

**BIGGER
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WHY OTHERS FAIL

**SETS
AND
REPS**

By Dr. Greg Shepard

I don't mean to imply that other programs can't make progress or even good progress. However, if you reach a plateau in six weeks and athletes aren't psyched up to workout, then to me that's failure. If you only maintain during the season, to me that's failure, especially with a high school program. Even if you make good progress for 16 weeks in a row and then hit a plateau, you haven't experienced success that is possible with the BFS Set-Rep System. Let's use Hans Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome theories to analyze various systems and you'll see what I mean.

CHANGE: What happens if athletes do a 3 x 10 system every workout, with every exercise and every week? First, Shock will set in and the athlete will experience soreness for 2 to 3 workouts. Then Countershock will be experienced and by the middle of the 2nd week, the Stage of Resistance will have begun. During this stage, progress will take place for about six to eight weeks. At this point, the body is crying out mentally and physically and the Stage of Exhaustion emerges. The athlete will experience a plateau and frustration raises its ugly head. Some athletes will try to work harder which accelerates the Stage of Exhaustion resulting in a reversal of progress. Some athletes will get discouraged and quit.

It's ironic but research studies that have been done over the last 30 years are typically done in a university setting. The subjects are usually in a weight training class and are enrolled for a term. Because of this limitation, these studies normally last only 8 to 12 weeks. Therefore, the Stage of Exhaustion has never been a factor and the fallacies of one dimensional set-rep systems have not been widely known.

Therefore, any program which does the same thing all the time is in deep trouble and is doomed to failure. Examples of these one dimensional set-rep systems in common use today are as follows: 5 x 5, 2 x 25, and the inane nautilus system of one set of 8-12 reps. My heart goes out to these athletes and coaches; their intentions are noble, and the work ethic is great but that is simply not enough to defeat the onslaught of the ever ominous Stage of Exhaustion.

REST: I was amused by an article in the newspaper last September about a Division 1-AA football player who said, "I was lifting five times a week and was getting nowhere. Now, I've changed to lifting three times per week and stretching more in the off days." This athlete stumbled on to a better way by trial and error. It's too bad it took him so long to learn about a basic principle that has been known by some for decades.

But what about bodybuilders? Don't they do upper body one day and lower body the next and train six days per week? Good questions! Bodybuilders are different than athletes involved in mainstream school sports. Plyometrics, sprinting, agilities and technique-of-sport training are all things not generally done by the serious bodybuilder but are vitally important to the athlete. Also, exhausting multi-joint movements, like the Power Clean, are usually not in the bodybuilders training regimen. Finally, more weight with less reps that athletes do are more draining from a recovery standpoint.

CHANGE-REST-OVERWORK COMBINATION: A very common mistake is to Squat, Bench and/or Clean 3x per week. Even if you change the set-rep system or go light one day and heavy the next, you can still create problems. It helps to prolong the Stage of Resistance and it's a step in the right direction but the human body cannot tolerate physically or mentally doing Squats or Cleans three times per week. With the Bench Press, the shoulder area screams for relief but the "dedicated" athlete will keep right on Benching three times per week. Our studies indicate 75% of those athletes who Bench this often suffer from "Bench Press Shoulder." (A moderate to severe pain in the shoulder joint area.)

It is almost impossible to keep the Stage of Resistance going more than 6-8 weeks training these lifts three times per week. The answer is variation, variation and more variation. Also, getting more intense but less often is smart and you'll keep from entering into Selye's Stage of Exhaustion.

RECORD KEEPING - BREAKING RECORDS: Remember when Selye isolated his rats? Separation, not being part of the group, loneliness, lack of self worth, not seeing proof of progress are stress creators. They make the Stage of Exhaustion appear just as quickly and surely as all other reasons.

Teams of athletes who are on the same program feel a bond and a togetherness. If you go through the motions without a real purpose or objective, it is a guaranteed path to failure. To tell an athlete, "Just do 10-8-6" is to tell him to fail. To post a workout on a bulletin board with the command to "Do it" is a command to fail. To not keep personal records and monitor progress is also fertile ground for failure.

