

Your Pre-Season Workout

Planning Your Workout

Warm Ups

Warm ups are a very important part of your workout. Doing a proper warm up allows your muscles to loosen up and it elevates your heart rate prior to any stress and fatigue being put on your muscles during your main workout.

Main Workout

In this section of your workout you should be concentrating on cardiovascular fitness, elevating your heart rate. Hiking and running should be your main considerations here. This kind of activity promotes weight loss, increased blood-flow throughout your body, improved respiratory abilities, and gives your body a good overall strength base for you to build on. Injuries are common in people who neglect cardio when it comes time to perform during the beginning of the season.

In addition to hiking and running, you should be doing push-ups, pull-ups, and sit-ups. These workouts promote good core and upper body strength which will be imperative to performing your job as a Rappeller. This crew is not interested in people who just do the minimum, so you should come to the base in the spring with the ability to do much more than the amount expected in your PT test.

Cool Down

The cool down process is very important for healthy muscles. Cooling down allows muscles to release lactic acids which build up in muscles during a workout, creating soreness afterward. A proper cool down will work soreness out so you can put maximum effort into the next day's work out. During the first weeks of your off season workout, you should expect to be sore the next day to three days afterward. A cool down each of those days will help reduce soreness and loosen up muscles faster than waiting for them to do it on their own.

Classic Exercises

Running

Expect to be running around 30 miles your first week here, so get yourself some good running shoes. You will be running long distances, sprints, and hills so you are encouraged to put these into your workout early and often. Below are some links to great sites that will prepare you for the spring. You should at least be able to do the half marathon workout by the time you start.

<http://www.halhighdon.com/>

<http://www.ultrunr.com/>

<http://www.amazon.com/Born-Run-Hidden-Superathletes-Greatest/dp/0307266303>

Hiking

A large part of being a Rappeller is your ability to hike many miles to a pick-up point after being inserted into areas where there are no roads. The Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest has some of the steepest terrain in the region and we pride ourselves in our ability to navigate this terrain with 90 to 100 lbs on each person's back. Depending on where you live, you may have to get creative during the winter. Try biking, lunges, and if you're lucky enough to ski or snowboard get out to the back country and earn your turns.

In this link, look under the "exercises" portion for good workouts:

http://www.backpacker.com/may_09_hike_forever_ultimate_hiking_workouts/skills/13107

Though you won't have the luxury of only 30-40lbs., this is still a good link.

<http://weighttraining.about.com/od/weighttrainingforsport/a/hiking.htm>

Push Ups

Three types of push-ups we encourage are the wide, regular, and narrow (diamond). By varying the distance between your hands you will be able to strengthen different areas of your pectorals, shoulders, triceps, back and abdominal muscles. All push-ups start in the up position (arms extended) and continue with a slow and steady descent, ending when your upper arm and forearm make a 90 degree angle. Keep your back straight, butt down, and your abdominal muscles flexed. As with all exercises, proper form in the beginning produces better (and faster) results in the future.

Wides

These should be done with your hands more than shoulder-width apart. This exercise focuses on the back and outer pectoral muscles.

Regular

Arms are shoulder-width apart. The main muscle groups worked here are the shoulders.

Diamonds

Here, your index fingers and thumbs touch each other, making a diamond shape. These are a more difficult workout that uses a lot of triceps and inner-pectoral muscles - a good, stiff core is key to maintaining balance.

Pull Ups

The Pull Up is started by grasping the bar with the backs of your hands facing you, your arms will be straight in a "dead hang"- this is the down position. Pull yourself up until your chin is above the bar... welcome to the up position. Return to the down position, making sure your arms are straight.

With pull ups, you can also vary your grip from narrow to wide to engage different muscles. A wide grip will strengthen more of your back, while moving your hands in will work more shoulders and traps. In the beginning, this can be a challenging exercise, requiring assistance from a spotter or placing your legs up on a chair.

An excellent way to increase the number of pull ups is the "Pull Up Pyramid".

A pyramid works like this: Start with one pull up then release the bar and rest for ten seconds. Next, do two pull ups then rest again for ten seconds, then three, and so forth until you reach the top of your pyramid. Your top number should be around 7 - 10, although it may take awhile to get to this point. Once you've reached the apex of your pyramid, start down again (9,8,7, etc).

Remember: we want good pull ups. This means straight up then straight down. Don't swing or pike your legs or jerk while doing your pull ups or you could experience injury or at least embarrassment when it comes time to do your pull ups in front of the rest of the crew.

Sit Ups

Find someone or something to hold your feet. Bend your knees and lie flat on your back, this is the down position. While doing your sit ups, place your hands behind your head (do not pull on your neck) or across your chest, then engage your abdominal muscles and bring your chest up to your knees. Again, do not rush these, first work on quality then quantity. Some other abdominal/core workouts enjoyed by the crew are crunches, leg raises and planks.

Crunches

Similar to sit ups, however these don't require a foot holder. Lie on your back, hands across your chest or behind your head, cross your ankles with your feet off the ground and position your thighs at a 90 degree angle to your abdomen with your knees bent. Engage your abdominal muscles until your shoulder blades come off the ground. I personally like to see hands behind your head then sit up until your elbows touch your knees.

Leg Raises

Lie flat on your back with your legs together and straight out in front of you. Place your hands palm down under your butt. To start your leg lift, raise your feet up six inches - this is the down position. Keeping your legs straight, lift your legs so they are somewhere between 45 degrees and straight up in the air - this is the up position.

Planks

This exercise is much like the up position of the push-up, except that instead of having your hands on the floor, you will be resting on your forearms with your hands clasped in front of you. Your legs will be straight out behind you with your feet together. With your core and butt flexed you want to be in a straight "plank" position. At first you may want to start at 30 second intervals, making your way up to 1 minute, 2 minutes, etc.

Side Planks

In this exercise you will only have one forearm down at a time, while resting on the side of one foot with the other foot directly on top of the other. Make sure your hip does not sag down toward the floor. This is a wonderful oblique and latissimus workout. Remember the optimal word here is "plank" so keep your body straight.

So now you should have all you need to be in great shape come April. Use this information and I encourage you to take your off-season workout seriously. This packet will be available online on our web site: <http://www.siskiyouappellers.com>.

If you have any questions feel free to contact me throughout the winter.

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Here are some more links to help you with your workouts:

<http://www.menshealth.com/men/fitness/muscle-building/perfect-your-pushup/article/0fc69cf736b40110vgnvcm10000013281eac/5>

<http://www.menshealth.com/mhlists/international-pushup-variations/index.php>

<http://www.military.com/military-fitness/fitness-test-prep/pt-pyramid>

<http://www.military.com/military-fitness/fitness-test-prep/pullup-push-workout>

<http://sportsmedicine.about.com/od/abdominalcorestrength1/qt/plank.htm>

<http://exercise.about.com/od/abs/tp/abexercises.htm>

<http://weighttraining.about.com/od/weighttrainingforsport/a/hiking.htm>