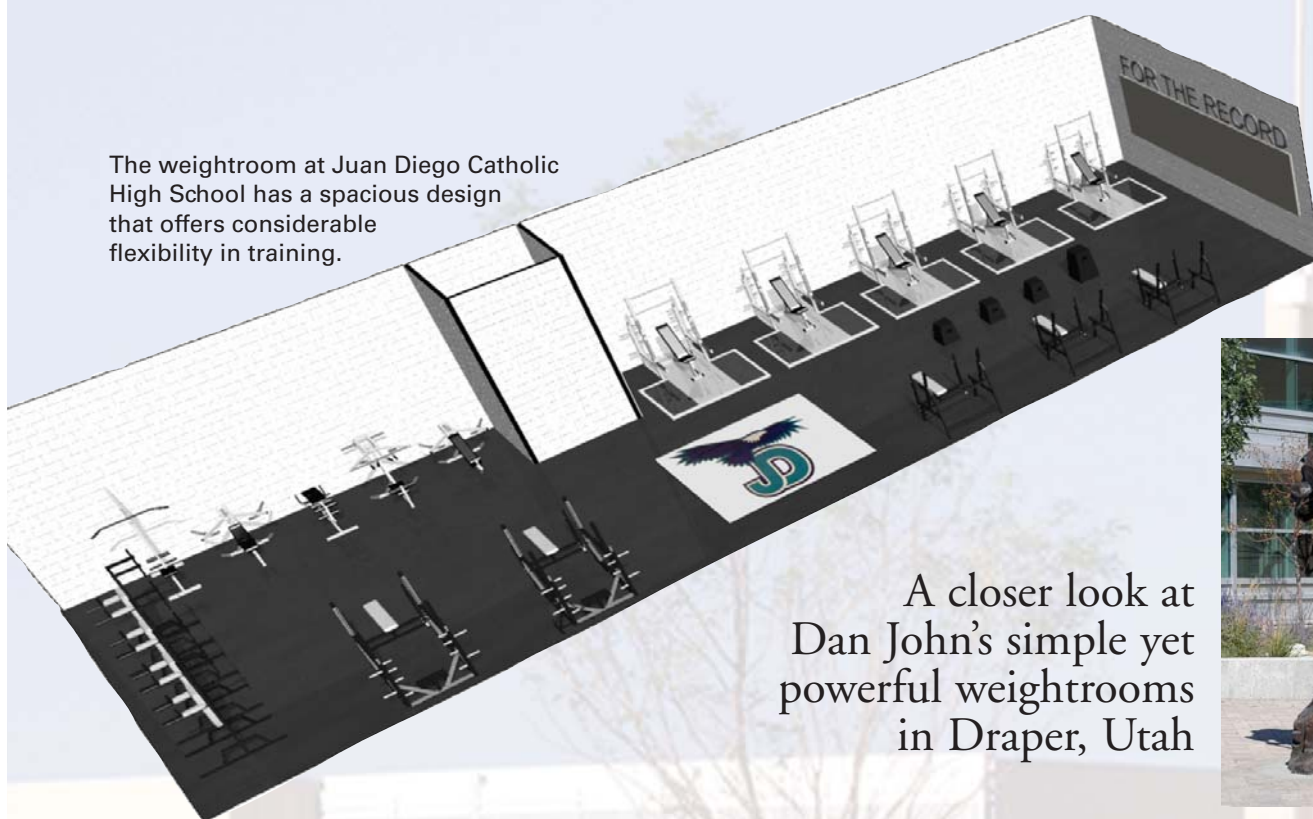


# Championship Weightrooms: *Juan Diego Catholic HS*

The weightroom at Juan Diego Catholic High School has a spacious design that offers considerable flexibility in training.



A closer look at Dan John's simple yet powerful weightrooms in Draper, Utah



Juan Diego Catholic High School is one of the most inspiring campuses in the country. With beautiful architecture and landscaping, this private school in Draper, Utah, provides an optimal environment for young people to learn and become valuable members of society. Governed by the school's tenets of *Community, Faith Development and Learning*, the teachers at Juan Deigo have designed their classes in the best interests of their students. And this philosophy even extends into the weightroom.

