

# KNOW YOUR OWN STRENGTH

**PART 1**

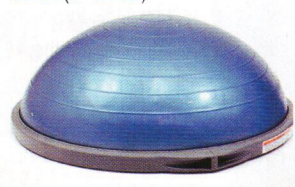
**F**OR MOST athletes, winter training should bring an increase in volume – not just in terms of mileage but with regards to additional training loads in the form of strength sessions. There's no better place to increase general stability and strength than with a good circuit regime.

The circuit we'll be outlining over the next few weeks, with exercises demonstrated by the 800m specialist Michael Rimmer, provides the perfect stepping stone toward a more demanding weights programme.

There will be a variety of moves and equipment, starting this week with some Bosu and medicine ball exercises.

## What is a Bosu?

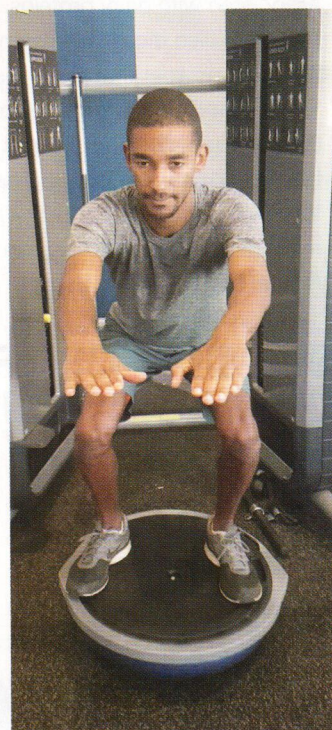
The Bosu is a dome-shaped piece of balance training equipment consisting of an inflated rubber hemisphere attached to a rigid platform. It's looks like a stability ball cut in half and requires your core abdominal muscles to work hard in order to stay upright. It's a really useful item of equipment and you can buy one from argos.co.uk (£105.99).



**CIRCUITS SHOULD FORM THE BEDROCK OF WINTER STRENGTH TRAINING. EILISH McCOLGAN EXPLAINS WHY**

## How many repetitions?

Ideally you should include one upper body, one core and one lower body exercise within each section. The exercises are to be done in quick succession (no breather) with 10-12 reps each (5-6 reps on each side for single leg exercises).



## Balance squat

Place the Bosu's rounded side on the floor. Carefully place one foot onto the flat surface and, when balanced, stand on top of the platform with your feet shoulder width apart.

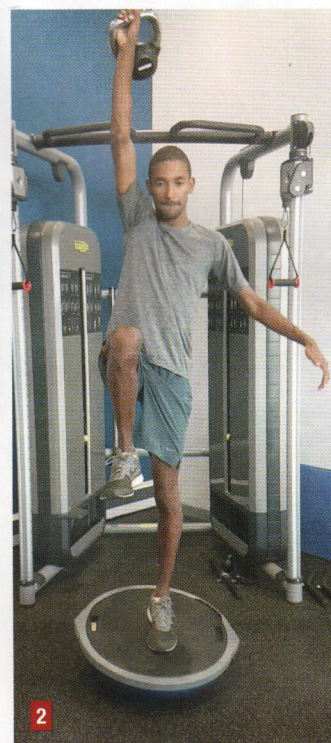
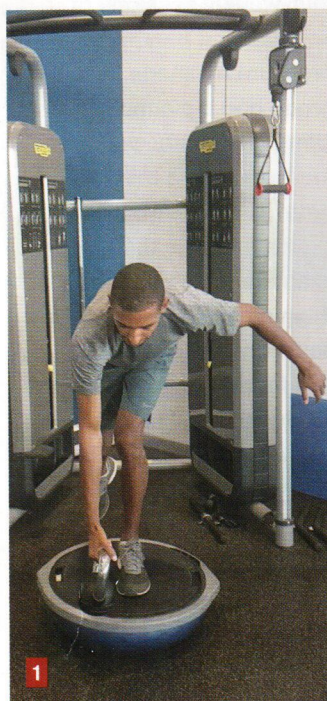
Squat down, ensuring that you don't let your knees go over your toes. Focus on sitting backwards, putting weight

evenly through your feet and heels. As you come back up, emphasise thrusting your pelvis forward and engaging your glutes. You'll need to really engage your abdominals for stability.

