

OLYMPIC LIFTING FOR ATHLETES?

Part Two In A Series

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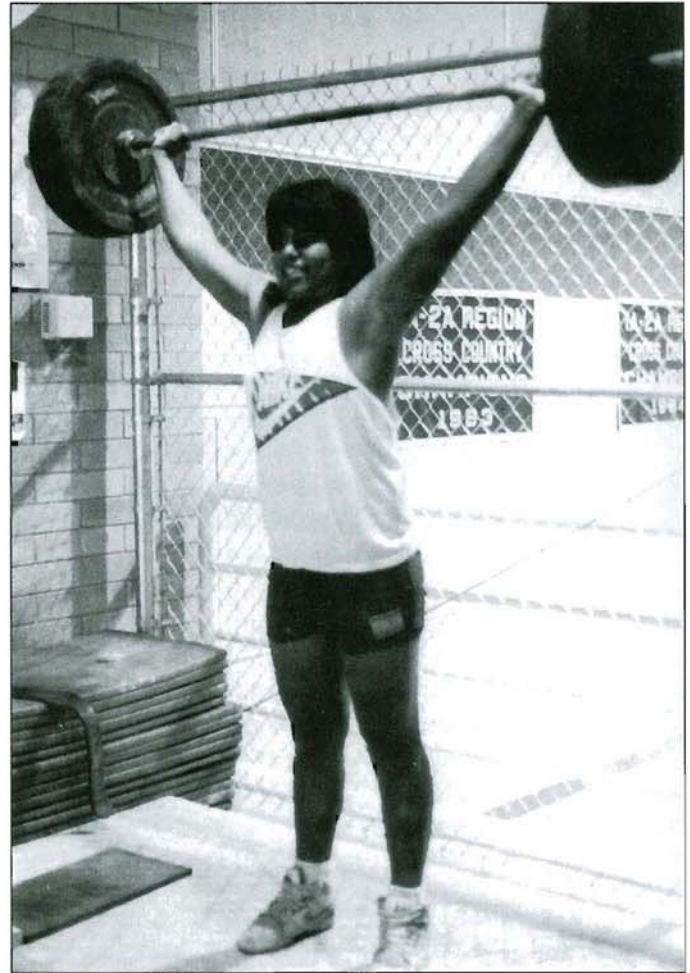
Editor's Note: Ollie Whaley coaches football and weightlifting at Monument Valley High School in Utah. He is an excellent Olympic lifter and a Master Upper Limit teacher and coach. We are fortunate to present this series of articles by Coach Whaley.

The BFS philosophy readily accommodates the introduction of Olympic weightlifting movements into the athlete's training program. The implementation of a few key exercises into the program as auxiliary lifts will allow your athletes to become fairly proficient Olympic weightlifters while they are also becoming more explosive sports performers. While there are myriads of weightlifting related exercises to choose from, we feel it is vital to limit ourselves to the basics. We also feel that the short four week cycle outlined in the BFS Set-Rep System is ideal for high school athletes. The more complex a program becomes, the harder it is to effectively teach and manage with the large groups and limited facilities common to most high school situations. An example of effective implementation is given in the box below:

A brief description of each exercise and a rational for its use will be given. The purpose of this article is not to provide a detailed explanation of technique. In teaching these explosive Olympic weightlifting movements technique is of the utmost importance for both safety and optimal benefit. Be sure you are proficient in teaching proper technique before implementing these lifts.

Monday

The Front Squat can be alternated with the Box Squat on an every other week or every other month basis. These are best done with the bar in a solid front rack position with the elbows high. Sit straight down with the lower back locked in as in the Back Squat. Go as low as possible and start light until the athlete is comfortable with this position. Strength in the Front Squat position is vital to the weightlifter and provides other athletes with greater lower quad development and variety in the workout. Another positive spin-off is that



High School Athlete Completing Power Snatch.

front squatting can improve an athletes Back Squat technique. Especially with those athletes who have tendency to lean forward too far.

Monday is also a good day to add the Power Snatch as a quick lift. This movement is unsurpassed for developing speed-strength. The Power Snatch is very safe when proper technique is adhered to and it emphasizes speed of movement making it less taxing than the Power Clean as less weight is used. The pull is similar to the Clean pull except that a wider grip is used and the bar is pulled directly overhead. These can be done from the floor or from the hang below the knees to get the so called double knee bend effect or from the hang above the knees. We like to follow a set of Power

MONDAY

Box Squat / Front Squat
Towel Bench Press
Power Snatch + Overhead Squat

WEDNESDAY

Clean
Dead Lift / Trap Bar
Push Press / Jerk

FRIDAY

Squat
Bench Press
Hang Clean / Hang Snatch

HOW TO INCORPORATE WEIGHTLIFTING INTO THE BFS PROGRAM

Snatches with a set or Overhead Squats. With the bar overhead at the completion of the Snatch, squat down keeping the bar fixed overhead. This is super for developing balance, flexibility, and teaching athletes to keep a tight torso. A rigid torso is essential when transferring force from the legs through the upper extremities as is required in blocking, tackling, rebounding, and other sports. We do these movements with the same set-rep scheme as the other core lifts.

Wednesday

This is an excellent day to add the Push Press. Start from the same strong front rack position. Dip the knees and thrust the bar overhead without splitting the legs. Although this movement will increase tricep and shoulder strength and explosiveness as well as torso stability, it is really an explosive hip thrust exercise. The Push Press can be alternated with the Jerk (the same movement except that the feet are split, pushing the body underneath the bar) every other week. The Jerk basically develops the same attributes plus it requires quick and accurate footwork and allows more weight to be handled. Trap Bar Deadlifts may be alternated with regular Deadlifts if desired. Again the standard BFS Set-Rep scheme for Core Lifts should be followed.

Friday

This is a great day to add Hang Cleans and/or Hang Snatches. They are super for building explosiveness and teaching full body extension. When done from above the knee, they are not as taxing on the lower back as pulling from the floor. This is an important consideration when training athletes who have to practice other sports. Again, follow the BFS Set-Rep schedule.

We have found that including these movements as Auxiliary Lifts allows for continued progress, simplicity and easy movement, improved explosiveness, and also develops skills which allow our athletes to compete in Olympic weightlifting which we encourage wholeheartedly. While there are numerous other weightlifting related exercises which could be substituted for variety or to meet individual needs, we recommend beginning with these. It is important to note that the ideal situation is to perform the quick or explosive lifts before the slower strength lifts when possible. We have found that when the realities of time, space, and numbers of athletes dictate compromise from the ideal, we have still achieved great results incorporating these lifts at the end of a session. Keep it basic and motivate your athletes to train hard.



The Overhead Squat



The Jerk



The Hang Snatch



The Front Squat