

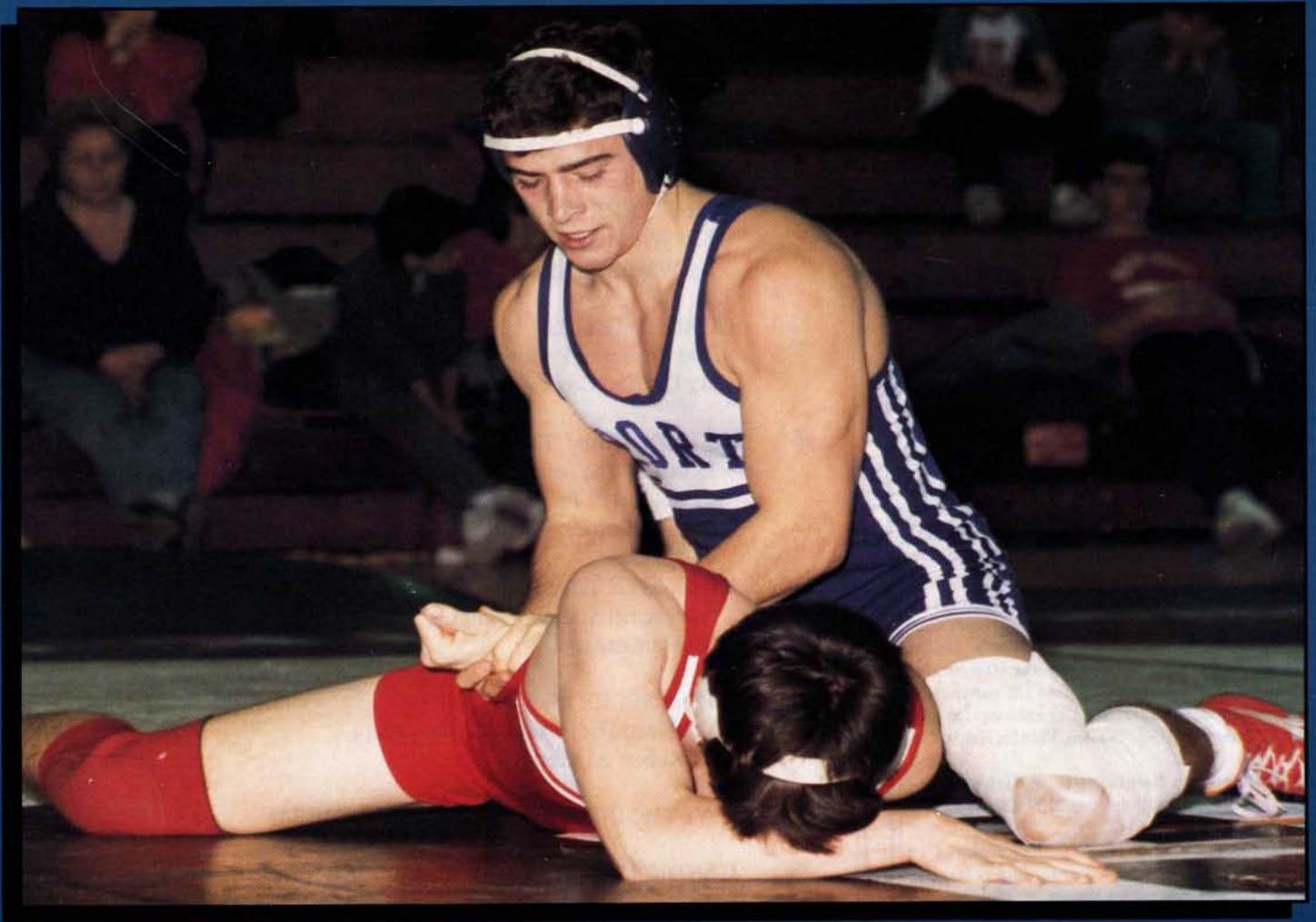


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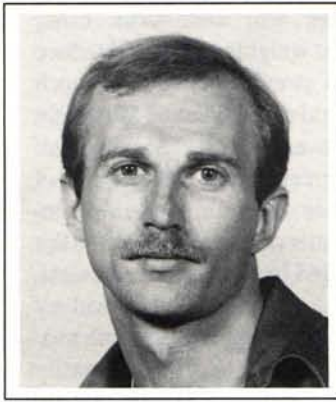
WRESTLING USA



