

Last month's topic focused on rear strength for injury-free skiing (www.trainingtobalanced.net/newsletters). This month's column entails principles and applications to effectively prepare for winter season such as skiing.

Tele Tom will be our featured skier.

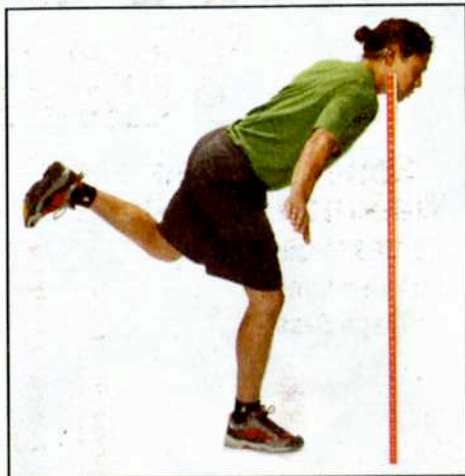
First rule of any preparation: Have a plan to execute, even if you don't know a thing about setting up a training plan. Set a goal to achieve long-term, intermediate and short-term goals with adjustments accordingly.

In order to enter the ski season prepared (long-term goal), Tom plans on taking a ski conditioning class that meets twice a week for eight weeks. In addition, he plans supplemental work on core strength, resistance training, and cardio development (medium-term goal). His first order of business is to train the core as the center of action (short-term goal).

The second rule of preparation is taken from Vern Gambetta, considered the father of functional sports training. The core is the center of the body: All movement must pass through the core. It is a "muscular corset" that lends integrity and support to the body. A strong, stable, fully functional core is essentially for quality, injury-free movement. The core works as an integrated functional unity that accelerates, decelerates, and dynamically stabilizes the body during movement. It helps to think

of the core as a relay center for the body. The most effective means of training the core is in standing and moving postures that incorporate extending, bending, twisting and rotating.

Thus, Tom performs a side lying bridge for the core strength presented by Lorne Goldenberg, a National Hockey League strength and conditioning coach for more than 12 years. The exercise focuses on the lateral core musculature, particularly the quadratus lumborum muscle (deep



The balance shoulder reach works the legs. Put the object at least two feet away, then alternate shoulder touches.

lower back muscle). The muscle is important for resisting side-to-side motion of the spine.

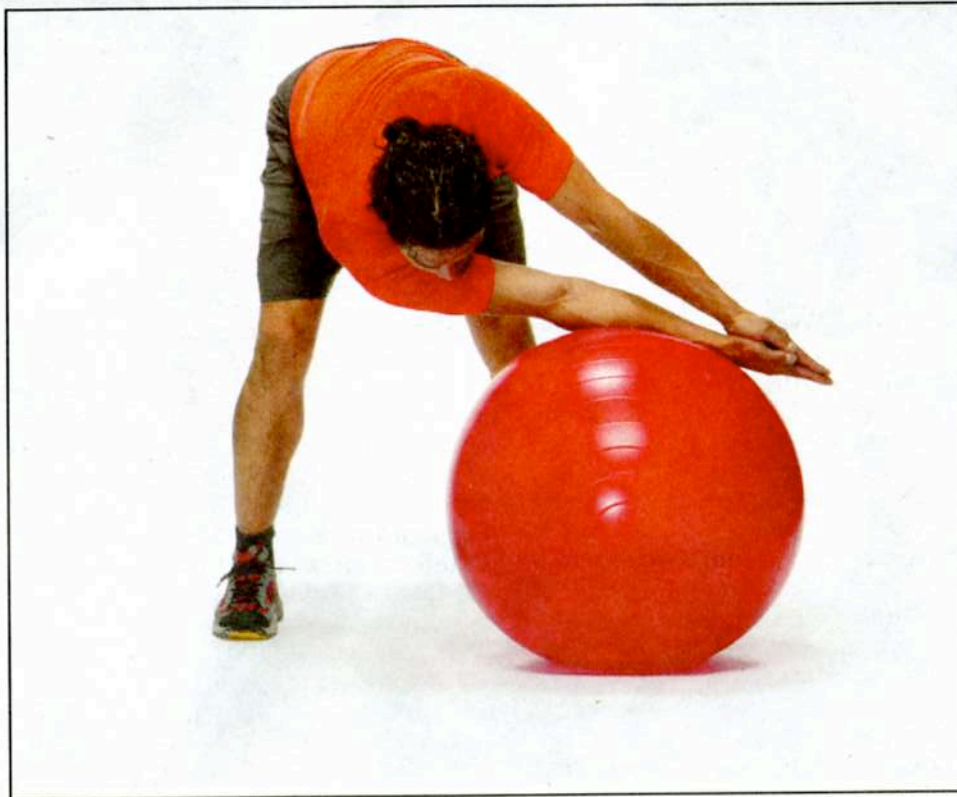
Tom sets up by lying on his side with his top foot in front of his bottom foot

and maintaining a straight body. To perform the exercise, Tom lifts his hips off the floor, using only his feet and right elbow for support. The left arm is held across his chest with his hand placed on the right shoulder. For the static portion of the exercise, he will hold the position for 30 to 60 seconds, then switch to the other side. Progressions include feet on top of each other; or raising the top leg while in the top position.

Following this course of Tom's medium goal of training two extra days a week, Tom finds time around work, social gatherings and laziness to highlight balance, power, and flexibility, as coordination/agility and strength is touched in class.

Goldenberg provides an excellent power exercise, the standing bar twist. This exercise will focus on static strength in the core initially and power in the progression.

Tom sets up by placing the end of a



The bent-over shoulder reach, which strengthens the core, entails rolling arms to one side on the ball and repeating on the other side.

bar in a corner of a wall, or against the frame of a solid machine. His body is in a solid athletic stance with hips back, knees bent and his shoulders just over his knees. He holds the bar in front of the body and initiates the movement by lowering the bar to the outside of his thigh; as soon as it reaches this point, he reverses the direction and moves to the opposite leg. He doesn't stop at the midpoint; the movement is smooth, in control and in a half-circular motion. Progressions include increasing the weight by sliding a plate on the bar. Or increasing the speed of the bar.

The third rule to understand is that training is cumulative. Vern Gambetta states that adaptation to training takes time. There are no instant results. Because training accumulates over time, the longer the person can be in a systematic progressive training approach, the better the chance for long-term success.



Training to be balanced

Augie Hernandez

PHOTOS COURTESY AUGIE HERNANDEZ

This brings Tele Tom to the first two components that, as a society, we lose the quickest as we age: balance and flexibility. The balance shoulder is excellent for balance and can be done anywhere in the world, and the bent-over shoulder roll, stretches the upper back in rotation. View the illustrations above.

Whether in a ski fitness class, with a trainer, or self-training this winter season, remember to make a plan to cover all aspects of movement, set goals and choose exercise that will benefit your enjoyment outside. Even if you don't know the "most effective" way to train, something is always better than nothing. Be safe and have fun!

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