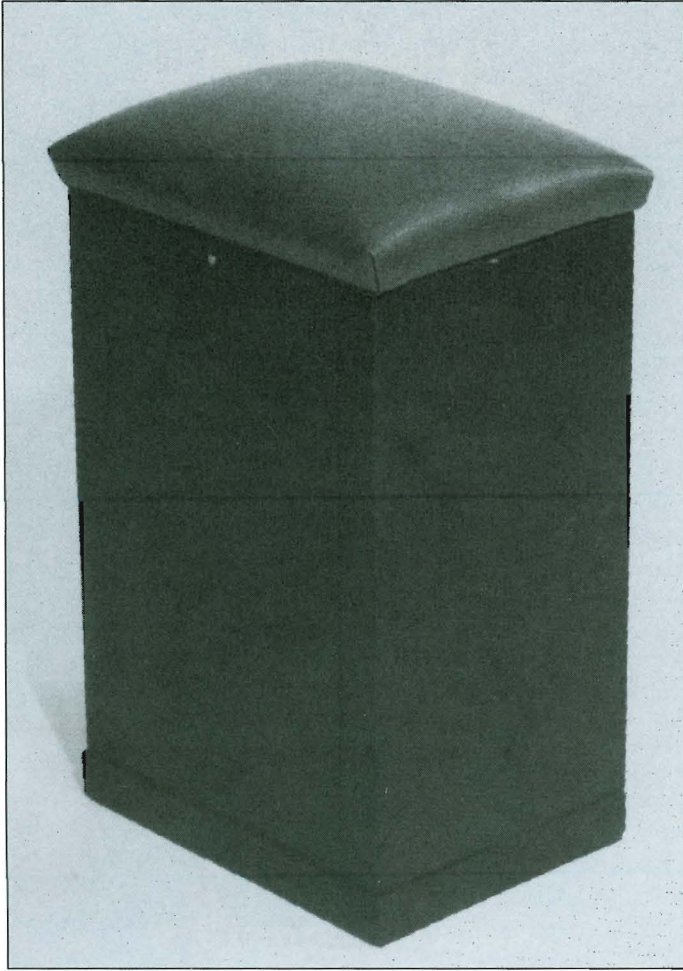


# THE BFS BOX SQUAT

By Dr. Greg Shepard



**FIGURE I:** *The BFS Box Squat: This Is A Prime Requisite For Doing This Lift Right & Safe. It Is the Perfect Height, Length and Width. It Also Has Perfect Padding For Safety. They Only Cost \$49. but For Subscribers Until Sept. 1, 1992, You Can Get THREE For Only \$129. Call 1-800-628-9737*



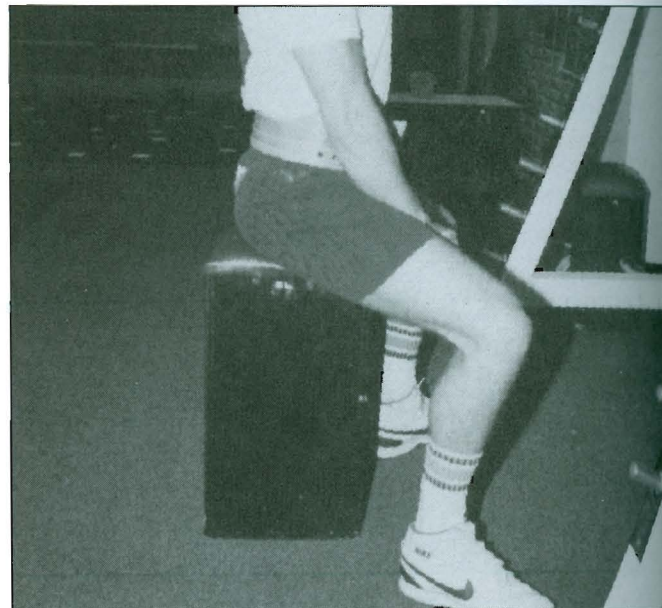
**FIGURE II:** *This Box Is Too Short For This Athlete.*

The Box Squat is a fantastic Parallel Squat variation. We have said this for fifteen years and each year we discover more and more strengths for implementing the Box Squat as a BFS Core Lift. Curiously, there are still some strength coaches who do not really know about this sensational lift for athletes.

