

# THE SPLIT SNATCH

## How To Perform The Split Snatch

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This series of stick figures shows the technique of the split snatch. When performing an exercise as complex as the snatch, first concentrate on achieving the correct body positions in each of the major phases of the lift. Only after you learn correct technique should you try to increase the speed of the movement.

### THE START (figure 1)

The best starting position for most athletes is with the feet positioned hip-width apart and the toes pointed slightly out. From a standing position over the bar, you should be able to see *at least* the tips of your toes in front of the bar...

How do you determine the width of your grip? A general rule is to take a grip wide enough so that your arms form a 45-degree angle with the bar. Keep your arms straight but not locked. Next, curl your wrists towards you until the top of your hands are perpendicular to the floor. This will rotate your elbows out to your sides so the bar will be more likely to travel straight up (rather than back) at the top of the pull.

Many coaches believe you should start with your shoulders in front of the bar. But athletes with a relatively short back often perform better with their shoulders directly over the bar. Regardless of where your shoulders are, keep the bar close to your shins.

Stick your chest out and place your head in line with your back. Some athletes prefer to look straight ahead, but I've found that this position often causes them to swing the bar too much. Finally, move your arms so your elbows are in line with the middle of the knees. This technique should move your hips into the correct position, which for most athletes is slightly higher than knee level.

### INITIAL PULL (figure 2)

Keeping the bar close to the body, lift the weight to knee level the bar by pushing with your legs *without* straightening your back (figure 2). The bar should reach a position where it is in line with the middle of your kneecaps.

### POWER POSITION ( figure 3)

Continue pushing with the legs until your knees are almost completely straight. You will have to straighten your back slightly to do this, and you will have to pull the bar towards your body rather than straight up. At this time the bar will have reached the *power position*.

The power position is the place where you will be able to produce the most force on the bar. Your shoulders should be on top of (or slightly in front of) the bar, and you should feel your bodyweight centered on the middle of your feet. For some athletes this means the bar will be resting on the middle of the thighs. For others the bar will be resting on the top of the thighs.

### SHRUG (figure 4)

From the power position, you now fully straighten your legs (but do not lock the knees) and shrug your shoulders. Your arms are still straight.

### DROP UNDER ( figures 5 & 6)

Now is the time when the arms go to work, and their purpose is to help pull you under the bar. As the arms bend, your legs begin to jump into the split position.

### RECEIVING POSITION (figure 7)

When your feet land the bar should be positioned overhead as shown in figure 7. Your front knee should be slightly in front of the foot and the rear knee should be slightly bent. The heel of the rear foot is off the floor, so your balance is on the ball of the foot.

Photos 1 and 2 show the difference between the receiving positions of the Split-style Snatch and the Squat-style Snatch. In the Squat style the upper arms (humerus bones) must rotate back much further than in the split style. This position creates a stress that *may* cause or aggravate a shoulder injury. Most athletes can lift more weight in the Squat style because they can fix the bar overhead in a lower position, but the muscles are working equally as hard in both lifts.

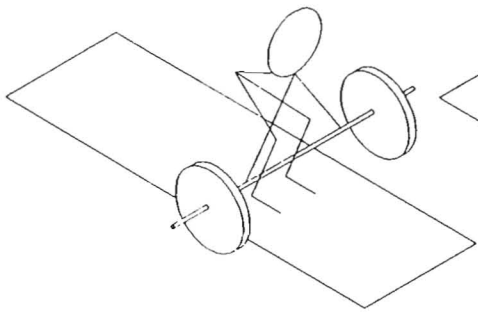
### RECOVERY (figure 8)

Complete the lift by first straightening your front leg and then your rear leg. If you perform the lift incorrectly, you might have to recover first with your rear leg.

