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MUSCLE & FITNESS

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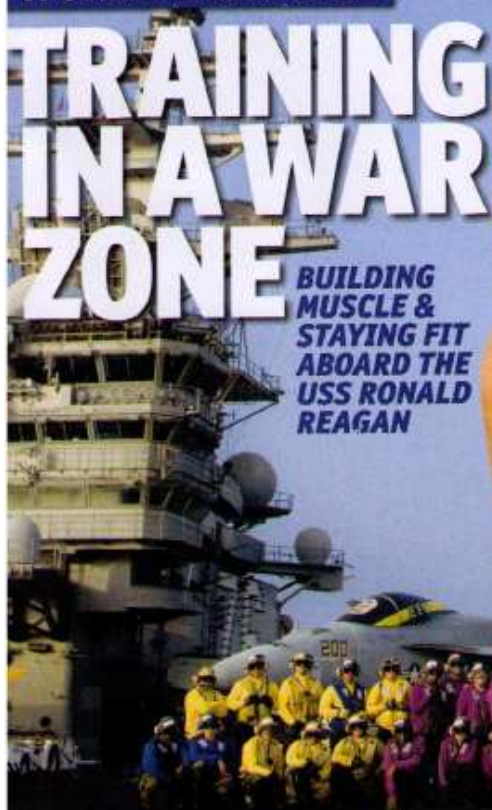
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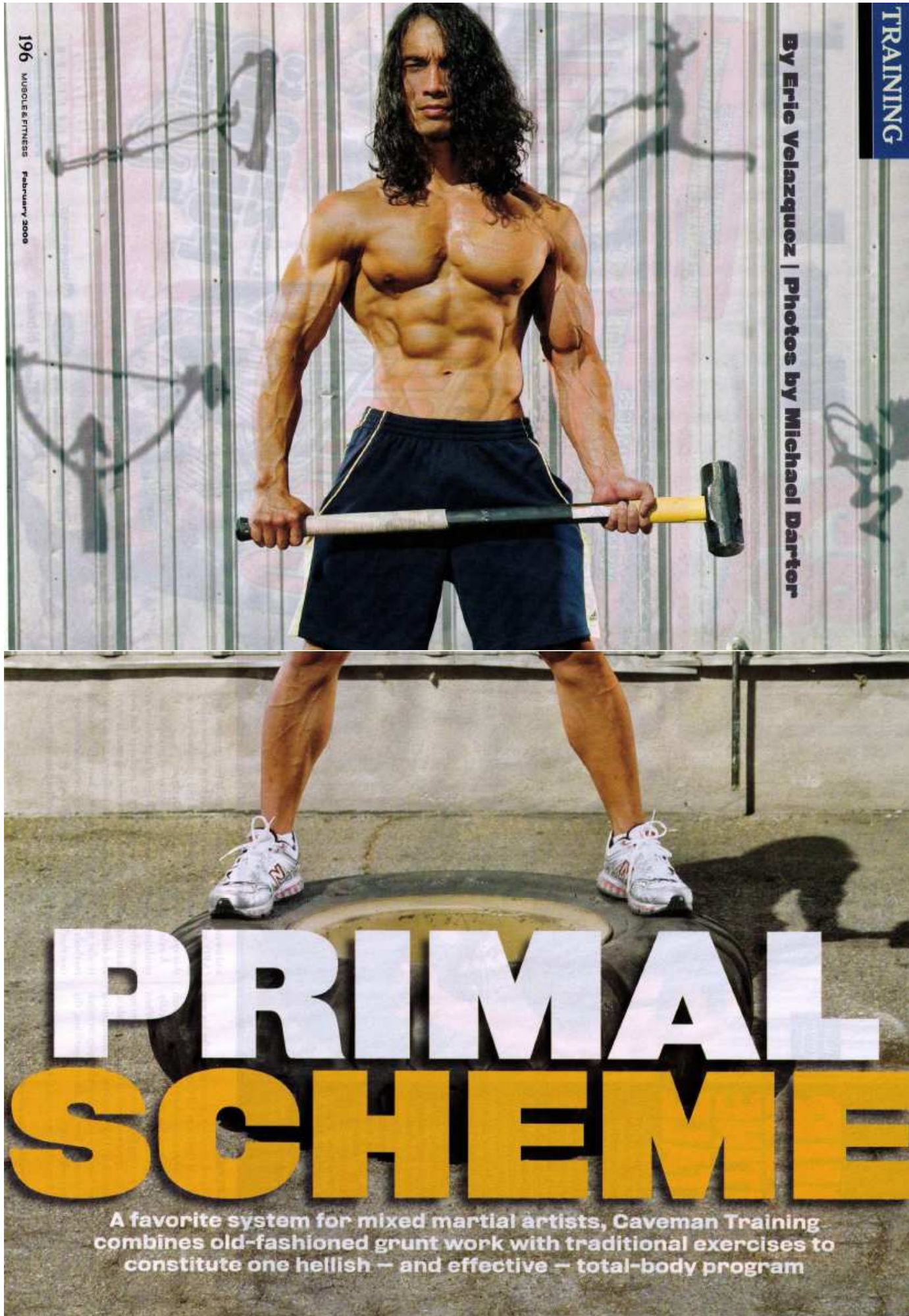
