FOOTBALL PERFORMANCE SYSTEM

CHRIS BARNARD

www.OvertimeAthletes.com
Overtime Athletes Inc. 2021. All Rights Reserved
# TABLE OF CONTENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position Needs Analysis</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Factors in Physical Development of Football Athletes</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training the Key Factors</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodization for Training Football</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principles of the Program</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Football Performance System. My goal for this program was to create an all encompassing performance system for football athletes.

Since I can remember football as a sport has been my dream and passion. Growing up in central Florida, football was more than a game. It was a right of passage for us young men. We spent all year preparing and practicing for those Little League games on Saturdays and eventually the Friday night lights in high school.

Through that process I discovered the weightroom and fell in love with developing myself for the game. I got my initial introduction from a teammate’s dad who would take us every night to a hardcore powerlifting gym. We focused on 3 to 4 compound lifts a night and kept the intensity extremely high. These were some of the most iconic training sessions I shared with my boys. To give some context, my friend’s father was recently released from prison where the word was he was an enforcer for organized crime. Now I mention this because you can imagine the intensity this guy brought day in and day out. I’ll never forget my first leg day and barely being able to walk to the truck.

Later on I continued to research and developed a true passion for enhancing performance. I would hold regular training sessions with friends on my back porch where I had a rack and barbell and the field behind my house. This led me to learning how to incorporate sprinting, jumping, and agility drills. I would scour the internet for drills of other football athletes all night and without context we would spend the next day’s training session performing them for hours. We had no idea what we were doing but there was something magical about
tying rope around our waists and pulling tires for repeat 100 yards that molded my mind and body.

My next evolution came after having severe surgery on my shoulder while playing junior college football. I came back home thinking my career was over and after picking myself back up I found a strength coach named Elliott Hulse in the nearby area who I sought out to rehabilitate me. My buddy and I would drive an hour away everyday to his garage warehouse gym. Elliott was a professional strongman and integrated a lot of what he was doing into our workouts. We would flip tires, push sleds, and press heavy weights. This was another milestone in my performance evolution.

The final chapter in my development came when I enrolled at the University of Miami. I went there with the sole purpose of reaching my childhood dream of playing for the Hurricanes. Unfortunately, because I didn’t meet some qualifications, I never saw the field but I was fortunate enough to receive my degree in Applied Kinesiology and Physiology. Through this time I was able to workout in the mornings with my professor Brian Biagioli, a former D1 strength and conditioning coach, who I think is one of the most brilliant minds in the industry. He taught me how to bring balance to training and tie all of the pieces of performance into a sound program to develop athletes.

Since this time I obviously hung up the cleats and have devoted the last 15 years to developing athletes in my facility in St Petersburg, Florida. Over this time, I’ve been fortunate to work with dozens of professionals and aspiring collegiate and high school ball players. I’ve developed high school athletes with no scholarship offers into professional athletes. I’ve developed practice squad guys into starters and I’ve developed pro guys into Pro Bowlers. We’ve had success at every level.

My life has revolved around football since I can remember and all the experiences and work along the way has led me to develop this program. My goal is to compile all of this into one program to share with you how we are producing ball players like a factory to help create more elite level athletes.

Let’s get to work.
POSITIONAL NEEDS

To understand your goals of the program, we need to analyze the needs of each position of the sport. This means we’re determining which movements football athletes perform in their sport, then we’re isolating those movements to train and elevate their game.

Below, I’m going to break down the positional groups in football based off data of shared movement and share what they perform in-game:

1 - SKILL PLAYERS (BACKS AND WIDE RECEIVERS)

Skill players are the athletes who require the most speed and agility. These athletes all possess similar size where runningbacks tend to be slightly bigger and stronger while wide receivers and defensive backs tend to be leaner and faster. They require quick acceleration and deceleration with rapid change of direction in multiple planes. Good skill players also need balance and coordination to achieve center of mass control to create positional advantages on the field. The goal for training these athletes should be to develop and maximize speed and power. An emphasis on mobility and body integration will support the athletes ability to be more agile.
2 - LINEBACKERS AND TIGHT ENDS

In comparison to skill players, LB’s and TE’s typically require more short to moderate bursts on the field. These positions are considered transitional players because it requires the size and strength of lineman but also the speed and agility of skill players. The goal for training these athletes should be to maximize power and full body integration as these athletes require the most dynamic balance out of all the positions. It’s important to note that many runningbacks can be considered in this category as well depending on the use of that back within the offensive system.

