

A Model For All To Follow



Poplar Bluff High School Coordinating The BFS Program From Jr. High To High School

By Dr. Greg Shepard

Poplar Bluff High School, to my knowledge, has the best set-up in the nation for coordinating a strength and conditioning program from Jr. High to High School. It is the brain-child of Coach Jim Brown one of our BFS Clinicians. However, just knowing what to do and how to do it is never enough. You must have the cooperation of fellow coaches and the administration to capture the vision to make it work. Coach Brown has many talents and one of his strongest talents is the ability to get things done and the personality to rally others to a noble cause.

Several years ago Coach Brown was looking for a high school in

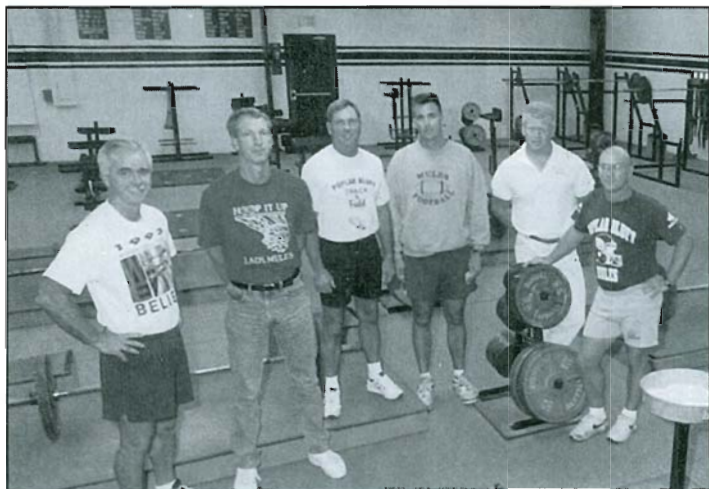
which to coach football and do the BFS program. He found Poplar Bluff, a large high school (1500 students 9-12) in southeast Missouri. Head Football Coach Paul Webber



Coach Jim Brown

was the first to share Coach Brown's vision. They teamed up to turn the football program around. Coach Brown would be the defensive coordinator and strength coach. Coach Webber had the foresight to let Coach Brown run with it and give him full cooperation.

The efficacy of Coach Brown's program has been demonstrated in many ways but one of the best was with Coach Webber's son David. You start the BFS Program in the 7th grade. It is called the BFS Readiness program. The BFS Dot Drill is introduced along with stretching for speed and jumping power. These two elements are done just like the high school program. All Core Lifts and Auxiliary Lifts are introduced using just the bar at first. The emphasis is



Poplar Bluff Varsity Coaches (L to R) Larry Morgan, Kirk Chronister, Barry Cody, Tony Roth, David Sievers and Jim Brown

on technique not pounds lifted. Two sets of ten are done on all lifts except the Power Clean which employs two sets of 5 reps. Readiness athletes never go for a max. All reps are to be done with perfect form. Coach Brown has the ideal equipment for introducing the Power Clean replete with BFS Aluma-Lite Bars, Training Plates and Ten-Pound Bumper Plates. The basic fundamentals of jumping, sprinting and plyometrics are also introduced at this time. David took to it like a hungry dog on raw meat.

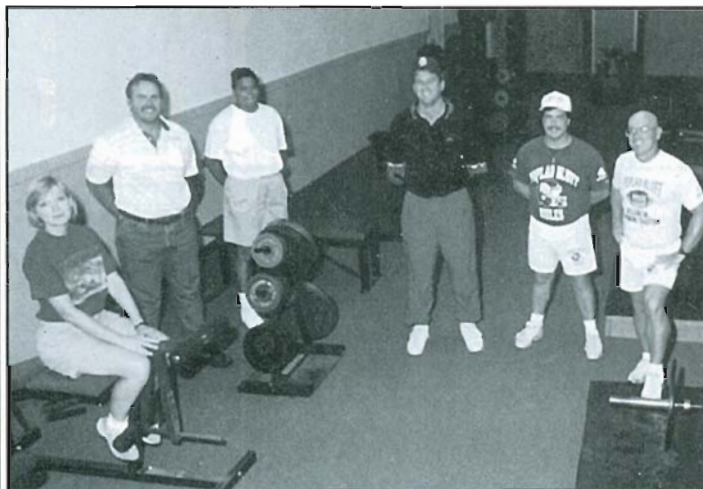
You see what this coordinated program does is get you going right at an earlier age. Now, it didn't help David grow taller, even though he was over 6-2 in height, but just listen to this.

Last year, as a sophomore, David did the dot drill in 42 seconds and weighed 285 pounds. He qualified for state in wrestling and Bench Press 325, Parallel Squatted 550, Dead Lifted 550 and Power Cleaned 300 pounds! He was doing what the college guys do at 15 years of age!