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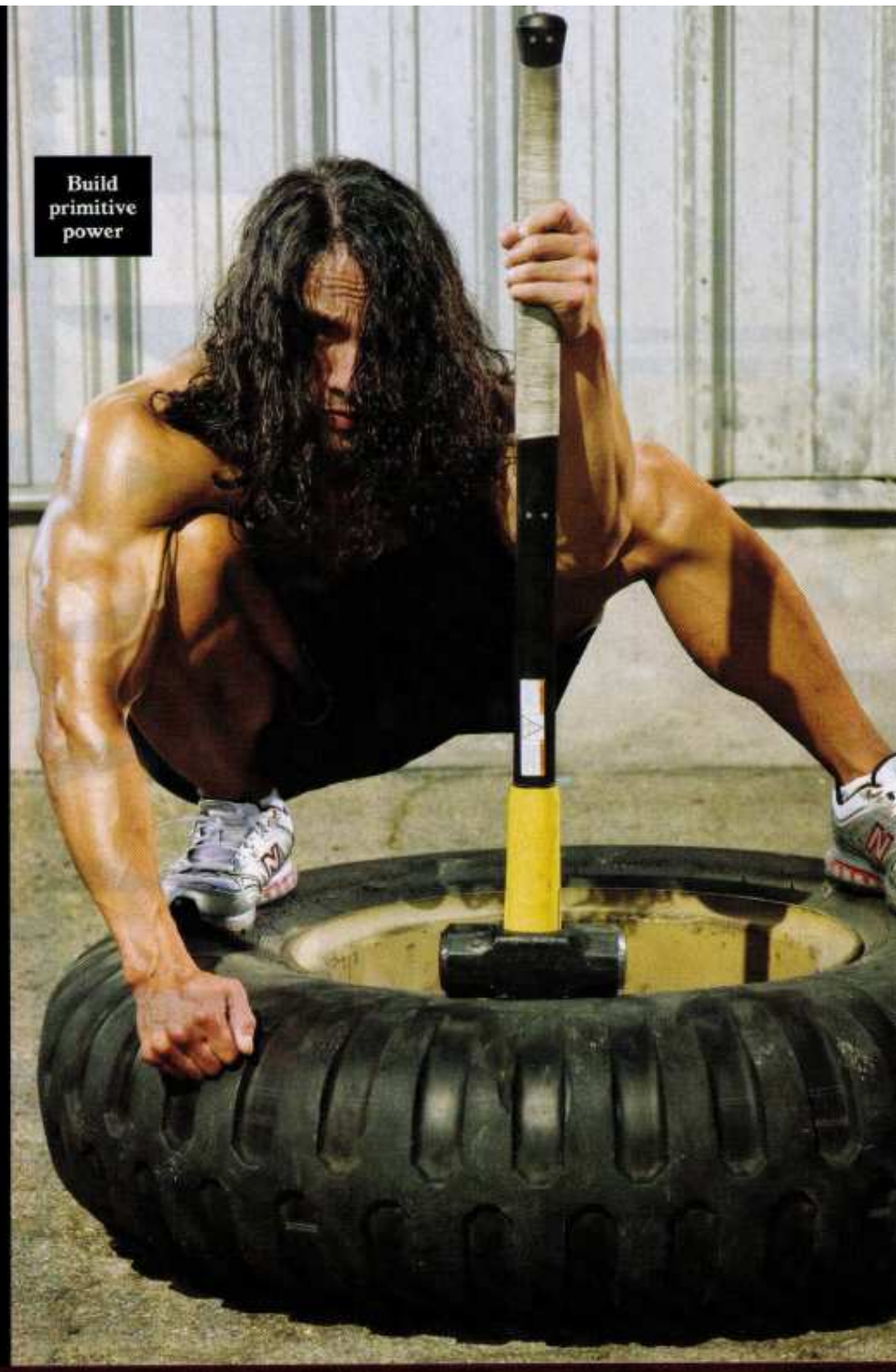
A favorite system for mixed martial artists, Caveman Training combines old-fashioned grunt work with traditional exercises to constitute one hellish — and effective — total-body program