People who are in an environment of continued and rapid progress are happy people. They are more able to tackle anything and overcome plateaus. Do you want to win? Obviously! Do the BFS Set-Rep System! It's a miracle, a wonderful miracle for Coaches and Athletes.

**BIGGER
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THE MIRACLE OF BFS

**NO
PLATEAUS
EVER!**

By Dr. Greg Shepard

I suppose it's somewhat pretentious to call our BFS Set-Rep System a miracle but I really feel that way. It's fantastic at every level: High School, College, Pro or Masters. I'd bet everything I own that our system is better for athletes than any other system available today. It's fun and exciting to participate in and it's fun to coach.

Athletes break at least 8 personal records week after week, month after month and even year after year. The Stage of Resistance never ends! That's why it's a miracle. There are three things in this life you can be sure of; Death, Taxes and the BFS Set-Rep System!

CHANGE: To insure constant automatic change, the BFS System makes Monday, totally different than Wednesday with Friday's workout again totally different. There are four separate and different rotational weeks. An exact repeated workout only takes place every fifth week. Three workouts per week are done during the off-season, while two workouts are done during the in-season. This constant change within a regular systematic routine helps make the Stage of Resistance reach ever upward.

REST: Only three weight workouts are done as mentioned but that doesn't mean the athlete sits on his fanny during the off days. Remember that vacations, even though strenuous, provide a positive stimulus. Well, the BFS System uses the same thesis. We take a vacation from the weight room on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday but engage in strenuous activity in a different environment. After warming up on the BFS Dot Drill and stretching, we do speed work, plyometrics, agilities and work on technique: Passing, shooting, throwing, hitting a baseball, spiking a volleyball, etc.

CHANGE-REST-OVERWORK COMBINATION: We only have two Squat workouts per week not three. Parallel Squats are done once, while a Squat Variation is done on the other day. This is superior to doing one light and one heavy Parallel Squat workout. The Box Squat is perhaps the best variation from Selye's point of view. You see the hips and hip tendons are the prime forces in performing the Box Squat movement and therefore the body recovers almost instantly. Instead of dreading another Parallel Squat workout, you actually look forward to it.

We only have two Bench Press workouts. One of these is a Bench Variation exercise. It could be close grips, wide grips, inclines, declines or dip exercises. The one we like the most are Towel Benches which are Bench Presses done with a pad or rolled up towels on the chest.

It's a cushion built up 3-4 inches, so obviously you can lift more. It's similar in function as the Box Squat. They're less strenuous and now you have these records to break.

Power Cleans and the Trap Bar lifts are done once per week. Power Snatches are done on another day as an auxiliary lift to compliment the Power Clean. We do two core lifts per workout plus five auxiliaries. The total time is 45 to 60 minutes per workout. That's enough!

RECORD KEEPING-BREAKING RECORDS: We keep track of 24 Set Records (4 for each of the 6 Core Lifts) and 42 Rep Records. That's 66 total records. Our job is to break at least 8 of those per week.

For example, on week number one, We do 3 sets of 3 reps. We might do 200 lbs. on the first set, 210 on the second and 215 on the third set. We add them up for a 625 lb. total. That becomes our set record. Next month when the athlete does that same workout, the coach with a twinkle in his eye, merely asks, "Do you want to win?" The athlete, of course, says "yes" to which the coach responds, "Well then, beat 625 pounds!" It's that simple!

We also keep track of much more than just a one rep max. I want to know how much you can do twice, three times, etc. up to ten reps on the Squats and Benches. On the Trap Bar and Power Cleans we only record up to five reps. The coach again asks the rhetorical question, "Do you want to win?" So, if you're doing the 3 x 3 workout and your 3 rep max for example is 245 pounds. You have to do 3 or more reps at 250 pounds. You've got to get excited and intense. You've got to break that record. "Don't you want to win?" Now when the athlete breaks the record, the coach pats him on the back, his teammates give him a high five and he yells, "Yeah!"

