

N.S.S.A. NEWS



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A Message from Coach Sigut

NSSA Athletes and Parents,

NSSA had another exciting month of speed and strength training. We have recently completed over sixty post evaluations for our inaugural speed training group. The results were simply outstanding. You can check out our athletes' performance gains near our NSSA News wall at the academy. NSSA athletes will continue their growth process by doing once per week "in-season/busy time" training and two/three times per week "out of season/slower times" training. As we have discussed in our previous newsletter, year round training is vital to the continued speed and strength development of our athletes. It takes a mere three weeks to begin to lose everything you have worked so hard to gain.

NSSA will keep an ongoing evaluation database of every athlete. This information will be very helpful for those athletes attempting to receive scholarships and financial aid at the collegiate level. These records will give college recruiters a clear picture of what to expect from your athlete. NSSA evaluations will not only display their performance statistics, but prove to be a shining example of the hard work and dedication your athlete has put forth throughout their elementary through high school years.

Sincerely,

Brad Sigut
NSSA President

Hot Topic: NSSA Strength Training Program

This month's focus will be on the importance of strength training to speed and overall athletic performance. There are many misconceptions concerning athletic strength training. The NSSA Strength Training program follows the principles of the Bigger Faster Stronger strength training protocol. The BFS program is designed for both male and female athletes from ages 12 through adult. I would encourage you to visit the BFS website (www.biggerfasterstronger.com) to learn more about the Readiness and Total Program Package.

At NSSA, Athletes can either work with one of our staff, or we will gladly educate the parent/guardian on the total BFS protocol. The NSSA Strength and Speed program are a dynamic combination that will yield phenomenal athletic performance results. **An athlete will never reach their full potential, no matter what the sport, without a proper, year round strength training program.**

Please read this month's feature article "Why is Strength Training Important To Athletes" by one of the country's most highly sought after performance enhancement specialists, Joe DeFranco.

Why is Strength Training Important to Athletes?

By Joe DeFranco

The improvement of performance in athletics over the past few years has been phenomenal. For example, twenty years ago the average football lineman weighed 250 pounds and ran a 5.2-second 40-yard dash. This was considered to be nearing the genetic limit for a player. Now *running backs* that weigh what the lineman used to weigh are running 4.4-second 40-yard dashes! Strength training has made the single, most positive contribution to this type of improvement. Today strength training influences every athletic program in the country, no matter what the sport - male or female. Athletes now find it necessary to lift weights and participate in conditioning programs to better prepare themselves for the competitive rigors of the athletic season.

Just a short time ago, most coaches thought that strength training would cause athletes to become muscle-bound and would be counterproductive to good technique. Now it has been proven that athletic performance depends either directly or indirectly on qualities of *muscular strength*. We must remember that strength builds the foundation for *ALL* other athletic qualities. For example, if you do not possess great relative body strength (strength in relation to your body weight), you will never be able to run fast. This is due to the fact that all aspects of proper running technique require high levels of muscular strength. In other words, if you can't achieve the proper knee drive, arm swing, posture and push-off, you can't be fast! And this is just one example. Many university studies have also found a high correlation between an athlete's jumping ability and agility in relation to their relative body strength. What this means is that an athlete who is strong for his/her bodyweight will possess the ability to jump higher and move quicker, compared to their weaker counterparts.

The number one purpose of complete conditioning - including the physical, technical, tactical, and psychological aspects of training - is to improve the player's ability to make the big play. Strength training is a vital part of complete conditioning. The primary function of the body's 600+ muscles is to contract (shorten in length) to move body parts. And remember that only *muscle* can cause movement. The stronger the muscles and the more forceful the contractions, the faster the athlete will run, higher he will jump, further he will throw/kick, and harder he will hit. It's that simple!

An added bonus of strength training is injury prevention. Athletes who strength train tend to have fewer injuries. This is because strength training strengthens the muscle attachments and increases density of bones at the sites of muscle origins and insertions. And if an injury does occur to an athlete who has been strength training properly, it will probably not be as serious and will tend to heal faster.

So next time someone tells you weight training is just for bodybuilders, think again. A proper strength training program just may be the final piece of your training "puzzle" to success!

