



SERIOUS RESULTS FOR SERIOUS ATHLETES



TRAINING NUTRITION SUPPLEMENTS FAT LOSS EXTRA REPS VIDEO SHOP SUBSCRIBE CONNECT

Extra Reps

Ben Prentiss

0

Like 8 Tweet 12 0 1



Trainer to the NHL stars Ben Prentiss shares his top fitness tips for getting in shape for a grueling hockey season.

By Alex Zakrzewski, Online Editor

For over 20 years, **Prentiss Hockey Performance**, a Connecticut-based hockey training facility has hosted some of the biggest names in the NHL. Indeed, its client list, past and present, reads like an All-Star game roster — Al MacInnis, Chris Pronger, Jason Arnott, Martin St. Louis. Owner and head trainer Ben Prentiss recently took time out to share with Reps some his of Stanley Cup-winning training secrets.

[AZ] How does training for hockey differ from training for other sports?

[BP] In my opinion, there is no such thing as sport-specific training. The differences are much more subtle in that hockey is an anaerobic sport, so you're working a lot on building power and anaerobic threshold. Typical things you work on for a hockey player are hips, groin muscles and core strength. We emphasize these areas, but we still do the big movements like front squats, Olympic weightlifting and plyometrics. It's all a matter of how you periodize them and put them together.

[AZ] What are the top exercises for hockey players?

[BP] Each guy's training is really specific to their body type, but because hockey is a unilateral sport, I would say the Bulgarian split squat, which they all hate. It's basically a one-legged squat in which your

 Search

NEWSLETTER

GET THE LATEST FROM **REPSMAG.COM**

Your e-mail address Sign Up

TWITTER

Tweets Follow @repsmag

REPS Reps Magazine @repsmag 7 Jun
An interesting way of looking at it! ow.ly/I/2h9pD
Show Photo

REPS Reps Magazine @repsmag 7 Jun
Vary your degree of difficulty and rep counts to build three-dimensional six-pack abs that are strong and chiseled! ow.ly/IH5Ov

Tweet to @repsmag

FACEBOOK

Find us on Facebook

REPS Reps magazine Like 5,302

REPS Reps magazine An interesting way of looking at it!

People who exercise longer, but those ex years are spent at th

POPULAR

? **5 Biceps Exercises You Must**

back leg is elevated. I'd say that's one of the best for hockey players because it works the adductors, groin, quads and stretches the hip flexors. It's really hard to say though because each guy is different and we do things in different phases. The floor glute-ham raise is another exercise that's unbelievable, and sled work is great too.

[AZ] What are some of the weaknesses you see in the athletes that come to you for training? Are there any universal shortcomings hockey players need to work on?

[BP] For sure! Their glutes aren't firing, they have weak VMOs (vastus medialis obliques) and they're imbalanced, meaning their rotator cuffs are weak and so are their stabilizer muscles. Going through an 82-game season, they don't get to train too much because of travel and lack of sleep, and they lose a lot of muscle mass. So we usually focus the first phase of their training on putting them back together by doing a lot of unilateral and small stabilizer work to sort of build them up. Then when they get into the power cleans, front and split squats they're more balanced.

[AZ] How does the training differ according to what position a client plays?

[BP] It really doesn't. It's more focused on body types. Everything is so specific to the player that the focus isn't really position-related. The only thing I do differently with goalies is a lot of power work because goalies have to be very explosive in a very small area. I do a lot of flexibility stuff with them. But position to position, whether wing, center, defense, that doesn't really matter much. It's more body type and what weaknesses they have.

[AZ] How would you train a player who's 6'9" differently than one who's 5'9"?

[BP] For instance, a player with a very long torso and long legs is not a good body type for deadlifts, whereas a player who has short legs is better suited for squats and those kinds of movements. Typically, someone who is 6'9" is not going to be able to squat that well because his body is just not made for it. I'm not saying they don't, but maybe we'll do squats off of pins instead for a shorter range of motion. It also depends what their weaknesses are. Let's say the 6'9" guy comes in and his hamstrings are nonexistent and his glutes aren't firing. In that case we'll spend more time working on his posterior chain. If the shorter guy comes in and his VMO is next to nothing, we'll do more quad-dominant work. Again, it really depends on their weaknesses.

[AZ] What are some of the most common hockey-related injuries?

[BP] Injuries specific to hockey are typically hip, groin and hernias, which are all intertwined. I would say for hockey players the most common injuries are in the hips.

[AZ] How do you accommodate injuries in the training?

