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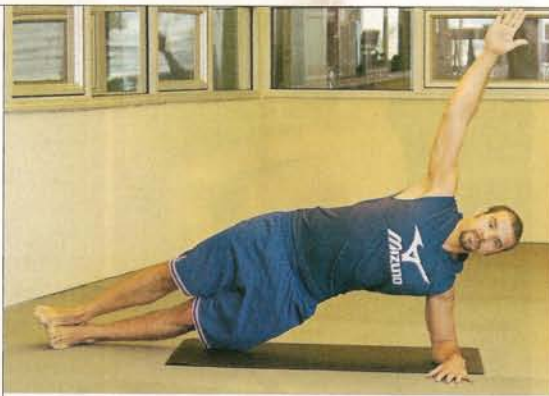
Trainer Tom Vachet Helped Volleyball Star **Donald Suxho** Overcome Injury

It goes without saying that flexibility is a necessity for a professional athlete. It is injury preventative. Flexibility also elevates performance, particularly explosiveness, through an enhanced ability to store potential energy. The following exercises comprised the first phase of the conditioning workout trainer Tom Vachet began with U.S. volleyball star Donald Suxho, who at the time was five months post Achilles tendon rupture, and after completion of a period of rehabilitation. The program objective was minimally to return Suxho to full pre-injury function, and additionally to reduce his future risk for additional or collateral injury.

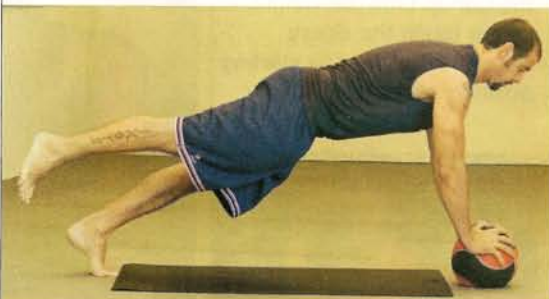
Vachet is a Manhattan Beach based trainer. His unique background of over 25 years of experience in health care, training and sports has allowed him to train some of the world's top athletes. In many cases his orchestration of all of the elements of both health and fitness has turned back the clock on aging bodies, enabling these athletes to extend their careers beyond what even they thought was possible.

Suxho, 31, had been the U.S. Men's National Team's starting setter since just after the 2004 Olympics. After a successful season in 2005 Suxho's world turned upside down in March of 2007, when he suffered the serious injury during a routine play for his club team in Italy. "It was a freak accident," said Suxho. "I was in the front row. I kind of stepped back and went forward. I felt like someone stabbed me with a knife in my calf. I was lucky in a way because it was partially torn, not completely torn."

Vachet and Suxho worked together for 12 weeks. The program was three consecutive days of conditioning, at 90 minutes per session, followed by four days of rest. The following exercises were all part of the overall rehab effort.

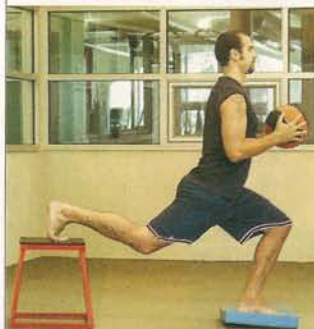


Core Side Plank is done starting from a position lying flat on the floor on one side. Stack your feet one on top of the other. Bring the downside elbow underneath you, and then press up into an aligned body position, with forearm flat to the floor and at a 90-degree perpendicular to your body. Raise the top side arm straight up in the air. Again, hold the position as long as you can without letting your body sag, which is an indicator of loss of core control.