YOUR ROUTINE IS STALE

Somewhere along the way you lost the visceral drive to invoke your inner Arnold and power through your workouts with focus and ferocity. Instead, you find yourself lulling your body into complacency, plodding robotically through set after set, forgetting your goals and perhaps your motivation. At risk are your strength, muscle mass, conditioning and training identity.

Enter Caveman Training, which is gaining steam with elite mixed martial artists because it can improve body composition while boosting athleticism. In short, it's a great way to inject new life into your routine without straying too far from your traditional weightlifting roots. A combination of strongman disciplines, high-intensity training and towel-drenching cardio, Caveman Training will leave you feeling (and looking) like the hard-charging cage warriors who are taking it mainstream. So beat your chest with a primal thud and get ready to work like the alpha male you really are.

Build
primitive
power



PRIMITIVE FITNESS

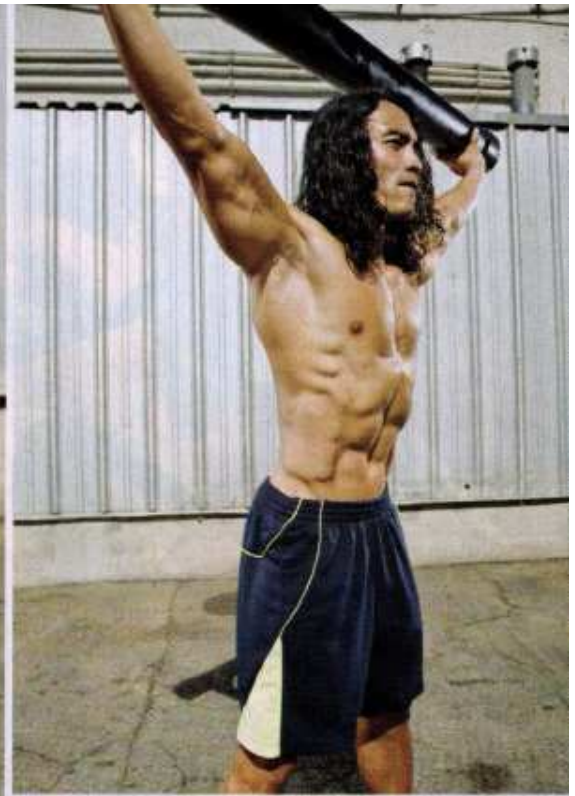
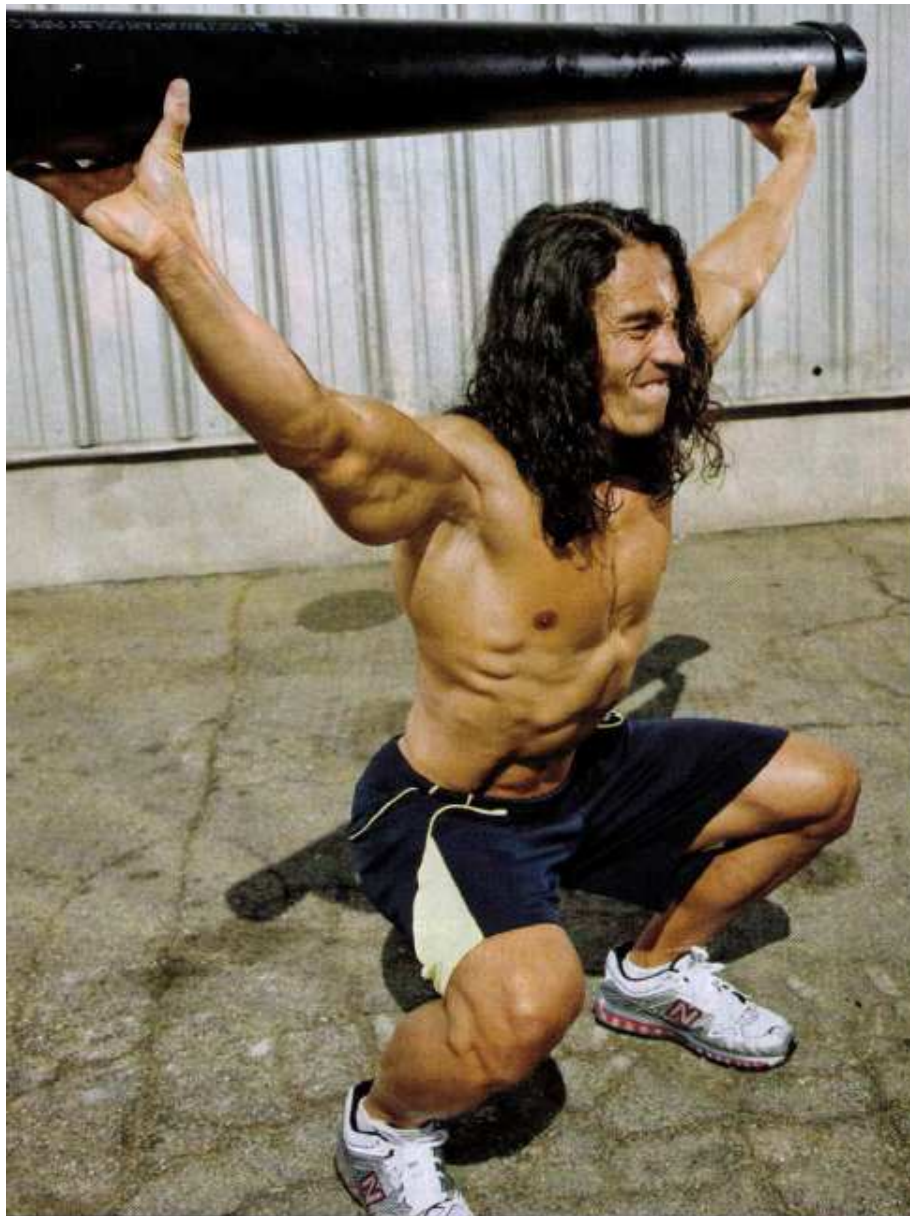
Watching Sean Sherk scramble, shoot and strike his way to victory over Tyson Griffin at UFC 90 in October was impressive if for no other reason than the ease with which he cruised through the bout. But not tactically, physically. It has become a trademark of his fighting arsenal. When most fighters are starting to suck wind, Sherk is getting stronger. When his opponents wilt in the late rounds of a fight, Sherk flourishes. That's because his conditioning coach has trained him with a simple philosophy in mind: "Whatever the intensity level of the competition, the level of training should be higher."

So says Scott Ramsdell, creator of Caveman Training

and owner of Minnesota-based Athletic Performance Inc. (API), where Sherk and a handful of other top-tier mixed martial artists endure the frenzied and relentless pace of this system before heading to the Octagon.

A calculated mix of traditional and novel strength and conditioning exercises, Caveman Training is prided on its specificity as much as its difficulty. It produces fast and measurable results whether you're seeking muscle mass and definition or looking to boost performance in a particular sport or activity. "It takes the best of all training methods and puts them into a truly comprehensive routine that's goal-specific," Ramsdell says.

And though Ramsdell and his colleagues run training



Overhead squats with a water-filled slosh pipe require greater core stabilization to offset the movement of the pipe

sessions at various levels, the brave few who want to be considered advanced must adhere to one rule: Never quit. "If a client quits during an advanced-level routine, he's kicked out of the gym and cannot come back," Ramsdell says plainly. "Over the past year, I've asked eight people not to return. I give them directions to the nearest health club and thank them for their time. Our motto is simple and it's written on our walls: Commit, no excuses."

