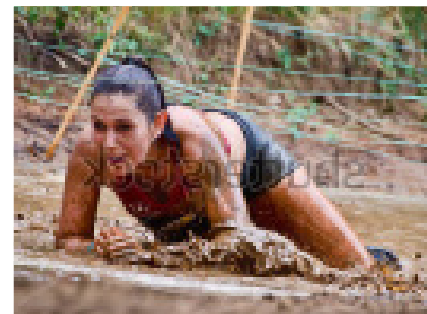
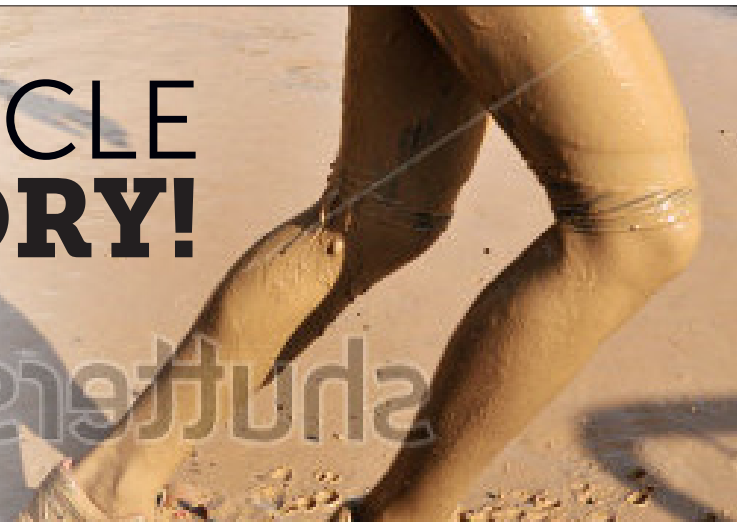


NO OBSTACLE TO VICTORY!

FOR MORE AND MORE PEOPLE THE DRAW OF **OBSTACLE COURSE RACES** IS PROVING IRRESISTIBLE. SO, HOW FIT DO YOU NEED TO BE TO COMPETE IN ONE OF THESE EVENTS, AND WHAT IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO TRAIN?

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A STRANGE THING is happening. More and more people are choosing – paying, in fact – to drag themselves out of bed on perfectly pleasant Saturday and Sunday mornings to get filthy and sweaty throwing themselves around obstacle course races.

Events like marathons and triathlons have long been popular challenges for those wishing to test their mettle, but the latest drift is towards obstacle course racing and team-building events with a whole lot of craziness and good times thrown in for good measure.

Four of the toughest and most popular races are the Raw Challenge; the Tough Mudder series; the Stampede; Warrior Dash and the Mud Run. These events were created to test toughness, fitness, strength, stamina and mental grit, all in one place and all in one day. They consist of a five to 20km trail run over uneven, hilly and wet terrain with a mix of 13 to 23 military-style obstacles. Each event is unique, however, with challenges and course features being dependent on local terrain.

Obstacle course races require you to move your body in ways that you may not have done for a while – or possibly ever! On top of this, your endurance will be greatly tested. To prepare effectively

you need to condition your body for intense cardiovascular work while also putting your muscles to the test. If you are training for an obstacle course race for the first time, it is essential to build up your running fitness, because running makes up the biggest portion of obstacle courses (when travelling between obstacles). You must be able to maintain a good running pace and to complete the course distance comfortably.

In addition to improving your running, of course, you need to focus on strength training. Most obstacles on the race course, particularly wall, hill and rope climbs, require a short burst of strength. It is also important to have good relative body strength, i.e., a good ratio of strength to body weight, which equates to more efficient acceleration of muscles. A great way to increase relative body strength is through bodyweight exercises such as squats, pull ups, push ups and lunges. Incorporating the right exercises into your training plan is the key to success on race day.

A long, super circuit routine (at least 10 exercises) functions as a good training program and test for an obstacle course, especially if you include bouts of running in between strength and core exercises (running distances can

be extended for longer events). If going from basic conditioning to circuit training feels like too much of a leap, try a program with shorter circuits and build up to a super circuit.

