

YOUNG ATHLETES - PART 2

By Richard Bell

In my last article I touched on the fact that bad training concepts and methods can lead to the overall structural imbalance of young athletes. For example, my approach with young athletes, 13 to 14 years old, would be to perform a thorough assessment of his/her lower and upper extremities, because this information will help me better design the athlete's training program.

A typical concern that pops up with this age group is a weak lower back and tight hamstrings. In that case, posterior chain work would be the first thing to focus on so the individual will benefit better from all the specialized lifts down the road. Having a candy bracelet for a posterior chain can really hurt an athlete's ability to explode on the field or on the court.

One thing I want coaches to understand is that if you want fast and explosive athletes, you must *first* develop muscle balance and *then* begin to improve their overall strength.

What really ticks me off is seeing athletes running around the lake for conditioning purposes and all they have to do is compete within a 75-foot area. I would highly recommend that young people invest in a simple physiology book to become educated on the concept of metabolic training for sports. You also should look into the strength requirements for your sport. I will outline some programs for several of the more popular sports.

I recently discovered that our area athletes are far behind in physical development. The reason is poor training methods and lazy coaches who are not encouraging their athletes to improve their off-season motor abilities, strength, speed, power and flexibility. Without further ado, here are some examples of General Physical Preparedness programs for basketball, football and soccer.

I usually start the young athlete with circuit weight training for the first four to five weeks and then move towards superset training for another three to four weeks. Keep in mind that the program should be based on how many weeks you have available for training.

FOOTBALL	BASKETBALL	SOCCER
Circuit A: 2/3 times a week	Circuit A: 2/3 times a week	Circuit A: 2/3 times a week
A-1 Variation Pushups	A-1 Medicine Ball Chest Pass Against Rebounder	A-1 3-way Lunge with Medicine Ball
A-2 Body Weight Squats	A-2 Body Weight Lunge with Medicine Ball	A-2 Overhead Medicine Ball Toss Against Rebounder
A-3 Lat Pulldown	A-3 Seated Rope Pull to Neck	A-3 Box Single Leg Step-Up
A-4 Standing Calf Raise	A-4 Standing and Seated Calf Raise	A-4 Seated Horizontal Row
A-5 Seated Rope Pull to Neck	A-5 Back Extension	A-5 Prone Alternating Leg Curl
A-6 Abdominals	A-6 Abdominals	A-6 Abdominals
Repeat circuit 4 to 6 times	Repeat circuit 4 -6 times	Repeat circuit 4 -6 times