

FOR THE **ATHLETE** BY THE **ATHLETE**

STAFF

TRAINING NUTRITION SPORT-SKILLS

PREMIERE ISSUE 2005

\$4.99

LEBRON'S PROGRAM!

HIS TRAINING SECRETS REVEALED STEP-BY-STEP!

5 MLB ALL-STAR
TESTED MED BALL DRILLS

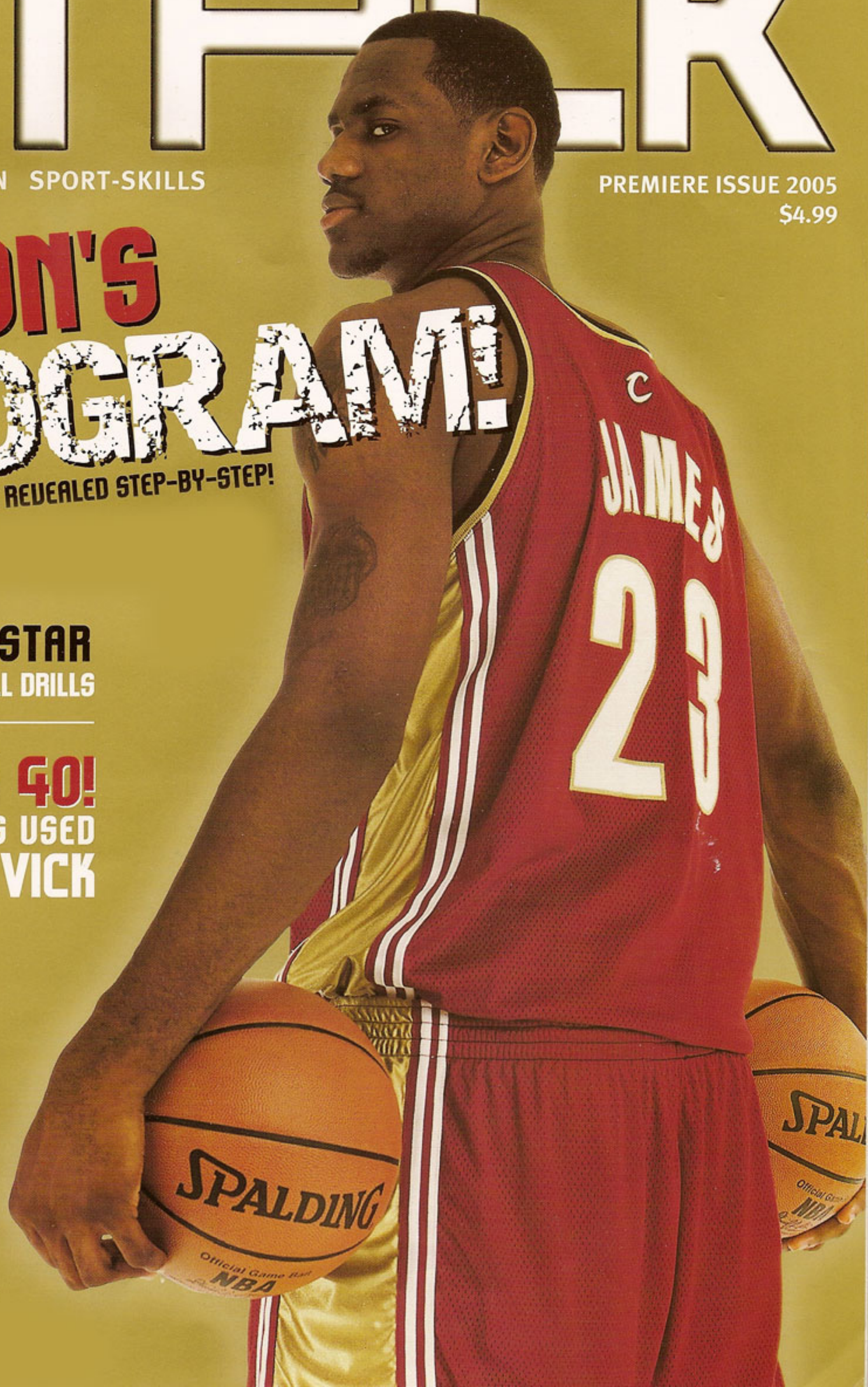
DROP YOUR 40!
THE SPEED DRILLS USED
BY MICHAEL VICK

PLUS

JUMP LIKE MJ

PRE-GAME WITH
CHRIS HOVAN

ON THE DIAMOND
WITH ASU





An exclusive look at the training that elevated LeBron and his high school team to legendary status BY: DAN BASSO

THE CHOSEN PROGRAM

Unless you've been living on Mars for the past few years, you've undoubtedly heard of St. Vincent–St. Mary High School in Akron, Ohio, and its former phenom **LEBRON James.**

St. V and LeBron experienced an unprecedented worldwide media blitz and countless accolades for their success. But exactly how did LeBron and St. Vincent—St. Mary become known as perhaps the greatest high school basketball player and team ever?

It's June 2002 and the phone rings at Speed Strength Systems in Cleveland, Ohio. On the other end of the line is Dru Joyce, St. V's head basketball coach.

Joyce has heard what Speed Strength accomplished with rising basketball stars Neñe and J.R. Bremer (Neñe and Bremer ranked tops out of all potential NBA prospects in athletic testing prior to the 2002 NBA draft) and wants to know if Speed Strength founders Eric Lichter and Tim Robertson will train LeBron and the rest of the team.

They agree. Less than a year later, St. V is crowned national high school basketball

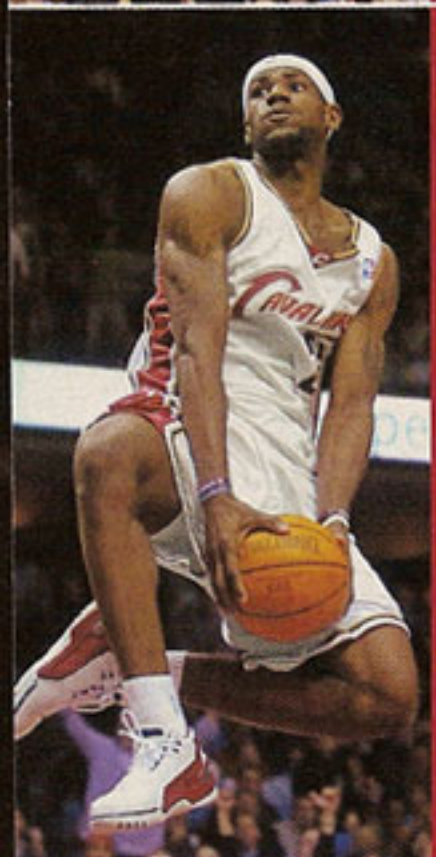
champion and the graduating LeBron is on his way to becoming the No. 1 pick in the 2003 NBA draft.