3 - LINEMAN

These positions require the most amount of contact. The goal for these athletes should be to increase overall force production and anaerobic endurance. The size of these athletes matters but should not compromise the athletes speed and endurance. Therefore the goal should be to optimize body composition dependent on the athlete’s anthropometrics. Overall our goal here is to increase absolute strength and transition into power while maintaining a high level of endurance since the every down engagement of these athletes.

Above is a breakdown of the positions in football based on the movements they perform in the game. However, in this day in age football athletes are judged at camps and combines with just how much strength, speed, and power they possess.

This means to play at an elite level now, you need to be developed in every physical category. Nowadays linemen are running elite 40 times and skill players are lifting weights that only linebackers and lineman touched.

Put simply, whatever your current position or strengths are, you need the physicality of each attribute to stand out in today’s game.

Knowing this, there are a series of key factors that I focus on with football athletes that will translate to the game no matter their position. Let’s get into them.
KEY FACTORS IN PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF FOOTBALL ATHLETES

KEY FACTOR #1: STRENGTH

A football athlete’s ability to express strength statically and dynamically is a huge factor in their success on the field.

If you look at a player like Derrick Henry, he can run between the tackles and take hits in the trenches, which reflects his static strength. He can also make a linebacker or defensive back miss in the open field, which reflects his ability to express strength dynamically.

To become a better athlete, you must be able to produce high amounts of force (or express your strength) in three different scenarios.

The first scenario you need to express your strength in is when you are in a static position. For example, when you are engaged with another player during contact. Your ability to “stand your ground” is determined by your static strength.

If this foundational ability to express strength in a static position is not properly developed the football athlete will struggle when making contact on the field.

The next scenario is expressing strength dynamically. This is your ability to produce force while your body is moving at high velocities. As you may have guessed, in the game of football, this is a point of emphasis while sprinting as well as changing directions.

This ability is especially important because as the speed of contraction increases, the body’s ability to produce force significantly decreases. For example, the reason a lineman can squat 500 pounds, but can’t jump over 30” on his vertical is because the speed of contraction is different. To jump, you need a quick muscle contraction.
That last fact signifies the importance of two things:

1 - It signifies the importance of getting our bodies in the most beneficial positions to produce the highest amount of force possible. This comes down to having sound mechanics when changing direction, jumping and sprinting.

2 - It displays the importance of strength training for those who want to become more agile, jump higher, and sprint faster. However, regular old strength training won’t just do the trick. We’ll have to utilize a combination of advanced methods if we want to elicit strength adaptations that help our sport specific strength.

The last strength scenario is elastic. This is our ability to produce spring-like force in certain situations. You can see this in a skill player who can stop on a dime and quickly explode in the opposite direction.

Currently, it’s believed that a lot of one’s elastic force potential is purely based on genetics, but in my experience dynamic lifting and plyometrics can develop one’s elastic force production.
ABSOLUTE STRENGTH

In addition to the three strength scenarios, you should know about the two types of strength.

The first is your absolute strength.

This is your raw ability to produce force. Think of it in terms of a one-rep max.

A foundation of absolute strength sets the stage for athletes to move better, stay healthier, and be overall stronger. In addition, absolute strength is a precursor to power, which is important to for reasons I’ll address below.

In this program, we’ll develop absolute strength with a series of advanced modalities. These modalities will not only make you stronger, but will also translate into power, explosiveness, and more.

RELATIVE STRENGTH

The other type of strength is relative strength.

Relative strength is the amount of force you can produce relative to your bodyweight.

As an example, if you weigh 200 pounds and can squat 315 pounds, and your buddy weighs 200 pounds, but can only squat 225, you have more relative strength.

Relative strength is massively important for all athletes, especially football players. The higher our relative strength is, the more control we have over our bodies. This means we’re better able to change direction, traverse the field sideline to sideline, explode off the ground to snatch a ball, tackle in open space, and more.

The converse of a guy with high relative strength is an overweight powerlifter who can lift heavy, but is slow, sluggish, and unbalanced.

In this program, we’ll use various advanced methods to improve your relative strength, thus improving your body control, balance, movement efficiency, and more.
KEY FACTOR #2: POWER

Power is what you should be after as a football player. Power is your ability to produce force quickly. And it determines your ability to change directions rapidly, sprint down the field to make play, tackle, and more.

