

**STRENGTH**

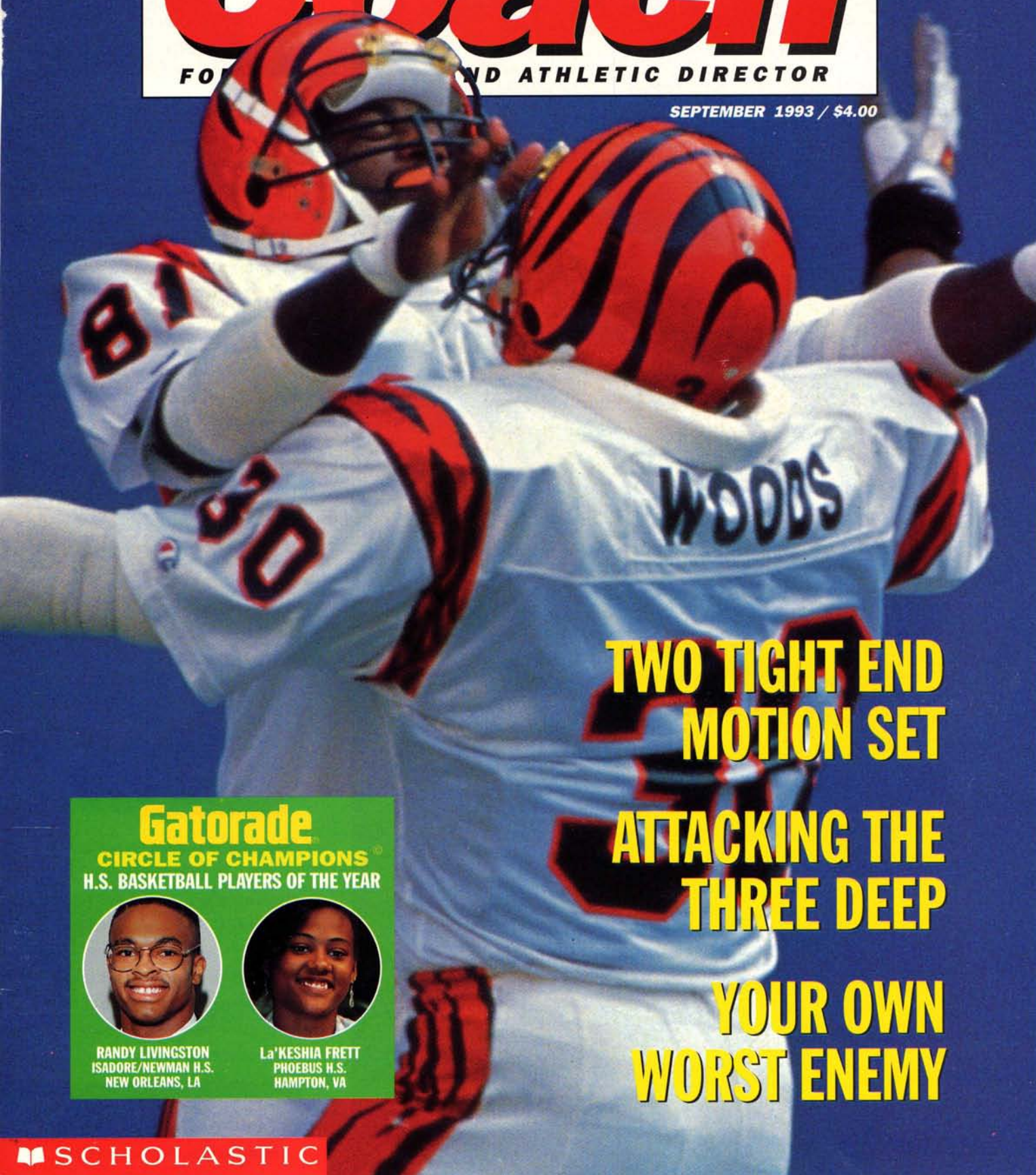
**WHAT YOU CAN LEARN FROM A DUMBBELL**

S C H O L A S T I C

# Coach

FOR HEAD AND ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

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**TWO TIGHT END  
MOTION SET**

**ATTACKING THE  
THREE DEEP**

**YOUR OWN  
WORST ENEMY**

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## Strength-training coaches looking for variety in their workouts would do well to investigate the possibilities of dumbbells.

Dumbbells offer several definite advantages:

First, they provide variety in at least two ways. They enable the athlete to duplicate every exercise that can be performed with a barbell, meaning that the DB counterparts can be used as alternative movements.

Second, the fact that the lifter can use a different grip with the DBs gives him an additional option. For example, a DB bench press can be done with a parallel grip (palms facing each other) as well as with the traditional bench-press grip.

Perhaps the biggest advantage of DBs is that they require each of the limbs to work independently of the other. Most people have a dominant body side—they are often stronger (and more flexible) on that side. As a rule, the difference in strength is not significant. When the difference in strength between limbs does become significant, the DBs become highly useful as a training medium.

