

5 Reason athletes should strength train in the offseason

By Chris Drabik | Posted 5/10/2016

While we are still a few months away from the official start of football season, athletes across the country are working out every day to ensure they will be in the best physical shape possible for the upcoming year.

These athletes are not only putting in the time on the field to stay sharp, but dedicating their offseason to the weight room, getting themselves bigger, stronger, and faster for the season to come.

In a football world that has featured a growing focus on strength training and taking care of your body, Volt Athletics has developed itself as an online platform that combines top strength and conditioning expertise with cutting-edge technology.

Volt Athletics' Lead Sport Performance Specialist Jace Derwin shared his knowledge of why strength training in the offseason is so important for athletes everywhere.

- It's more than just weightlifting. Although hitting the gym to pump some iron is an important part of any athlete's offseason plan to becoming a better player, Volt Athletics' idea of strength training combines all of the components that a football player needs to focus on. "Strength training sessions, as part of a well-designed, year-long training calendar aimed at preparing football players for the demands of the season, are not stand-alone workouts," said Derwin. "They are parts of a larger systemic approach to improving performance. Athletes who utilize this time to begin developing strength and power in the offseason will enter training camp fitter, better prepared for the rigors of camp, and more resistant to non-contact injuries that can occur due to poor fitness or muscular imbalance."
- **Injury prevention.** While the idea that an offseason training program will aid in preventing injuries on the gridiron might seem obvious, it does not make this benefit any less important. "Football is a high-octane collision sport that requires its players to be big and strong to resist injury from impact with opponents, and also fast and powerful to be competitive on the field," said Derwin. "Strength training can help players accomplish these goals." Derwin believes that strength and muscle mass are related to stronger bones, tendons and connective tissue. "Together, these benefits translate into greater impact on the field, more powerful performances, and a reduced risk of injury during gameplay," he said.
- **Physical stamina.** Not only will strength training keep you on the field, but it will keep you playing the game at a high level. "Strength training will also help players improve efficiency and mechanics within running and sprinting movement patterns, increasing player stamina throughout long efforts in competition," said Derwin. Maintaining a high level of play goes back to the year-round approach of Volt Athletics' strength training programs. Preparing for the grind of a game, let alone a season, is key when it comes to dominating all four quarters. According to Derwin, training can expose the body to incrementally larger amounts of stress, helping them to adapt and recover, something that is critical when practice and training camps begin.
- **Mental strengthening.** An important way that strength training can translate well for football players is the opportunity to sharpen not just the body but also the mind. When it is late in the game and an athletes have given all that they can, mental toughness is a requirement to get through to the final whistle. "A strength training routine can also have a positive effect on an athlete's mind and willpower. Lifting heavy weights is difficult, and repeated exposure to difficult

tasks can help athletes develop greater mental toughness and grit—both necessary traits on the football field,” said Derwin.

- **Developing good habits.** The final advantage of strength training in the offseason that Derwin has to offer is one that can show its benefits both on and off the football field. “Of equal importance to a strength training routine is developing good habits outside the weight room. Getting enough sleep, eating enough nutritious foods, and making sure your body is well-hydrated sound easy enough, but the impact these habits can have on your game cannot be understated,” said Derwin. “Develop these habits, stay patient, and trust in your training program. You will see the results.”

Volt Athletics is the official strength and conditioning provider for USA Football and the U.S. National Team Program.

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