

The 4 Most Critical Mistakes Made By Parents and Athletes Which Derail and in fact often Destroy a Young Pitcher's Career.

Crucial Mistake #3. Mass & Strength are King: Accepting the Paradigm that bigger, heavier, larger and stronger is ALWAYS better and... needed

I assume most people are reasonable and logical folks and when they are shown all sides of the issue they are typically very good at deciding for themselves what the real truth is. The challenge is when it comes to athletics and athletes, parents, coaches and players 'assume' bigger and stronger is always better and often we don't investigate further. I don't think I have to remind you what they say about what occurs when you ASSUME!

First...Is that even true? And if not...what could possibly be the consequences for being mistaken and coveting the wrong things in our training?

Let's for one moment take a step back and just let our eyes take a look at the issue before us. Is it true that to be an elite, world class caliber thrower, size, mass and strength are THE key ingredients to attain this status?

First let's take a good look at 8 of the most elite throwing athletes in the world today. Drew Brees, Tom Brady, Payton Manning, Eli Manning, Aaron Rodgers, Clay Bucholtz, Justin Verlander, and Clayton Kershaw. What do you see?

Compare that to men who truly covet and work specifically at gaining size, mass and strength.

Bench pressing, squatting, etc... and getting large and gaining mass/ strength are in themselves sports. They are referred to in terms as body building, power lifting, cross fit, body sculpting, weight lifting. etc.

In essence these sports all have very specific goals. Getting bigger, gaining mass or gaining 50 lbs on your max back squat or barbell bench press is a very different goal indeed than is throwing a baseball 95 mph, 120 times, every five days for 180 days- for 20 years.

And frankly...the consequences for getting this wrong are severe. Namely injury and drastically reduced performance capabilities.

It truly breaks my heart. I see 6-10 athletes at every camp we run or I travel to that has worked his rear off, chasing the wrong rabbit. Their current strength program has HURT, not helped them. Their program has in fact become a constraint...a limitation to their development...not something that assists their growth.

In essence they have in their garage a Hennessey Venom GT. So far it simply hasn't performed to the level they would like...and they have been convinced by others that they MUST put in a bigger motor.

Their current lack of performance may indeed be something wrong with the engine...yet again it also could be one or more of the tires that are significantly under inflated...or a multitude of other possibilities like bad fuel...etc...etc.

Your strength program must fit YOUR specific, unique needs. It must be personalized.

Simply gaining strength and mass through a one size fits all strength program...while it sounds good...almost always will produce underwhelming results...and in about 25% of cases really cause some significant constraints or limitations to movement and performance.

At best...the wrong strength process will be a waste of time...at worst...it can contribute to injury and a significant reduction in performance.

Take it from me. I have personally experienced this phenomena first hand.

I have an elite 17 year old catcher for a son. He is 90mph from behind the plate and has a 1.75 Pop time. Both world class parameters. I have understood this potential problem for years...yet I was reluctant to step in last year when my son's High School baseball team went as a group for strength training at a very respected and well ran facility close to his school. I just didn't want to be seen as 'THAT' Dad so I remained silent even when I saw activities I thought were counterproductive. The result of my timidity...significantly reduced performance, anterior shoulder pain, loss of shoulder mobility...etc.

It took us 8 weeks to right the ship.

Let me be clear, the facility and the instructors, for the most part were exceptional...they were highly competent men with great processes. The problem was because of the size of the group they had all players go through the same processes. There was no assessment. There was no customization. And it just so happened the specific process they prescribed for everyone...was a poor fit for the specific needs of my son.

To their credit, once I shared my observations with the head trainer, they immediately made some adjustments. But some damage had been done. We lost time and ground. But what if I wasn't paying attention or the head trainer was belligerent and absolutely certain of the superiority of his processes? I shutter to think how often this happens. A young man in essence is sprinting East...looking for a sun set.

My general comment, if your strength coach doesn't assess you as an individual before he throws you into a universal strength program...RUN don't walk...away.



For more information on the Texas Baseball Ranch and the various training programs offered, visit www.TexasBaseballRanch.com, call (936) 588-6762 or email: info@TexasBaseballRanch.com