

AWESOME POWER CLEANS

From Sabino High Schools



Female Athletes

Sabino High School Junior, Carmen Sather, A 3-Sport Athlete, Demonstrates A Perfect Power Clean Rack

Senior Michelle O'Neal A Cross Country, Basketball & Track Athlete, Uses the Trap Bar To Develop Strong Power Cleans

Senior Daryne O'Neal All-League Basketball, Track & Cross Country Star, with an Explosive "Jump" phase.

**By Jeff Scurran
Sabino High School Strength
Coach & BFS Clinician**

The fastest growing trend in the athletic arena involves female weight training. While many females have been lifting and making exceptional progress for years, women's athletic development through weight training has exploded in recent years.

At Sabino High School, this involvement has resulted in a 40% increase in our female enrollment in Weight Training Physical Education, boosting our overall enrollment.

Rather than remove males from the existing classes that were already at capacity, our school administration made the decision to expand our weight training facility and hire

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additional personnel to accommodate this increase. The result is a well-balanced, all-sport curriculum that serves both male and female athletes and non-sport oriented students of both sexes who are interested in weight training for a wide variety of other reasons.

To supercharge our female athletes, we decided to emphasize the Power Clean as our premiere lift. Since we are a true BFS football program and many of the girls were currently working along side boys who were members of the football team, this was an easy decision.

I love the Power Clean because of the full-body interaction and coordination it requires. I also like the explosive quality of the lift and the immediate help it gives athletes in whatever sport that they are partici-

pating. My personal favorite reason is that, done properly, the Power Clean is a very attractive lift—kids enjoy doing it and it motivates them to continue lifting.

Teaching the Power Clean to female athletes, like most everything else in the weight room, requires no modification over what we teach the guys. To get some of the smaller athletes interested, we purchased two 15 pound bars from BFS and combined them with several full-sized 10 pound bumper plates.

This was an important element in getting some of the girls to try this lift.

Previously, we had to get many of the girls and the smaller boys into cleans by using the lighter, fixed barbells and setting them on boxes. While this gave them the feel of “cleaning”, it looked so different from what the larger athletes were doing. The people using this equipment felt inferior and unmotivated.

With the new aluma-lite bar and the full-sized plates, 55 pounds looks like a ton of weight and the lifting height is perfected. Now any time someone raises their poundage by 20, they add two new plates. It really gets all of the athletes “pumped”.

I teach the Power Clean just like I would any element of my sport. I break the lift into the component parts of stance, “hip-pop”, jump, elbow pull and rack.

I teach the stance in conjunction with the Trap Bar Dead Lift. The feet should be aligned slightly out and just wider than the shoulders. The back should be flat, the chin high and the chest large, before any lift is attempted. Dead lifting with



Carmen Sather, projected to be a top softball player in the state demonstrates the Power Clean. Head position is good. Elbows should continue to be forced forward and up. The stance is a little too wide (athletic stance)

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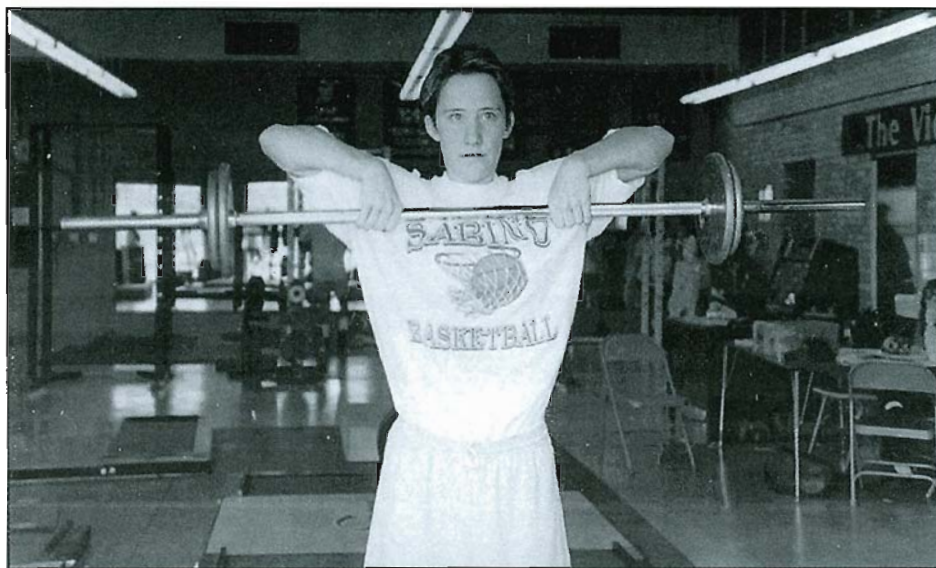
the trap bar teaches athletes to keep their hands in tight to the legs and to stand up with their hands pulling through the knees.