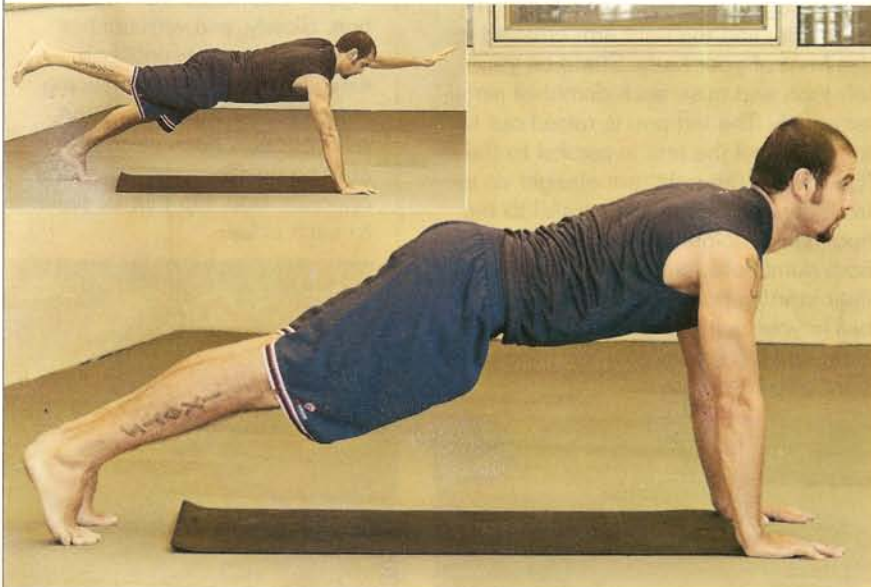
V Pushups On Med Ball. Start with two hands on the ball, touching the thumbs and forefingers together to form a diamond shape. Extend into a pushup start position. Raise the foot opposite the hand on the ball off the floor. While maintaining control of the ball, and activating the core, do 12 pushups. When completed, raise the opposite foot, and continue 12 pushups to finish.

Box Lunge Onto Airex Pad focuses on the development of glute strength. Place a pad three feet in front of a bench on the floor. Stand with one foot on the pad, and reach behind with the other foot and place it on top of the bench on your toes. Hold a medicine ball of reasonable weight in your hands in front of you at waist height. Using core control and maintaining an upright posture, perform a lunge. In the down position, extend the medicine ball out in front of you, and then back in to your waist. Return to standing position, and repeat 12 to 20 times. Then repeat on the opposite side.





Sit-To-Stand works the glutes. Picking one foot straight up three to four inches, and focusing on core control and glute activation, come to a standing position on the opposite leg. Then, with control, and without putting the opposite foot down, sit with control. Do 20 reps on each leg.



Core Alternating Leg & Arm. The beauty here is that you begin to incorporate elements of stability and balance as you alternate from side to side, balancing on one foot and outstretched hand. Put a pushup between each, and you've added a bit of functional strength to the mix.



The Core Plank is a measure of core endurance. Prolonging the plank has the real benefit of creating remarkable core endurance. Start from a face down position on the floor. Put your feet together, toes to the floor. Bring your elbows up directly under your shoulders, forearms flat on the floor with wrists and hands in alignment. Bring your weight up, until you are suspended by the contact of just your elbows and toes to the floor. Keeping your back flat, spine and head in alignment, hold the position as long as you can without letting your body sag.

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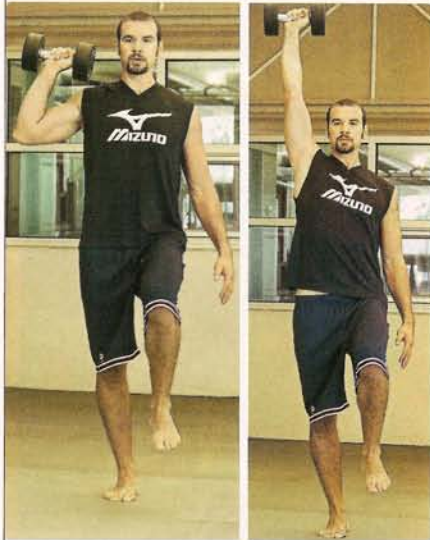
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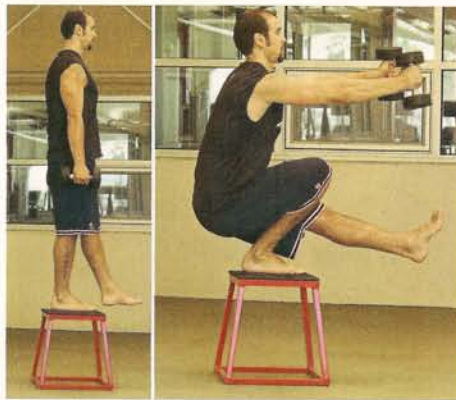
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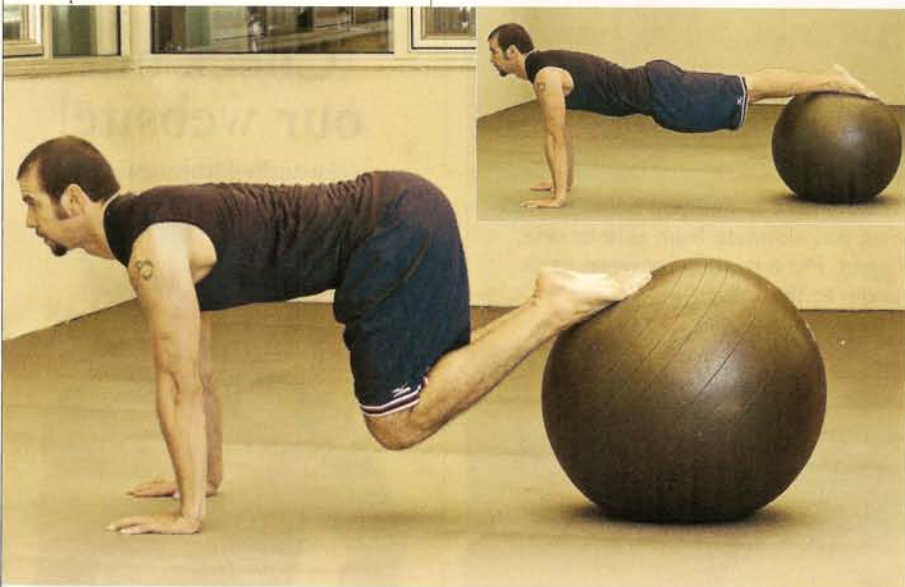