## Single leg runner (with kettlebell)

Keeping the Bosu in the same position, hold a kettlebell in your right hand and place your left foot onto the middle of the flat platform. Bend your left knee slightly and reach down until you can feel a slight stretch on your hamstring.

At the same time, lean forward from the hips to raise the kettlebell slightly. Be sure to



keep the same degree of flexion in your knee throughout the move – don't force it upwards or downwards (pic 1).

Sit back into the exercise, working the gluteal muscles and allowing your 'free' right leg to rise off the ground as needed.

Once you have a stretch on the hamstring, drive the right leg through into a running position (the higher the knee, the better), bringing the kettlebell up and above your head, with a fully extended arm (pic 2).

Keep your chest up and core engaged. Return to the start position and repeat the set number of reps on one side before switching.



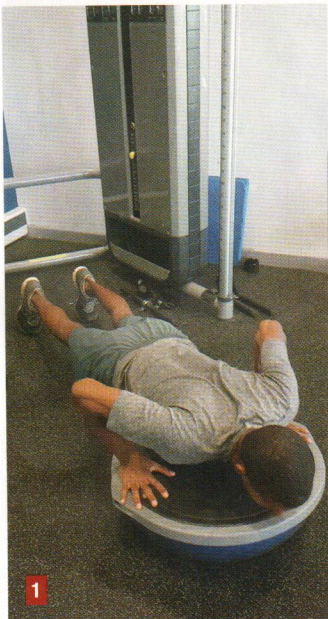


## Bosu press up

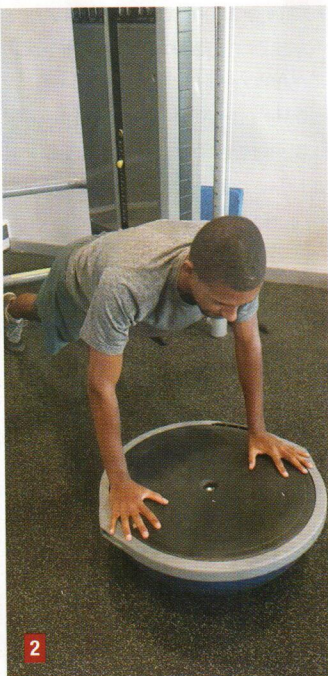
With the rounded side of the Bosu on the floor, lay both palms flat on its outer edges with arms fully extended and legs outstretched behind you.

Flex your elbows and bring your body down until your chest touches the flat surface, ensuring your core is continually engaged and your entire body moves as one 'plank'.

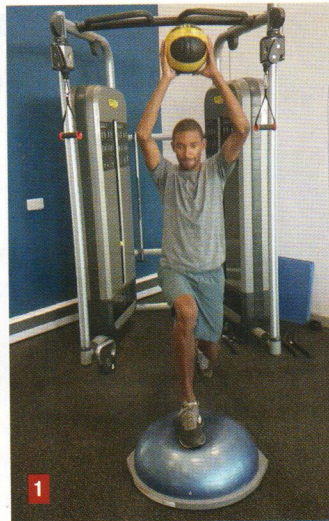
Keep your bottom tucked in and then push your body back up to the original starting position.



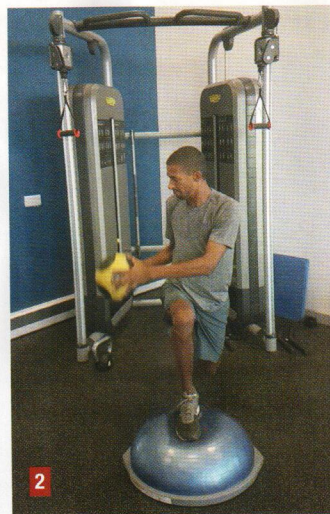
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## Bosu woodchopper