In this program, we'll be building your power in three planes, which we'll discuss below.

VERTICAL POWER

Football places a big emphasis on vertical force.

As such, you need vertical power to be successful. Previously it was thought you only needed force for jump balls as a WR or DB. Now, all positions require high levels of vertical power because we know that vertical force directly translates over to your ability to produce max velocity sprinting.

Vertical force is a key attribute all over the field.

Again, it doesn’t matter what your position is, all positions on the field are expected to produce vertical force.

HORIZONTAL POWER

Horizontal power is a key factor for football athletes. Whether increasing your explosive first step off the line to getting push in the trenches, football athletes must possess an exceptional amount of horizontal force.

Horizontal power is critical for your ability to accelerate. And in a game where you’re constantly changing speeds and transitioning, the faster you accelerate, the more of
an edge you’ll have on the field.

Again, horizontal power is the main force a football athlete must possess and elevating this force will give you a huge competitive edge.

**LATERAL POWER**

Cutting on a dime, covering or running a route, and mirroring a lineman - all of that is determined by your lateral power.

Lateral power is often misunderstood, and many football players don’t go about developing it the right way. It’s far simpler than most imagine but countless hours of laterally shuffling isn’t the most efficient way of developing it.

Building a foundation and building off the foundation with more advanced movement in the lateral plane will allow an athlete to begin moving proficiently.

**KEY FACTOR #3: LINEAR SPEED**

Speed is another important factor for football athletes. The faster you can move on the field, the more of an advantage you have to make plays. Period.

With that said there are two areas we want to focus on with speed.

**ACCELERATION**

Acceleration is your ability to build speed quickly. While mainly skill positions reach top speed on the field on a consistent basis all positions accelerate frequently.

Your ability to accelerate relies on two things. The first is horizontal power, which I spoke about above.

The second is mechanics.

In general, you want a forward body angle to produce as much force horizontally as
possible. In this program, we’ll use unique drills designed for the football athlete’s to possess the proper mechanics to move proficiently.

**TOP SPEED**

Top Speed or Maximum Velocity is the speed phase we reach after accelerating when an athlete is upright and performing a more cyclical like leg action. This is where an athlete reaches their maximum speeds.

Just like acceleration your ability to sprint faster during top speed phase relies on two factors:

Your ability to produce a good amount of vertical force.

And how good your biomechanics are to produce efficient movement that maximizes stride length and stride frequency.
KEY FACTOR #4: CHANGE OF DIRECTION

LINEAR CHANGE OF DIRECTION (CURVILINEAR)

When we examine how a football athlete sprints throughout a game, we can see that they don’t solely sprint in straight lines and angles. In fact, they often follow more of a curvilinear path.

For instance, think about a defensive end running around an offensive tackle to make a sack. He doesn’t sprint up field, pivot 90 degrees, and take a hard angle to the QB. He rounds the run creating more of a curve or arc.

This is considered curvilinear or arc running. This is sport specific speed development for each position on a football field and is an actual skill that can be trained.

When an athlete performs a curvilinear run they lean inwards anywhere between 5 to 30 degrees. This takes them off of their center of gravity as they are influenced by centrifugal forces. In order to sprint while leaning inwards an athlete must express a great deal of mediolateral ground contact.

When we run in a straight line both legs have the same responsibility. But, when we bend that line into a curve, each leg takes on their own responsibilities. The inside leg utilizes more eversion of the foot and adduction of the hip and serves as a stabilizer. The outside leg utilizes more inversion of the foot and hip abduction to produce the power.

The athlete who can maintain sound mechanics and rhythm while running a curve will be the faster athlete. If the athlete disrupts their mechanics through arm action, trunk
instability, or poor hip and ankle stability they will produce poor curvilinear speed.

This is why we must train curvilinear sprints when addressing football specific speed.

*LATERAL CHANGE OF DIRECTION*

Another important piece of your movement on the field is your lateral change of direction and agility.

Just like linear speed there are a series of base mechanics for coaches and athletes to consider when training Change of Direction movements.

1 - Deceleration - During this phase of the movement the athlete needs to come to a stop to change his direction. Initial deceleration is required to begin slowing the body down. Next, technique is involved to ensure the proper foot is planted and positioned at the proper angle. Finally the athlete must display eccentric strength out of the planted foot to fully decelerate their body.