The “hip-pop” phase is taught as an element in itself. Hang clean stance should be used with the butt back, in pre-jumping position, and the knees bent slightly. Have the athletes bring their hips all of the way through and into contact with the bar. The contact should be hard enough to make the bar bounce away from their mid-thigh with reasonable force. Repeat this over and over until it is done smoothly.

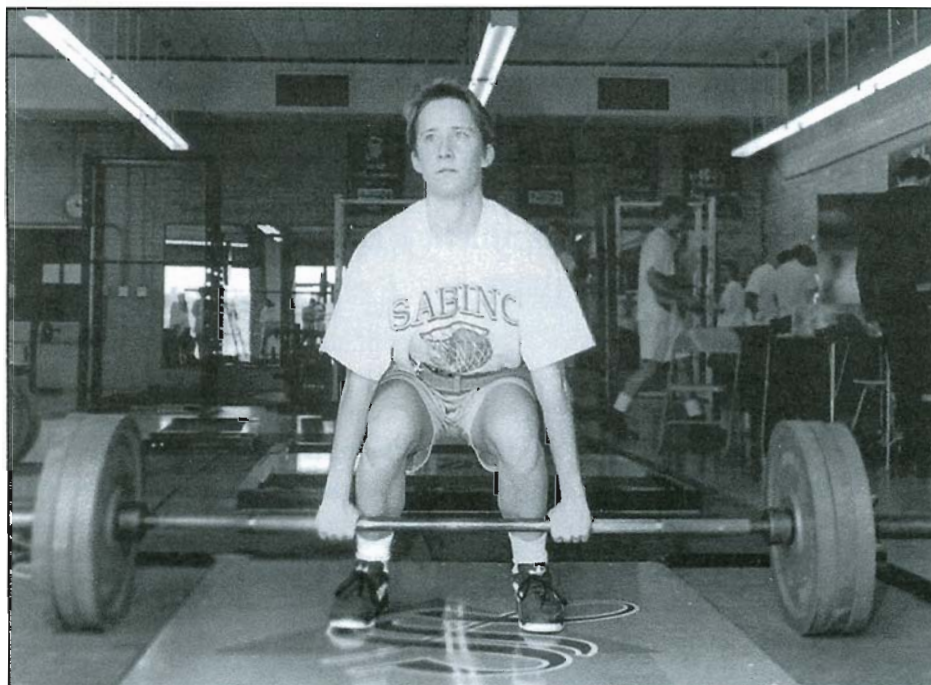
The “jump” element starts with immediate bar-leg contact. As soon as the bar touches the mid-thigh from the “pop”, simply jump up. A good coaching point is to keep the bar in close to the body with the arms completely straight. Once this element is done smoothly, repeat until the student can “pop” and “jump” as one single unit.

To get a great elbow pull, start by teaching the Upright Row Lift. Concentrate your efforts on keeping the bar close to the body and getting the elbows to go straight to the side. After this lift is done well, we immediately combine it with the “rack”, reversing the grip to rest the bar on the front of the shoulder, so the arms are not holding the weight up, only stabilizing the resting position of the bar. Again, as in the “pop-jump” combination, the “pull-rack” double element must be repeated until smooth.

Now we ask the athlete to combine



Carmen Does High Pulls To Develop Great Elbow Pull



Darynne, with the start position of the Power Clean: Head up, Chin Down, Elbows Straight. Advanced Coaching Points: 1. Stance could be an inch or two narrower so that the knees are directly above the toes (Jump Stance). 2. The wrists could be rolled slightly over the bar to facilitate hip-pop.

the "pop-jump" and the "pull-rack" into one smooth action. It is important to re-emphasize that the amount of weight used while learning is unimportant. Confidence must be maintained using lower weights, emphasizing only the proper move-

ments and body position. Repetition until smooth is very important.