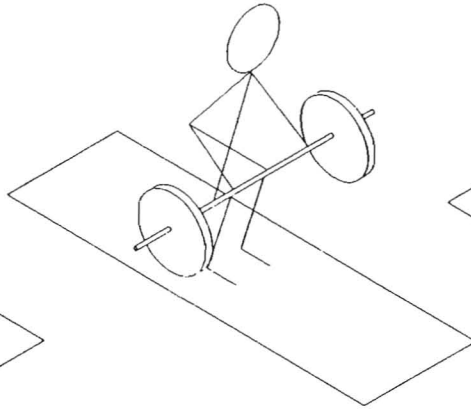
It's common practice to teach the Split Snatch by teaching it from the top down. First, learn the receiving position by practicing a Drop Snatch. From a standing position, place a barbell behind your neck and spread your hands apart to the Snatch Width. Now jump into the Split position while pressing the weight to straight arms. Recover to the standing position and repeat. Do 3-5 reps per set.

When you become comfortable with jumping into this receiving position, practice the lift from the power position (figure 3). When you've mastered this segment of the lift, practice it from knee level (you can rest the barbell on blocks set at this height) and finally from the floor.

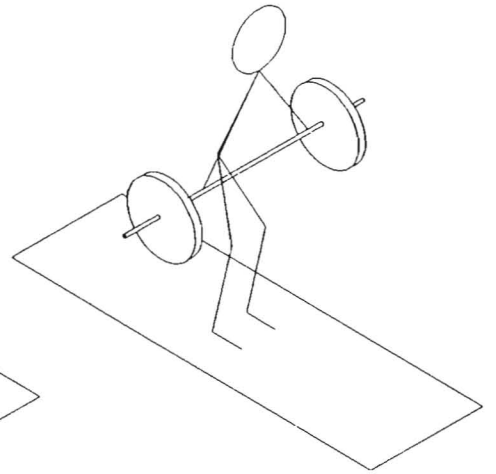
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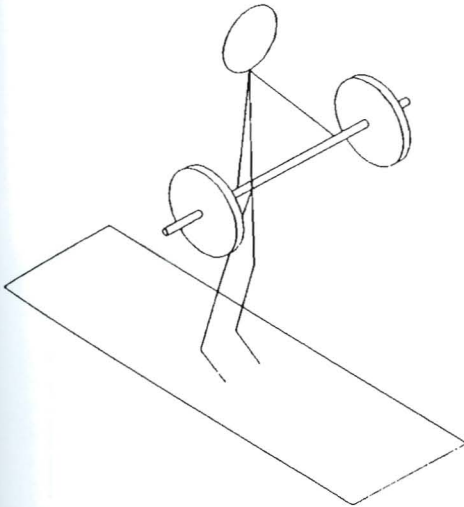
THE START: Figure 1



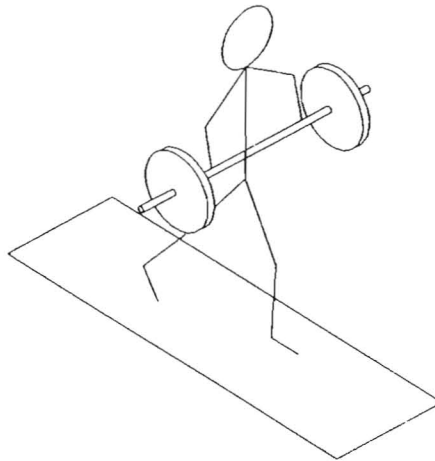
INITIAL PULL: Figure 2



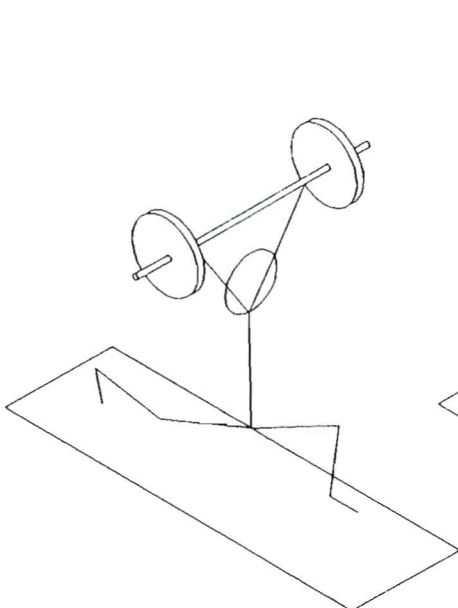
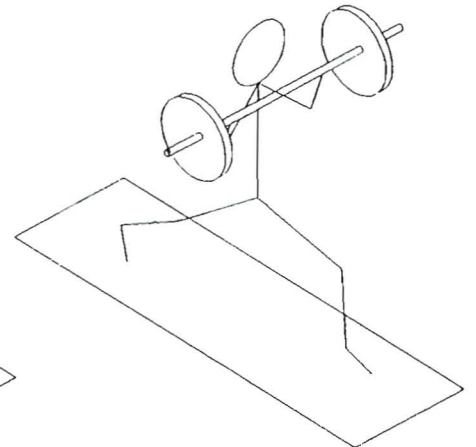
POWER POSITION: Figure 3