Two things must happen before the Box Squat can produce significant and positive results. First, the technique of the Box Squat must be performed correctly and second, there are safety procedures which must be followed. However, before we explore technique and safety procedures, let us first examine just why the Box Squat produces such superb results:

**I. Hip and Hip Tendon Strength:** The Box Squat is unsurpassed in the development of hip and hip tendon strength. It should be noted that bodybuilders of course, don't care at all about hip and hip tendon strength. A bodybuilder wouldn't do a Box Squat because it wouldn't help him win but that certainly is not the case for athletes in main stream sports. Through the development of hip and hip tendon strength in the pelvic girdle, buttocks and thighs, the athlete will be able to tackle, throw, jump, hit a baseball and rebound with much greater power. Athletes usually see an immediate improvement in these areas after the Box Squat technique is correctly implemented.

**II. Increased Confidence For Parallel Squats:** In our BFS System, the Box Squat is done once per week as is the Parallel Squat. Since the Box Squat is done about two inches above parallel and the hips are primarily used, more weight can easily be used when compared to the Parallel Squat. When you can Box Squat 400 pounds,



**FIGURE III:** *This Box Is Too Tall.*



# DO IT RIGHT & SAFE

for example, and you attempt 300 pounds on a Parallel Squat, the bar will actually feel light. This increases confidence!

**III. Teaching Basic Safe and Proper Lifting Techniques:** When teaching high school and junior high athletes at our BFS Clinics, the Box Squat is absolutely amazing for teaching safe and proper form for all lifts, especially the Parallel Squat, Dead Lift and Power Clean. It makes it so easy to grasp the concept of "Sitting Tall" and "Locking-in" the lower back. Proper stance, toes and perfect knee alignment are also now easy to teach and learn.

**IV. Overcoming Plateaus:** First of all, athletes should only have two Squat workouts per week. If an athlete attempts to Parallel Squat three times per week, this athlete will have a plateau set in quite rapidly. This is a rule! There are no exceptions! Athletes who Parallel Squat twice a week with one heavy and one light to medium workout would also have much better results if they did a heavy Box Squat workout instead of the medium-light Parallel Squat workout. Variation is the key in overcoming plateaus. The Box Squat is perfect for this. In our BFS Squat System, athletes continually break records week after week, month after month and even year after year.

**V. Full and Rapid Recuperation:** This is perhaps the most compelling reason for doing the Box Squat. This rapid and full recuperation is a remarkable and astounding process. An athlete can go through a killer workout and be fully and totally recovered by the next day. Thus, the athlete can then play a game or go through an effective and complete Sprint and/or Plyometric workout on the next day. When done correctly, the hips, hip tendons, pelvic girdle muscles

*Continued on page 15*



FIGURE VI: *This Box Is Perfect For This Athlete Which Is About Two Inches Above Parallel*



FIGURE V: *This Lower Back Is Dangerous! Spread The Chest and Sit Tall!*



FIGURE VI: *Don't Lean Over! Spread The Chest and Sit Tall!*



# THE BOX SQUAT: DO IT RIGHT & SAFE



FIGURE VII: You Can Put A 35 lb Plate Under A Squat Box To Raise The Height.

and tendons are the prime forces in the Box Squat. Apparently, this is the reason for the rapid recovery. The insightful coach surely must see the obvious dynamic ramifications of this result, not only for the athlete who is in an in-season status but during the off-season as well. **Bottom line: You now have the option to lift the day before a contest!**

## THE HEIGHT OF THE BOX

Making sure each athlete has the correct height for his Box Squat is of crucial importance. The ideal height for this lift is about two inches above parallel (see Figure IV). If the box is too short as in Figure II, then technique and safety problems could arise. For example, plopping down hard on the box is dangerous as is unlocking the lower back. A box that is too short for the athlete makes performing good technique much more difficult. A box that is too tall (see Figure III) has its own unique problems. It is easy to get in a good squat position and easy to do the lift. However, this is the problem: it's too easy. Thus, the athlete will put on far too much weight and make the positive results of the Box Squat far less effective especially when transferring squatting power to the Parallel Squat.

