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SSG Ken Weichert,

Just wanted to say that I have been enjoying your articles in the GX magazine that I receive here at home. I am a Staff Sergeant in the Virginia Army National Guard. I am 46 years old with 12 1/2 years of prior service in the U.S. Navy.

I passed the most recent APFT that we had last month but am certainly eager to improve my performance. I desire this not only for my own benefit but also to be an example to the men in my unit. I especially want to be in the best possible shape as we may be deploying sometime within the next year or so.

With my busy schedule I find the toughest challenge is disciplining myself to set aside time to train. I have been running at my civilian work place during lunch time. I laid out a course that is approximately 1.6 miles in length. I have been running this for the past 6 weeks (3 times a week).

My questions:

- 1) Is it all right to run during the day when the temperature is above 85 degrees?
- 2) Is it okay to increase my running to 5 times a week? Or should I stay at 3 times per week?

Thank you for your time in considering these questions. I will be looking forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,

SSG Jeff Hughes

START Fitness™

OPERATION HEAVY OR NOT

WEIGHT TRAINING AND BODY-RESISTANCE EXERCISES

Part 2 of 3

By SSG Ken Weichert



SSG Hughes,

Hello. Thanks for the compliment, SSG! Over the past year and a half, Stephanie and I have received a lot of positive remarks about our START Fitness articles in GX Magazine, and online in GX Intel. Many Soldiers have mentioned how their APFT scores have improved immensely through the consistent use of our fitness programs. Some simply cannot wait to tell us how great they feel after seeing the results. I think that your inquiry is a perfect opening for Part 2 of 3 of "Operation Heavy or Not."

We've got lower body answers.

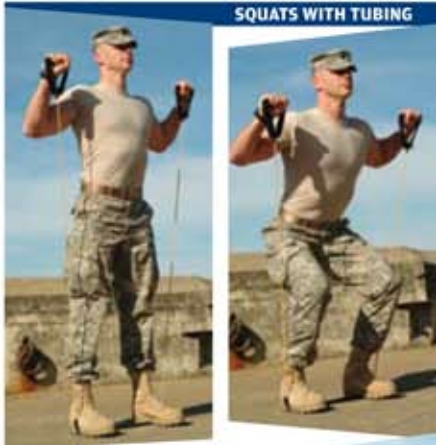
We opened Part 1 of our newest weight training and body-resistance exercise series with a chest and arms combination called "Muscle Exploitation Day." In this issue we will target the lower body.

First let's review the three HEAVY OR NOT RULES from Part 1 of the series:

1. Weight training alone will not help you get a better score on the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT).
2. High weights and a low amount of repetitions = Bulk Up
3. Low weights and a high amount of repetitions = Sculpt Down (Refer to GX 3.4 for more details, pages 72 and 73)

As we get older, our joints take more time to recover. I am approaching the age of 40, and there are days when I too sometimes feel the pressure in my joints as the result of intense training. Feel free to run more than three times per week provided you monitor your joints closely. I switch from street to treadmill running in order to spare my leg joints from strain due to constant jarring on hard surfaces. I also like to substitute trail for street running whenever I can. The trails are often softer than pavement. Always remember to provide yourself an adequate amount of rest and recovery time each week.

SQUATS WITH TUBING



STEP-UPS WITH TUBING



STATIC LUNGES WITH TUBING



SAFETY NOTE: It is best to have someone spot you during weight training exercises.

FOR SPECIFIC APFT PREPARATION EXERCISES, please refer to START Fitness in GX issues 2.6, 3.1 and 3.2 in www.gxonline.com past issues. Remember that low weight and high repetition will provide you a sculpting result while high weight and low repetition will provide you a mass building result.

UNIFORM REMARK: SSG Ken Weichert is pictured in the Army Combat Uniform (ACU) with Field Cap and without the ACU Shirt in order to show you what muscles are employed during each exercise.

Quadriceps and Gastrocnemius

Let's do some exercises to help you build strength in your leg joints.

QUADRICEPS are a group of four muscles that sit on the anterior or front aspect of the thigh. **GASTROCNEMIUS** is the largest, most prominent muscle of the calf of the leg, the action of which extends the foot and bends the knee.