Ramsdell conceived of Caveman Training with athletes in mind but has expanded it to include more than 80 detailed routines that anyone can do, depending on their goals and experience levels.

"Caveman Training originated here at API," he says. "I was tired of the play-it-safe attitude with athletes. I was tired of seeing them coddled as if they were going to get injured or die if they were pushed too hard. I've heard from every one of my fighters that their training with me is harder than their fights. I believe this should be true of every sport. The training and preparation for the competition should be harder than the competition itself."

GYM: FORTUNE GYM, HOLLYWOOD, CA

The Caveman Split

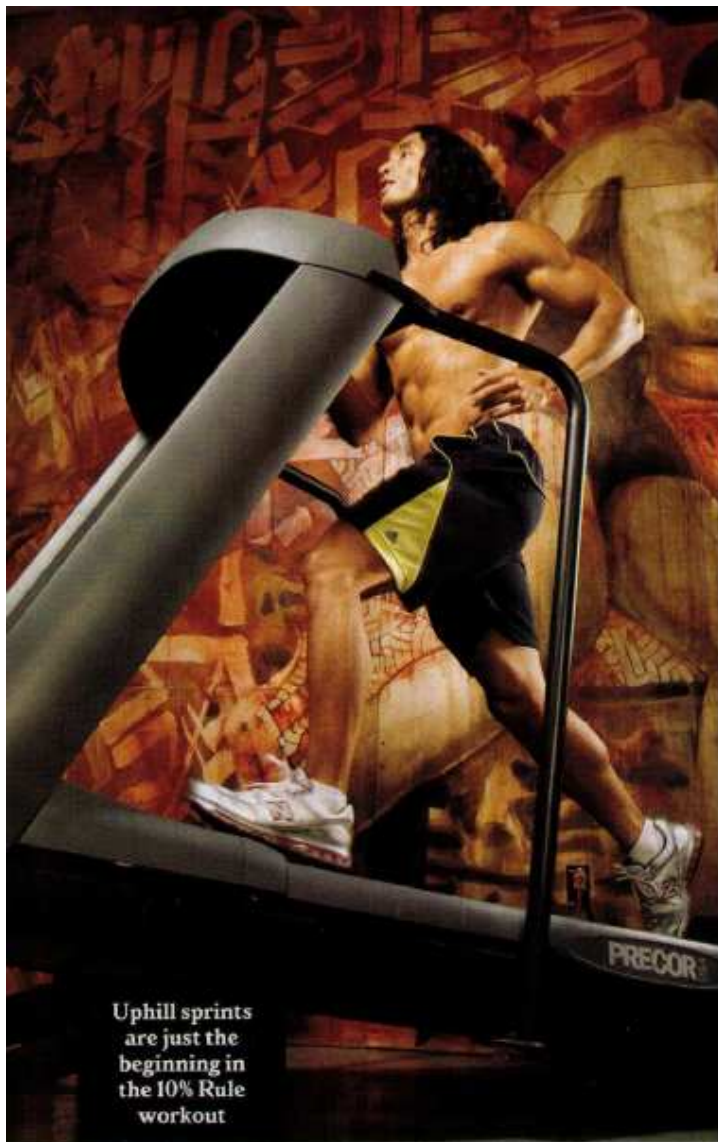
MIX CAVEMAN TRAINING INTO YOUR EXISTING ROUTINE TO GET A PHYSIQUE BUILT FOR SPEED AND POWER

Creator Scott Ramsdell says the best results are achieved when you incorporate 2-3 sessions of Caveman Training per week into your traditional weightlifting split. While you can do these workouts more often, he suggests sticking to this guideline in the beginning to prevent overtraining. Here's his recommended split:

DAY	EXERCISE
1	Caveman Training
2	Cardio
3	Weight training ¹
4	Cardio
5	Caveman Training
6	Weight training ²
7	Rest

¹ mostly deadlifts, rows, squats and presses

² detail work on smaller muscle groups



Uphill sprints are just the beginning in the 10% Rule workout

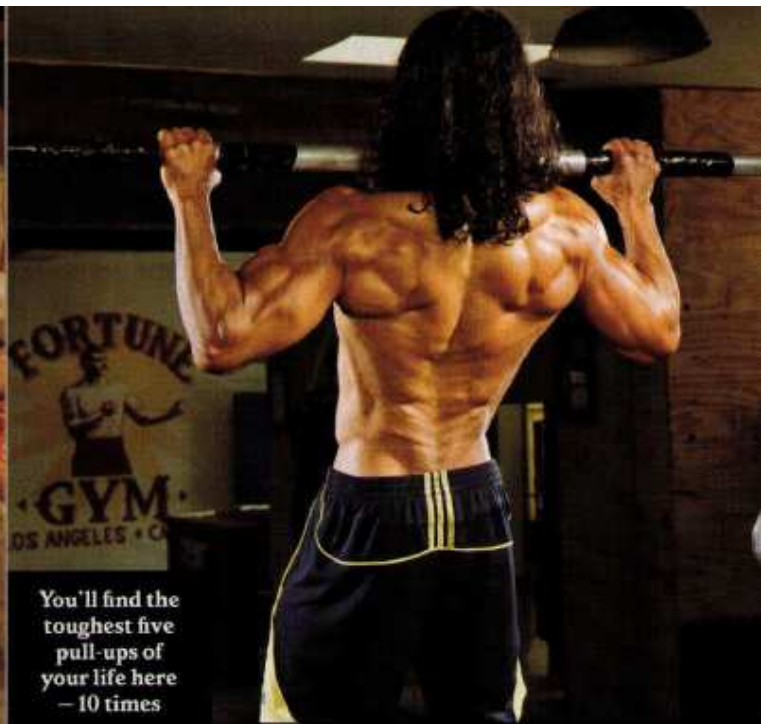
The tireless Sherk, who boasts an M&F-worthy physique, is the poster boy for Caveman Training — they don't call him "Muscle Shark" for nothing — but he's only one of a handful of fighters who look to Ramsdell to get Octagon-strong. Brock Lesnar, Nick Thompson, Logan Clark and Derek Noble have all taken a ride on the pain train at API, with some of these workouts becoming the stuff of legends on YouTube. The ladies aren't left behind, either. There are a few "cavewomen" at API who go rep for rep with the guys.

