

CARVE YOUR BODY LIKE AN NHL STAR

DESPITE a grueling regular season, not including playoffs, NHL players don't have much of an off season. In fact, it's the off season that seems to define the greatest players in the game today. NHL superstars Mike Cammalleri of the Montreal Canadiens and Tyler Seguin of the Stanley Cup winning Boston Bruins are fierce rivals, but off the ice they train together.

But even NHL players require guidance. That's where Matt Nichol comes in. One of the top strength and conditioning coaches in the game today, plus an expert in sports nutrition, Nichol helps elite athletes with "back to basics" regimens.

While Nichol has trained athletes from the NFL, CFL, MLB, NCAA, CIS, as well as Olympic gold medalists, his bread and butter has been working with elite players from the NHL. From 2002-2009 Nichol served as the strength and conditioning coach for the Toronto Maple Leafs.

We asked Matt to come up with exercises he would use with his NHL clients. In the following pages, *OptiMYz* unlocks the doors to a secret society, giving you an inside look at the training routines of NHL stars. These exercises offer a great full-body workout for those wanting to spice up their "same old" workout routine! **Z** JONATHAN DEAN

MEDICINE BALL SIDE TOSS

3-4 SETS | 8-12 REPS

A: Begin in 1/4 squat athletic position with core engaged. Keep arms straight.

B: Rotate the back hip towards the front leg as you shift your weight from the back to front leg (releasing the medicine ball).

EXPERT TIP EXHALE FORCEFULLY AS YOU FOLLOW THROUGH WITH YOUR ARMS IN A ROTATIONAL PATTERN.



VIP PASS INTO THE SECRET WORLD OF ELITE ATHLETES

Mike Cammalleri of the Montreal Canadiens and Tyler Seguin of the Boston Bruins push, pull and lunge their way into super shape.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANTHONY TUCCITTO



MEDICINE BALL LUNGE WITH PASS

3-4 SETS | 8-12 REPS

A: Start with medicine ball at chest height.

B-C: Lunge forward launching the medicine ball to your partner (or against wall).

EXPERT TIP SPRING BACK UP INTO STARTING POSITION AND AWAIT THE PASS BACK (OR REBOUND).

AIRFIT PUSH-UP

3-4 SETS | 8-12 REPS

Visualize doing a push-up in mid air.

Stay on your toes and keep a flat back by drawing the abdominals in and contracting the glutes.

EXPERT TIP EXHALE ON THE WAY UP (INHALE ON THE WAY DOWN); 2 OR 3 REPS ISN'T THAT BAD.



SINGLE ARM RENEGADE PRESS

3-4 SETS | 4-6 REPS

A: Begin in an athletic position with knees slightly bent. Stance should be staggered with the forward leg opposite the hand holding the bar.

B: Push begins with legs, extending the hips and then finishing by extending arm.

EXPERT TIP EXHALE AS YOU PUSH THE BAR AWAY (INHALE AS YOU BRING THE BAR BACK UNDER CONTROL).