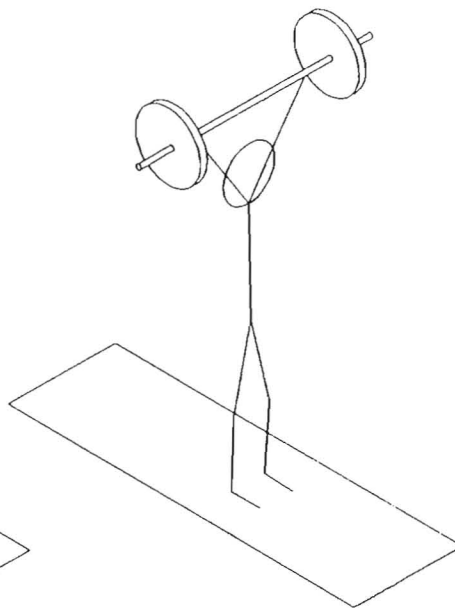
SHRUG: Figure 4



DROP UNDER: Figures 5 & 6



RECEIVING POSITION: Figure 7

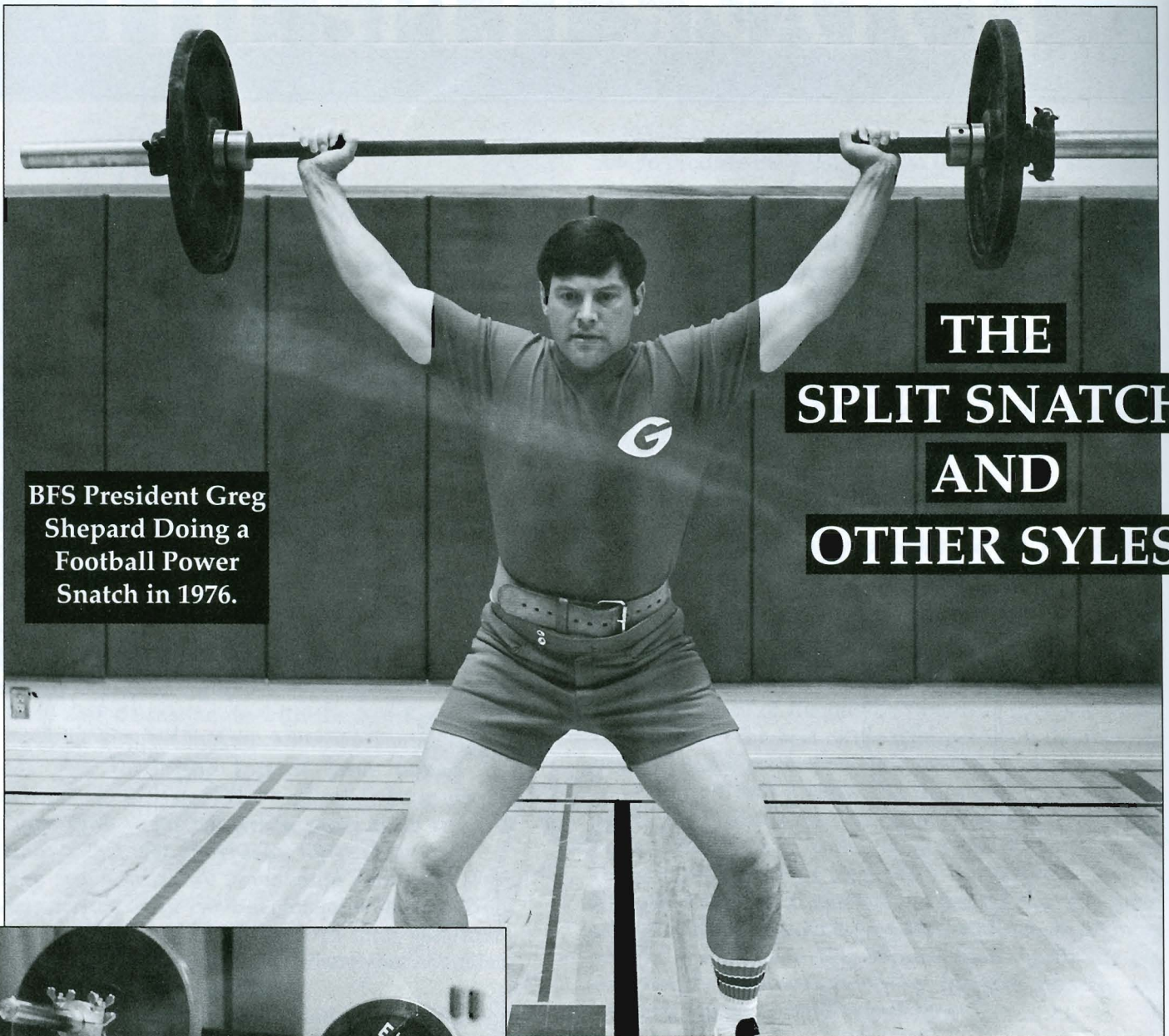


RECOVERY: Figure 8

**Illustrations  
by  
Steve Beebe**

