

Beyond Squats: 3 Lower Body Exercises for Baseball Players

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The April/May 2011 issue of the NSCA Performance Training Journal has a very good article:

Functional Lower Body Strength and Conditioning Exercises for Baseball Pitchers: A Current Overview of Lower Body Training For Baseball Pitchers

Here are the 3 exercises I found most functional:

Exercise #1: The Elevated Front Split Squat

Elevated Front Split Squat (Figures 5A and 5B)

The athlete will hold a medicine ball or dumbbell under their chin. With the hind foot elevated higher than the lead foot, the athlete will drop into a deep lunge at greater than 90 degrees (approximated 100 – 110 degrees) hip flexion and then extend in place. This position improves gluteal and rectus femoris stretching for the stride leg, while promoting drive-leg groin flexibility.



Figure 5A. Elevated front split squat



Figure 5B. Elevated front split squat

Exercise #2: Single-Leg Medicine Ball Chest Toss

Single-Leg Medicine Ball Chest Toss (Figures 8A and 8B)

The athlete will begin with the hip flexion of the unsupported leg and slight knee flexion of the supported leg. In a powerful, coordinated effort, the athlete will flex at the trunk and extend at the hip and knee of the unsupported leg and deliver a forceful chest pass. The athlete should do no more than 4 – 6 repetitions per leg for 3 – 4 sets on each leg. Due to the ballistic nature of this exercise, rapid loading is experienced by the hamstrings. Athletes should only initiate this activity after hamstrings flexibility and eccentric training has occurred to reduce any risk of strain injury to the hamstrings.



Figure 8A. Single leg medicine ball chest toss



Figure 8B. Single leg medicine ball chest toss

Exercise #3: Front Drop Back Lunge

Front Drop Back Lunge (Figures 1A and 1B)

The front drop back lunge requires the athlete to hold a dumbbell or medicine ball under their chin for resistance. The athlete drops their foot back on a 45 degree angle until an approximated 90 degree lunge is achieved with a slightly arched lower back. The gluteal muscles should be warmed-up prior to knee and hip extension while maintaining an upright trunk posture. The athlete should finish the movement with their feet aligned at shoulder width.

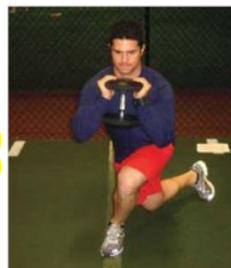


Figure 1A. Front drop back lunge



Figure 1B. Front drop back lunge

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