2 - Transition - This phase deals with the athletes time between deceleration and acceleration. This component is based on the amortization phase between the eccentric and concentric contraction of the movement. Here we want to minimize ground contact time utilizing the elastic strength we develop in our program.

3 - Acceleration - This is the final phase of a change of direction movement where we are redirecting our forces to move in the desired direction. Accelerating out of the movement deals with the concentric contraction of the muscles to rapidly drive the body in the desired direction. Technique is also involved to put the athlete in the most mechanically advantageous positions.

It’s important we train these factors independently and integrate them back as a whole. When these components are enhanced we can then enhance the technique to change directions in multiple planes.

Finally once change of direction technique is enhanced we can then add reactionary components so the athlete is responding to a stimulus. This is what is considered true Agility or Sport-Specific Speed training.
TRAINING THE KEY FACTORS

Now that you understand what we’re trying to accomplish in this program, the next piece is understanding how we are going to achieve this and get your results.

As the saying goes, there are many ways to skin a cat. The same is true for training athletes. In fact, each athlete is unique and may need to be trained differently to get the desired outcome.

I have met many coaches who have different opinions, experiences, and coaching techniques than myself, and still produce optimal athletes.
But, my goal for Football Performance System is to trim the fat, and focus on training principles that consistently deliver results.

When I focus on training these modalities it has shown me improvement time and time again with athletes of all different ages and levels.

Below, I want to touch on the modalities you’ll be using in this system and the reason behind the use of them.

**SPEED TRAINING**

Speed Training is the direct speed work you will be performing within Football Performance System. We will place an emphasis on increasing your acceleration and top speed, as well as your ability to change directions efficiently so you can move better on the field.

When it comes to speed training I like to take the “isolate and elevate” approach.

If you’ve watched any of my YouTube videos, you may be familiar with this term. Essentially, it means that I want to hone in on a single component of a larger movement, train that component, and elevate it to enhance that movement.

In our case, we’re doing it with acceleration, top speed, and change of direction mechanics. Instead of having an athlete sprint, and yelling cues at them, hoping they’ll “change course” mid sprint to produce better movement, I let carefully selected drills do a lot of the work.

This, again, means we create better mechanics by singling out particular motor patterns, repeating them over and over until they’re significantly improved, and transferring them back into a sprint.

Remember, sprinting is a skill, and skills can be taught and developed. It’s in the same realm as catching or throwing a football. We want to break it down into simple drills to get better.
POWER TRAINING

Power is the key to transition your strength into speed and jumping ability. As the program moves along, we need to focus on moving the athlete throughout the Speed-Strength Continuum in order to transfer absolute strength into relative strength so the athlete can produce more force from each step on the field.

One big player in building relative force is plyometrics. Plyometrics enhance the elastic strength we discussed prior and are the key to teaching the athlete how to absorb and produce force dynamically.

Because when you’re on the field, you’ll be producing force in a variety of different scenarios. Sometimes at high velocities and sometimes at low velocities. To excel on the field, you’ll need to effectively display power in all scenarios.

When you nail this down, you’ll see a higher vertical jump, more quickness, and more overall explosiveness.

To do this first, we place an emphasis on low level plyometrics to build a solid foundation.

Next, we progress to teaching the athlete to properly absorb force eccentrically.

Once this ability is established, we place an emphasis on the transition, or isometric phase of dynamic movement, which not only creates more stability, but also generates faster ground contact times.

Finally, we can focus on maximum force production and how fast we can produce that force in the final phase of jump training.
STRENGTH TRAINING

As stated prior, the focal point of this program is to build the body’s overall absolute strength and transition it to relative strength.

To achieve this, we’ll use a four day split, where two days consist of upper body training, and two days consist of lower body training.

Of these two days, one day will focus on building absolute strength, while the other will emphasize relative strength by utilizing tempos and various loads with our compound lifts.

ABSOLUTE STRENGTH

I’ve focused predominantly on the trap bar deadlift as the core lower body lift to build absolute strength in the lower body. Through my years of coaching, I’ve gravitated towards this movement more and more and as much as I love movement variation for building strength, I use the trap bar as a staple.

Here’s why:

Multiple studies have found that peak power and peak velocity are greater with trap bar deadlift than conventional deadlift. In many cases, these two measurements are higher in trap bar deadlift than back squat as well.