1. **Warm-up** (6-Minutes Jump Rope and 30 Side-Straddle-Hops "Jumping Jacks")
2. **A few rotation exercises and leg stretches**
3. **Squats with tubing**

I like to start with a body resistance and tubing combination exercise in order to keep uniformed pressure on my connective tissue.

START POSITION: Grasp the handles of the Xertube, raise your hands head high, elbows bent, palms forward, both feet evenly on the tubing hip-width apart. Stand erect with a neutral spine.

ACTION: Slowly lower your body, with your hips moving back as if sitting on a chair. Maintain your weight directly over the heels or mid-foot. Lower to approximately 90 degrees of knee flexion. Pause, then slowly return to the start position. If lumbar curvature cannot be maintained, lower less than 90 degrees without causing discomfort in your knee joints. Warning: Do not let your knees bend beyond your toe line.

BRING IT ON! Try extending your arms straight in front of you while lowering yourself to the 90° point with your palms down and arms level with your shoulders. Bend your elbows and return your palms to the Start Position as you raise your body. Now you've added upper body resistance!

BULK UP - 3 sets of 8 repetitions each with Heavy resistance

SCULPT DOWN - 3 sets of 15-30 repetitions each with Light to Moderate resistance

4. **Squats with Dumbbells or a Barbell**
5. **Flutter Kick** (1 Minute)
6. **Crunches** (30 repetitions)
7. **Step-ups with tubing**

START POSITION: Grasp the handles of the Xertube, raise your hands shoulder high, elbows bent, palms inward, starting with your left foot on a step with your left knee bent, and your right leg straight while positioned on the ground. Place your left or upward foot on top of the tubing evenly while standing hip-width apart while your upper body is upright.

ACTION: Slowly raise your body by straightening your left leg until your body is erect without your right foot touching the step. Pause, then slowly return to the start position. Switch feet when you have completed your required set of repetitions and continue with opposite foot placement. Warning: If using tubing for this exercise, turn your body slightly to the right if using your left leg, or to the left if using the right leg. If not using tubing, refer to START Fitness in GX 2.3 for specific instructions.

BRING IT ON! After this exercise I like doing a bunch of "Tubing Jacks." I step off the step and perform Jumping Jacks while still holding on to the tubing. Now, you've added upper body resistance and some cardiovascular endurance!

BULK UP - 3 sets of 8 repetitions each with Heavy resistance

SCULPT DOWN - 3 sets of 15-30 repetitions each with Light to Moderate

8. **Static Lunges with tubing**

START POSITION: Grasp the handles of the Xertube, raise your hands shoulder high, elbows bent, palms inward, starting with your left leg on the ground straight in front of you with your left knee slightly bent. Place your right leg straight behind you, balancing on the ball of your right foot on the ground. Place the tubing evenly under your left foot while your upper body is upright.

ACTION: Slowly lower your body, both knees bending until your forward leg achieves 90 degrees of knee flexion. Maintain your balance in the center. Pause, then slowly return to the starting position. Warning: Do not let your forward knee bend beyond your toe line. Bring your shoulders back a bit in order to correct your posture.

BRING IT ON! Try adding a Plyometric quality to the exercise by jumping straight in the air during the action movement (Very Advanced). As your feet briefly leave the ground and receive the impact while returning to the start position, your legs must endure negative resistance. Warning: Watch your form closely while attempting these movements!

BULK UP - 3 sets of 8 repetitions each with high resistance

SCULPT DOWN - 3 sets of 15-30 repetitions each with Light to Moderate resistance

9. **Lunges with Dumbbells**
10. **Calf Raises with Dumbbells**
11. **Crunches** (3 Minutes)
12. **Aerobics** (5 Minutes Treadmill or Elliptical Machines)

REPEAT CYCLE TWICE MORE

TOTAL TRAINING TIME = 75 MINUTES (Depending on Repetitions per set and Rest Periods)

DO NOT PERFORM THIS FITNESS PLAN FOR ANOTHER 36-48 HOURS (Recovery Time)

WARNING: Always seek the advice and guidance of a qualified health provider with any questions or concerns you may have prior to commencing a fitness program. This article should not be relied on or substituted for professional medical diagnosis or treatment. The exercises presented are for suggestion only. Participate at your own risk. Stop if you feel faint or shortness of breath.