Profiled in our Winter 2003 issue, Dan John assumed the position of head

strength coach of the Soaring Eagle's strength and conditioning program last August. With his extensive background as an athlete, coach and educator, John set about designing a weight training facility that would provide each student with the opportunity to fulfill their physical potential.

The main weightroom has a large open area in the middle of the room for exercises such as box jumps, hurdle hops, and short sprints – it can even be used to hold clinics. “All too often, coaches just keep filling and filling their weightrooms with equipment, making it difficult to

supervise,” says John. “I can stand in one spot see literally every single inch of our weightroom. I can see bad spotting or dangerous stuff or simply tomfoolery and can deal with it now...not on ‘my rounds.’”

Much of Coach John's training of the Soaring Eagle sports teams revolves around exercises performed on lifting platforms, and he decided it was best to arrange his five platforms against a wall. “In a large facility you want your platforms in an area that naturally restricts access: opposite the doors and against a wall, away from the flow of “general”



Dan John poses in front of the unused classroom he converted into a weightroom for younger athletes.



Safety is stressed every day in the weightroom, and that includes perfect spotting.



Initial training at Juan Diego includes technique training with PVP pipes and Aluma Lite Training barbells.



Impressive record boards such as this one help motivate athletes to fulfill their physical potential.

## TRAINING & EQUIPMENT



Plyometrics, power cleans, chins and dips are key exercises in the development of athletes at Juan Deigo High. Machines are used primarily for rehabilitation.



traffic. You don't want people walking near, over or across a platform during lifting." John also put the squat racks against the walls. "Any place else and pretty soon they become "curl racks."

All of Juan Deigo's squat racks and benches have lifting chains available, because he simply loves them. "Chains are the single best innovation in lifting in a century. With chains athletes must con-

tinually accelerate each and every rep—I don't have to say "Down slow—up fast" anymore as "Coach Chain" teaches it on each and every rep."

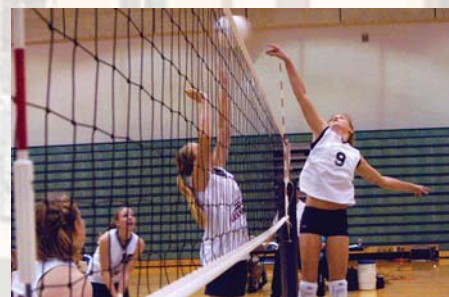
One novel idea John came up with was to convert an unused classroom into a weightroom for younger lifters that would be quieter and allow them to better focus on technique. Much of this training is performed with PVC pipes,

progressing to 15-pound Aluma Lite barbells and 5-pound training plates.

Dan John's strength and conditioning program adheres to the concept of unified training: "One School: One Program," says John. The weightroom is used every period, every day, and classes are scheduled every other day for an hour and a half. If pressed, John says he could train up to 100 kids at one time safely. All classes are coed, but John plans to soon hold girls-only classes. "I have discovered that girls tend to train harder than boys if they are in an all-girl class."

When asked if he does anything special to make his workouts as safe as possible, John replied, "Every day is an orientation day on safety. I have some athletes who could be taught safety issues every two minutes and still forget. Anyone who thinks you can trust a teenager to spot safely, each and every rep for the whole year, is probably misguided. Safety is something that you must never take for granted."

In addition to an enormous record board for core lifts, John often posts interesting items on the walls to motivate and teach his athletes. "We put a quote from Reggie Bush's high school coach about him 'sneaking in' the weightroom to get extra work and it astounded some of our kids. It doesn't have to be a lot of work, but this is the real coaching you do in the weightroom: opening the eyes of your athletes to give them a vision of what they can accomplish." **EBS**



The mission Juan Diego Catholic High School is, "To educate students in Christian values that are rooted in the past, using modern teaching techniques and facilities, to prepare them as leaders for the future."

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