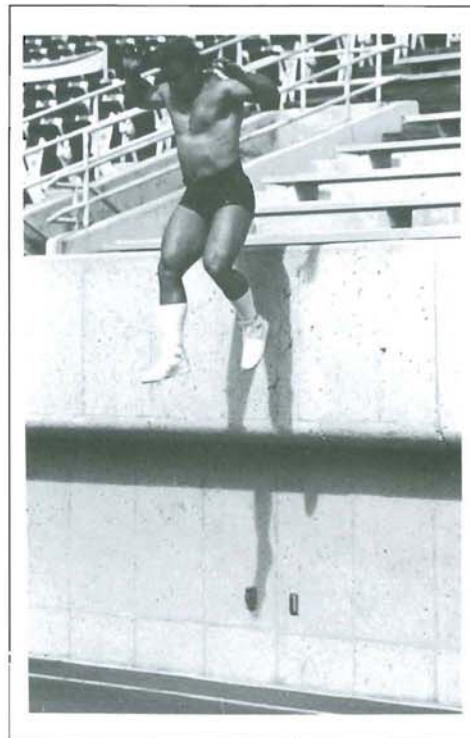
Stefan: Exactly! Try this experiment yourself. Measure your vertical jump. Then climb up on a box or bleacher twice your vertical jump height. Now jump off and simply land. At the landing, which should be easy, you have absorbed through the muscles a force well above your vertical jump force.

BFS: OK, but will that help me as an athlete?

Stefan: It will and especially if you combine this stretching of the musculature with a shortening or contraction.

BFS: There you go again. You lost me.

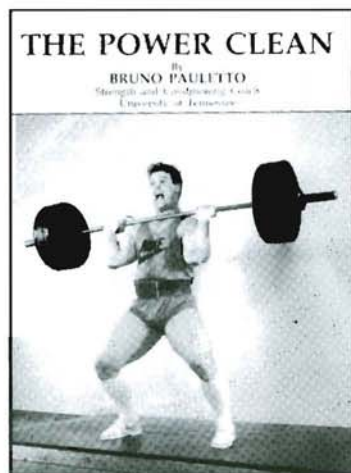
Stefan: Well Greg, the exercise would look like this. The athlete jumps off a box. At the landing he or she tries to jump up as fast as possible to land on yet another box. This can be done in a series of several boxes or with any two boxes. The boxes should vary in height. Usually ending with a higher box.



Stefan has emphasized his Power Plyometric Program more this year. The result: This phenomenal athlete has gotten even better. His Power Clean is now 470 pounds! At our Jackson, Mississippi BFS clinic Stefan jumped from a stand up on a 58 inch box! At Mayfield, Kentucky, Stefan put his head 6 inches from the rim at his Graves Co. High School clinic! This was also done from a complete stand! In his first meet April 30th, Stefan threw the Discus 224 feet. Tops in the world so far this year. We wish Stefan the best at Seoul.

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TRAP BAR *continued from page 23*

movement safely without a spotter. Many coaches have said that even using our spotting techniques the Dead Lift can be grueling especially on 5 x 5 day. Here's how you could use the Trap Bar. Do it on week two and four of our Wednesday's workout in place of the Dead Lift. Keep the BFS spotted Dead Lift on week one and three. This variation should help bring on new Dead Lift highs.

In addition, the Trap Bar can be used as a Parallel Squat variation lift. So now an athlete can utilize a Box Squat, Front Squat or Trap Bar to help stimulate faster development. Coach Rick Anderson of Bigger Faster Stronger really likes the Trap Bar. He states, "It's half way between a Dead Lift and a Squat. It gets my legs and hips in a different way. I really don't like doing Dead Lifts personally but I do enjoy the training feeling of the Trap Bar."

Al Gerard maintains, "When you work on my Trap Bar, you should think Squat or Leg Press not Dead Lift. Although, you will see some big increases on your max Dead Lift, think Squat while using the Trap Bar. One of my training partners Robert Washington expects to break the world record in the Dead Lift towards the end of May at the nationals in Alabama. He's made some amazing gains training with the Trap Bar." Some of our readers may remember that we featured Robert Washington in our May 1986 issue as History's Strongest Linebacker. Robert did 750 then and now is closing in on 865 in the 220 to 242 pound class.

The Trap Bar also lends itself to doing shrugs in a superior way because there is no bar contact with the thighs. Dave Williams the strength coach at Liberty University says, "The Trap Bar is a tremendous training tool, besides the Dead Lifts and Shrugs our football players also do high pulls from the hang position and upright rows."

I did 5 sets of eight reps going up to 375 pounds. It took much less time than a squat workout: only 8 minutes. I was really sore the next day. My Glutes, Hamstrings and Traps were deeply affected. I could hardly walk. It was just like what happens after a heavy squat workout when you haven't squatted for awhile.

My lower back felt great. I was impressed!

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PLYOS BY STEFAN *Continued from page 15*

BFS: I'm beginning to understand but what benefits can I expect?

Stefan: Your ability to overcome resistance will increase. This means you will be more explosive with a greater power output. You can expect an increase in all power movements such as vertical jump, sprints, power clean, lateral movement, standing long jump etc. This is also predicated on practicing these power movements.

BFS: Do you have any guidelines for the height of boxes for a high school program?

Stefan: A perfect set up would be a course consisting of five 20 inch boxes placed about three feet apart in a row. A sixth box would also be placed in this row but it would be 30 to 40 inches tall. The object is to jump as fast as possible from box to box. The last box requires an explosive powerful contraction. You could also turn around and come back.

BFS: How about Depth Jumping?

Stefan: For most athletes this is excellent. Start with Depth Jumping of 12 inches over the athletes Vertical Jump and progress to twice the height of the athletes Vertical Jump. The first phase is just to land. The second phase is the jump quickly and explosively straight up after landing. The final phase is to jump up to another box immediately after landing.

BFS: Could you develop a manual and video showing us how to do this exactly?

Stefan: Sure, but it would have to be after the Olympics. I could even build a compact series of Plyo Boxes for coaches. We could call it Plyometric Package.

BFS: That's a pretty good idea even for a Swede. See you in September and good luck in the Discus at Seoul.

BASKETBALL INFO.

John Stockton of the Utah Jazz broke the All-Time NBA Season Assist Record. He was also 3rd in the NBA in Steals. John was featured in Sports Illustrated in April.

John Stockton benches 2x per week in season. Not heavy, just consistently. We feel all athletes should work with weights in season.