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SJU Hawks Leadership Newsletter #4
March 15, 2007

A More Detailed Look at the In-Season Basketball Strength Program

Strength and power training has become a much bigger part of the sport of basketball within the last 10-15 years, not just at the highest levels, but now down to the high school ranks as well. Coaches and players recognize the need to get stronger, so they are logging in more and more weightroom time in the off-season to accomplish this goal. Many programs, however, make the mistake of leaving it there. Once the season starts, they put all of their time into school, practice, and games, and forget about the strength program they worked so hard at just a few months earlier. Within one month of weightroom inactivity, all of the improvements they made vanish.

I mentioned in a previous tip that the Hawks spend up to 4 hours per week during the season to not only maintain off-season gains, but to attempt to improve on them as well. Many of our guys this year will, in fact, get stronger with our in-season program. In comparison to the off-season, however, the workouts are structured much differently. With all of the time demands the sport of basketball puts on our players' bodies, the total amount quality recovery time available is significantly less. The workouts, then, should be as efficient as possible. We get them in and out in less than an hour, no more than 3x per week (on most occasions, a 2x per week schedule is appropriate). Compound movements that focus on the major muscle groups comprise the bulk of the workout. Examples of these exercises are Hang Cleans and Push Presses (and variations), Front Squats (and other squat variations), Bench Presses (and variations), Glute-Hamstring exercises, Pullups (and variations), and a heavy emphasis on Core strengthening and flexibility. The single-joint and small muscle group exercises (arms, calves, etc.) are eliminated, as they are adequately addressed with the above movements. With the above exercises in mind, we keep the workouts to no more than 5 movements, and a total of no more than 15 sets for the day. Rep ranges will vary depending on the seasonal timing, but usually ranges from 10-12 reps early in the season to 4-6 reps toward the end of the season, for most exercises.

In all, your athletes should understand that to truly embrace the habits of a successful basketball player, they must commit to a *year-round* training program. The in-season program is the one that is usually sacrificed over the course of the year, but is actually the one that can have the greatest impact on your on-court performance!