

Beating Steroids to the Punch

Written by Jeanne Blake, President, Blake Works

Headlines have catapulted anabolic steroid use into public awareness. A survey conducted by the U. S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows how prevalent and available steroids are even at the high school level. One in twenty five high school students have used anabolic steroids without a doctor's prescription.

"Steroids are definitely available," says Nate Hunter, a shot put champ from Northeastern University who has dedicated years to building his strength naturally. "They are very easily accessible." Hunter is one of two young men profiled in *Steroids: True Stories Hosted by Curt Schilling*. In this new twenty-minute Educational DVD, produced by Blake Works, their compelling experiences testify to the physical and emotional harm anabolic steroids can inflict on young lives. Introducing the film, Boston Red Sox pitcher, Curt Schilling says, "anabolic steroids do build muscle tissue, but can also ruin your life." Case in point is the Costa family's five-year "nightmare."

Craig Costa began using steroids the summer after high school. "I was never big enough," he says in *Steroids: True Stories*. "I was never strong enough." He thought muscle-building steroids would give him an edge. Craig developed "roid rage"- a characteristic of the emotional state of steroid users. Craig stated, "I had blowouts with my parents. I had blowouts with my sister. I drove everybody crazy."

Inevitable plateaus in training can tempt ambitious athletes like Nate Hunter to use steroids. "It's almost like something in the back of your brain telling you, 'Oh, well, you could get these. Why not?'" he says. But Hunter agrees with Jose Diaz, a baseball player who hopes to turn pro. Diaz discounts men and women who gain steroid-induced glory. "They don't have the guts or the heart to work on their own," he says in *Words Can Work: When Talking About Steroids*, a booklet Blake Works also produces. "So they need something to increase their muscles or size."

In the film, Schilling concludes: "Steroids can hurt you and the people around you. And the benefits of staying strong naturally will last a lifetime."

Intense personal and societal pressures to succeed are real. Young adults need the facts, effective strategies, and consistent support to beat this stress and to "Beat Steroids to the Punch".

The Sport Supplement Volume 14, Number 4, published by the United States Sports Academy October 23, 2006