[BP] That's kind of the secret (laughs)! Without giving it away, we have specific protocols that we follow in a succession of phases to build up those muscles so that those injuries don't happen. The key is to address them in succession. For instance, when a player comes in on day one, we're not going to have him do 57-inch box jumps. We're going to build up his small muscles, work on his weaknesses, and then later in the summer we introduce those things.

[AZ] Who's the most impressive hockey player you've ever trained?

[BP] Each player is different and there really isn't just one. For instance Max Pacioretty is 220 pounds and he's super strong and super powerful. Max is also definitely the most powerful in terms of plyometric power. Each guy brings something different. Matt Moulson is very, very strong when it comes to moves like cleans and snatches. Cam Atkinson only weighs 170 pounds and can squat almost 400! So if you're going pound to pound, it's probably Cam and Marty [St. Louis]. One guy's upper body is stronger, another is stronger in plyometrics and another in Olympic weightlifting. I have respect for each one and how they go about it. Marty and I have been working together for eight years and it's incredible seeing what he does at 37 years old. He never misses his workouts and he sets the tone for everybody in the gym because of his work ethic.

[AZ] Prentiss Hockey Performance is in New England. You guys must all be Bruins fans. I understand if this question is too controversial to answer.

[BP] Actually my area is all Rangers or Islanders fans. I grew up in the Mike Bossy, Brian Trottier, Denis

Do!

5

Lauren Jones

5

4 Core Exercises For Flatter

Abs

4

RECENTLY ADDED

[HIIT High Jinks](#)

[Build Bigger Arms From All Angles](#)

[To the Next Level: 4 Proven Methods to Crush a Plateau](#)

[Ball to the Wall](#)

[Common Fitness Myths Debunked](#)

Potvin and Billy Smith era, so I was a huge Islanders fan when I was a kid. But I don't have an affiliation nowadays. I'm going out to Montreal this weekend to watch Max and I still go to a lot of Islanders games. Basically whoever my boys are playing for, that's who I root for, so I don't have a team anymore per se. If Tampa Bay is playing Montreal, I don't care who wins, I just want my guys to not get hurt and get points!

[AZ] All I heard was "Go Leafs Go!"

[BP] (Laughs) Well, when the Leafs are playing, as long as Colton Orr and James van Riemsdyk do well, I'm happy!

Editor's note: Both Colton Orr and James van Riemsdyk are among Prentiss's clients.

Top 5 NHL Fitness Freaks

We went all the way back to the Original Six era to find five NHL superstars whose superior fitness and dedication to training continues to put athletes of all sports to shame!

5. Jaromir Jagr



Playing Career: 1988–Present

Teams: Pittsburgh Penguins, Washington Capitals, New York Rangers, Philadelphia Flyers, Dallas Stars

At 41 years of age, the most productive European-born player in NHL history is showing no signs of slowing down — far from it! His incredible staying power is due in no small part to a strong commitment to training that was drilled into him during his early playing days by Penguins teammate Paul Coffey. To this day, after every game, Jagr is known for speeding past the waiting media scrum to some open space where he continues to punish his body with a series of bodyweight squats and lunges. If that weren't admirable enough in a player averaging 20 minutes of ice time, he does so wearing a 45-pound weight vest and ankle weights!

4. Zdeno Chara

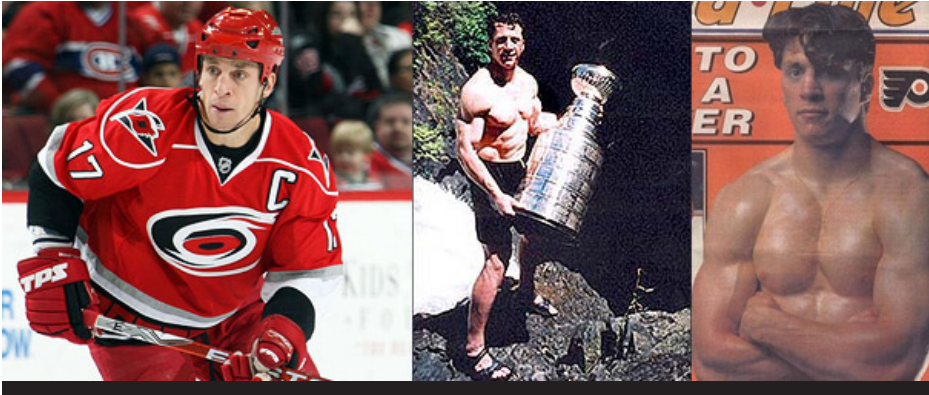


Playing Career: 1998–Present

Teams: New York Islanders, Ottawa Senators, Boston Bruins

At 6'9" and 255 pounds, Bruins captain Zdeno Chara looks like Ivan Drago's hockey-playing younger brother. However, the tallest player in NHL history is anything but a lumbering giant. Instead he's a solid mass of lean muscle who once performed a mind-boggling 31 consecutive pull-ups during a team training session! Since arriving in the NHL, Chara has earned a reputation for his tireless work ethic and fitness fanaticism. Through endless hours spent running stairs, weight training and mountain biking, the big Slovakian has developed a combination of strength, balance and footwork rarely seen in players his size. These qualities, coupled with his long reach, record-setting (105.9 mph) slap shot and bone-crushing hits, have made Chara into one of the most intimidating shutdown defensemen ever.