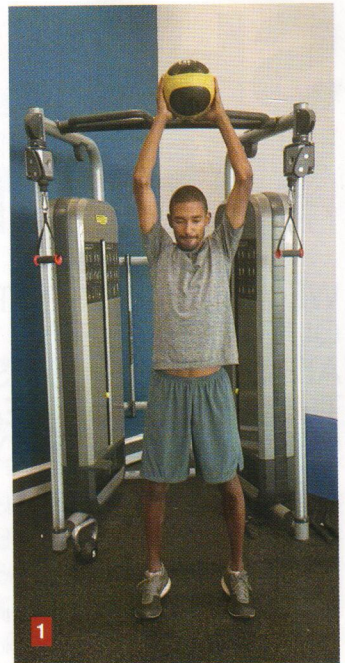
Place the Bosu on the floor, flat side down. Standing with the Bosu directly in front you, hold a medicine ball high above your head and lunge forward with one leg onto the middle of the dome surface, engaging your core on impact and sinking deep into a lunge.

Pause at the bottom for 1-2 seconds and then with a diagonal, downwards movement (a woodchopper move) bring the medicine ball down over your front leg and consciously tighten your core muscles. Keep your shoulders forward and as square to the front as possible. The majority of the movement should come from your arms. Keep looking forward throughout the exercise.

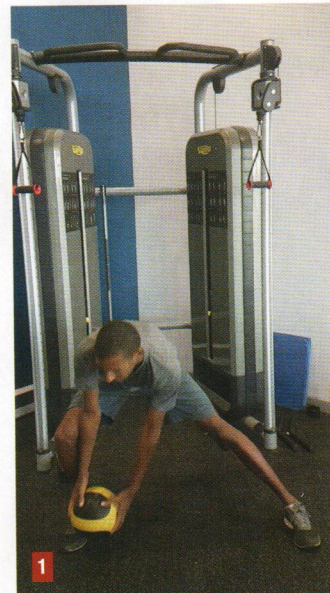
## Triangle touch

Stand with feet slightly more than shoulder width apart with a medicine ball held high directly over your head. In this position, with both hands bring the ball down diagonally to one foot, touch the ball on your toes gently (pic 1) and then immediately begin to bring the ball back up.

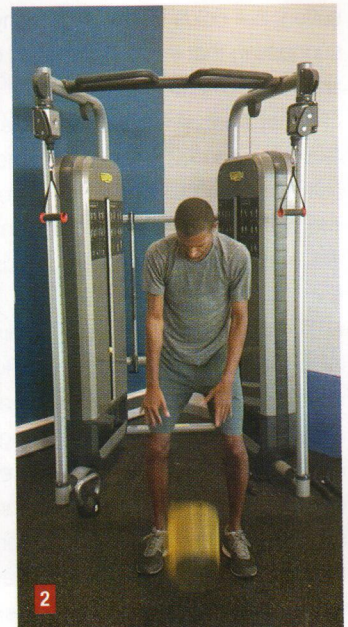
As you come back up, the foot you just touched the ball with comes up also and you should finish standing on the one leg in a running position with the medicine ball high above your head, held in both hands (pic 2).



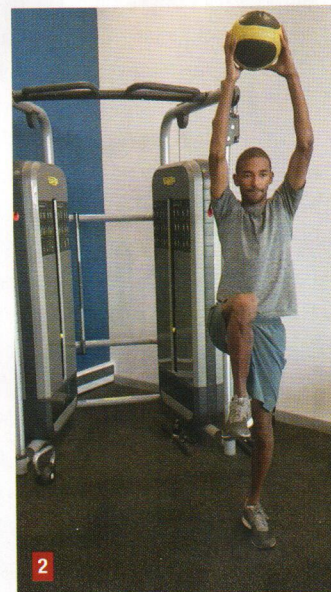
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## Slams

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart and the medicine ball held high above your head (pic 1). Slam the ball hard into the ground (pic 2).

The first movement should come from your core rather than your arms. Remember to bend your knees slightly as one smooth movement with the rest of your upper body.

■ Next week: part two of the circuit, featuring stability ball and pulley system moves