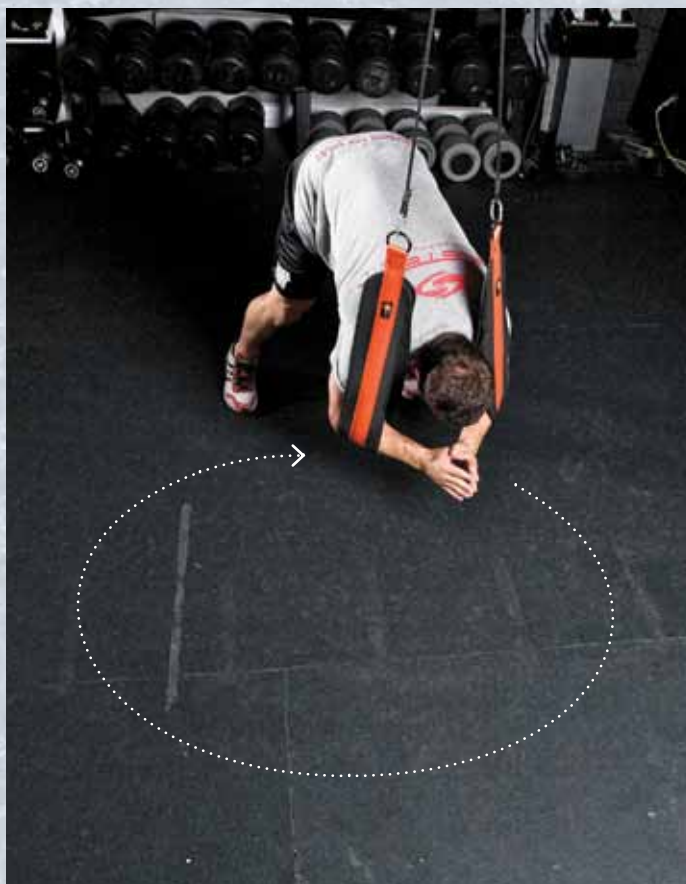
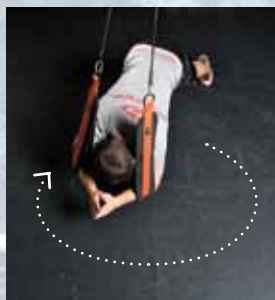
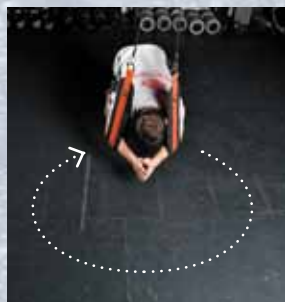
AIRFIT WITCH'S BREW

2-3 SETS | 3 REPS EACH WAY OR UNTIL EXHAUSTION

Visualize that you are stirring a witch's cauldron (hence the name!).

Keep your back flat by drawing your abdominals in and contracting your glutes.

EXPERT TIP STAY ON YOUR TOES



A



B

TRAP BAR DEADLIFT

3-4 SETS | 3-5 REPS

A: Keep back flat, chest up and chin retracted, pull shoulder blades together and brace the core.

B: Pull the bar off the floor by extending legs, leading with the head, NOT the hips. Drive the hips through at the top by squeezing glutes tightly and sticking chest out.

EXPERT TIP EXHALE AS YOU LIFT THE BAR (INHALE AS YOU LOWER THE BAR BACK UNDER CONTROL).

DUMBBELL MILITARY PRESS

3-4 SETS | 8-12 REPS

A: Stand in an athletic position holding dumbbell's in neutral position with palms facing each other.

B-C: Exhale as you extend arms overhead; turn palms so they are facing forward.

EXPERT TIP INHALE AND RETURN TO STARTING POSITION GOING INTO A SQUAT (KEEP BACK FLAT AND HEAD UP).



SINGLE ARM DUMBBELL SNATCH

3-4 SETS | 3-5 REPS

A: Stand over dumbbell with feet shoulder width apart. Squat down keeping chest up and chin tucked and grasp the DB, keeping upper back tight and shoulder pulled down and back.

B: As you rapidly pull the dumbbell from the floor, visualize jumping and shrugging your shoulders at the same time.

C: As the DB reaches peak height, bend knees slightly to get underneath, catching it with a straight arm. Bring the dumbbell back down to the shoulder under control, using the opposite hand to guide if necessary.

“Guys like Mike Cammalleri are the epitome of physical fitness and have a great knowledge base, but they still turn to professionals for help. Tiger Woods has a swing coach, Michael Phelps has a stroke coach. If these guys who are at their peak still need assistance, then everyone else can benefit from another set of eyes or another opinion on how they should train.”

MATT NICHOL



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TRAIN SMART PLAY TOUGH

Matt Nichol teaches clients like NHL stars Mike Cammalleri and Tyler Seguin not only how to train properly, but also how to relax, rest and get proper nutrition.

By Jonathan Dean

MATT NICHOL

WHEN Matt Nichol was the strength and conditioning coach and nutritionist for the Toronto Maple Leafs, he also formulated his own high performance sports drink — exclusively for the use of his own athletes. Today, Matt makes his formula available to the public as BioSteel Sports Supplements. Matt continues to train professional and amateur athletes.



