

# Combating High School Weight Training Programs for Baseball

Keep in mind, the message is not directed towards those coaches who did not have control over their high school weight programs, nor did they have much input into those programs. Bashing all high school weight training teachers is not the intent of the presentation, but to better paint a picture of how to combat some of the **strength protocols** which are being implemented. Here are some common problems with poorly designed high school strength and conditioning protocols:

- 1. Ratio of push to pull is not balanced** - It's not common to see a 2 to 1 push to pull ratio in high school weight training, or even higher.
- 2. Back squatting for overhead throwing athletes.** Putting a baseball player in the back squat position adds stress to the valgus nerve of the elbow.
- 3. Clean or Hang Clean for overhead throwing athletes.** Putting a baseball player in the clean position adds stress to the valgus nerve of the elbow increasing the chance for damage of the UCL.
- 4. Olympic lifting.** Baseball players tend to have more joint laxity in the shoulder, thus performing clean and jerks and snatches put baseball players at higher risk for shoulder injuries.
- 5. Ignoring in-season needs for overhead throwing athletes.** Baseball players, specifically pitchers, need to have a specific in-season strength and conditioning regimen that coincides with throwing protocols. If a pitcher is set to start that day, he sure as heck does not need to pound out 12 sets of presses.
- 6. Too much focus on "Pump up".** So, what is the connection to strength and conditioning? It's pretty simple; there is too much focus on aesthetics rather than focusing on building the motor of our athletes. The lesson? Make athletes better movers. Period. Let me reiterate, this is not intended to bash all high school weight training teachers, but only to highlight some common problems I have seen and heard about. I will leave it up to baseball coaches to determine if this occurs in their programs.

## What the goals are, meaning what is going to take time to implement...

- 1. Focus on scapular strength.** Scapular wall-slides, forearm wall slides, rhythmic shoulder stabilization exercises, and iso-metric band holds are just to name a few. Focus on external rotation of the shoulder and pulling exercises. Check the links below for some examples:
- 2. Implement upper and lower body mobility drills into warm-ups and conditioning sessions.**
- 3. Educate players (without bashing a co-worker) on the importance of becoming a better mover, rather than trying to look like Lou Ferrigno.** Getting players to buy into becoming better movers and not having the biggest biceps in the school is tough, but have substance to what you are telling them. Take a look at Tim Lincecum, Justin Verlander, or Cole Hamels and you will see these guys won't be winning any bodybuilding competitions anytime soon.