In sports, you rely on power and velocity to succeed, so it makes sense to double down on a movement in which the athlete can move the bar quickly and explosively with the intent of a better transfer to the court.

Even more, the trap bar deadlift places slightly more emphasis on knee extension than the conventional deadlift, and less stress on the lower back. This makes it a safer movement for athletes, easier to teach, and makes it more sport-specific.

My general goal is to get my athletes lifting 2.2 to 2.6 times their body weight on the trap bar. This is because I have found this range to be an indicator of sufficient absolute strength. Once an athlete has their absolute strength in this range, I know I can shift my
focus to developing the athlete’s strength-speed and speed-strength.

It’s important to note that these benchmarks are all relative to the athlete’s height and weight. It would be tougher for my 6 foot 6, 250 pound tight end to lift 650 lbs (2.6 times their bodyweight) than it would be for my 6 foot tall, 250 pound linebacker to lift 650.

This isn’t to say we stop at 2.6, either. It’s more of a box to be checked, among a list of other benchmarks, that allow me as the coach to strategize and program in a way that helps the athlete develop more speed and power.

We’ll build strength in this movement, and others, by using simple progressive overload. Each week, we’ll decrease the volume (amount of repetitions) while increasing the intensity or load (amount of weight lifted).

Every 4th week, we’ll deload, and then repeat. Training in this fashion allows us to stay fresh and continually experience strength gains.

**STRENGTH-SPEED**

There are a variety of methods we’ll use to build strength-speed, but the method we’ll use in the weight room to develop this kind of strength is coined Triphasic Training.

I was first introduced to this type of training during my pursuit of a 44 inch vertical jump.

I read *Triphasic Training* by Cal Dietz, which focused on isolating and elevating each phase of a dynamic movement: eccentric, isometric, and concentric.

To exemplify each phase of a dynamic movement, we’ll use a back squat.

The lowering portion of the back squat is known as the eccentric phase. During the eccentric phase, you’re putting your muscles on stretch, and absorbing force as you descend lower into the squat. One of the mechanisms responsible for taking the muscles from a stretched position to a contracted position is the stretch-shortening cycle.

When you work this mechanism, you increase the speed and power with which you can contract the muscles.
In addition, we’re going to work the Stretch Reflex by manipulating the Golgi tendon organs.

The Golgi tendon organs are components of muscle that signals the brain to relax when a muscle contracts too hard. This mechanism is known as GTO Inhibition.

This mechanism is beneficial, as it prevents muscle damage. However, the mechanism is overactive, as the GTO signals the brain to relax when a contraction reaches 60% of the maximum force a muscle can handle.

With calculated eccentrics, we can place stress on the GTO and bypass this mechanism.

To sum this up, we’re trying to increase the total amount of force an athlete can absorb, effectively increasing the amount of force the athlete can produce.

Next, we’ll work the isometric phase. The isometric phase is the transition at the bottom portion of the squat.

During the isometric phase, you’re producing force in a static position. Producing force
in this way calls upon motor units to maintain that position and not fold over from the weight. But, when you hold static positions for an extended period, the initial motor units fatigue, and larger, fast-twitch motor units are recruited as reinforcement.

This ultimately teaches the body to recruit larger motor units when performing dynamic movements. It will also increase the amount of force you can absorb, and have a resulting increase in the rate of force development.

Finally, we'll work the concentric phase.

The concentric phase occurs during the ascension of the squat.

During this phase, we’re working on increasing the speed at which you can generate maximum force.

To do this, we'll use concentric focused lifts in which we’ll move lighter loads as fast as possible. By doing this we’re working rate of force development, which is how fast you can produce force.

On top of this, we’ll use contrast training in conjunction with the concentric focused lifts.

Contrast training is essentially performing a heavy, resisted movement, such as a squat, or trap bar deadlift, then following it with an explosive movement like a sprint, a jump, or a bound.

The idea here is that the concentric-focused, loaded movement heightens the nervous system of the athlete. This is called potentiation. After the lift, we experience post-activation potentiation. This is the enhanced ability of a muscle to generate force with lighter loads after performing an exercise that consists of heavier loads.

Post-activation potentiation allows for greater force production, and power output of the lightly loaded exercise. In our case, the “lighter load” will be an explosive, plyometric movement.