LeBron and St. V's fierce dedication to the Speed Strength-designed training program contributed to their amazing run—and now you, too, can follow the same program that took LeBron and St. V to heights that had never before been reached in the world of high school sports.



1

TO STRENGTHEN THE JUMPING MUSCLES: HAMSTRINGS, QUADS, GLUTES, CALVES, HIPS AND CORE REGION FOR ALL FACETS OF MOVEMENT IN ALL DIRECTIONS.



2

TO STRENGTHEN THE UPPER SHOULDER REGION BECAUSE MANY SUCCESSFUL BASKETBALL PLAYERS USE THEIR SHOULDERS TO CREATE SPACE AND GET OFF THEIR SHOTS.



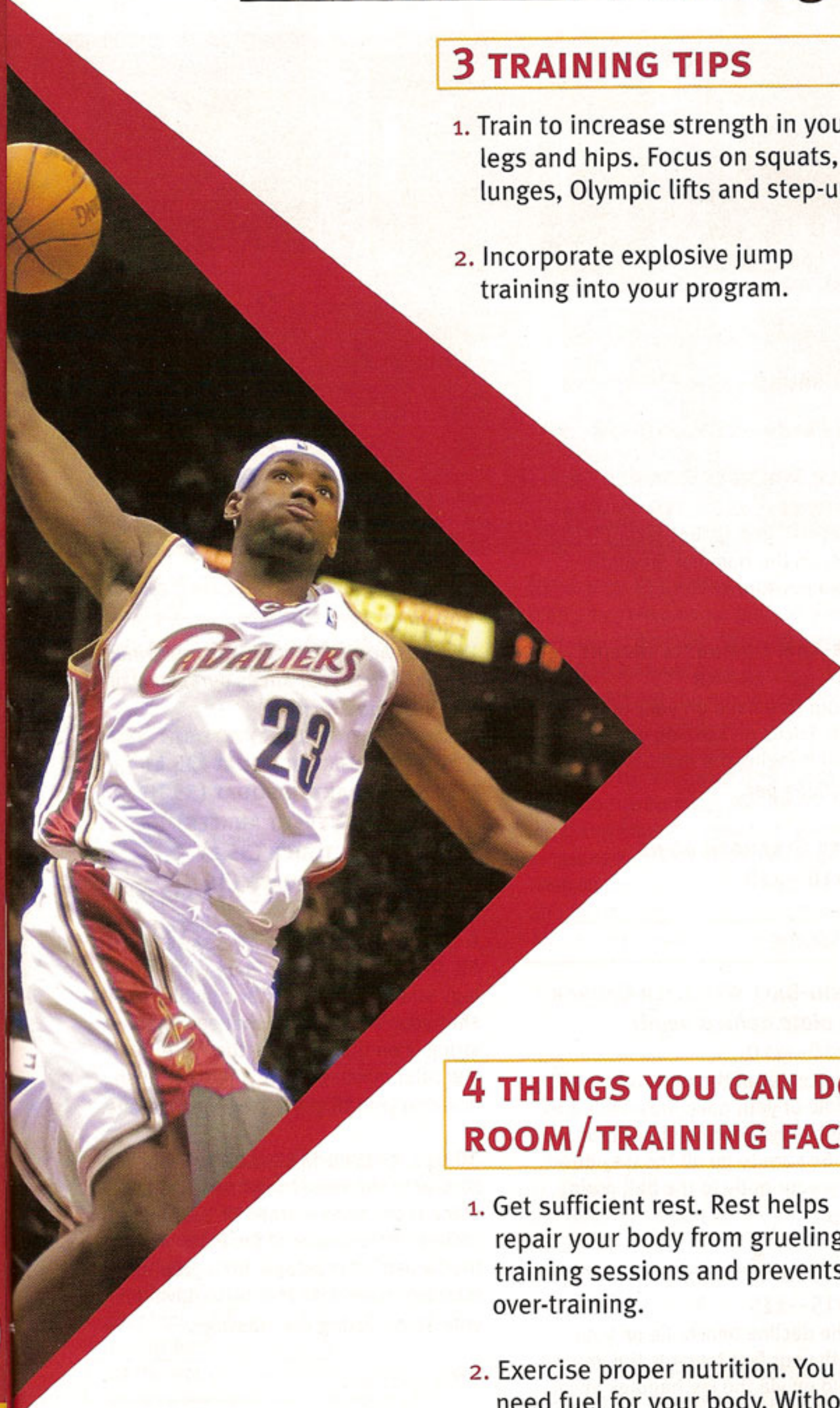
3

TO CONDITION THE TEAM'S LEGS AND CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM ON THE COURT IN SPECIFIC MOVEMENTS THAT ARE UNIQUE TO THE GAME AND EACH PLAYER'S INDIVIDUAL POSITION.

the program's

GOALS

SPEED STRENGTH'S basketball training guidelines



3 TRAINING TIPS

1. Train to increase strength in your legs and hips. Focus on squats, lunges, Olympic lifts and step-ups.
2. Incorporate explosive jump training into your program.
3. Train for multi-directional quickness. Include quickness and agility drills with cones, working the transition from different positions and directions. Not much of basketball is played running straight ahead. Train to move in all directions.

3 COMMON MISTAKES

1. Not training at all or training very little. Basketball players sometimes have this old-school mentality that they don't need to train, which absolutely is wrong.
2. Focusing on the upper body in training. Basketball players need to focus on developing their legs in an explosive fashion.
3. Overuse of jump training and plyometrics. When used, jump training and plyometrics are often abused.

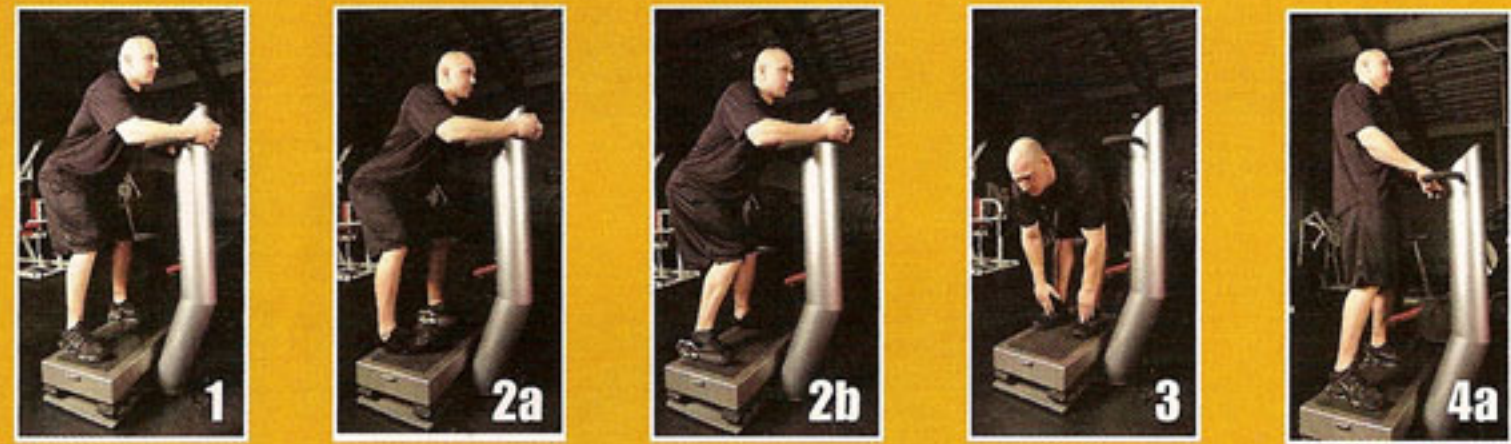
4 THINGS YOU CAN DO OUTSIDE THE WEIGHT ROOM/TRAINING FACILITY TO GET BETTER NOW!