OptiMYz: In your experience, what separates the great players from their peers?

Matt Nichol: The difference is a commit-

ment to excellence. When I think about great hockey players, I think about guys like Mike Cammalleri who don't settle. Good is never good enough. It doesn't matter if they're playing in the Stanley Cup Final or beach volleyball, they want to win.

OP: What is the hardest habit to ingrain in your professional clients?

MN: One of the hardest things for them to understand is the importance of rest — during workouts or rest and recovery. A lot of young players, especially hockey players that do work hard, don't always work smart. And they don't always understand the importance of rest, nutrition and proper recovery.

OP: What would they rather avoid?

MN: With the younger guys, nutrition is

SECRETS OF NHL STARS

one area that's tougher to change. They work hard, burning a ton of calories, so they don't always understand the need to eat healthy. Just because you're not fat doesn't mean you don't need to eat healthy. Our workouts are short and intense. The guys usually cringe when they know it's a conditioning camp, but once they get into it they start getting fitter and it's not so bad.

OP: What training techniques are on the cutting edge now?

MN: I emphasize with my guys the importance of being a well-rounded athlete. You're not just a hockey player or a tennis player. You're an athlete first and foremost. Basic athleticism is being able to move in multiple directions, being strong, powerful, fast, and fit. It's not good enough just to be strong.

OP: What can weekend warriors learn from the training regimes of NHL players?

MN: The importance of not just working hard, but working smart. Like an NHL player who has just finished a long strenuous season, weekend warriors that are trying to get back into fitness often dive into it head first. Inevitably, they end up either burning out or getting hurt. Just like my NHL players, we begin training with rest and recovery and a rehab phase. You need to train to be able to train. You need to prime your body and your system to avoid injuries down the road and get the most out of your training.

MIKE CAMMALLERI

AT only five foot nine, Mike Cammalleri of the Montreal Canadiens is one of the fittest players in the league. His commitment to physical fitness has solidified his place in the NHL, despite playing a game where, increasingly, size matters.



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MATT NICHOL

Putting up more than 50 points in three of the last five seasons doesn't hurt either. In 2009, Mike began training with Matt Nichol. The next season he led the Montreal Canadiens to the playoffs, dominating in the scoring category with 13 goals.

OP: At what age did you think the NHL was a realistic dream?

MC: I've dreamed about it ever since I can remember. When I was about 15 years old in junior hockey, I saw guys around me getting drafted and thought: If they can do it, so can I.

OP: Did an emphasis on fitness at a young age help you get there?

MC: Yeah, fitness has always been a big part of it for me. Charlie Francis started working with me when I about 13. He was one of the great minds. Compared to other guys, I've never been the tallest guy in the world so I always thought it was important for me to be strong.

OP: What do you rely on physically and mentally to keep your competitive edge?

MC: Overall, I think it's just a real passion for the game that allows you to be mentally where you want to be.

OP: It's a long season. How do you make sure you get the rest and nutrition you need to recover after each game and practice?

MC: BioSteel has really helped. I've been part of the whole R&D thing. I get it in me during and after all my workouts and practices. And then I try to eat as clean as I

possibly can. I'm not perfect. I love dessert. I find eating clean helps with everything. My energy levels stay more consistent and I sleep and rest better. What I'm looking for during the season is to have a consistent energy level with no crashes. BioSteel doesn't have any of the artificial stimulants or caffeine so I get the same level of consistent energy.

OP: What does Mike Cammalleri do to relax?

MC: Probably just hang out with friends and family. I'd like to say golf is relaxing, but I tend to compete there as well. I like to just lie in front of the TV and watch golf. That's my most zoned out time.

OP: Who are your role models?

MC: My dad has always been my biggest hero. My mom and family too.

TYLER SEGUIN

OP: At the start of the season what did you think the chances were of winning the Cup?

TS: Even going into the final round you still can't really believe it. The whole time you're thinking it would be amazing to win the Cup, but you can't actually get the feeling of it until you're that close. That's when you and your teammates leave it all out there. I came to a very good Bruins team and I felt fortunate to win the Cup. 