Working each phase in isolation allows us to work particular mechanisms in the body independently. By training in this way, the physical adaptations we receive from
emphasizing each phase will build upon each other in a way that allows us to build more relative strength and increase force output.

**AUXILIARIES**

To supplement the compound lifts we use to build strength, we’ll use accessory movements to maintain balance in the body and further build strength.

I think a key difference in my coaching is that I teach my athletes to approach every rep with focus and intent.

Most without coaching go hard on the sprinting, jumping, and compound lifts, then the minute they get to auxiliaries they tend to “go through the motions”.

While there are some movements where this is merited, the majority of the time, I stress the importance of accessories, as they are tools to get stronger on compound lifts. I push them to keep the same intensity on reverse lunge reps as you do with your deadlift.
PERIODIZATION

In this section, I’m going to lay out the Periodization you’ll be following in this program.

If you don’t know, periodization is intricate planning intended to overload the body with various training cycles and apply stimulus to transfer your training to increased performance in-game.

In Football Performance System, we’ll follow a block periodization, which we’ll break down into three main macrocycles; Accumulation, Transmutation, and Realization, which we’ll dig deeper into in the following sections.

BLOCK TRAINING

Block training is, at its core, concentrating on acquiring one desired quality, then building upon that adaptation while introducing a new stimulus to improve a new quality.

This is my system of choice when training athletes because it allows the specific adaptations to be acquired with as little volume as possible, which limits the athlete to simultaneously train the skills of their sport.

As you may know from reading above, in this program, there are three phases that make up a block.

The first is the Accumulation phase. In this program, the Accumulation phase is broken down into two micro-phases. These phases will work to build our foundation.

The first two weeks of the Accumulation phase will be known as the Adaptation phase, and this can be thought of as a “Pre-Accumulation’ phase in which we use general preparation methods to prime the body for the stimuli it’s about to be introduced to.

In these two weeks, you’ll see a focus on volume to increase your overall work capacity. This will prepare you for more intense loads you’ll see in the following phases by allowing you to produce higher quality repetitions.
During weeks 3 through 6, we’ll advance the Accumulation phase by developing basic motor qualities.

In addition, we’ll introduce eccentric strength training as well as absolute strength training with compound lifts.

As far as auxiliaries go, they will be programmed with the intent of further developing the basic motor patterns.

From there, we’ll move into the Transmutation phase, which will build upon the qualities we developed in the accumulation phase, while developing intermediate motor patterns and explosive power.

In addition, we’ll continue to develop absolute strength, as well as work on motor unit recruitment with isometric strength training.

Finally, we’ll move into the Realization phase, where we’ll put everything together and focus our efforts on maximal explosiveness and power training.

In this phase, the development of the specific motor patterns we’ve been working on in the previous phases will culminate to produce the proper sequencing of mechanics that will produce improved quickness, agility, and overall power.

During the strength portion of this phase, we’ll continue to develop maximal strength, while also further developing explosiveness and power, by moving lighter loads at fast velocities.
PRINCIPLES OF THE PROGRAM

As you can see, this system is designed to start out very basic, and get progressively more and more advanced as you move through it. Regardless of how easy or difficult the drills are, they require the highest focus and intent in order for them to elicit the physical adaptations that you desire.

In the following sections, we’re going to dive into the principles of the program. These principles cover everything from how to lift, how to deload, how to warm up, and more.

In order to get the results you are looking for, it is critical we are executing the program consistently and correctly.

This is a simple guide to make sure you are doing just that...
STEP 1: DYNAMIC WARM UP

As a base of mobility and general warm up I highly suggest following my Dynamic Warm Up located in the Exercise Database, even if you are at a commercial gym.

The Dynamic Warm Up, once understood, should only take 10-12 minutes and will act as a great base to prepare your body for the rest of the workout.

The goal of the dynamic warm up is to prime the body for strenuous training by elevating tissue temperature and elevating heart and respiratory rate. The dynamic warm up will improve the quality of the reps, reduce injury, improve reaction time, lower resistance in the muscle range of motion, and improve oxygen delivery and blood flow.

Point being, approach your warm up each session with intent, focus, and the understanding of the benefits.

STEP 2: MOBILIZATION AND ACTIVATION

The next phase of the workout is the mobilization and activation through static stretching and dynamic movements.

Muscle tightness limits your performance. It not only prevents you from getting into the proper position to move, but it also creates muscle imbalances.

