

Physical Fitness Stressed For North High School Boys

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Women's Editor

(Editor's note: The following article on Physical Fitness at North High School is fifth in a series on education in the Torrance schools.)

With President Kennedy recommending 50-mile hikes and national attention focused on physical fitness, parents throughout the country are asking "What is being done to promote physical fitness for my child in the schools?"

A prime example of how Torrance is handling this phase of education can be seen at North High School, where Robert Gilmore heads the boys' physical education department.

Emphasis at North High School, which is in its seventh year of a program geared to meet the individual needs of each student, is on a sequential phase of activities aimed at building body strength and endurance.

Objectives of the four-year program which was formalized into a course of study outlined in written form three years ago, are fourfold: social adjustment, physical fitness, coordination and agility in leisure-time activities, and development of skills to play the game.

Developers of the course of study were Claude Ragsdale, Walter Hetz, Donald Dorsey (now at San Fernan-

do State College), Del Artmiller and Gilmore.

Social adjustment skills are taught through co-ed activities such as archery, golf and volleyball, where boys and girls learn the skills of leisure time activities together. Social dancing also is taught. Etiquette and standards of boy-girl relationships are emphasized.

Activities geared strictly towards the physical fitness phase of the program include weight training, soccer and conditioning drills.

Particular attention is paid to weight training exercises aimed at strengthening muscle groups throughout the body. Tests at North High have indicated that students excel in abdominal strength but fall behind in shoulder and upper body muscles. Therefore weight training and gymnastics devised to build up the upper body are emphasized. Each student has his own exercises based on his individual body needs and weight. Students with physical disabilities are assigned special exercises which utilize the parts of their body which can be built up physically. Activities for students with broken bones, partial sight, and other physical handicaps are conducted in the weight training room.

Other rooms include the

wrestling room, trampoline

room and gymnasium. In addition, facilities available include eight tennis courts, eight volleyball courts, four football fields and a track.

At the beginning and end of the program the boys are run through a physical fitness test. Purpose of the test is twofold; to determine the boy's progress and to evaluate the program itself. Results compare favorably with state and national standards.

Typical exercises performed by a group of North High students at a recent Torrance Educational Advisory Council luncheon included: shuttle-run, pullups, sit-up test, push ups and standing broad jump. Broad jump record at North High is nine feet.

Each summer a six-week five-credit physical education program is offered to all boys through grades nine to twelve in addition to entering freshmen.

Purpose of the summer program is: to keep fit through the summer, to help boys maintain athletic fitness in the summer months, to accrue credits, and—in the case of entering freshmen—orientation.

Among the summer activities are: weight training,

soccer, conditioning and grass drills, lectures, and recreational sports.

Lecture topics cover a range of subjects from "Diet and Exercise" to "Muscular Strength—What It Is?"

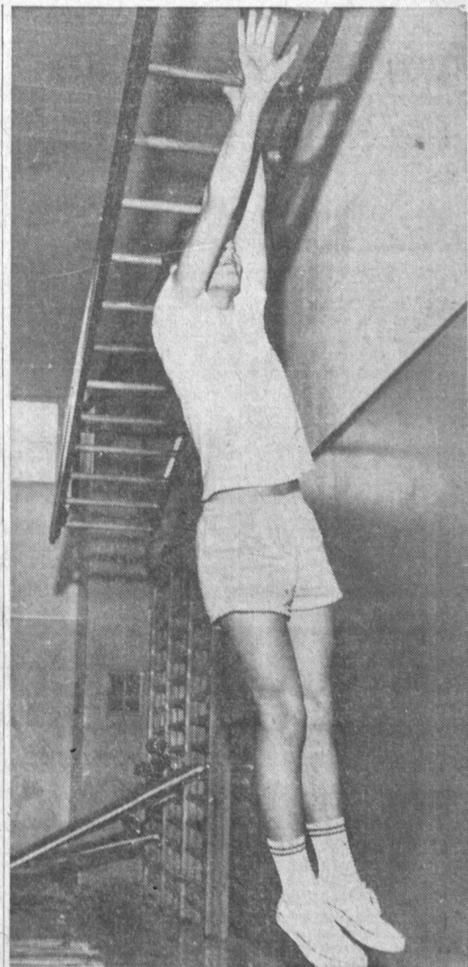
Coaches at North High School do not instruct boys' physical education classes. Instead they teach in straight academic classrooms. A typical example is the head track coach, who teaches Spanish.

In addition to Gilmore, who is currently doing graduate work towards a doctorate in physical education at the University of Southern California, members of the boys' physical education department include: Walter Hetz, James O'Brien, Donald Easten and Robert Howard.

What does Gilmore feel are the attributes a boy gains from physical education training at North High School?

He lists five of them: strength and speed; coordinated balance and agility; muscular endurance and stamina; improved posture and appearance; and development of organic efficiency.

Whether or not these will prepare a boy to sprint through 50-mile walking jaunts is anybody's guess. But it would seem safe to bet on the physical well-being of Torrance boys who complete the well-rounded four-year program offered by the local high schools.



