

## **Incorporating Hybrid Workouts into RAW**

Hybrid workouts blend strength/power and endurance challenges into a single session. There are several advantages to these workouts:

- **Efficiency:** Time is often in short supply...blended workouts kill two birds with one stone.
- **Developing power-endurance:** Too many easy-paced long runs will rob the legs of power. When the same endurance effect can be achieved without compromising leg power, the choice is clear. This is not to say we should never run long, only that we should not over-emphasize that mode of training.
- **Mental toughness:** Most hybrid workouts we've done have required a lot of focus to maintain form as fatigue sets in. Contrast that with mindlessly drifting through a 5-mile run or performing well-rested sets in the weight room.
- **Neuro-endocrine response:** This basically means nerves and hormones are stimulated. Blending strength and endurance means you are pushing/pulling/lifting something when you are tired. This is hard work and a big stress to the entire body. The body responds by mobilizing a neural and chemical response that gets you better prepared for the next smoke session. This is good, but it requires adequate recovery.

Hybrid workouts have some drawbacks:

- **Injury risk:** There is nothing inherently risky about hybrid workouts. The risk comes when you choose lifts/exercises for which you are not technically proficient, or you allow form to get sloppy due to fatigue. Unfortunately, we see quite a bit of each risk factor.
- **Strength/Power compromise:** The restriction on rest intervals compromises strength/power development. Insufficient rest intervals fail to restore creatine-phosphate levels and normal acid-base balances. Rangers wanting to get bigger, stronger, or more powerful must get adequate recovery between sets and, therefore, should limit the use of workouts that don't allow such recovery.
- **Over-stimulation of the neuro-endocrine response:** This is all about stimulus and response. If you train too hard, too long, you are creating a stimulus to which your body cannot properly respond. Your body will adapt, just not in the way you want (lethargy, low-motivation, higher resting heart rate, immune-suppression, etc.)

Our recommendation for incorporating hybrid workouts is to first define your objectives (both long-term and short-term) and then choose training modes accordingly. Most top athletes follow a periodized approach to training, changing their focus/workouts every few weeks, with a different objective for each period. The classic model trains hypertrophy, strength, power, and sport-specific needs in that order. In this model, hybrid power-endurance workouts fit best during the sport-specific (think Ranger missions) phase. More

recently, an alternative training model called non-linear periodization has proven effective. In this model, different forms of strength training are scheduled within a 1-2 week period. Based on discussions with top strength and conditioning researchers, the RAW program recommends this method and includes one heavy-resistance workout, one power-endurance workout, and one local muscle endurance workout per 7-10 day period. The power-endurance workout can be either Ground Base, hybrid, or a combination of the two.

The hybrid, power-endurance workouts certainly have value for Rangers, but should be used as one modality in a broad-ranging PT program rather than the primary mode of training across phases.

#### Bottom Line Bullets:

- Perform hybrid workouts 1-2X/week in the all phases except Transition #1.
- Lay a good movement skill foundation first.
  - Understand and control the neutral position of the spine
  - Perfect form with body-weight squats before heavy squatting, deadlifting, or plyometrics.
  - Score a “3” on the FMS Deep Squat before weighted, overhead lifts
- Build volume over time. If you have not been training an exercise (Ex: box jumps, kipping pull-ups, handstand pushups), don’t do 50, high-speed reps the first session – doing so is a recipe for tendinitis or joint injury.
- Don’t let fatigue win...maintain form in the face of deep fatigue. Concentrate!
- Definitely don’t let fatigue win with a weight over your head.
- Structure workouts so that more demanding/complex movements (example: Get Ups) are performed early in the workout...before deep fatigue.