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Olympic Lifts A Valuable Training Tool
Handicap No Excuse For Nowakowski



By Matt Brzycki

Strength Training

Adolescent Strength Training

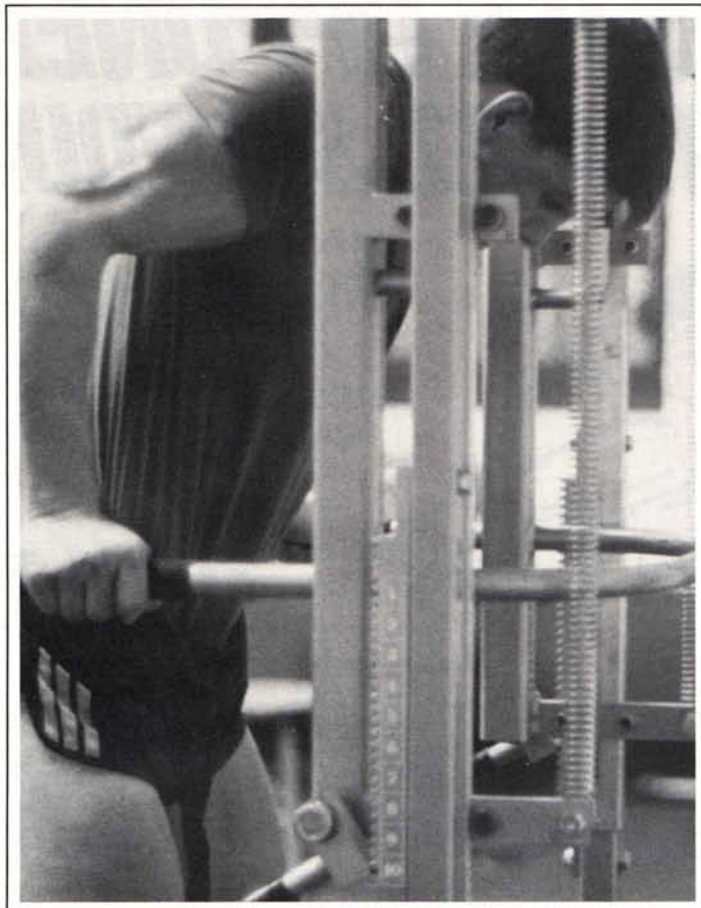
QUESTION:

"One of my students (who also wrestles) showed me your column in Wrestling USA. Can you recommend books or magazine articles which address off-season strength training for junior high wrestlers?"

Pete Panse
Middletown, NY

ANSWER:

The literature contains very little useful information concerning the needs of the adolescent athlete. Strength training hasn't really been accepted or emphasized during the younger ages. This is unfortunate, since younger athletes have a great deal to gain from weight training. A safe, practical and productive strength program can prepare youngsters for the demands of sport. Strengthening their muscles, joints and connective tissue is an excellent precautionary measure against



injury. In addition, they can perform closer to their potential by increasing their functional strength.

Guidelines

Most of the strength training guidelines that I've suggested in past articles apply to junior high athletes. Everyone (especially younger athletes) should perform each exercise throughout the greatest possible range of motion that safety allows. This will promote or maintain flexibility. Also, require your athletes to raise and lower weights in a controlled manner. **EXPLOSIVE LIFTING IS DANGEROUS!** If explosive lifting doesn't cause immediate damage, it will certainly predispose your athletes to future injury.

Avoid movements that place an unreasonable amount of stress on bones, joints and connective tissue. Potentially dangerous movements include barbell squats (which compress the spinal column and create undesirable shear forces in the knee joints), power cleans, snatches and plyometrics.

A productive workout needs only take 30-40 minutes if it's done

right. Remember that the most often injured bodyparts in wrestling are the neck, shoulder, elbow, knee and ankle. Therefore, emphasize the major muscle groups (hips, legs, upper torso) and the neck as a safeguard against injury. Include forearm exercises to increase grip strength.