Once the basic movements have been mastered, we combine the "rack" with the Front Squat, a Core Lift at our school. This helps to teach the athletes that the weight

does not have to be lifted up to shoulder height. By using a combination of proper technique, quickness and strength, the athlete can get under the bar, rack it, and Front Squat into a standing position. In this manner the amount lifted will quickly rise.

As improvement continues, add snap to the lift and overemphasize the pop of the hips. Look for the chin to lead the body upward and forward and keep the head in great position. Allow the athletes to jump and snap their legs outward to aide the Front Squat position.

Most of our female athletes are cleaning their body weight and many are way above this level. While we are not a school that concentrates on max's for lifting progress, our lifting set totals have shot skyward dramatically for all of the athletes who work on a year-round basis.

Our girls basketball team, with no starters over 5' 11", is able to press from buzzer to buzzer and compete with the best in the state using quickness, jumping ability and aggressiveness. Most of the girls are excellent Power Cleaners and lift in-season, as well. Incidentally, the best lifters in the group have dramatically improved their shooting percentages as well as their shooting range.

The level of excellence achieved by our ladies in the Power Clean has not been missed by their male counterparts. With the best females Cleaning 125-140% of their body weight, it is a great challenge for the males to keep this pace.

More importantly, through this lift, one of our school's weight room goals has been met: to have our student's, regardless of sex, size, or sport, lift side-by-side with respect for each other's abilities...□

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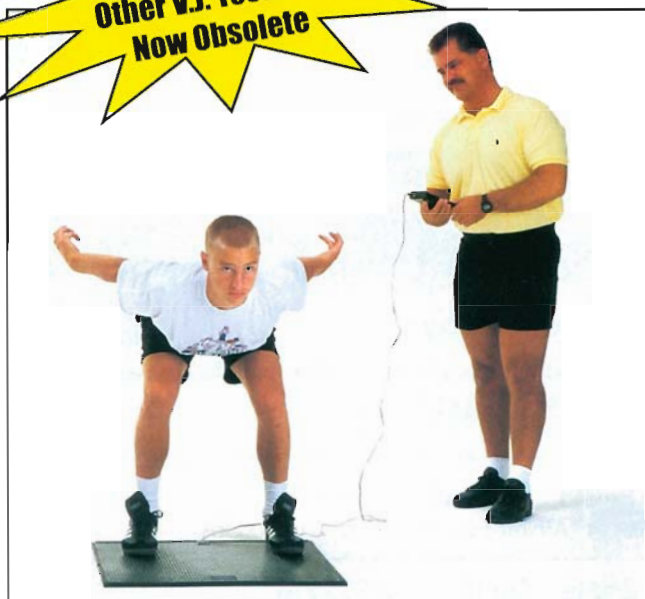
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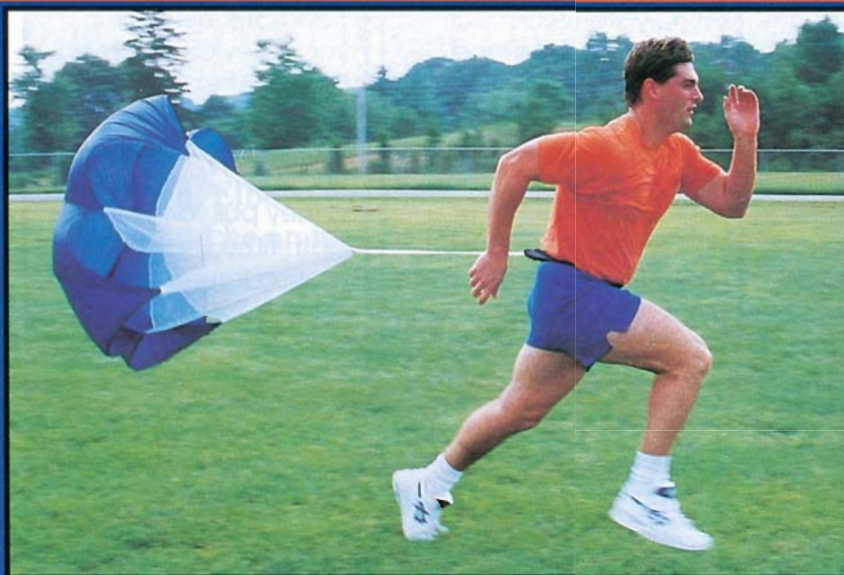
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