This also becomes important in rehabilitative strength training, especially when the lifter is forced to work one limb at a time when using a lighter weight for the weaker limb.

Contrary to what you might read in the esoteric journals on exercise science, the DBs are not particularly advantageous in enhancing neuromuscular adaptations to an exercise.

simple: variety and independent workload.

The following DB exercises can be performed for specific areas of the body.

### **Gluteals:**

A deadlift with DBs is effective for exercising the hips, legs, and low back. While the movement is quite similar to its barbell counterparts, namely the squat and deadlift, the DB deadlift has several advantages: It doesn't have the spinal compression associated with barbell squats, and it is more comfortable to perform because the bar doesn't ride up and down the shins.

### **Calves:**

A calf raise can be done in a standing position using a DB for resistance. You simply hold the DB in one hand while standing on a stable block of wood (to obtain a stretch). The free hand can be used to hold onto a machine to maintain balance.

If you find this too easy to do, just do the movement with one leg at a time.

### **Chest:**

Three multiple joint chest exercises can be performed with DBs to emphasize different parts of the chest: the bench press, decline press, and incline press. These can be executed with the traditional bench-press grip or with a parallel grip.

pullover.

The bent-over row can be done more comfortably and with better technique by using one arm at a time. This multiple joint movement works the lats, biceps, and even the forearms, whereas the DB pullover is a good choice for isolating the lats with conventional equipment.

### **Shoulders:**

All kinds of DB exercises are available for the 11 shoulder muscles.

The shoulder press, a multiple joint movement, involves the anterior delt and the triceps.

The three parts of the deltoid—the anterior (on the front), the middle (on the side), and the posterior (on the back)—can be isolated by front, lateral, and bent-over raises, respectively.

Two DB exercises are particularly effective for the trapezius (traps): the upright row and the shoulder shrug.

Finally, internal and external rotation can be used to exercise the deep muscles of the shoulder: "internal rotators" (subscapularis and teres major) and "external rotators" (infraspinatus and teres minor).

### **Biceps:**

The basic exercise for training the biceps is the bicep curl. It can be performed with DBs either standing upright or seated, as well as on a Preacher Curl device. DB concentration curls are also a productive and popular exercise for the biceps.

# YOU CAN LEARN A LOT

## **Anything you do with a barbell can be duplicated with the DBs!**

Note: At this point, we'd like to dispel the ridiculous notion that free weights are better than machines for increasing size, strength, and power or helping to accelerate the learning of sports skills. Such notions have no basis whatsoever in the scientific literature and make absolutely no sense at all.

The advantages of DBs are pure and

Multiple joint movements for the chest also provide indirect work for the triceps. However, a bent-arm fly with DBs can be used to isolate the pecs and the anterior deltoid on the front part of the shoulder. As a variation, DB flies can also be done on a decline and incline bench.

### **Back:**

Unfortunately, DB exercises for the upper back (lats) aren't very plentiful. As a matter of fact, there are only two decent movements: a bent-over row and a DB

### **Triceps:**

The tricep extension and its variations are the typical movements used for exercising the triceps. DB alternatives include the tricep extension from a supine or seated position (usually referred to as a "French curl").

The so-called "donkey kickback" isn't a bad DB exercise for the triceps, either.

### **Forearms:**

The two basic forearm exercises that can be performed with DBs are the wrist

By Matt Brzycki  
Strength Coach, Princeton U.

## SUMMARY OF DUMBBELL EXERCISES:

BODYPART	EXERCISE
<b>Gluteals</b>	deadlift
<b>Calves</b>	calf raise
<b>Chest</b>	bench press decline press incline press bent arm fly
<b>Back</b>	bent over row pullover
<b>Shoulders</b>	shoulder press shoulder shrug upright row bent over raise front raise lateral raise external rotation internal rotation
<b>Biceps</b>	bicep curl
<b>Triceps</b>	tricep extension
<b>Forearms</b>	wrist flexion wrist extension
<b>Abdominals</b>	side bend
<b>Low Back</b>	stiff leg deadlift

extension and wrist flexion. Wrist extensions are used to work the posterior (or back) side of the forearm, while wrist flexions are used to work the anterior (or front) portion of the forearm.

### **Abdominals:**

The side bend is a pretty good exercise for the oblique muscles (on the sides of the abdomen). It is a popular exercise among fitness enthusiasts.

# FROM A DUMBBELL!

### **Low Back:**

The stiff-leg deadlift can be used to train the lumbar region. It can be done with a barbell or with DBs. The execution is similar (with the DBs held in front of the body).

### **Don't be a DB:**

Dumbbells provide several advantages and a multitude of exercise options. To avoid getting punched out, the lifter should make sure that his training partner knows that he (lifter) is not getting personal when he starts talking about "working out with dumbbells!" ■