ATHLETE SPOTLIGHTS

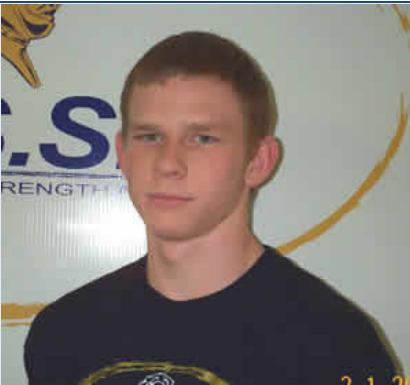


Norwin Freshman **Matt Palo** has seen success on the basketball court, the baseball field and even lettered as a Freshman in Cross Country this fall. Matt was a starter as shooting forward for Norwin's undefeated (18-0) Freshman Basketball team this year. He was one of their top scorers and leading rebounders. Matt continues his basketball season now playing AAU with the Westmoreland Wizards. In baseball last year, Matt played for the Pittsburgh Wildthings AAU team as their starting shortstop. They qualified to play in the 14U AAU Championship in Sarasota, FL and also in the USSSA

Championships at Walt Disney World.

Matt trains at NSSA to become a better athlete. He would like to improve his speed and strength to help him in all his sports. He most enjoys the Vertimax, which has already improved his vertical jump by 3" in just 8 weeks of training.

Coach Sigut says: Matt definitely has the frame to become a big time basketball player at Norwin and at the collegiate level. Although he was a little unsure about our training system at first, he now understands everything he does in our Speed and Strength sessions translates to more success on the court. I look forward to watching his young career blossom.



Nate Harriger is a Norwin sophomore track and field enthusiast. During this past indoor winter track season, which he participated in while training at NSSA, he saw several achievements. Most notably, he placed 4th in the High Jump at the Tri-State Track Coaches Association Indoor Championship. He cleared 6'0" for the first time at this meet.

Nate enjoys strength and speed training and his main reason for training at NSSA is that he knows it will help him to excel at his best sport, high jump. He noted that what he likes best about training specifically at NSSA is Trainer Jon Salmon who motivates him to do his best. Nate feels that with continued training at NSSA, he will keep improving his vertical jump and his times in sprints.

Nate has very specific athletic goals set for himself over the coming years: He wants to increase his vertical to 42", and set the school high jump record of 6'11" by the time he graduates.

Coach Sigut says: Nate has excelled at training from the very first day, especially on the Vertimax. He has earned the respect of his peers for his great vertical jumping ability. He is very dedicated and committed to all aspects of his training. His recently acquired thirty inch vertical is just the beginning. We look forward to Nate setting new personal records in the high jump over the next few years.

9-year-old **Jason Cerniglia** is one of Norwin's up-and-coming athletes. Jason and his sister, Olivia, began training with us in January.

Jason plays football, baseball and hockey. His recent sports achievements are playing in the semi-finals for both football and hockey last season and winning MVP in the Turtle Creek baseball tournament when he was 7.

Jason enjoys NSSA and likes spending time here with his friends. He has improved his speed and agility and especially his jumps. Jason's main athletic goal is to be the best he can be in all sports he plays. His parents noted that they are pleased with the Norwin Speed and Strength Academy program and love the motivation and inspiration that the trainers offer the children.



Coach Sigut says: I have had the good fortune of watching Jason perform in both baseball and football. Jason is blessed with natural skills that some other his age don't have. There is a saying from a friend of mine, that hard work and average beats lazy and talented every time. Jason Cerniglia combines both, hard work and talent. The sky is the limit for this young athlete.

Norwin Wrestlers Rock Rockwood!

Among the Norwin Wrestlers taking first place at the Chris Truxal Memorial Wrestling Tournament at Rockwood, PA on February 23rd were NSSA Members **Heath Coles, Zak Kelley and Brady Sigut**. Other first place winners from Norwin were Chad Coles, Kurtis Phipps, Drew Phipps, Jarrett Miller, Joe Alessandro and Josh Freidhof.

NSSA Evaluation Schedule

As part of your 8-week Speed Training package, you are entitled to one re-evaluation after at least 6 weeks of training. In order to accommodate all athletes without interrupting normal training schedules, we will now be conducting re-evaluations on Saturday mornings twice per month. A sign will be posted next to the schedule at the Academy with names of athletes who are due to be evaluated each month.

This Month's Re-Evaluation Dates are: Saturday, March 15th, 9 a.m. – Noon and Saturday, March 29th, 9 a.m. – Noon.

Next Month's Feature Topic

Nutrition and Sports Performance