One, Kaitlin Young, a 4-2 mixed martial artist, is now a certified Caveman Training instructor and has seen gains aplenty in her game. "Training at API has helped me gain muscle mass while dropping bodyfat and increasing my cardio," she says. "As a result of my training, I'm a stronger, leaner and more efficient athlete. It's my primary source of conditioning. All kinds of athletes have seen a jump in their looks and performances with it."

MASS APPEAL

You don't have to have a fetish for front kicks and armbars to train this way. All you need is an open mind, a hunger for challenge and a threshold for pain. In the end, the mirror tells the story.

"It doesn't matter what level you're at, the end result is



You'll find the toughest five pull-ups of your life here — 10 times

Three to GROW ON

TRY ANY OR ALL OF THESE CAVEMAN TRAINING PROGRAMS TO BUILD MUSCLE, BOOST YOUR ATHLETICISM AND BURN BODYFAT

While API's Scott Ramsdell recommends performing Caveman Training under a certified trainer's supervision, particularly if you're new to it, he offers up these three routines as a broad sample of what he puts his athletes through. He also has a rating system — gold, silver or bronze — depending on how long it takes you to finish each workout.

WORKOUT 1 THE 10% RULE

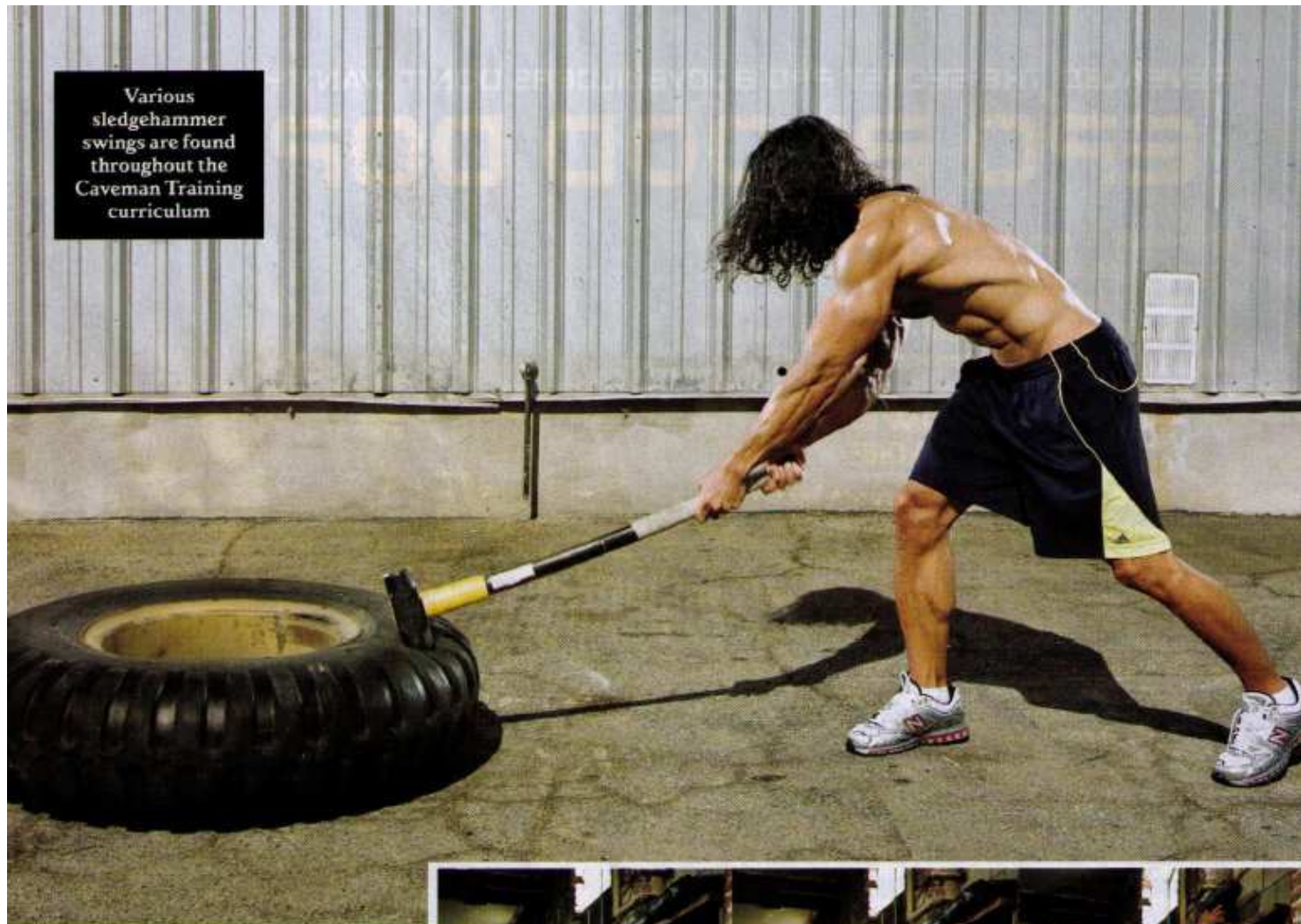
In this workout, the reps are few and the weights are fairly heavy. Pace is the ultimate controlling factor in how effective this routine can be.