This happens 8 times per week, at least! It's contagious. People know they're going to win. They have positive feedback every workout. Their self esteem rises to meteoric levels. You feel part of something big. You feel great every day!

COMMON SENSE: Selye' found that poor diet, cold, heat and lack of sleep can cause the Stage of Exhaustion to appear quickly. Common sense dictates that serious athletes who want to keep their Stage of Resistance always rising, should have a great diet. Never skip breakfast. Make it a nutritious plus meal. If it's cold, wear a coat. If it's hot, drink plenty of water. Don't watch TV until one o'clock every night. Folks, this part isn't complicated but if you abuse these common sense rules, you'll pay the price.

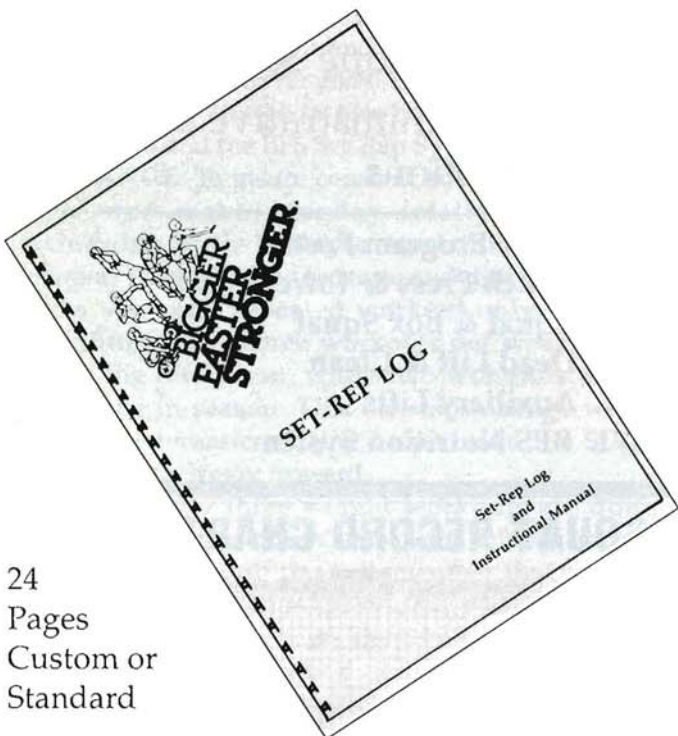
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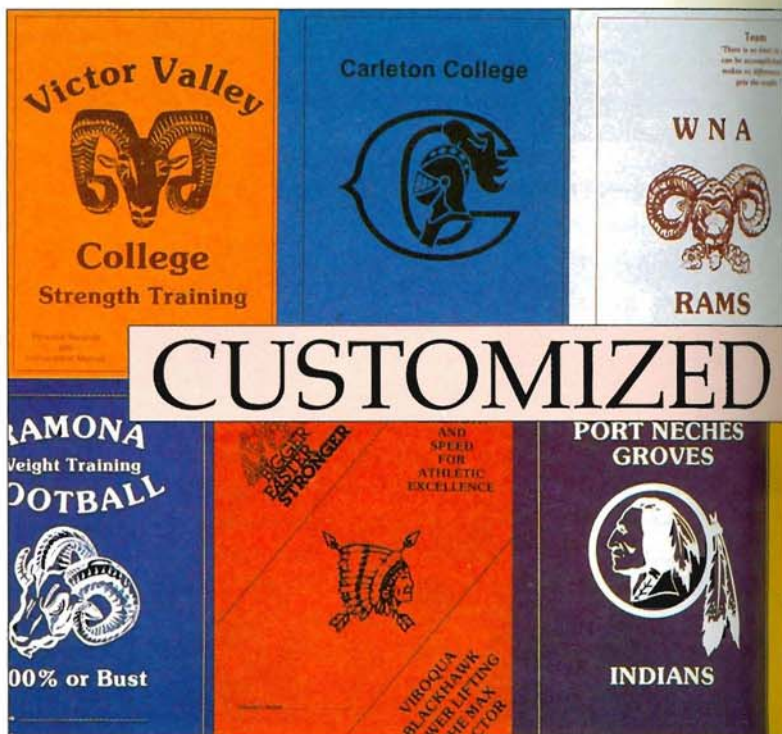