Muscle Imbalances are the leading cause of injury in athletes. To prevent these we want to lengthen muscles that are commonly tight or muscles that will support the movements you are about to perform.

Each time we stretch make sure to intuitively relax into the stretch and focus on increasing the range of motion throughout the time of stretch for each individual set.
STEP 3: SPEED AND POWER MOVEMENTS

- **Warm up Sets** - At this point you should be fully warm and ready to compete in every rep. This means every rep is of the highest quality and intensity.

- **Intensity** - When performing any form of athletic movement always make sure to progress to a technical max. This means you are maximally performing the drill but not sacrificing any technique. If it is a sprint we want to perform with high intensity, but also make sure technique is sound. If the tempo or speed needs to be reduced to meet the technique than so be it. If it is a jump and we need to increase the height we jump each week, without sacrificing form.

- **Sets & Reps** - The sets and reps are provided, so make sure to record your bests for that particular day if they can be measured. When performing an athletic movement ensure that each rep and set given is performed maximally.

- **Rest** - The rest for each athletic drill is intuitive. This means there is no prescribed rest period. You choose the amount of rest where you can perform each drill with 100% quality. The muscles should not be fatigued unless I have noted otherwise. The standard rest period for a movement in this section is anywhere from 60 - 120 seconds but can vary depending on your conditioning level and the degree of difficulty of the movement.

- **Recording** - Track your progress from week to week for the drills that can be measured.

STEP 4: STRENGTH MOVEMENTS

- **Warm up Sets** - I usually advise 2-3 warm-up sets when performing the main compound movement for strength or power and then lead into the instructed working sets in the table.

- **Load** - Make sure that you choose a weight that you can not perform more than the number of reps given, but can complete the full amount of reps with. Typically I suggest building up to your technical max lift for the given reps. For instance, if the
program calls for 5 sets of 3 reps, the prior 2 sets should be a consistent build up. So, say you ended at a 300lb 3RM, it should look something like this…

- **Warm Up** - 135 x 5
- **Warm Up** - 225 x 3
- **Warm Up** - 250 x 3
- **Set 1** - 275
- **Set 2** - 285
- **Set 3** - 300

- **Sets & Reps** - The amount of sets and reps is given in each table to show the athlete what they must perform for each movement on each and every day. This means if you are performing a Deadlift for your Strength Movement and it calls for 3 sets of 3 reps you would complete 2-3 warm up sets. Then from there you will progress each of the 3 sets until you reach your heaviest 3 repetitions, while maintaining proper technique.

- **Tempo** - The tempo for each particular rep will be displayed with a bracket next to the movement. (Example: [3|1|X]) Where the first number is the Eccentric tempo or
portion where you will lower the weight for the given seconds. ([3|1][X] in this case 3 seconds). The next number is the Isometric portion and finally the Concentric is the last. The letter X represents “explode” as in you will produce force as fast as possible in this phase of the lift. So to go with the example of [3|1][X] on say a bench press you would lower the weight to your chest in 3 seconds. Then you would come to a hard pause at the bottom of the motion for 1 second then explode the bar up as fast as you can.

•  
  
  Rest - Sets of reps >5 = 60-90 seconds of rest between sets. Sets of reps <5 = 2-3 minutes rest between sets. The exception to this is when the program calls for a superset.

- Eccentric Training - When performing an eccentric lift we will focus on a controlled tempo for the lengthening of the movement or the “down” phase. The overall volume to receive this stimulus is low so it’s important to execute each set at a high level. To perform eccentric reps, you’ll execute on your prescribed tempo on the way down, then explode up as quickly as you can. For these reps, we’ll stay between 60-85% of your one rep max.

- Isometric Training - When performing an isometric lift, we will focus on a pause for the static portion of the movement, or the “transition” phase. We will mimic the same range of motion the athlete will utilize in their sport. For instance, if we are performing a squat we will perform the isometric pause at a 45 degree angle. This is because when the athlete runs or jumps they are typically within this range of hip angle. That said, when you get to the bottom position of your movement, you’ll hold that position for your prescribed tempo, squeezing the muscles involved with the movement as hard as you can. Then, without sinking lower, you’ll explode up out of that position. Again, we’ll stay between 60-85% of your one rep max for maximum effectiveness.