1. Get sufficient rest. Rest helps repair your body from grueling training sessions and prevents over-training.
2. Exercise proper nutrition. You need fuel for your body. Without giving your body the fuel it needs, you will not be successful.
3. Improve your flexibility by stretching on your own throughout the day.
4. Complete body weight exercises such as sit-ups, push-ups, pull-ups and dips, if you can't make it to the weight room.

THE CHOSEN PROGRAM

LEBRON JAMES

MONDAY



POWER PLATE WARM-UP PROTOCOL

When using the Power Plate, it is critical to NEVER lock your knees during any of the following exercises.

1 30 SEC. QUARTER SQUAT (35 L)

Stand with your feet shoulder-hip width apart with the knees slightly bent. Now dip down to a quarter squat position and hold for 30 seconds.

2 30 SEC. QUARTER SQUAT (35 H) (INVERT (a) AND EVERT (b) ANKLES)

Maintaining a quarter squat position, invert your ankles and hold the position for 30 seconds then evert your ankles and hold for 30 seconds.

3 30 SEC. TOE TOUCH (35 L)

Stand with your feet together and knees slightly bent. Now bend down and touch your toes.

4a-b 30 SEC. FULL SQUATS (35 H)

Stand with your feet shoulder-hip width apart with the knees slightly bent. Now lower yourself to a parallel squat position (thighs parallel to the ground) and hold for 30 seconds.

RESISTANCE TRAINING

BEAR CRAWLS WITH SLED

Get down on all fours with the sled's harness straps around your shoulders. Bear Crawl for 2 sets of 20 yards.

SSS WARM-UP (3 DEAD LIFTS, 3 HANG SHRUGS, 3 HANG CLEANS, 3 SPLIT JERKS)

Complete the above exercises in a sequence switching exercises every 3 reps for a total of 12 reps.

HANG CLEANS—x5—x5—x5—x3

HANG SHRUGS—x3—x3—x3—x3

BENCH PRESS—x10—x10—x8—x8

HAMMER STRENGTH REVERSE GRIP PULLDOWNS—x10—x10—x10

SINGLE-ARM DUMBBELL INCLINE BENCH—x8—x8—x8

Place your free hand on your upper stomach. Focus on keeping your core tight and bringing the dumbbell over your working pec.

HAMMER STRENGTH ROWS

x10—x10—x10

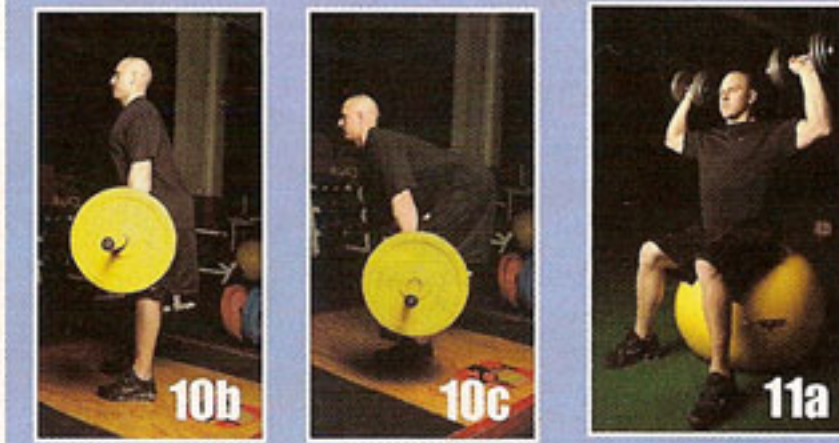
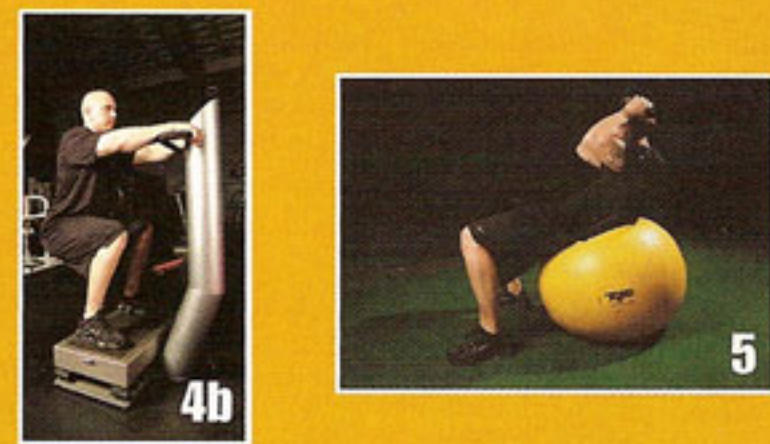
CORE WORK

5 PHYSIO-BALL WEIGHTED CRUNCH (10-lb. plate behind head)

x10—x10—x10
Align the center of the physio-ball with the middle of your back. Now with a 10 lb. plate behind your head perform a crunch. Be sure to go all the way down and form your body to the ball during each rep.

LEG LIFTS ON DECLINE BENCH

x15—x15—x15
Using the decline bench, lie on your back with your feet towards the ground. Now hold on via the leg handles above your head and lift your knees to your chest. Be sure to lift your hips off the bench on each rep.



POWER PLATE WARM-UP PROTOCOL

When using the Power Plate, it is critical to NEVER lock your knees during any of the following exercises.

▶ 30 SEC. QUARTER SQUAT (35 L)

▶ 30 SEC. QUARTER SQUAT (35 H)

(INVERT AND EVERT ANKLES)

▶ 30 SEC. TOE TOUCH (35 L)

▶ 30 SEC. FULL SQUATS (35 H)

6 30 SEC. HAMSTRING MASSAGE (40 H)

Sit down on the Power Plate with your legs straddling the center console. Now shift your hips back so that each hamstring is on the center of the Plate. For a greater massage have a partner push down on your thighs during the massage.

30 SEC. CALVES MASSAGE (40 H)

Similar to the hamstring massage, but place your calves instead of your hamstrings on the center of the Plate. As in the hamstring massage, for a greater massage have a partner push down on your shins during the massage.