The second problem associated with too tall a box

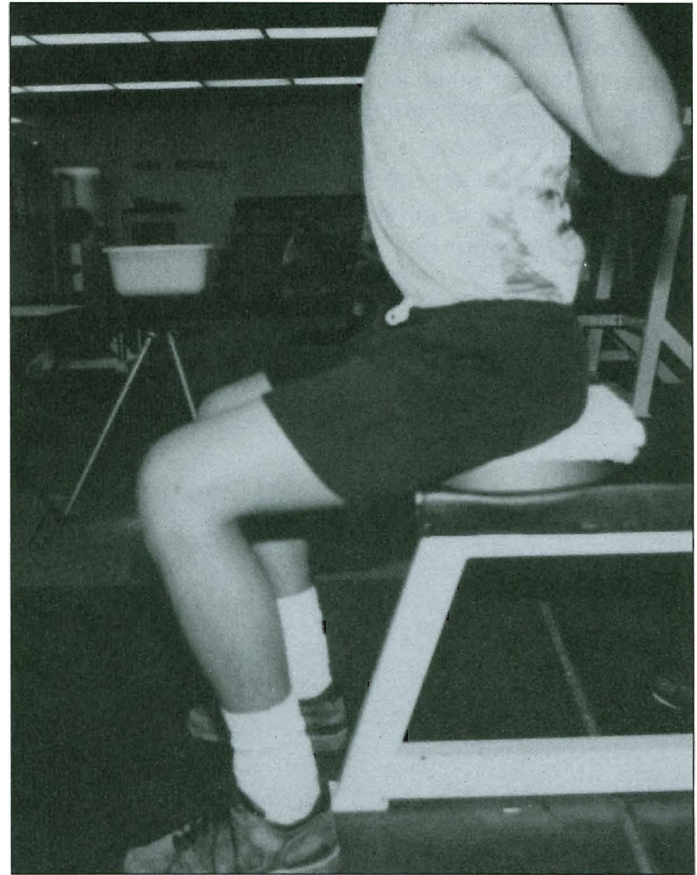


FIGURE VIII: You Can Also Put A 25 lb Plate With A Towel On Top of A Bench To Raise The Height.

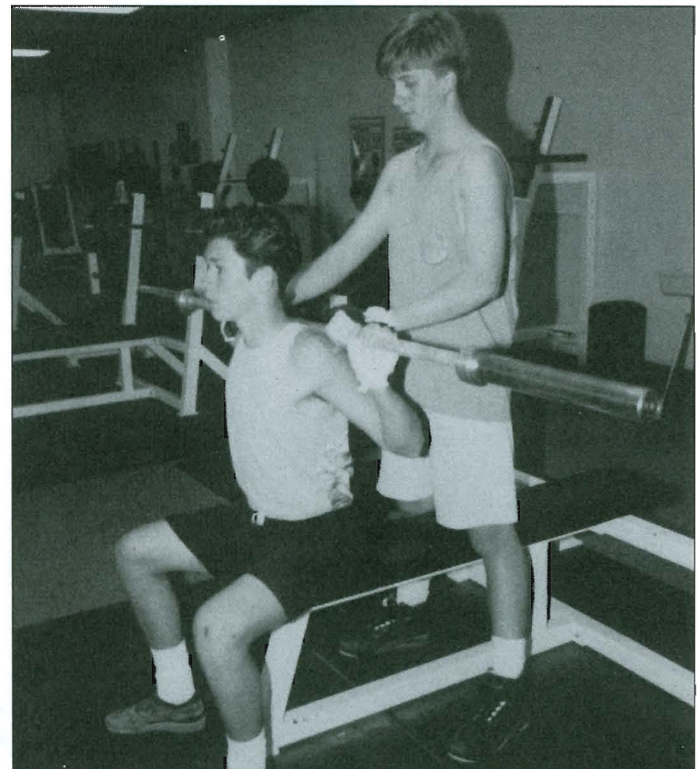


FIGURE IX: Readiness - Junior High Athletes Can Use A Bench For Their Box Squats.



# THE BOX SQUAT: DO IT RIGHT & SAFE

and too much weight is putting the athlete's spinal column through too much stress before it is structurally ready. It doesn't make sense for a young athlete to Box Squat 400 pounds, when he can't do a 200 pound Parallel Squat. Below is a table with guidelines for the relationship between the Box Squat and Parallel Squat. If you exceed these guidelines or tolerance levels, you should shorten your box.

## BOX SQUAT TOLERANCE LEVELS

| PARALLEL SQUAT MAX | ★BOX SQUAT MAX |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 45-95LBS           | 50LBSMORE      |
| 100-195LBS         | 75LBSMORE      |
| 200-295LBS         | 100LBSMORE     |
| 300-395LBS         | 125LBSMORE     |
| 400-495LBS         | 150LBSMORE     |
| 500-595LBS         | 175LBSMORE     |
| 600-695LBS         | 200LBSMORE     |

★For example: An athlete who has a Parallel Squat max of 250 pounds should not Box Squat more than 350 pounds (100 lbs more).