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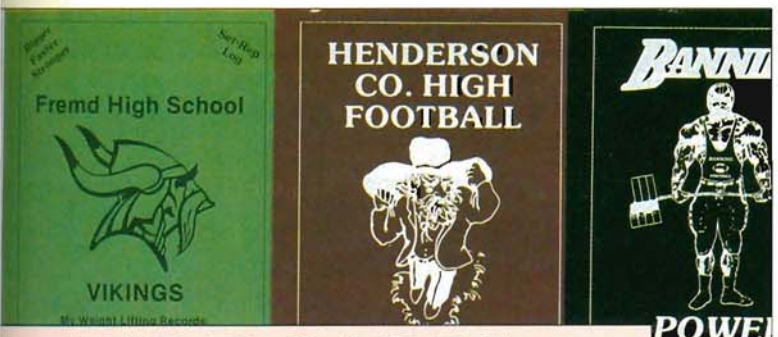
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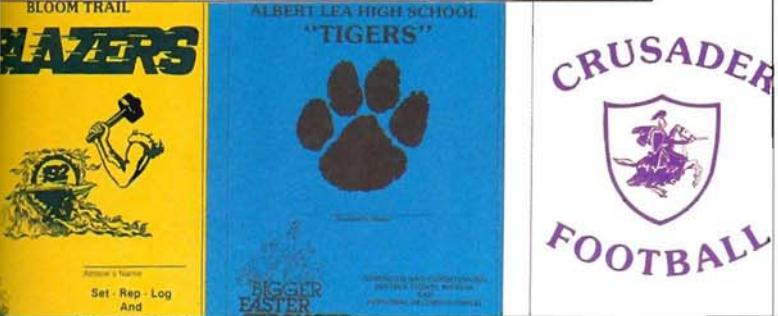
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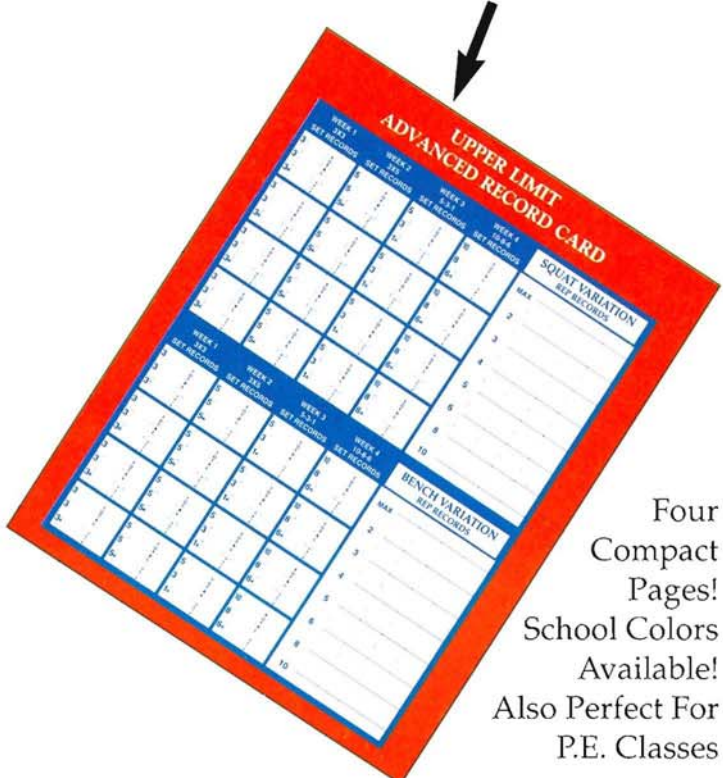


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