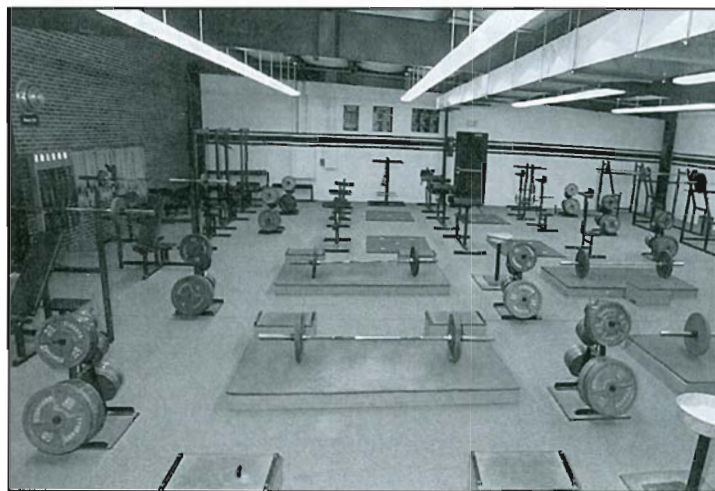
Unfortunately for Poplar Bluff, David and his family moved to St. Louis. David transferred into Hazelwood East High School, currently ranked in the top ten USA Today National Football Rankings. Coach Webber decided to enter into the field of school administration and is now an assistant principal at Hazelwood East. Anyway, the Hazelwood East coaches couldn't

believe David's ability. He is their only two-way starter as a junior. David is also getting letters from colleges nationwide.

In 1989 Poplar Bluff had only a total of 1,000 pounds of weights between both the high school and junior high. They really had nothing at all but a cluttered room that was not being used. So, Jim Brown, armed with his vision of greatness, conducted Lift-A-Thons and sought private donations. The weight rooms you see illustrated were built and supplied completely with outside funds. There was no cost at all to the school district. Coaches from many sports also donated a lot of extra time. Now that is what I call Upper Limit!



Poplar Bluff Jr. High Coaches (L to R) Carol Davis, Bob Case, Annie Hinton, Doug Lawyer Stan Bullington, and Jim Brown



Poplar Bluff Varsity Facility



Poplar Bluff Jr. High Weightroom



The Poplar Bluff Junior High weight room is for 7th and 8th graders and is a 25 X 85 facility which is 2,125 square feet. They have 5,000 pounds of free weights with 30 weight belts and 30 jump ropes. There are three stations each for the Bench Press, Squat, Power Clean, Dead Lift, Leg Curl & Extension. In addition, there is a Hip Sled, Incline Bench, Lat Machine, Neck Machine and a Push Jerk and Push Press Rack. The room is also completely carpeted. At the present time the junior high kids must come in after school to get their work done but next school year there will be athletic classes included into the curriculum.

The Poplar Bluff High School weight room for grades 9-12 is even bigger. It is a 50 X 60 foot facility which is 3,000 square feet. There are three stations of the following: Bench Press, Squat, Dead Lift, Power Clean, Neck, Glute Ham, Calf, Lat Machines and Inclines. There is one Preacher Curl, one Leg Extension, two Dip Stands and 3 through 75 pound pairs of Dumbbells. In addition, there are 11 Plate Holders, 36 Belts and 36 Jump Ropes with

10,000 pounds of weight. For aerobic conditioning, there is an Air Dyne Bike and a Stairmaster. The entire facility is carpeted and features air conditioning.

All of this is fine but it really isn't much good if it isn't used. Poplar Bluff has participation in the extreme! The junior high has between 150-175 athletes coming in after school at any given time. The high school has 300 students signed up throughout the day in 7 classes. All of the athletes at Poplar Bluff in all sports both boys and girls are enrolled. They are all on the same page! Poplar Bluff is on a united program. Everyone does the same program both in-season and off-season. They get it done in the allotted class time.

Can you get strong doing the BFS program? I'll let you, the reader, judge. The following are the results of the 85 members of the varsity football team: 64 Bench 200 or more, 44 Parallel Squat 300 or more, 42 Dead Lift 400 or more and 41 Power Clean 200 or more!

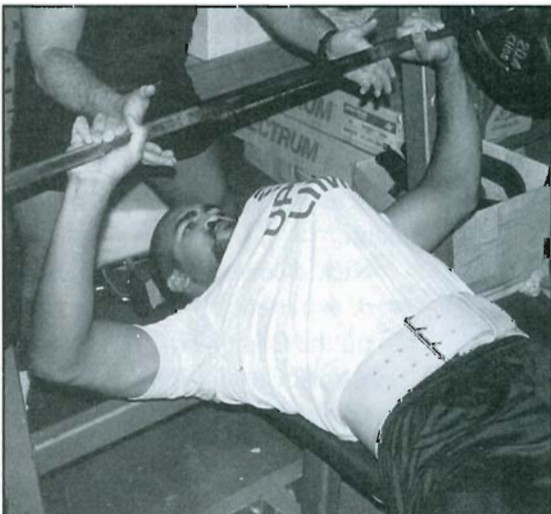
Well you say that's pretty impressive but can you get super strong

doing the BFS Set-Rep system just working for about 45 minutes per session? I'll let you, the reader, judge. Here are the results of those same 85 football players: 16 Bench 300 or more, 18 Parallel Squat 400 or more, 12 Dead Lift 500 or more and 10 Power Clean 300 or more! On the BFS Dot Drill: the skill position players average 38.02 seconds while the lineman average 42.5 seconds. The players do the dot drill at least 3X per day. Enough said!

I have to say this: Jim Brown is a master motivator and teacher. He lives, eats and breathes this stuff. There is absolutely no screwing around in Coach Brown's classes and yet he has a wonderful sense of humor. Every minute is productive. You have got to go in and coach hard and smart to be successful at anything and that's just what Coach Brown does.

We thank Jim Brown for his Upper Limit vision which should now be a light for all to follow. I guess I shouldn't be but I am continually amazed at what kids can accomplish if we just give them a chance. □

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