EXERCISE	TIME/REPS
Treadmill (10% incline/10 mph)	20 seconds
Slosh Pipe Overhead Squat	5 reps
Wide-Grip Pull-Up	5 reps
Double-Under Jump (jump rope)	20 reps
Heavy Bag Twirl (60-pound bag)	5 reps
Box Jump (24" platform)	10 reps
Double-Under Jump (jump rope)	20 reps
Sandbag Clean and Press	5 reps

GOING CAVEMAN Start from the top of the list and work your way down as fast as possible while maintaining good form on each exercise. There's no scheduled rest. Perform the sequence 10 times total, noting your time after the final sandbag clean and press.

SCORE Gold: 20 minutes or less; silver: 20:01–25:00; bronze: 25:01+ (Continued on page 204)

Various sledgehammer swings are found throughout the Caveman Training curriculum



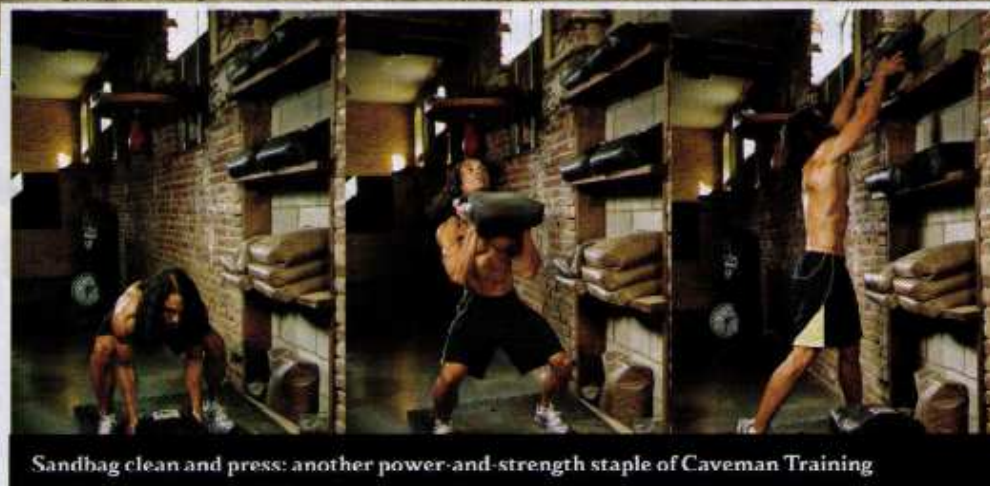
the same: a complete athlete,” Ramsdell says. “You’ll not only be bigger, faster and stronger but you’ll also be leaner, have much better cardio endurance and will perform better in the competition of choice.”

This holds true even if that “competition” is simply pushing and pulling more weight each week in an effort to build a bigger, more streamlined physique. You can train this way more often than 2-3 times per week, but Ramsdell recommends to start there if you want to augment your current program.

“For the most part, our clients build a tremendous amount of muscle throughout their bodies,” he reports. “They’ll see significant increases in lean muscle mass and decreases in fat mass. The muscle will be developed on the upper body — chest, core, shoulders and back — and into the upper legs and hips.”

Caveman Training doesn’t hide behind a complex, ambiguous set of pseudo-scientific jargon. Quite the contrary: It’s built on pillars of simplicity, hence the name.

“Caveman Training gives you incredible body and core strength,” says Justin Fortune, a Hollywood-based boxing and mixed martial arts strength and conditioning expert. “It’s all based on what guys did for a living: lifting kegs, laying bricks, mixing cement. It’s all physical labor. Men