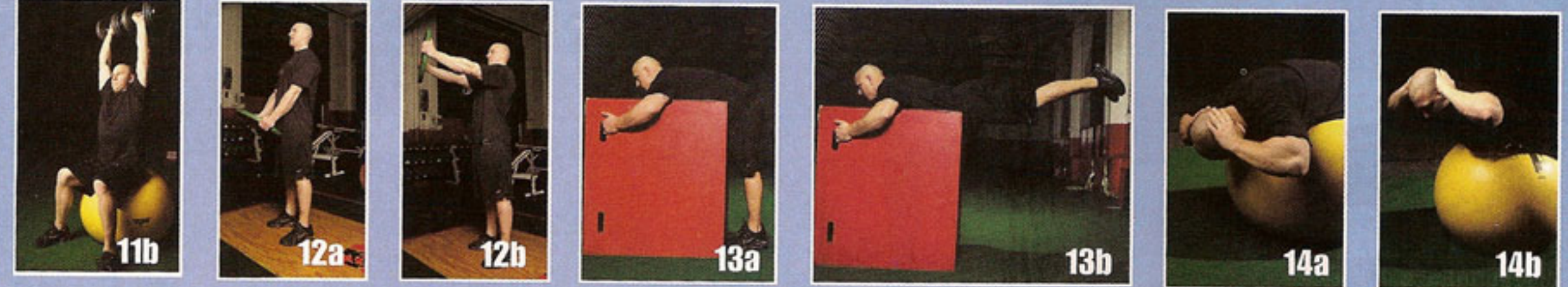
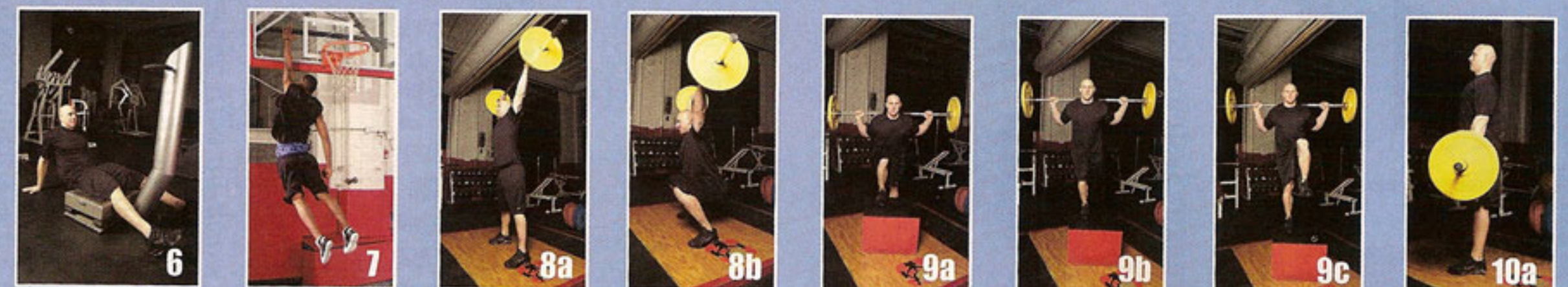
SKILL WORK

MIKAN DRILL (scoring on both sides with ball outside the body)

x20—x20

HOOK SHOT DRILL WITH MOVEMENT IN PAINT (shuffle, carioca, backpedal, sprint)—x10—x10—x10—x10

TUESDAY



SWING SHOOTING (5 from each side with 2 free-throws between each set. Must hit 1 of 2 free-throws)

x10—x10—x10

FREE-THROWS (keep track of makes out of 30)—x30

VERTICAL JUMP TRAINING

7 BACKBOARD SMACKS

▶ (NO STEP)—x4—x4

▶ (1 STEP)—x4—x4

▶ (3 STEPS)—x4—x4

RESISTANCE TRAINING

8a-b OVERHEAD SQUATS—x8—x8

Start with your feet shoulder-hip width apart with the barbell above and slightly behind your head. Lock your elbows and keep them locked throughout the exercise. Now complete a parallel squat (thighs parallel to the ground) focusing on shifting your hips back. Push through your heels and sit back. Do not let your heels come off the floor or allow your knees to move forward over your toes. Keep your back tight and squeeze your abs. Maintain an upright 45-degree torso angle throughout the duration of the exercise.

BARBELL SQUATS—x8—x8—x6

9a-c BOX STEP-UPS—x6—x6—x6

With a barbell on your back as if you were performing a squat, start with one foot on top of a box (20-24 in.) and the down foot up against the box on the floor. Push through the box with your heel and do not let your heel come off the box. Do not push off with your down foot. As you perform the step-up, maintain a tight back and squeeze your abs. Maintain a 45-degree torso angle. As your body rises on the box, lift your down leg through and finish with your thigh parallel to the ground with both your knee and toe up.

10a-c RDL'S—x6—x6—x6

Start holding a barbell against your thighs with your feet shoulder-hip width apart and knees slightly bent. Now, without bending your knees, shift your hips back and bring the barbell down to a point just past your knees. Bring the barbell slowly back up to the starting position. Maintain a tight back and abdomen, squeeze the shoulder blades together and lock the elbows throughout the duration of the exercise.

11a-b PHYSIO-BALL DUMBBELL

SHOULDER PRESS—x10—x10—x10
Sit on a physio-ball and perform a shoulder press. Focus on squeezing your core region and keeping your back tight. Do not allow your elbows to go beyond 90-degrees.

12a-b PLATE RAISES (superset with

dumbbell side raises)—x10—x10
Hold a plate with one hand at 3 o'clock and the other at 9 o'clock. Lock your elbows and do not bend your arms during the exercise. Begin with the plate slightly below your waist, against your thighs. Now raise the plate in front of your body until you can look through the barbell hole. Control the plate as you lower it to the starting position.

DUMBBELL SIDE RAISES (superset with plate raises)—x10—x10

CORE WORK

13a-b REVERSE HYPERS ON BOX—x10—x10—x10

Using a box that approximately is waist high, hold the far end of the box with each hand. Keep your hands shoulder width apart. Now lift your legs off the ground towards the ceiling. Lock your knees, keeping your legs straight at all times. Maintain a tight back.

14a-b PHYSIO-BALL LOW BACK EXTENSION—x10—x10—x10

Using a physio-ball, lie down on your stomach, ensuring that the center of the ball is at the center of your abdomen. Place your feet shoulder-hip width apart and hands behind your head. Now extend your back to the point where your body is parallel to the ground. Do not extend past this point. Remember to form your body to the ball on the way down in each rep.

Program courtesy of Eric Lichter and Tim Robertson of Speed Strength Systems (speedstrength.com).