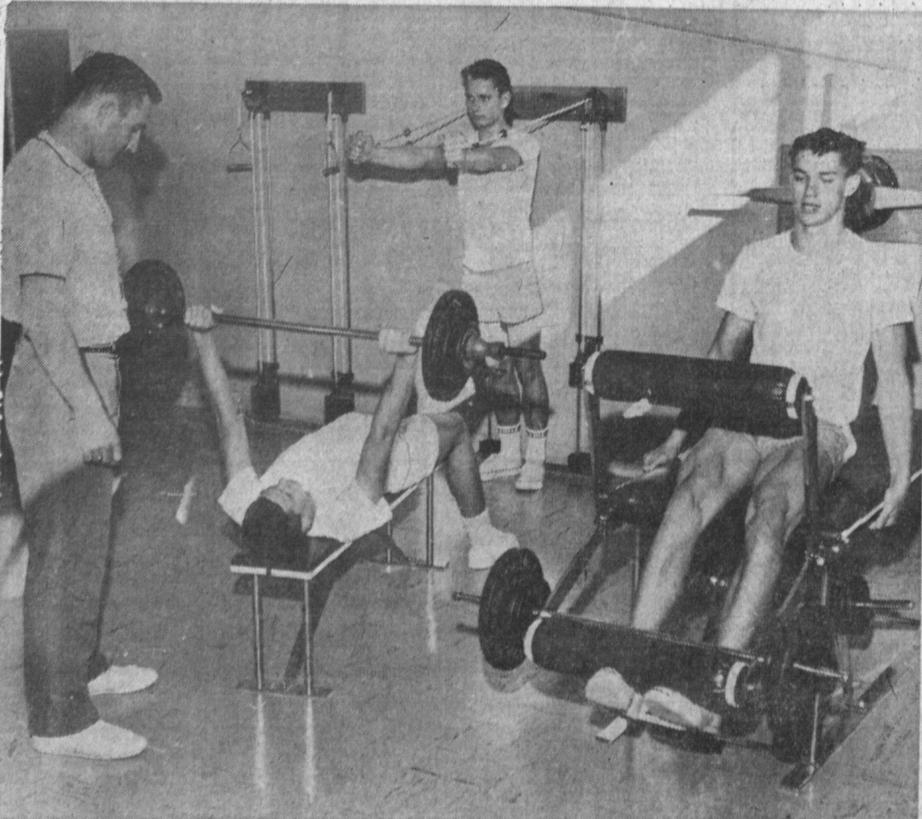
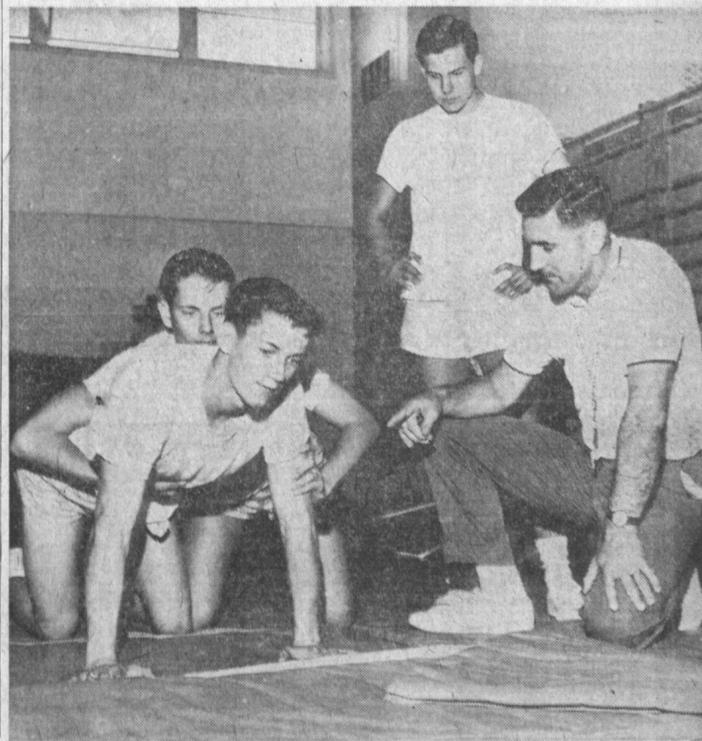
STRENGTH AND AGILITY are developed in the above exercise. Tests show that students need development of shoulder and upper body muscles. Each student has exercises designed to meet his individual needs.



BIKE RIDING helps develop endurance, one of the goals of the individual physical fitness program, now in its seventh year at North High.



ROPE CLIMBING is shown above. In photo at left, is the traditional "chinning" exercise. Wrestling also is part of the physical education program at North High, as shown in photo at right.



ROBERT GILMORE, head of the physical education department at North High, is shown as he gives hints to boys carrying out the various exercises which are part of a formalized four-year program designed to achieve

social adjustment, physical fitness, coordination and agility, and development of skills. Eight tennis courts, eight volleyball courts, four football fields, and a track are available for the use of students.



WEIGHT LIFTING is an important part of North High's physical education program. Summers a six-week course is offered to all boys from grade nine to 12 and to freshmen who will be entering school in the fall.

Attributes gained are strength and speed; balance and agility; endurance and stamina; improved posture and appearance, plus development of organic efficiency. —PRESS photos by William Schell Jr.