Sandbag clean and press: another power-and-strength staple of Caveman Training

CAVEMAN TRAINING CENTERS

THERE ARE SIX OFFICIAL CAVEMAN TRAINING CENTERS NATIONWIDE, AND MORE ARE IN THE WORKS

GYM

Strong 101

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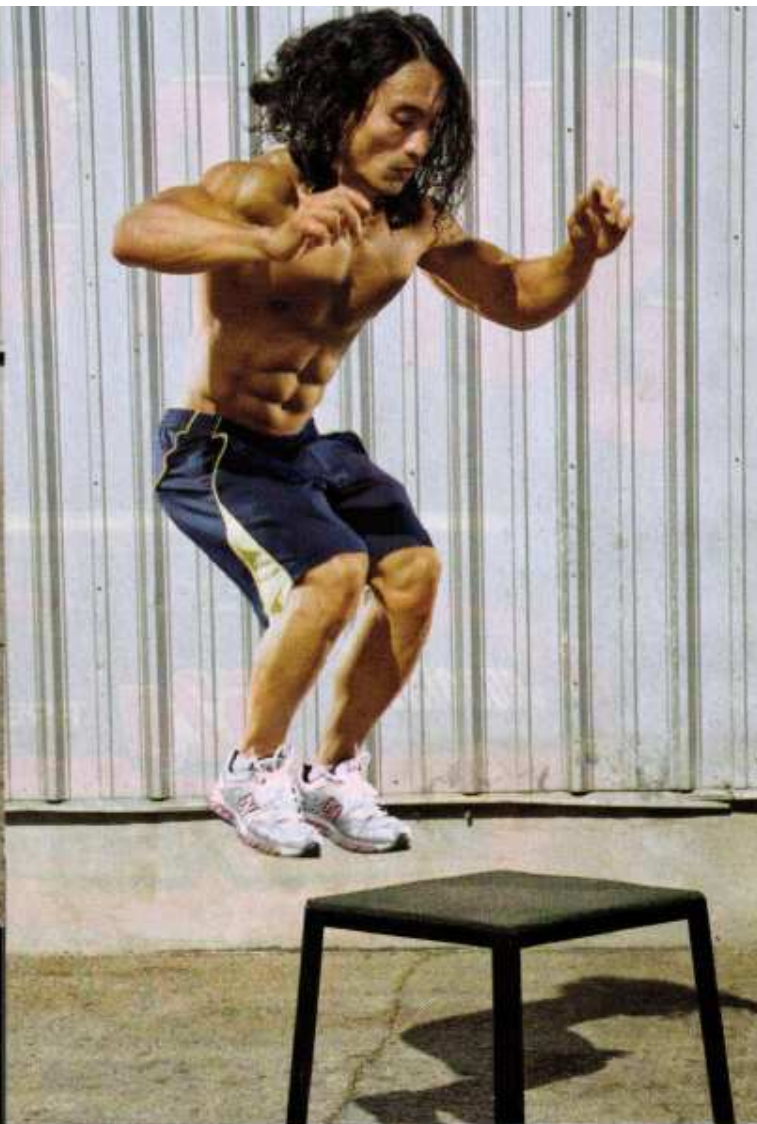
Brooklyn Center, MN

London, Ontario, Canada

Norfolk, VA

Gloverville, SC

» Visit ap1trainingcenter.biz for details on new locations.



Three to GROW ON

WORKOUT 2 MED-BALL HELL

Routines like this can give medicine balls a nasty reputation. This simple-looking workout, which should be performed using a 20–30-pound medicine ball, attacks your core and stabilizer muscles. If you're looking to make this one more interesting, do it interval style, alternating your pace from circuit to circuit.

EXERCISE	REPS ³
Overhead Squat ¹	11–20
Close-Grip Push-Up ²	11–20
Sit-Up ¹	11–20
Close-Grip Push-Up ²	11–20
Overhead Squat ¹	11–20
200-yard sprint ⁴	

¹ ball above your head; ² both hands on the ball; ³ start by doing 11 reps per exercise, then add one rep each time through until you reach 20; ⁴ don't use medicine ball

GOING CAVEMAN Complete each exercise in sequence in circuit fashion. Immediately dive back into the next set, and continue until you've reached 20 reps per exercise. Again, there's no scheduled rest. Don't forget to score your total time.

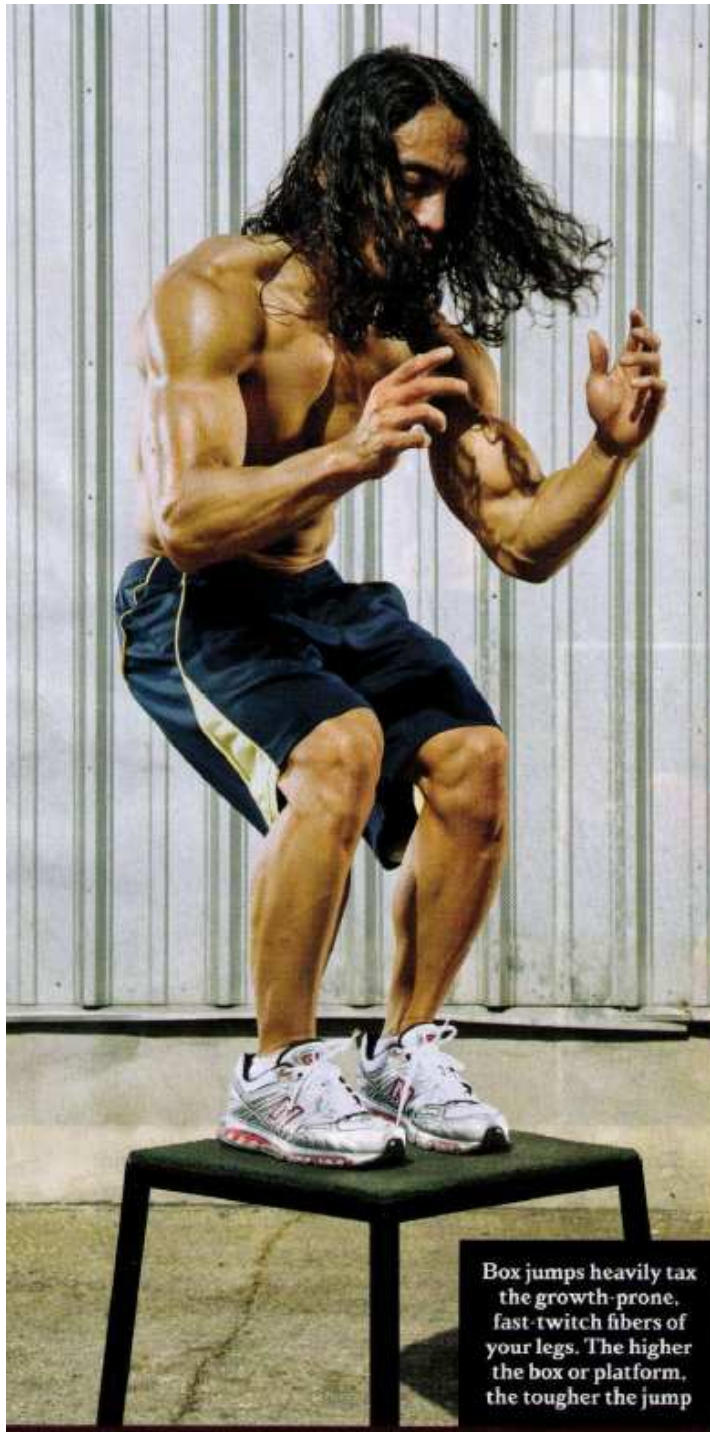
SCORE Gold: 18 minutes or less; silver: 18:01–22:00; bronze: 22:01+

in previous eras were harder, but somewhere along the way they got soft. When I was fighting, I was doing demolition, working on a jackhammer."