THE CHOSEN PROGRAM

MONDAY

POWER PLATE WARM-UP PROTOCOL

- 30 sec. quarter squat (35 L)
- 30 sec. quarter squat (invert and evert ankles) (35 H)
- 30 sec. toe touch (35 L)
- 30 sec. full squats (35 H)

RESISTANCE TRAINING

- *Bear crawls with sled*
- *SSS warm-up*
(3 dead lifts, 3 hang shrugs, 3 hang cleans, 3 split jerks)
- *Hang cleans*
x5—x5—x5—x3
- *Hang shrugs*
x3—x3—x3—x3
- *Bench press*
x10—x10—x8—x8
- *Hammer Strength reverse grip pulldowns*
x10—x10—x10
- *Single-arm dumbbell incline bench*
x8—x8—x8
- *Hammer Strength rows*
x10—x10—x10

CORE WORK

- *Physio-ball weighted crunch (10-lb. plate behind head)*
x10—x10—x10
- *Leg lifts on decline bench*
x15—x15—x15

TUESDAY

POWER PLATE WARM-UP PROTOCOL

- 30 sec. quarter squat (35 L)
- 30 sec. quarter squat (invert and evert ankles) (35 H)
- 30 sec. toe touch (35 L)
- 30 sec. full squats (35 H)
- 30 sec. hamstring massage (40 H)
- 30 sec. calves massage (40 H)

SKILL WORK

- *Mikan drill* (scoring on both sides with ball outside the body)—x20—x20
- *Hook shot drill with movement in paint* (shuffle, carioca, backpedal, sprint)
x10—x10—x10—x10
- *Swing shooting* (5 from each side with 2 free-throws between each set. Must hit 1 of 2 free-throws)—x10—x10—x10
- *Free-throws* (keep track of makes out of 30)—x30

VERTICAL JUMP TRAINING

- *Backboard smacks*
(no step)—x4—x4
(1 step)—x4—x4
(3 steps)—x4—x4

RESISTANCE TRAINING

- *Overhead squats* (barbell only)—x8—x8
- *Barbell squats*—x8—x8—x6
- *Box step-ups*—x6—x6—x6
- *RDL's*—x6—x6—x6
- *Physio-ball dumbbell shoulder press*
x10—x10—x10
- *Plate raises* (superset with dumbbell side raises) x10—x10
- *Dumbbell side raises* (superset with plate raises) x10—x10

CORE WORK

- *Reverse hypers on box*—x10—x10—x10
- *Physio-ball low back extension*
x10—x10—x10

THURSDAY

COURT WORK

- *Warm-up and stretch*
- *Active warm-up with basketball*
- *Speed ladder with dribble* (each repetition equals one run of the entire ladder)
Forward 1 foot in each ladder hole—x2
Forward 2 feet in each ladder hole—x2
Lateral 2 feet in each ladder hole—x2
Lateral 1 foot in and 1 foot out in each ladder hole—x2
Forward ickey shuffle—x2
Backward ickey shuffle—x2
- *Power band drill* (3 bands)—x10
- *Horizontal and vertical band attack* (reps from both angles and last set without bands)—x5—x5—x5
- *Band shooting and agility from elbow and baseline with shuffle/carioca combo* (last set without bands)
x5—x5—x5

RESISTANCE TRAINING

- *Barbell shrugs*—x15—x15—x10
- *Straight bar curls* (drop sets)
x10 + 10 + 10, x10 + 10 + 10
- *Close grip bench press* (drop sets)
x10 + 10 + 10, x10 + 10 + 10

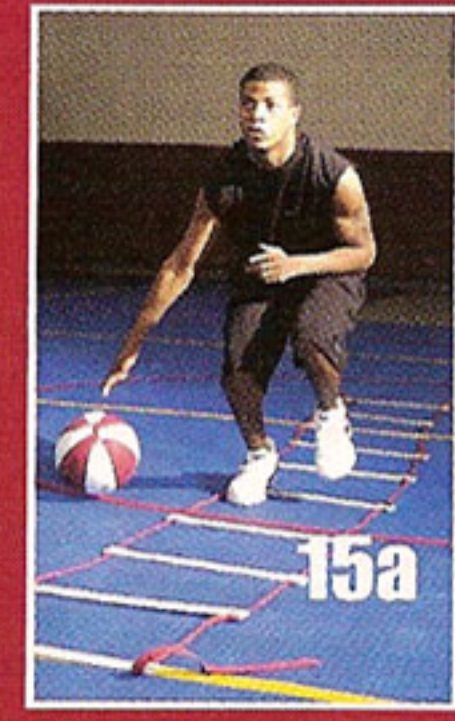
CORE WORK

- *Straight leg crunches*—x25
- *Bent knee crunches*—x25
- *Suitcase crunches*—x25
- *Toe pickers*—x25
- *Rockies*—x15
- *Grinders*—x25—x25