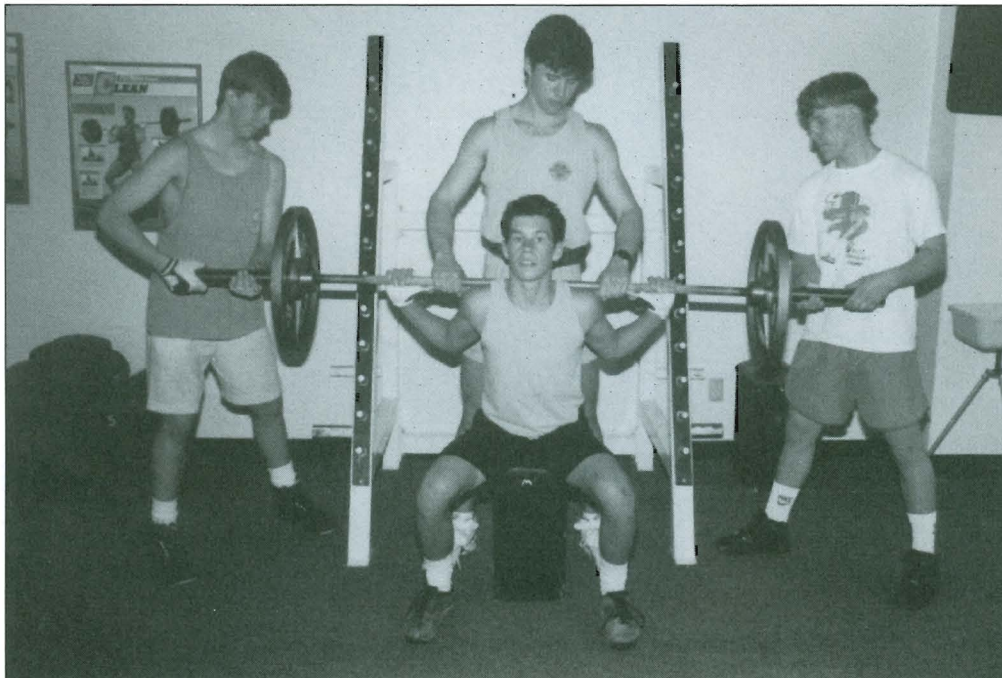
There are several options to consider rather than going to a shorter box when the tolerance level is ready to be exceeded. First, keep your Box Squat poundage at

the maximum tolerance level for all reps. For example, if your one rep Parallel Squat max is 250 pounds, you could do one rep through ten reps at 350 pounds. Second option: Have a rule that you can't go up on the Box Squat until your Parallel Squat goes up. Thus, you would always keep the maximum tolerance level in line with your Parallel Squat. This option will probably make the athlete work harder on the Parallel Squat.

**Third option:** This is a viable option especially with the more experienced and stronger high school athlete. Let's say his Parallel Squat max is 450 pounds and he's reached the tolerance level of a 600 pound Box Squat. Let's say also that this athlete has been Box Squatting for six months straight. A great option, in this case, would be to choose another Squat Variation at this point. For example, this athlete could switch from Box Squats to Front Squats and begin all over again fresh with new personal records to establish and break.

It is best to purchase a variety of box heights from us at BFS. They are solid, safe and cushioned. You can change a medium height box to a tall box by simply putting a 35 lb plate underneath it (see Figure VII). If you do your Box Squats off a bench and you want to raise the height, use a 25lb. plate and towel. (See Figure VIII) Junior High athletes or shorter women athletes can begin a program very nicely by using a standard bench. (See Figure IX.)

**Dealing with the taller, long legged, weaker athlete:** It is a fact; tall and skinny athletes can't Squat as well as shorter and stockier athletes. Often, they feel intimidated especially if they have to use the same height box. We've got to help that athlete feel successful or we'll lose him. Therefore, build up the height of the box to where he has success and confidence.



## TECHNIQUE GUIDELINES

1. Assume Athletic Stance With Toes Just Slightly Pointed Out For Balance.
2. Sit Tall (See Figures V and VI)
3. Spread the Chest and Lock-In Lower Back (See Figures V and VI.)
4. Rise Up on Toes At The End Of The Movement.
5. Don't Plop Down But Always Sit Down Under Control.
6. Rock Back Slightly As You Sit On The Box. Then Go Forward and Up. This Allows The Hips To Work.
7. Don't Just Barely Touch The Box. You Can't Lift As Much and All You Do Is Work The Quads Giving You A Hamstring Strength Development Imbalance.
8. Never, Absolutely Never Let Go Of The Bar And Bail Out.
9. Never Sacrifice Your Technique For A Few Extra Pounds.