On any given day, a Caveman Training routine might include flipping 200-pound tires, swinging 16-pound sledgehammers, pushing cars or hauling a loaded wheelbarrow up a ramp. Tomorrow you could be swinging heavy ropes, twirling heavy bags and hoisting sandbags overhead. These unconventional but effective strength- and mettle-manufacturing movements are often fused seamlessly with more traditional exercises like pull-ups, box jumps, overhead presses and sprints.

"If the routine is for the everyday gym rat, then the exercises are limitless," says Ramsdell. "I don't care what types of moves you put in the routines, they just need to be effective. Very seldom are there single-joint exercises in our routines because they don't tax the body enough to merit spending time doing them." In the long run, more compound movements means more muscle and less fat. Period.

Exercises are often performed in circuit fashion: Each participant completes a certain number of reps or performs the movement for a set amount of time. Athletes will, as Ramsdell mentioned, train specific to their sports; in the case of mixed martial artists, five rounds of five



Box jumps heavily tax the growth-prone, fast-twitch fibers of your legs. The higher the box or platform, the tougher the jump

The training and preparation for the competition should be harder than the competition itself

— Scott Ramsdell

Three to GROW ON

WORKOUT 3 SHORT BUT NOT SWEET

Looking for a trial by fire? This power-focused routine amounts to 7–10 minutes of total work for most athletes but provides a healthy dose of muscle-building benefits in the process. "This must be done at sprint speed for it to be effective," Ramsdell says. "The weights must be moved as fast as possible: Think short bursts of 100% effort with enough rest to allow for complete recovery."

Circuit 1

EXERCISE	REPS
Box Jump (24" platform)	10
Deadlift (185 pounds)	10
Thruster (40-pound dumbbells)	10
Pull-Up	10
Close-Grip Push-Up	10

Circuit 2

EXERCISE	REPS
Pull-Up	10
Bent-Over Row	10
Upright Row	10
Shoulder Press	10
Renegade Row	10

Note: Use 40-pound dumbbells for all exercises in Circuit 2 except the pull-up. Weights can be scaled down on any exercise to meet your experience level.

GOING CAVEMAN Complete each exercise in Circuit 1, moving quickly from one exercise to the next without rest. At the end of Circuit 1, rest 3–4 minutes. Perform this circuit five times, recording your total work time for each run-through. Start Circuit 2, completing it in the same fashion as the first: five times through with 3–4 minutes of rest between circuits. Add your workout times from both circuits to get your score.

SCORE Gold: 6:30 minutes or less; silver: 6:31–8:00; bronze: 8:01+

Piece together your own Caveman Training routine, or participate in various other combat conditioning programs at Fortune Gym in Hollywood. (fortunegym.com)

NOW AT M&F ONLINE

To see Sean Sherk power through a Caveman Training session in real time, or to go behind the scenes of our Caveman Training photo shoot at Fortune Gym in Hollywood, visit muscleandfitness.com/videos



Want to build freakish power? Try bag twirls. Start with quarter-turns and work up to full 360-degree flips

minutes each, with each round broken into five one-minute stations. The workouts — each its own frenetic, cyclonic test of physical prowess and mental endurance — provide a broader but equally taxing approach and are guaranteed to leave your muscles begging for mercy.

STRENGTH STRATA

The fast-paced chaos of these workouts may evoke comparisons to CrossFit (a training style covered in our May 2008 issue), but Ramsdell is quick to make a distinction.

“Our routines have a predetermined goal in mind,” he says, alluding to CrossFit’s “to separate domains of fitness” mantra. “There are specific energy systems that we train [with each workout]. In CrossFit, it seems like a bunch of difficult exercises are just thrown together.

“We’ve had several CrossFit instructors come through our program, and I’ve completed several of their workouts,” he adds. “Between what these instructors tell me and my own experiences, our workouts tend to be much more difficult, more involved and more calculated, and they’re done at a higher intensity level.”

Ramsdell stops the CrossFit smackdown there...kind of. “Don’t get me wrong, the CrossFit program is great and it blazed the trail for programs like ours. I just believe Caveman Training is the next level when it comes to effectiveness and intensity. This is going to get me in trouble, but we have a saying in our gym: ‘If it were easy, we’d call it CrossFit.’”



72,000

Number of hits on Sean Sherk's latest Caveman Training video at YouTube.com (as of press time)

PALEO-POWERED

Workout community jabs aside, Caveman Training does possess that “kick you in your pills” kind of kinetic mayhem that’s insanely addictive. There’s something about handling heavy weight and brandishing crude instruments of destruction at a breakneck pace in the name of fitness that’s entirely rewarding and utterly male. You don’t have to leave your traditional training behind, but if your routine is in need of new life — and your physique has been begging you for a change — you might just want to try going Paleolithic on it a few times a week. **M&F**

For more information on Caveman Training, visit the official website of Athletic Performance Inc. at apitrainingcenter.biz