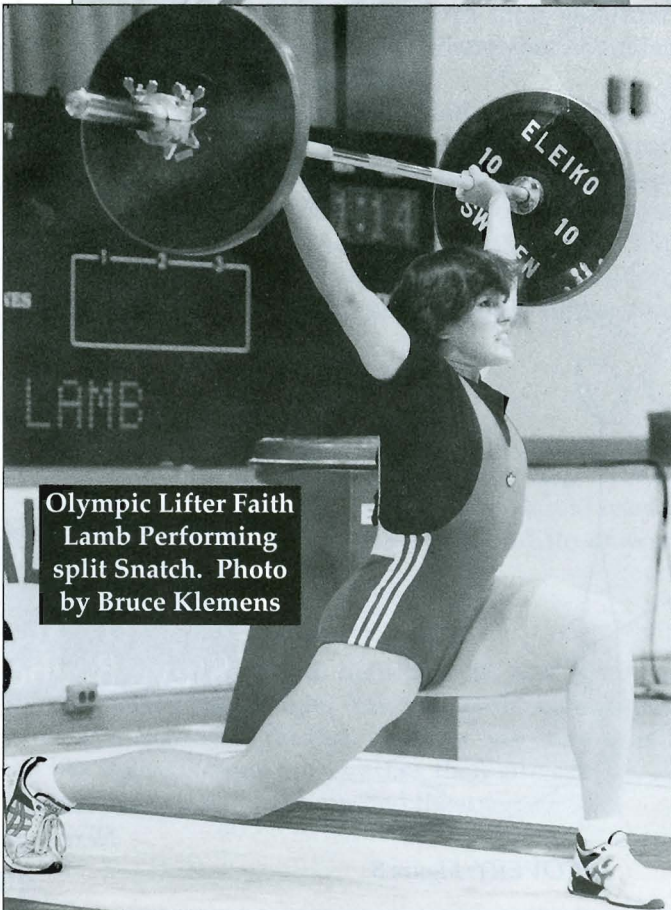
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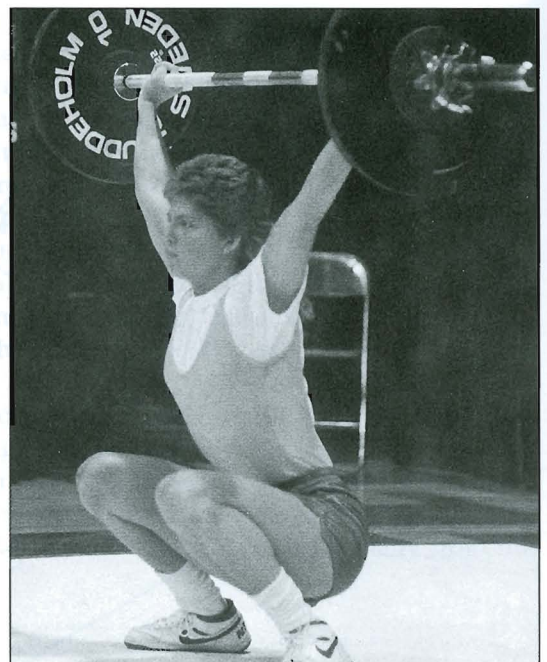
**BFS President Greg Shepard Doing a Football Power Snatch in 1976.**