It is also important to bear in mind the need for regular recovery. A week of lighter training sessions with flexibility work should be scheduled after every four to five weeks of intense training, as well as in the week leading up to race day, so you are fresh and raring to go when your alarm sounds early one sunny weekend...

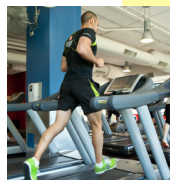
Note: Before beginning this program, make sure you can run at least 3km (at your own pace).

MUSASHI

For sports supplementation advice and information to help you achieve your exercise goals visit www.musashi.com.au

THE PROGRAM

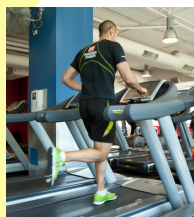
WARM UP: Run 1.2km at a moderate pace



RUN AT 2% INCLINE FOR 3 SPRINT INTERVALS

Alternate between 30 seconds at your full speed and 30 seconds at half-speed for 3 minutes.

**1
START
HERE**

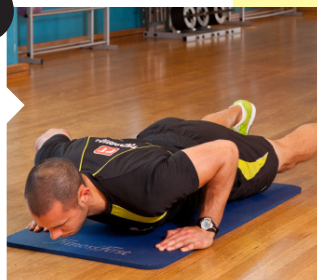


4

RUN 800M AT 70% FULL SPEED

COMPLETE 2 ROUNDS OF THE FOLLOWING:

2



15 PUSH UPS

Begin on your hands and knees with your hands positioned slightly wider apart than your shoulders, and your feet slightly wider than hip distance. Lift your knees off the ground so that your body is in a straight line from your head to your hips to your heels. Begin to bend your elbows, lowering your entire body towards the floor. Your elbows will bend slightly out to the sides. Keep your abdominal muscles engaged throughout the entire movement. Lower yourself until your chest is an inch or two from the ground and then push yourself back up

3



20 JUMP SQUATS

Stand up straight with your feet shoulder-width apart, toes pointing straight forward. Bring your arms loosely to your sides. Squat down by bending your knees and reaching your hips back as if to sit down in a chair behind you. Throw your arms up in the air and jump as high as you can. Land softly in the same spot you jumped from. Bend your knees as you land

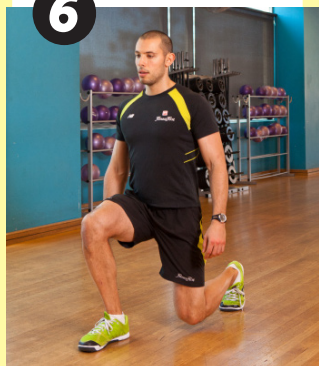
5



10 PULL UPS (ASSISTED IF REQUIRED)

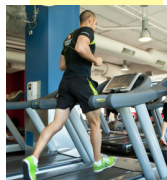
Stand below the bars, then jump up and grab the bar with an overhand grip, hands positioned shoulder-width apart. Pull yourself up until your head clears the bar. Lower your body until your arms are almost fully extended. Exhale and repeat the movement pattern. Keep your neck and spine in neutral position throughout the exercise.

6



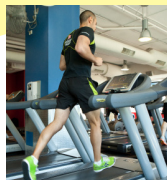
20 (10 EACH LEG) ALTERNATING BODYWEIGHT LUNGES

Stand tall with your feet approximately shoulder-width apart, and step forward with the right foot. Inhale as you flex your right hip and knee while keeping your knee pointed in the same direction as your foot. Keep your torso upright as you continue to bend your right knee until it forms a right angle and your left knee is almost touching the floor. Ensure your right knee does not extend in front of your toes. Pause briefly in this position and exhale as you extend your right hip and knee forcibly to return to a standing position. Continue by alternating legs for the series of lunges.



7

RUN 400M AT 80% FULL SPEED



10

RUN 200M UPHILL AT 5% INCLINE AT 80% FULL SPEED



8



11



15 STANDING BARBELL SHOULDER PRESSES

Grip the barbell with hands placed just further than shoulder-width apart. Instead of flaring the elbows wide to the sides at the bottom, bring the elbows forward. In addition to being easier on the shoulder structure, it sets the stage for the action of the shoulders as you press up. As you press up and the bar is about to move in front of your face, push your elbows backwards. Once the bar clears your head, push your shoulders back, move your head forward, and lockout the bar directly over the top of your head. Pause, then lower the bar to the start position.