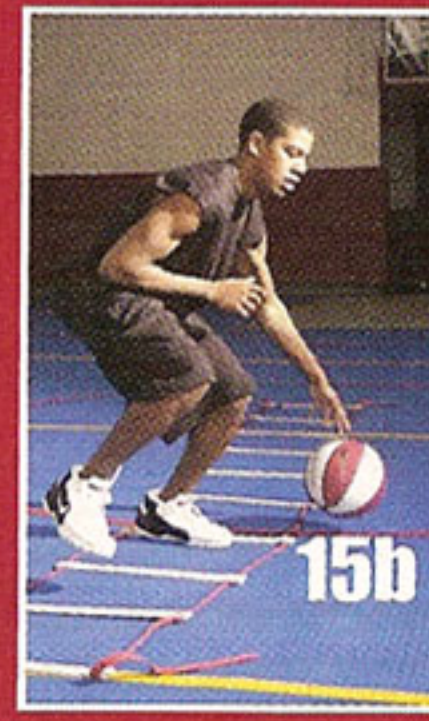
GARRETT ELLWOOD/NBAE/GETTY IMAGES

THE CHOSEN PROGRAM

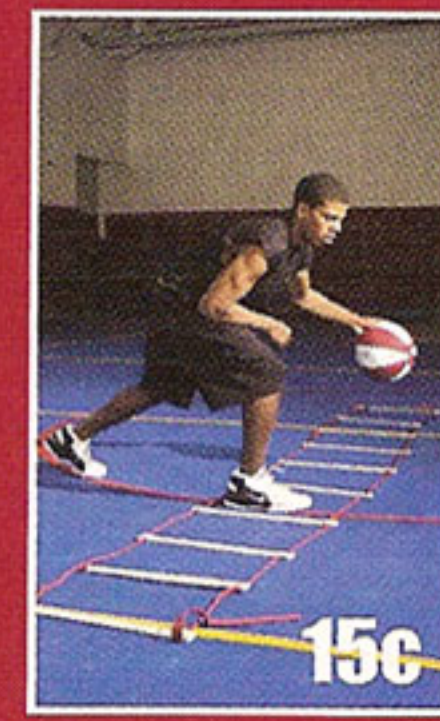
THURSDAY



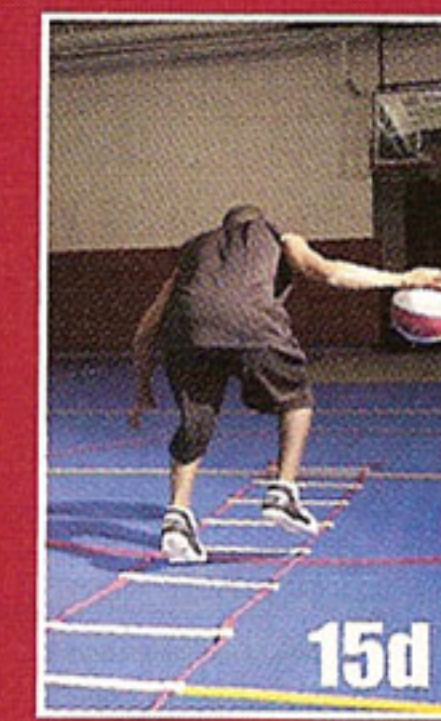
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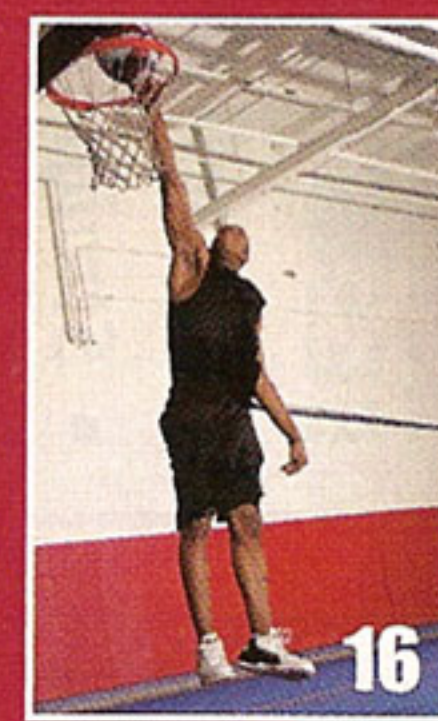
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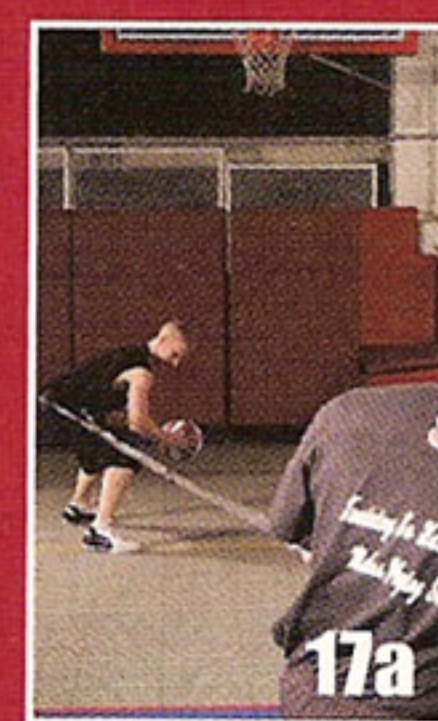
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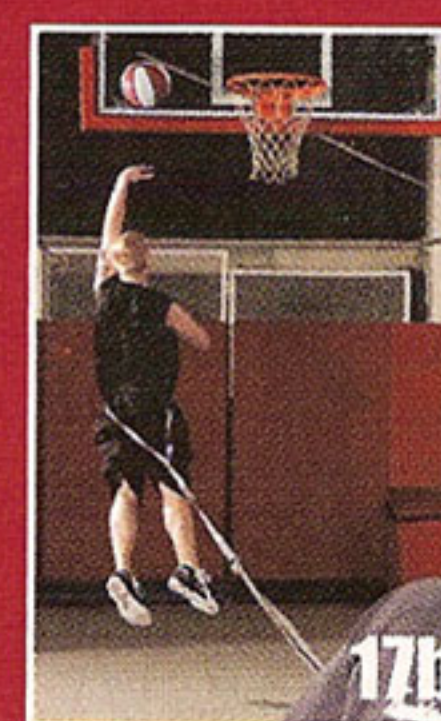
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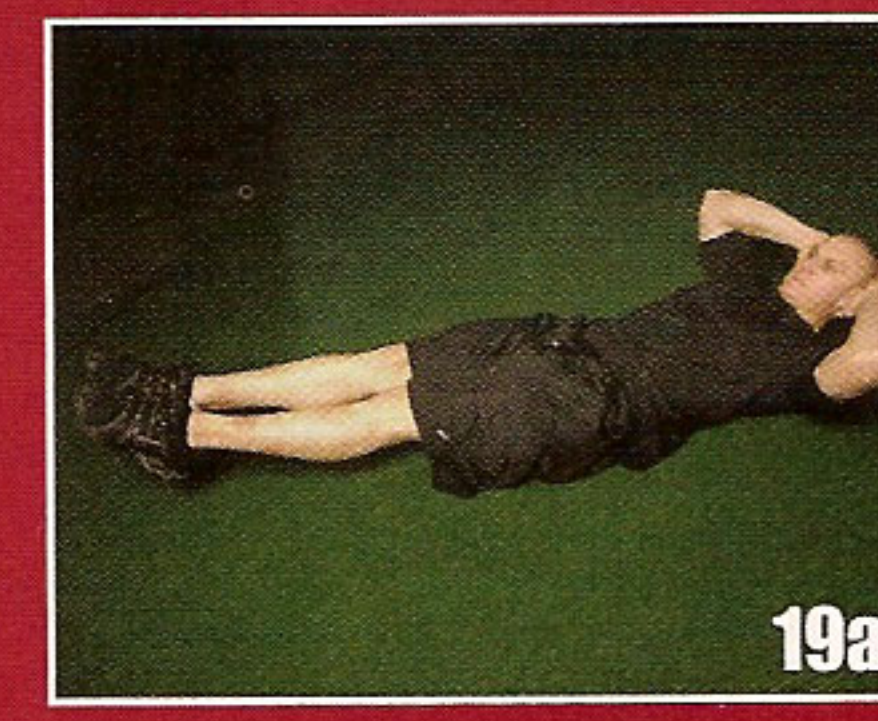
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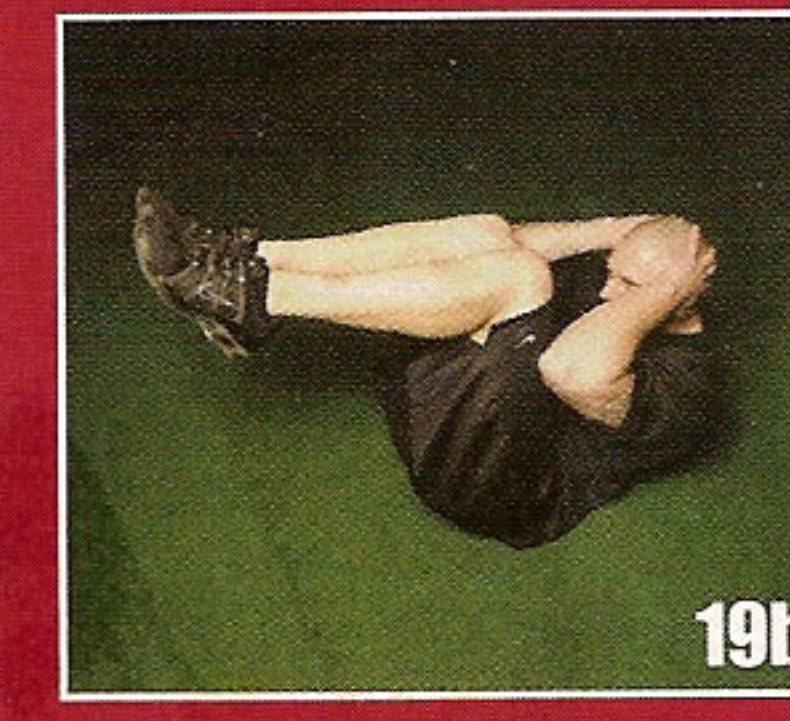
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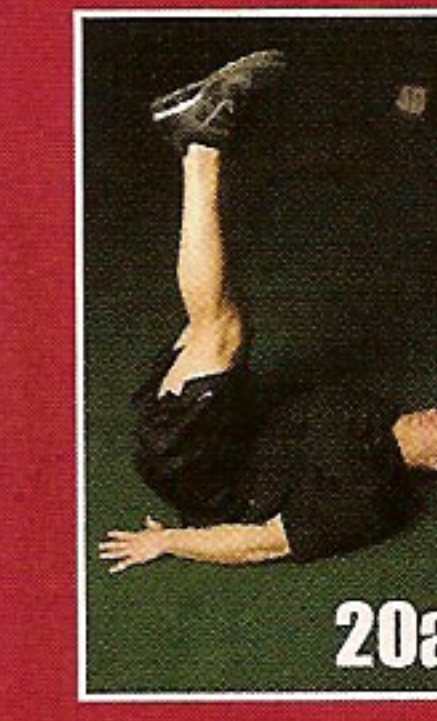
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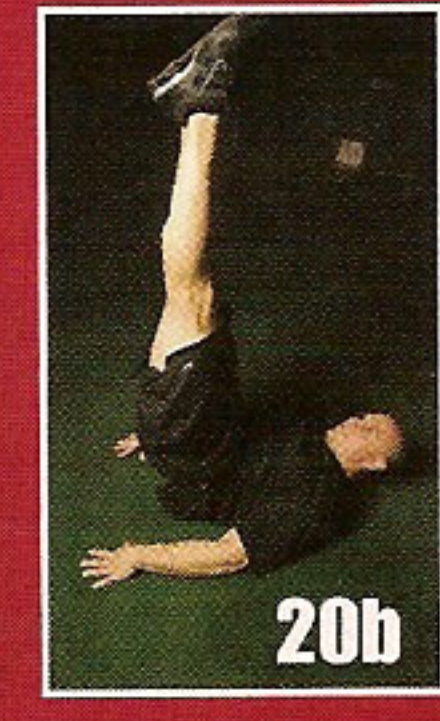
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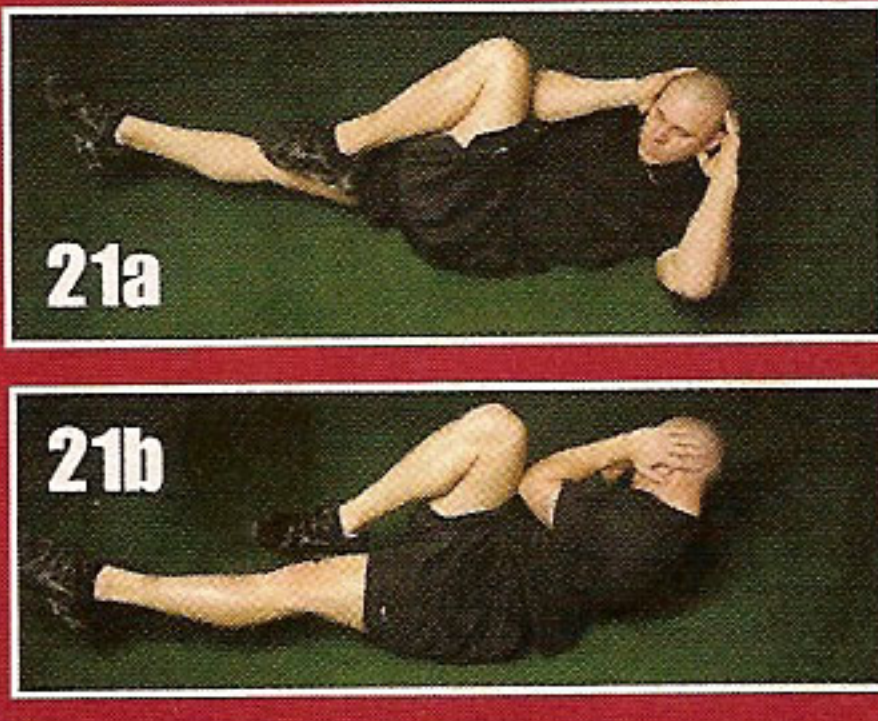
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20a