- Concentric Training - When performing a concentric lift, we’ll focus on being as explosive as possible during the ascension or “up” phase of the movement. Here, you’ll control your movement on the way down, no prescribed eccentric tempo. Then you’ll move the bar as quickly as you can as you explode out of the body position. Here, we’re focused on moving the bar as fast as possible, so we’ll use lighter loads that can be anywhere from 30-55% of your one rep max.
• **Recording** - Make sure to write down the weight that you performed the lift with in the table to keep track of progress. This is paramount as each week you will be building on the previous from last week. Track these in the actual Excel Sheet so you can analyze your progress.

**STEP 5: AUXILIARY MOVEMENTS**

• **Sets and Reps** - Make sure that you are performing each movement with maximal intensity. If the set calls for 10 reps then you are performing that set with a weight that you can do only between 8 - 12 reps with. If you can do more than 12 reps with that weight then you need to increase the intensity.

• **Rest** - Rest during the auxiliary phase varies, but try to stick closely to 60 - 90 seconds rest between each exercise. If you switch body parts you can take up to 2 - 3 minute rest.
DELOAD

Every 3 - 6 weeks you will be assigned a Deload week in your training. During this period we are attempting to recover the muscle tissue and nervous system fatigue. This week typically mimics the same program you are following but with reduced volume and intensity overall.

- **Speed and Power Deload** - During these movements in a deload we want to focus more on technique then intensity. I like to cue my guys to have mental reps by pulling back the reins and having them focus on perfect reps for each drill. In addition, volume will typically be reduced.

- **Strength Deload** - During this portion we will cut the intensity of the movement to 50% of your estimated 1 rep max to reduce nervous system fatigue and allow it to recover. A race car can’t be driving with the pedal to the floor forever or it will breakdown. Use this time to recover and tune up.

- **Auxiliary Deload** - During the auxiliaires we want to reduce the intensity to an estimated 70% of what you were performing the movements in the prior week. As a simple example, if you were performing a single arm row with a 100 lb dumbbell we simply want to reduce it to a 70 lb dumbbell.
CONCLUSION

This concludes the Football Performance System manual. The goal of this manual is to educate the athlete or coach as to why they are doing what they are doing.

My experience as a coach has been to show the athlete the final product to show the potential possibilities. Take Lego’s as an example. We want to show them the finished product on the front of the box while guiding them step by step through the process.

By showing them the bigger picture and the step by step process of getting there I’m of the opinion that this produces not only trust and confidence in their training but better overall effort. Better effort produces better results.

As mentioned above, there are many ways to skin a cat but I wouldn’t put this program together if I didn’t think it would work for athletes across the board.

With that being said if you don’t get the desired results I implore you to reach out to me in order for us to determine the best strategy for you moving forward to get those results.

Train hard, compete every rep, and trust the process.

Chris Barnard
MEDICAL DISCLAIMER

This program is for educational and informative purposes only and is not intended as medical or professional advice. Always consult your doctor before making any changes to your diet or nutrition program. The use of diet and nutrition to control metabolic disorders and disease is a very complicated science, and is not the purpose of this program. The purpose of this program is to help healthy people reach their cosmetic fitness goals by educating them in proper nutrition and exercise guidelines.

No health claims are made for this program. This nutrition and exercise program will not help cure, heal, or correct any illness, metabolic disorder, or medical condition. The author is not a medical doctor, registered dietician, or clinical nutritionist; the author is a fitness and nutrition consultant.

All individuals, especially those who suffer from any disease or are recovering from injury, should consult their physician regarding the advisability or undertaking any of the activities suggested in these programs.

The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) recommends that apparently healthy individuals who are male and over 40 or female and over 50 to have both a physical exam and a diagnostic exercise test prior to starting a vigorous exercise program.

A diagnostic exercise test and physical examination is also recommended in individuals of any age who exhibit two or more of the major coronary risk factors (smoking, family history of heart disease, elevated blood cholesterol, elevated blood pressure, and diabetes). Any individual with a known history of heart disease or other heart problems should be required to have a medical evaluation including a graded exercise test before engaging in strenuous physical activity.

The author and publisher shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any of the information contained in this manual. The user assumes all risk for any injury, loss or damage caused or alleged to be caused, directly or indirectly by using any information described in this course.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED: No part of this program may be reproduced or transmitted in any form whatsoever, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any informational storage or retrieval system, without expressed, written and signed permission from the author (with the exception of brief quotations as used in reviews or discussion groups, with attribution to the author and source).