



Beginner Home Training: Part Two **Strength & Conditioning**

By Rich Baker

This is part two of a two part series on training at home. The first part, which ran in the September issue, dealt with MMA skills and equipment. This portion is a strength and conditioning overview – or more accurately “power” and conditioning – and some basic equipment for use at home. The typical gym rat works out to stay in shape and build a strong muscular body. The most important goal isn’t necessarily athletic performance, although that’s changing as evidenced by the popularity of crossfit gyms. For the typical gym rat, full-body exercises and speed at which an exercise is performed is not as important as, say for example, hitting all three heads of your triceps. One thing can be said for training in a regular gym is that there are so many various pieces of equipment, it doesn’t take much imagination to keep your muscles guessing



and motivation peaked. That can't be said for someone training at home. Although it takes an extra measure of discipline and motivation, superb conditioning can be attained at home with just a few pieces of equipment.

Equipment Basics

Let's start out by going over some basic, but very functional pieces of equipment: adjustable bench, dumbbells, kettlebell, and dumbbell stand. Also some bench attachments includ-

ing a crunch sit up attachment, bar dip handles, and a chin up bar. Literally hundreds of exercises can be done with these few pieces of equipment.

One of the nice things about it is these few pieces of equipment take up very little space in your home. Look for a bench that can be adjusted for use in the flat, incline or decline positions. Look for dumbbells that can be easily and quickly adjusted in weight. And look for a kettlebell that has an arch in the handle with no

sharp corners in the weighted portion. Ironmaster as shown in the photos, has some great quality and functional equipment. Check out their website at www.ironmaster.com.



The clean and jerk, more common to barbell training, is an effective full-body exercise that can be used with dumbbells as well.



Dumbbell step-ups

Step-ups work quad muscles and require a strong core.

Rather than going into specific exercises, some of the principles behind training for athletic performance would be to focus on full-body multi-joint movements. Also focus on training not for maximum strength, but for maximum power. Strength is the ability to lift maximum loads under slow to moderate speed with very low reps. Power is the ability to generate force quickly. This involves pushing yourself to move a moderate weight with a moderate to fast speed over multiple reps. While training for strength, an athlete will also improve power delivery, but not as well as training specifically for power.



Knee-raise to side



Chin ups

Attachments such as a dip bar and chin up bar can add a number of additional exercises without taking up extra space in your home.



Dips



One-arm Overhead Squat



Five-Minute Rounds

Also when moving a moderate to light load, with moderate to fast speed, for multiple reps is going to invariably improve aerobic capacity. Many fighters will train a particular exercise with repetitions that they can do for five minutes. Since MMA fights are three five-minute rounds, the body needs to be conditioned to sustain the exercise or exercises for a full five minutes. Training for three five-minute rounds conditions your mind to gauge just how hard your body can be pushed for this amount of time. You will also be able to gauge just how much you need to conserve energy to stay in an aerobic state without going into an anaerobic state. You may have heard the term “gassed” or see a fighter just trying to hang on until the bell rings. More times than not, this means the fighter has reached a point when his body can no longer sustain the level of output.

So rather than trying to go over hundreds of specific exercises just remem-

ber to focus primarily on full-body lifts and target “power” training instead of “strength” training. Also, train your body and mind to endure five-minute sets of various exercises. Break your workouts up to focus separately on skills improvement, power training, and aerobic conditioning. If you have the discipline, these few pieces of equipment can be all the resistance you need to get into amazing shape. **FIT**

