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Conditioning

HOW TO BUILD BALANCE



BY BILL KERIG

■ NO MATTER HOW GOOD a skier you are, you're occasionally going to get knocked off balance, forcing you to ski from the "back seat."

As a professional mogul skier, I know that the difference between planting my butt in a bump run and quickly regaining my balance often boils down to abdominal and lower-back strength. That's why I regularly do the two lower-torso exercises I demonstrate on this page. I recommend three sets of 10 repetitions for each exercise, at least three times a week.

Your workouts won't guarantee recoveries in a challenging mogul field, but they'll give you an extra measure of stability and confidence.

Bill Kerig is a World Pro Mogul Tour veteran and mountain-bike racer who lives in Vail.

LOWER BACK EXTENSIONS

Skiing recovery depends on back strength, too. Lie on your stomach and bring your hands forward. Make a fist with your left hand and place it under your chin. Next, extend your right arm along the floor in front of you. Contract your lower back muscles by slowly and simultaneously lifting your right arm, left leg and as much of your chest as possible off the floor. Repeat with the opposite leg and arm.

THE TIME-PROVEN SIT-UP

Why do so many people do sit-ups incorrectly and wind up with back strain? Here's the proper method: Lay on your back with legs extended. Bend at the knees and walk your feet backward until they're comfortably flat on the floor. Place your hands behind your head. Now contract the abdominal muscles (don't pull upward with your arms) to raise your shoulder blades a few inches off the floor. Hold this position, then lower your shoulders. →



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