Single Leg Dumbbell Military Press hits shoulder muscles. Take an appropriately sized dumbbell in your right hand. Bring it up to your shoulder. Stand on your left foot, and press the dumbbell into full arm extension. Return the dumbbell to your shoulder, while continuing the one-foot stance. Perform a total of 12 repetitions, then switch to the right foot and repeat the press with the left arm.



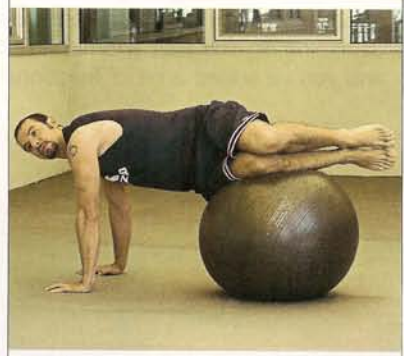
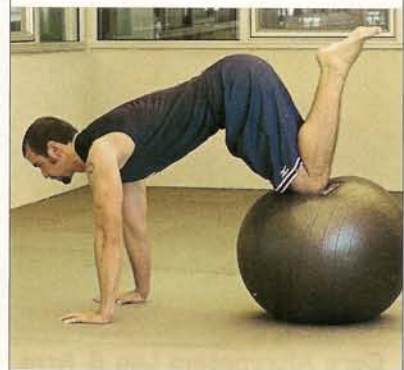
Single Leg Alternating Dumbbell Raise also hits shoulders. Take an appropriately sized dumbbell in each hand. Begin by holding the left arm at your side, and the right arm crossed to the front of your body. Stand on your left foot, and raise each dumbbell simultaneously. The left arm is raised out to the side until the arm is parallel to the floor. Raise the right arm straight up in front of your face, again parallel to the floor. Hold momentarily, and then lower both dumbbells, but to the opposite of their starting positions. Now the dumbbell in your right hand is at your right side, and the one in your left hand is in front of your body.



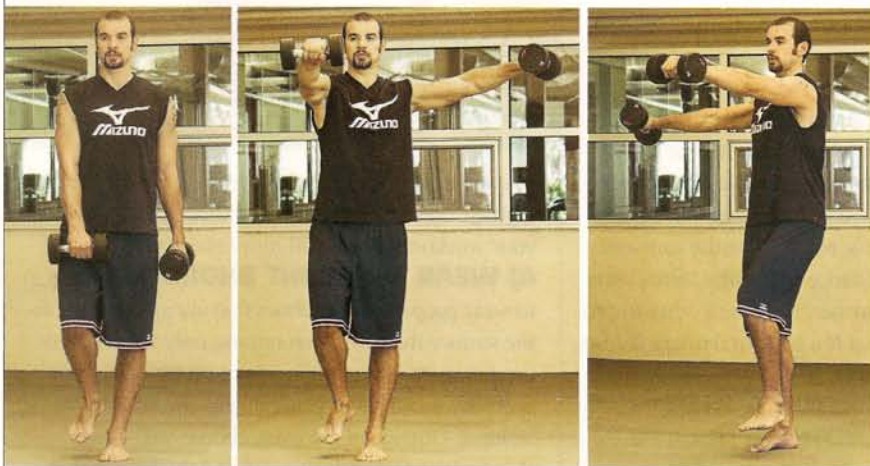
In & Outs strengthens shoulders, chest and hip flexors in addition to abs. Select an exercise ball of appropriate size based on the rule of thumb described in the Russian Twist On The Ball. Face down, put your hands on the floor with arms straight, and lift your feet, with toes pointed so they rest on top of the ball. Your head, spine and legs should all be in alignment. This is your starting position. Maintaining alignment in your spine, bend and drop your knees toward the floor, while bringing your feet toward your buttocks. The knees never touch the floor, and your buttocks stay down and flat. After a momentary pause, extend your legs to the start position. Repeat 12 to 20 times. For a more difficult exercise, do a pushup after each extension of the legs.