30 BODYWEIGHT SQUATS

Stand straight with your feet shoulder-width apart. Slowly begin to squat down as if you're going to perch your bum on the edge of a chair. Don't let your knees track in front of your toes. Keep your back straight and chest up when you squat. Squeeze your buttocks together when you return to standing position, and keep your abs tight throughout.



9



10 BURPEES

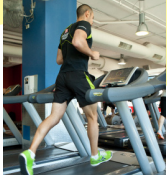
Stand with feet shoulder-width apart and arms down at your sides. Bend your knees and hips and place hands on the floor in front of your feet. With hands firmly on the floor, jump backwards onto the balls of your feet, creating a position similar to the start of a push up. Ensure your bum is down and back is straight. Drop your body until your chest and quads touch the ground at the same time. Push yourself up, jump your legs forward and transition into a squat position with knees bent and tracking past your toes. Jump into the air, clapping your hands above your head.



12

1-MINUTE PLANK HOLDS

Lie face down on a mat, resting on your forearms. Push off the floor, raising up onto your toes and resting on your elbows. Keep your back flat, in a straight line from head to heels. Tilt your pelvis and contract your abdominals to prevent your rear end from sticking up in the air or sagging in the middle. Squeeze your glutes, relax your shoulders, and hold the position.

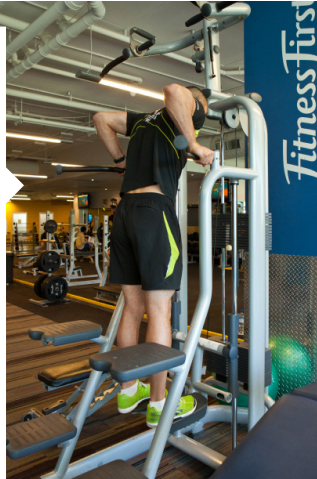


13

RUN 400M 80% FULL SPEED



14



15 DIPS

On a parallel dips machine/structure, grasp a bar with each hand. Raise and hold yourself with arms extended. Then, lower yourself down by, bending at the elbows (avoid flaring them out). Lower yourself until you feel a stretch in your chest muscles (approximately where your arms form a 90-degree angle). Be sure to lean forward slightly. Then, straighten your arms and lock out the elbows to push your body back up to the starting position. Repeat.



15



40M BEAR CRAWL

Get up on your hands and the balls of your feet, with your hips in line with your shoulders. This is the position you should maintain throughout. Crawl forward, using your hands and the balls of your feet to move forward rapidly, and continue for 40 metres.

See pages 84 and 85 for nutritional information to support your training goals.

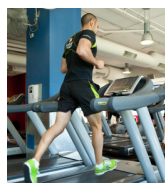
TO PREPARE EFFECTIVELY YOU NEED TO CONDITION YOUR BODY FOR INTENSE CARDIOVASCULAR WORK WHILE ALSO PUTTING YOUR MUSCLES TO THE TEST.

IN CONCLUSION...

This style of training will help build running fitness and strength endurance by getting the body used to the lactic acid running through every muscle of the body, while the heart rate remains elevated. This routine will also help simulate the conditions experienced during a typical obstacle course. So with this workout your body will become conditioned for the intensity and strength required to tackle any obstacle course event. There is, of course, one ingredient missing... lots of MUD! Good luck!

PETER MAMO

Peter is an experienced certified fitness professional working out of Fitness First Darlinghurst, Sydney. He focuses on both the aesthetic appearance of a strong body, and also the precision and function of elite athleticism. As well as being an ASCA certified trainer Peter is also a certified CrossFit facilitator, providing programs in line with the world-renowned system for strength and conditioning. Peter utilises diverse training methods and equipment, including traditional weight training, CrossFit, kettle-bells, TRX and ropes. He can be reached via pm.physique@gmail.com or www.yourphysique.com.au www.facebook.com/yourphysiquepersonaltraining or by phoning 0410 381 364.



RUN 800M 70% FULL SPEED

FOR THE SECOND SET, REPEAT FROM STEP 2: PUSH UPS.