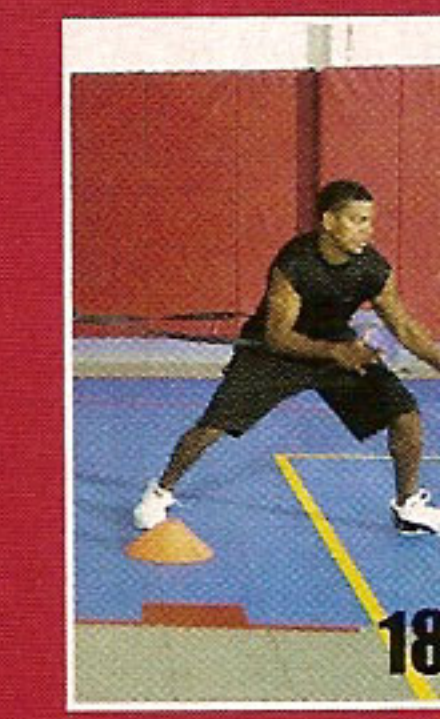
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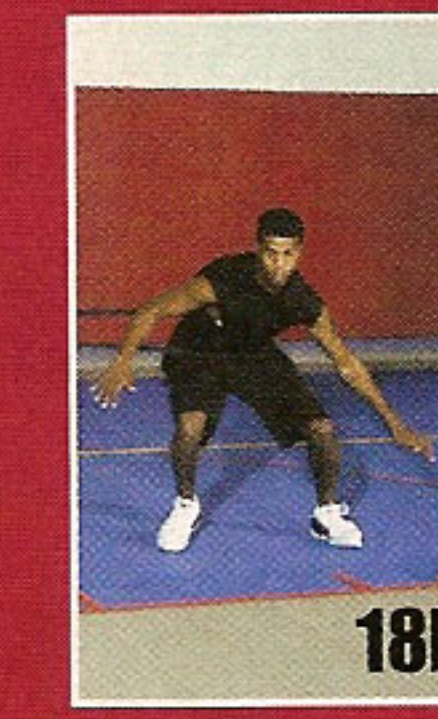
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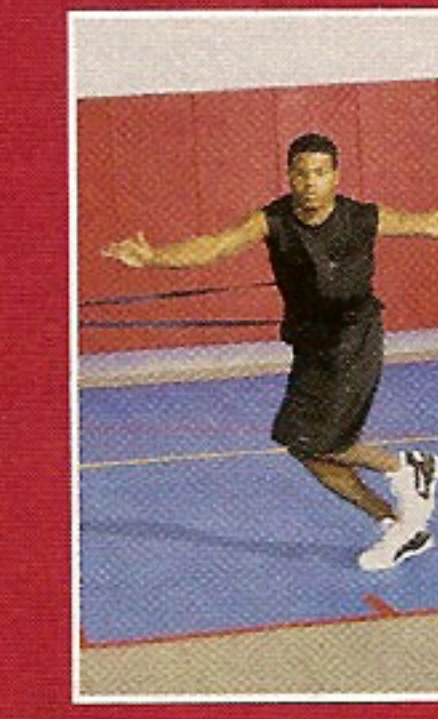
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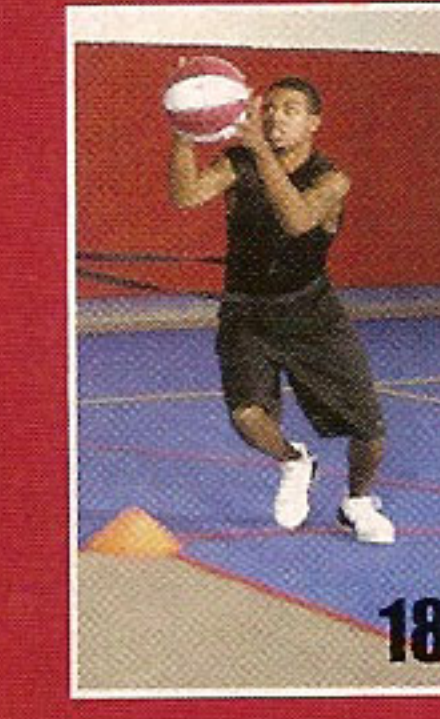
18a