Exercises that involve the bodyweight as resistance (dips, chins, push-ups and situps) along with partner-resisted movements are extremely productive for building strength. In particular, dips and chins work every major muscle in your upper torso.

During the off-season your athletes should strength train three times per week (every other day). Reduce the frequency of their workouts to twice a week during a season.

Many of your younger athletes will want to "max out" to see how much they can lift for one repetition. Never...and I mean NEVER...have them "max out." In fact, younger athletes should never do less than 10 repetitions on any exercise. Have them use slightly higher repetition ranges than your older athletes such as 20-25 for the hips, 15-20 for the legs and 10-15 for the upper torso. The higher

repetition ranges will necessitate using somewhat lighter weights which will reduce musculoskeletal stress. Seeing how much you can lift should not be viewed as a "right of passage" into adulthood. "Maxing out" substantially increases your athletes risk of injury and proves absolutely nothing. Remember, the winner of a wrestling match has never been decided by a bench press contest.

Anyone who has read my articles knows that I suggest a strength program that is performed in a high intensity fashion. For those of you who are unfamiliar with "high intensity training," it is characterized by performing each exercise to the point of muscular failure. This is immediately followed by 3-4 additional post-fatigue reps done with the aid of a partner. These extra reps are usually termed "forced reps" and are performed by having a partner raise the weight while the lifter resists the movement during the lowering phase. Most young athletes will have a problem handling this level of intensity. Hey, this might be too tough for some of your older athletes to handle! So, you might want to have your younger athletes stop a few reps short of muscular failure. There's nothing wrong with that. Gradually, you can have them

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train to exhaustion as they mature physically and psychologically. Finally, "break-downs" or "stripping the weight stack" can be done after reaching muscular failure instead of "forced reps." This is where a training partner quickly reduces the starting weight by about 25-30% and the lifter performs his 3-4 post-fatigue reps with a lighter resistance. In other words, suppose an athlete did 18 reps with 100 pounds on the leg extension before reaching muscular failure. His partner would immediately reduce the weight to about 70-75 pounds and the lifter would try to get 3-4 more reps with the lighter weight.

ONE MORE REP

I encourage all coaches to initiate a strength training program for their younger athletes. In addition to being an injury prevention mechanism, weight training is an excellent way of instilling a favorable work ethic at an early age. Make sure your youngsters realize the value of dedication, discipline and hard work as a way of achieving athletic ambitions.

Finally, I recently read about a survey that sought to determine the

extent of steroid usage at the high school level. The results of this particular research study suggested that 250,000 - 500,000 adolescents are using or have used steroids! Frankly, I am simply stunned by such staggering numbers. Moreover, the study also revealed that some individuals obtained the drugs from doctors, pharmacists and—believe it or not—veterinarians! (I would not be surprised if some drugs were supplied by overzealous coaches.) An alarming 38.3% said they first took the drugs at age 15 or younger!

The dangerous side effects from steroid use are well-documented. Briefly, steroids have been linked to extreme mood swings (which can be borderline psychotic), severe acne, baldness, temporary sterility, abnormal liver function, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease and possibly cancer of the liver and testicles. **STEROIDS ARE BAD NEWS!** In addition to being harmful, unprescribed steroids are illegal as well as unethical for use as performance enhancers. Instruct your athletes to steer clear of all drugs - not just steroids. Remember, users are losers. You don't need drugs to be a winner.

POSITION VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Applications and nominations are invited for a position with faculty status in the Physical Education Department at the United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland

POSITION:

1. To teach in the Physical Education Dept. general curriculum.
2. To assume chairmanship of Combative Curriculums.
 - a. Constant review and update of Combative Curriculum for both men and women
 - b. Ability to teach Hand-to-Hand Combat, Women's Self Defense, Judo, Wrestling, and Boxing
 - c. To continue to stress safety and implement any state of art equipment that is approved.
3. Potential for involvement in other phases of the Intercollegiate Sports programs with emphasis on Wrestling

QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Bachelors Degree required and Masters Degree preferred
2. Known expertise in Combative instruction with emphasis on activity and safety
3. Teaching and coaching experience at the high school or college level in combatives.
4. National recognition as a competitor and/or coach in Wrestling

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