Russian Twist On The Ball

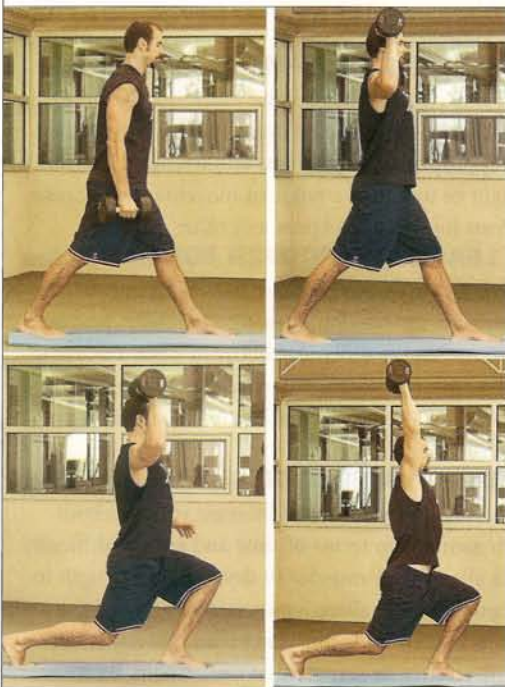
is one of those great exercises that create midsection strength and endurance through rotation, and at the same time it demands balance stability and absolute core control. Face down, put your hands on the floor, with arms straight, and lift your knees to the top of the ball. With the knees together on top of the ball, walk your hands as close the ball as is possible, keeping your arms straight and hands shoulder width apart. From this position, bend your knees and pick up your heels, creating a "V" shape. This is the starting position. Slowly, and with control roll your hips over until one side is flat on the ball, keeping your hands to the floor. Then, pull your hips back up to the starting position, and roll to the opposite side. Do this 12 times to each side.



Lateral Lunge With Med Ball Push. Stand with a medicine ball of appropriate weight held at the level of your upper abdomen. Pick up one foot, and reach a wide step laterally. Shift your weight to the side of the step until you are over the leading foot. Drop down into a squat, trailing the following leg. In the down position, extend the medicine ball out in front of you, and then draw it back in. Bring the trailing foot beside the leading foot while regaining a standing position. Alternate from side to side for 12 to 20 repetitions.



Med Ball Lunge With Turn & Reach. Stand with a medicine ball of appropriate weight held at the level of your upper abdomen. Pick up one foot, and reach forward to a lunge step. Bring yourself down into the lunge, keeping your upper body erect, not touching your knee to the floor. While maintaining an upright position rotate your body 90 degrees at the hips toward the forward leg, while extending the medicine ball in front of you. Then while looking back over your shoulder. Take the leading medicine ball, and reach up and in the direction of the turn. Then, turn back to midline, push off the leading foot to a standing position, and repeat on the opposite side. Alternate from side to side for 12 to 20 repetitions.



Balance Beam Lunge With Dumbbell Press. For the Balance Beam, use a six-foot length of 2"X4" lumber (hard), or an Airex Balance Beam (hardest). Stand in an extended lunge position on the balance beam, with feet apart and parallel, holding a dumbbell of appropriate weight in a military press position at the shoulder opposite the leading foot. Begin the lunge, dropping the knee of the trailing leg, but not touching the surface of the beam. Once down, hold and press the dumbbell straight up over the head, and then return it to the shoulder. At that time, return to the starting position. Repeat 12 to 20 times. Switch feet and dumbbell positions and repeat.

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