18b



18c



18d

COURT WORK

► WARM-UP AND STRETCH

► ACTIVE WARM-UP WITH BASKETBALL

15 SPEED LADDER WITH DRIBBLE (each repetition equals one run of the entire ladder)

a FORWARD 1 FOOT IN EACH LADDER HOLE—x2

FORWARD 2 FEET IN EACH LADDER HOLE—x2

b LATERAL 2 FEET IN EACH LADDER HOLE—x2

c LATERAL 1 FOOT IN AND 1 FOOT OUT IN EACH LADDER HOLE—x2

Start with right foot in ladder hole and left foot outside of ladder hole. Alternate in and out as you laterally move down the ladder making sure that both the right and left foot hit inside each ladder hole.

FORWARD ICKEY SHUFFLE—x2

Start with left foot in ladder hole. Step with right foot into ladder hole. Step outside the next ladder hole with left foot. Step in the ladder hole where left foot is outside with right

foot. Step inside ladder hole with left foot. Step outside next ladder hole with right foot. Repeat pattern for entire ladder.

d BACKWARD ICKEY SHUFFLE—x2

Start with right foot in ladder hole. Step with left foot into ladder hole. Step outside the next ladder hole with right foot. Step in the ladder hole where right is outside with left foot. Step inside ladder hole with right foot. Step outside next ladder hole with left foot. Repeat pattern for entire ladder.

16 POWER BAND DRILL (3 BANDS)—x10

Start with the bands attached around your waist and stand directly in front of the rim at a distance of approximately three feet. Explode up towards the rim and score the ball ten times as quickly as possible either by dunking or performing a lay-up. It is important to have your training partner or coach move in all directions to provide resistance from all angles to challenge your leg strength and vertical explosion.

17a-b HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL BAND ATTACK (reps from both angles and last set without bands)

x5—x5—x5

Start with the bands attached around your waist and stand near the baseline at a 45-degree angle from the rim at a distance of approximately four feet. With only one dribble and two steps explode up towards the rim and score. Perform the drill from the right and left sides of the rim. It is important to have the bands provide resistance at all times, meaning have the bands taut throughout the drill.

18a-d BAND SHOOTING AND AGILITY FROM ELBOW AND BASELINE WITH SHUFFLE/CARIOCA COMBO (last set without bands)—x5—x5—x5

Start with the bands attached to your waist and stand on the baseline. Shuffle out to the elbow of the foul line against band resistance. Plant at the elbow and carioca back towards the baseline. When you reach the baseline, turn and sprint to the elbow. Have a teammate pass you the ball when you reach the foul line and score. It is important that the bands offer zero resistance during your shot, so have your training partner or coach follow you as you sprint to the elbow to receive the ball.

RESISTANCE TRAINING

BARBELL SHRUGS—x15—x15—x10

STRAIGHT BAR CURLS (drop sets)

—x10+10+10, —x10+10+10

To perform a drop set, complete three consecutive sets of 10 with varying weights. For example, start with the barbell and two 5 lb. weights on each side. Complete the first set at this weight and take off one 5 lb. weight from each side for the second set. Immediately complete the second set and take off the final 5 lb. weight from each side. Then immediately complete the final set with just the barbell.

CLOSE GRIP BENCH PRESS (drop sets)—x10+10+10, —x10+10+10

Grip the bar with a width that allows your hands to be inside of your shoulders to isolate the triceps. Perform drop sets as described above, but use heavier weights.

CORE WORK

STRAIGHT LEG CRUNCHES—x25

BENT KNEE CRUNCHES—x25

19a-b SUITCASE CRUNCHES—x25

Begin by lying down with the legs extended. Raise the legs off the ground approximately 2 inches. From this position, perform a crunch by bringing your knees towards your chest and your elbows towards your knees. Touch your elbows to your knees and return back to the starting position.

TOE PICKERS—x25

Lie down on your back with your legs extended. Lift your legs to a 90-degree angle so that the soles of your feet are facing towards the ceiling. Extend your arms towards the ceiling also. Now while keeping your arms and legs extended, touch your toes.

20a-b ROCKIES—x15

Lie down on your back with your legs extended. Lift your legs to a 90-degree angle so that your toes are pointing towards the ceiling. Now lift your hips off the ground by flexing your abs and pushing your toes toward the ceiling. Keep your legs extended at all times and do not allow your knees to move towards your head.

21a-b GRINDERS—x25—x25

Lie down on your back with your legs extended. Lift both legs off the ground approximately 2 inches. Now pull one knee towards your head and touch your opposite elbow to that knee. Hold this position until your partner or coach says 1, at which point drive your opposite knee to your opposite elbow. Continue this pattern until you complete 25 reps only alternating positions on your training partner or coach's command. Ⓢ

