THE YOUTH, THEY ARE IN Stanton

UP To



The secret to success
at Stanton High is getting
an early start with strength
and conditioning

f BFS had a fan club, Coach Greg Hansen would be its president.
Coach Hansen is the head football coach and assistant activities director at Stanton High School in Stanton, Nebraska. Coach Hansen was introduced to the BFS program in 1984 when he was a junior in high school. He continued using the program in college, and then when he became a coach he taught it to his athletes. According to Coach Hansen, the reason he is such a fan of the BFS program is simple: It works.

For example, Hansen has been with the Stanton Mustangs for six years, taking over a program that had had only two winning seasons in 40 years. Despite this tradition of being cellar dwellers, Hansen knew he could turn around the program and begin a tradition of winning. And he did just that, setting the wins-in-a-season record in his second season as head coach (12 wins), making the playoffs five straight



Coach Hansen's readiness program, which he calls GUTS, became so popular with the 7th and 8th graders that soon the 5th and 6th graders asked to join.

years, and playing in the state championship game in 2004. In addition, as the strength training coordinator for Stanton, Hansen has adopted the unification philosophy to give every team sport the opportunity to duplicate the success of football.

Hansen attributes much of his success as a coach to applying an idea he borrowed from the business world: the "10-80-10 Rule." "As applied to coaching," explains Hansen, "this idea suggests that 10 percent of your athletes

are going to be exceptional and will do what they are supposed to do with little help from you; 10 percent will do pretty much whatever they want regardless of what you do; and 80 percent can achieve great success if you provide great leadership and encouragement. It's not that I ignore the athletes in the top and bottom 10 percent, but I focus my attention on getting that 80 percent to work hard – their efforts are going to make the most difference in your program."







One way Hansen motivates his athletes is by getting them to recognize the benefits of strength and conditioning. "If a football player comes into our weightroom and is not fired up to lift, I'll ask him, 'If you're going to play football, shouldn't you be the strongest you can be?' When he answers yes, I'll say, 'Right now you squat 250

pounds; don't you think you'd be a better football player if you could squat 350 – wouldn't you be a stud?" Hansen adds that he only talks about self-improvement, never comparing the accomplishments of one athlete to another, and he focuses on encouraging his athletes to make continual improvements in what they can achieve both on

and off the playing field.

A Strong Head Start

Another key to Hansen's success is the implementation of "GUTS," a workout for pre-high school athletes based on the BFS Readiness program. GUTS is an acronym that stands for "Get Up to Succeed." Hansen originally



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started the program for seventh and eighth graders to give them a head start on lifting by emphasizing agility and quickness and on perfect form on core lifts such as the squat and bench press. "In the past I would have to spend a great deal of time with freshmen, teaching them the core lifts and other aspects of the BFS program such as Dot Drills and plyo boxes," says Hansen.

"When kids came out of our GUTS program, they were ready to be put on the Beat the Computer program and start breaking records. It really gave our athletes a head start over our competitors." But there's more. Although he originally restricted the GUTS program to middle school athletes, Hansen soon found that many kids in the fifth and sixth grades were interested in participating. "I did my research and found that it was safe for kids of this age to start the program."

Although Hansen has studied other workout programs, he has never been



The Mustang weightroom is not fancy, but it's heavy-duty and designed to train athletes.



tempted to switch. "Kids transferring in from other schools often have problems with the lifting technique," says Hansen. "We recently had a transfer student from Texas, and he was just amazed at how organized this program is. He said that his previous school had a much bigger weightroom than ours, but their athletes did pretty much what they wanted. These kids had very poor squatting technique, one reason being they didn't emphasize that lift at his school. I teach our athletes that if you could do only one lift, it would be the squat. The squat is king."

Hansen says that he trains girls the same as the boys, but he adds that it is important to make it clear to girls that weight training will not make them big and bulky. "We explain that they don't have enough testosterone to look like a guy, and that our goal is not to get them bigger, faster, stronger but *better*, faster, stronger. If a girl says, 'I lifted last year and my legs got big,' it's most

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likely because she ate too much junk food and didn't exercise enough," says Hansen. "What also helps now is that we've had many girls go through the program, so the new girls in the program can see that they can get strong and still look feminine."

Asked if he's seen any differences in the kids of today and those he coached when he first came into the profession, Hansen replied, "There seems to have been a decline in the emphasis of proper manners and respectfulness in kids these days. I try to instill that in the athletes I coach. As a whole, there seems to be a rise in parental complaints to coaches and administration if they don't think their kids are getting enough playing time or are being treated unfairly. All this stress often leads to many good coaches getting burnt out a lot sooner, or causing good coaches to seek out

other professions."

That's not the case at Stanton. Thanks to a sound strength and conditioning program and dedicated coaches such as Greg Hansen, Stanton High School is enjoying newfound success in athletics. But more importantly, Hansen's work with younger athletes and that critical "80 percent" is inspiring students to create exceptional lives for themselves.

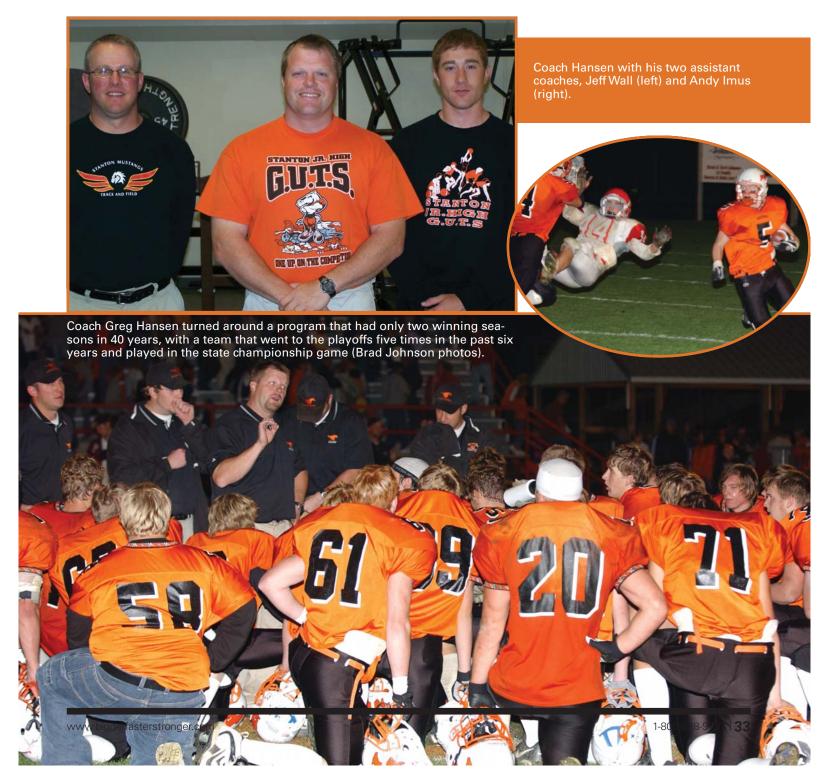


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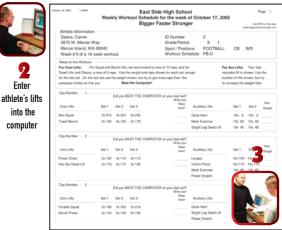


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