3. Rod Brind'Amour



Player Career: 1989–2010

Teams: St. Louis Blues, Philadelphia Flyers, Carolina Hurricanes

Rod Brind'Amour earned the nickname "Rod the Bod" well before arriving in the NHL. While playing college hockey at Michigan State University, he would go straight to the weight room after games where his coach said his workouts became so intense that the training staff would turn off the lights to get him to leave. When that didn't work, it's rumored they were forced to start padlocking the doors! Not surprisingly Brind'Amour still holds a reputation as being one of the most durable players ever to lace up his skates in the NHL. During the 2006 playoffs, at the age of 35, he not only captained the Hurricanes to their first and only Stanley Cup victory, but he also led all forwards in ice time with an average of just over 24 minutes a game.

2. Chris Chelios



Playing Career: 1983–2010

Teams: Montreal Canadiens, Chicago Blackhawks, Detroit Red Wings, Atlanta Thrashers

Chris Chelios' name has become synonymous with athletic longevity. When he finally called it quits in 2010 at the age of 48, Chelios was the second-oldest player in NHL history and he left the game with three Norris Trophies and three Stanley Cups to his name. Well up until his retirement, Chelios was known for subjecting himself to a brutal high-intensity training regimen that made rookies shudder and that he would further augment with long sessions of mountain biking and paddle surfing. Aside from weight training and conditioning work, one of his more unique training methods (and one that we don't recommend!) involved stationary biking for 45 minutes in a sauna while drinking two jugs of water. He called it an "aerobic wash." We call it insanity!

1. Bobby Hull



Playing Career: 1957–1980

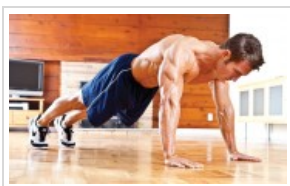
Teams: Chicago Blackhawks, Winnipeg Jets, Hartford Whalers

Fellow hockey legend Gordie Howe once noted that Bobby Hull actually got bigger as he took his clothes off! "The Golden Jet" earns the top spot on our list not so much because of his superhero-like physique, but because he built it in an era before team trainers, nutritionists and offseason conditioning were the norm. Hull's off-ice workouts weren't exactly scientific, but they sure were effective. Every year when the NHL season came to an end, he would go back home to his farm and spend up to eight hours a day, rain or shine, tossing 100-pound bales of hay around with a pitchfork. Hull credits this simple-yet-grueling routine for the grip, arm and shoulder strength behind his notoriously booming slap shot. So feared did his slapper become among goaltenders of the era that Montreal Canadiens netminder Gump Worsley was known to mysteriously "pull a muscle" before Blackhawks games!

[Feature](#) [Hockey](#) [Sports](#)

[Like](#) 8 [Tweet](#) 12 [0](#) [1](#)

Our Editor Recommends:



[← Previous Article](#)
[The Fit Guy's Fridge: Nutrition Must-Haves](#)

[Next Article →](#)
[Another Bodybuilding Legend Falls](#)

0 comments

★ 0



Leave a message...

Best ▾ Community

Share

No one has commented yet.

Comment feed Subscribe via email

Restorsea™ Official Site

www.restorsea.com

Better Than Glycolic Acid. Radiant Skin Without Side Effects.



AdChoices



REPS

[TRAINING](#)

[NUTRITION](#)

[SUPPLEMENTS](#)

[FAT LOSS](#)

[EXTRA REPS](#)

[VIDEO](#)

[SHOP](#)

[SUBSCRIBE TO REPS PRINT EDITION](#)

[RENEW A SUBSCRIPTION](#)

[GIVE A GIFT](#)

[CUSTOMER SERVICE](#)

[SUBSCRIBE TO REPS DIGITAL EDITION](#)

[BUY BACK ISSUES](#)

[PREVIEW CURRENT ISSUE](#)

[LIKE US ON FACEBOOK](#)

[FOLLOW US ON TWITTER](#)

[WATCH US ON YOUTUBE](#)

[NEWSLETTER](#)

[CONTACT US](#)

[ADVERTISE](#)