Presented By:

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Training the Explosive Athlete
Part 1: Developing a Philosophy

I've been in the coaching profession for my entire professional career. During these 23 years I have found that my philosophy for preparing athletes has evolved. Over the last 6 – 8 years it really has become solidified with only small changes needing to be made. The neat thing about this philosophy is that those who have embraced it have seen a significant change in their success.

Unlike some philosophies this one actually has legs to everyday use. It is not convoluted with too many technical ideas that seem to bog down a coach who does not spend time in the physiology lab. This thought process came out of a deconstruction of the sport that it was developed to facilitate.

To be truthful the process actually seems too simple to actually work. Why is it that in order for something to work it has to have a bunch of gadgets, gears, wires and blinking lights? This program will leave you doubting its legitimacy. But it has been road tested, not only at the Division I level but also in high schools and smaller colleges.

Let me explain the thought process. If you look at the game you are looking to train for you need to deconstruct the game. Strip it down to its bare essence. If we look at the game of football, when we really look at it, once the ball is snapped what do you see? Movement!!!! Everyone is moving. Some forward, some backward, some on angles but everyone is moving. This movement, or the ability to move efficiently, can also be seen as athleticism. This "movement" is something that we can improve on. We have removed the veil that tends to cloud how the training of athletes is looked at. Take this item and look at it from every angle. Look at it for each individual position. Now that you have the game stripped down, the problem begins, now you have to go to work. The better the athlete you have the more you must challenge them on a daily basis. The lesser the athlete, the more you have to work on moving them consistently through a training process to better their ability until you have better athletes that need to be challenged. Of course you will have those who say, "we need to challenge our athletes everyday". Of course you do, but the basics of movement will challenge those without great ability, and those without the innate ability will not be able to handle the more difficult movements that challenge great athletes.

When we are looking at a training program we see that there are several things that we need to work on to improve the ability for athletes to move. Let's start with flexibility and core strength (abdominal / lower back stability). These two are always worked on and are done everyday so I won't use them in the separation of your training day. What are the areas that will improve? Look at your needs to improve athleticism - what needs to be worked on?

When I'm asking this question in a clinic setting I get answers such as: SPEED, AGILITY, POWER, ENDURANCE and STRENGTH. If we look at these five, it becomes apparent that four out of five of our needs are based in movement and only one is based, almost solely, in the weight room.

In short 80% of our need is based in movement. If we look at this through a business equation, and 80% of our quest to be successful is based in movement then we must commit 80% of our energy and time into this endeavor. This is the point that makes most strength coaches cringe.

Are you committed to dividing your program into time essential periods that will allow you to spend the amount of time on your areas of need? Are you also ready to prioritize your program so that you do a bulk of your movement first and then do your strength work afterward. Yes, that means that you won't be doing your bench press until the end of your workout, twice a week.

If you are still reading you are among the minority who are ready to hear me out on how this process is actually one of the building blocks on building a successful program.