

MY TOP 10 FAVOURITES

Essential Exercises For Great Strength and Conditioning

By **Jonathan Chaimberg**, Canada's Strength, Conditioning and Performance Guru

I once wrote an article entitled 'Deserted Island Exercises' where I explained the three most essential movements I would do to stay in optimal shape if I was stranded on a deserted island. Along somewhat of a similar line, here are my top 10 best movements, not only for sport, but also for life!

Sled Pushes

Anyone who knows me knows that no week is complete without pushing sled. Sled work encompasses all that is important for athletes; power, strength and endurance can all be maximized using this great tool. I like having my athletes push their bodyweight eight times with six seconds of rest in-between pushes.

Olympic Lifting

When I say Olympic lifting, I refer to power movements with triple extension – hip, knee and ankles. If you don't quite have the technique to do cleans or snatches, don't feel bad doing high pulls, weighted jumping squats or even kettle bell swings (only double extension).

Walking or Slideboard Lunges

With lower body movements, I always classify movements between hip or knee dominant exercises. While squats are knee dominant and hamstring curls are hip dominant, walking lunges are probably one of the only true movements that are considered both. There is no better lower body movement when looking for the most bang for your buck. If loaded heavy enough, my butt, quads and hamstrings all get a

hit and can hurt for many days afterwards.

Inverted Rows

Inverted rows are a great exercise if you have a TRX because it incorporates rotation. Without the TRX, a Smith Machine can substitute. Weighted inverted rows have become my favorite pulling movement, surpassing weighted chin-ups for the sole fact that we neglect inverted rows. Moreover, inverted rows are the direct antagonist to push-ups and bench press, which, as a whole population, we over-do in the gym in comparison to rowing.

Weighted Push-ups

I chose push-ups because I both like the ground contact and the fact that I place them directly after inverted rows. Weighted push-ups with either just a vest or both a vest and Olympic plates on a client's back are a very good alternative to bench press, in my opinion.

Single Leg Squats

I have moved away from bi-lateral squats, even though I used to be a huge fan of front squats and still use them on occasion. The benefits of training off one leg for any unilateral sport are essential. Figuring I can load with a 40-pound vest and two 30-pound dumbbells in my hands, I have just added 100lbs to my 160lbs bodyweight. In total, I would then single leg squat 260lbs. Doubling that weight equates to a 520lbs front squat. Even though the weight does not quite come



UFC Welterweight Champion and Canada's own Georges St-Pierre incorporates sled pushing as part of his strength and conditioning program.

out to such numbers, you can see my point. Single leg squats are a safe way to load huge amounts of weight onto one leg. It's amazing I didn't utilize this movement years ago!

Single Leg Deadlifts

In keeping with antagonist work, single leg deadlifts are the antagonist to the single leg squats. Being a great hip dominant exercise, both glutes and hamstrings get to work in conjunction. This is a great hip dominant movement.

Anti-Rotary Work

Be it Paloff press or using a landmine unit, your obliques serve a purpose; to protect our lumbar spine from over rotating. Yet most of the movements we see are built around rotating. I try to train myself

to be as strong as possible in both anti-rotating and anti-extending .

Anti-Extension Work

Doing either ball rollouts or TRX jackknife pushaways are a great way to work the core to anti-extend. Jackknife pushaways are a great combination exercise that athletes and clients love (and hate).

Sprints or Intervals

No favourite list is complete without some conditioning. Be it sled, shuttle runs, tabatta, intervals, battle ropes, etc. I end most of my routines with some sort of conditioning. **IFM**



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