# THE BOX SQUAT: DO IT RIGHT & SAFE



FIGURE X: *The Back Spotter Should Grab Firmly On To The Box With An Overhand Grip.*



FIGURE XI: *Do Not Use This Method Of Spotting Which Is Used Frequently In Gyms.*

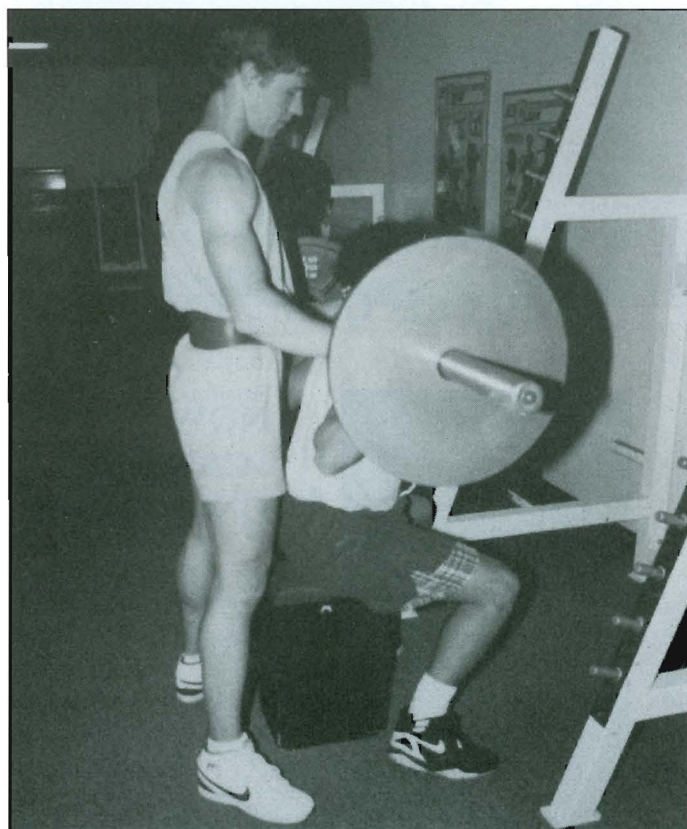
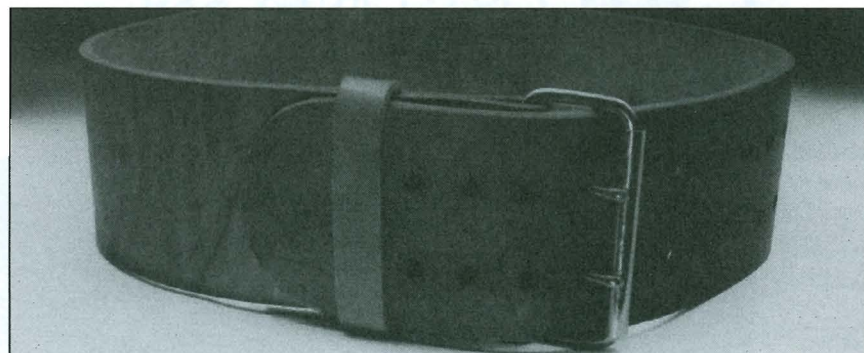


FIGURE XII: *The Back Spotter Is Crucial For Safety And Technique.*

## SPOTTING TECHNIQUE

1. Always Use Three Spotters For Optimum Results. One Spotter Can Be Used With Readiness Athletes.
2. The Two Side Spotters Should Stand At 45° Angle So They Can Coach and Judge The Lift Effectively.
3. The Side Spotters Should Use A Dead Lift Grip On The Bar. Grab It Firmly But Don't Put Any Pressure Upwards.
4. The Side Spotters Can Assist Slightly In The Rocking Motion.
5. The Side Spotters Should Guide The Lifter Back To The Rack While Looking At The Support Standard.
6. The Back Spotter Should Always Use A Firm Overhand Grip. (See Figure X.) This Will Allow You To Control And Help Create The Slight Rocking Motion For The Lifter. (See Figure XII.)
7. The Back Spotter's Overhand Grip Can Also Prevent The Lifter From Popping Down. Just Before The Lifter Touches The Box, The Back Spotter Can Gently Lift Up On The Bar To Prevent Dangerous Out Of Control Descent Patterns.
8. Do Not Use The Back Spotting Technique As Shown In Figure XI. You Just Simply Cannot Control The Lifters Technique.
9. All Spotters Should Keep Their Hands On The Bar From Start To Finish!



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