# THE SPLIT SNATCH AND OTHER SYLES



**Olympic Lifter Faith Lamb Performing split Snatch. Photo by Bruce Klemens**

**Editor's Note:**  
We at BFS prefer the Power Snatch for High School and College Athletic Training and then if you do go into Olympic Lifting the transition will be smoother for the Squat Snatch. Please note that figures 1-4 are the same for all styles of Snatching.



*Olympic Lifter Stacey Goss performing Squat Snatch. Photo by Bruce Klemens*



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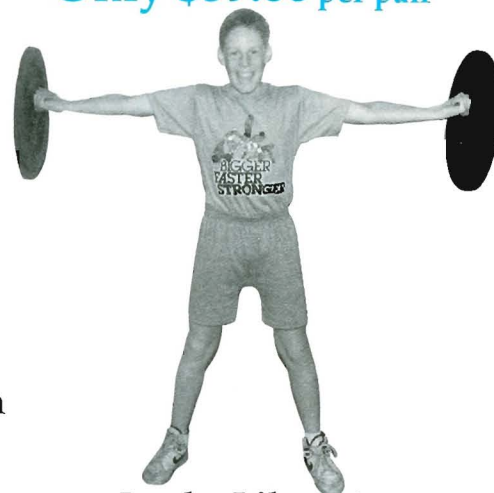


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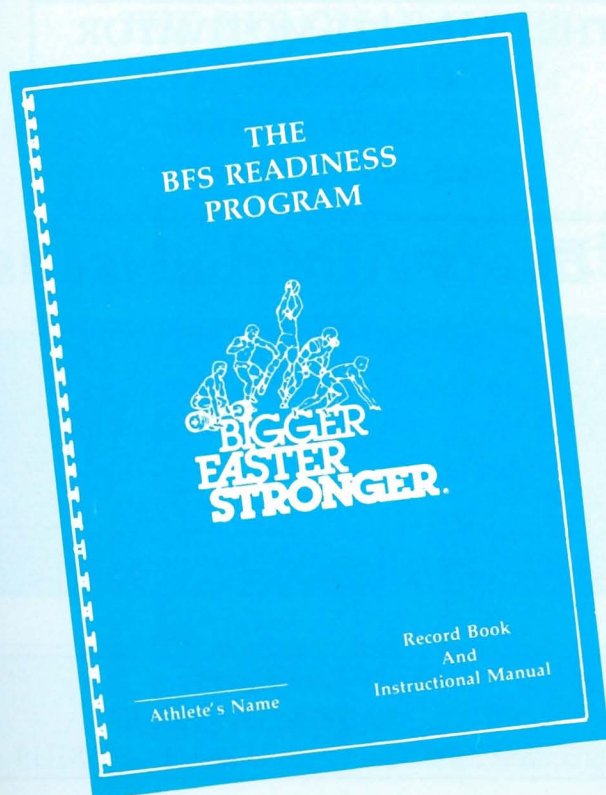
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Dr. Greg Shepard, BFS President

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