

Strength Training for Fitness Competitions, Competitive Aerobics or Gymnastics

Strength training for fitness competitions or aerobics should be versatile. The execution of the competition routine needs all the forms of strength; maximal strength, speed strength/power and strength endurance. Also all the forms of muscle work; concentric, eccentric and isometric should be covered in training. Aerobics alone is not effective enough to increase the strength level, special training is needed.

Strength training for fitness/aerobics can be divided into two main categories:

Weight training

Gymnastics training

The character of strength training is very different at different times of year depending on which training period is going on. Strength training begins in the basic training period. The goal here is to make the body (muscles, tendons, ligaments ...) adapt to the training. Typical exercises in this period are squat, bench press, clean up. The sets are relatively long (10-15 repetitions) and the load in the beginning is quite low (50-60 % of max.).

After the adaptation or the starting period comes a period where the muscles are built bigger (hypertrophy). The exercises are both so called general exercises with several muscles and muscle groups in action and also assisting exercises that are aimed at smaller muscles and single muscles. After the hypertrophy comes maximal strength training. In the maximal strength training the loads are high (more than 80 %) and the sets short. The exercises are more chosen in direction of the competition. In fitness and competitive aerobics the strength needs are emphasised in the shoulder and leg area. Hip flexors need their own training.

In the competition period maximal strength is changed into speed strength. This is the most difficult period in preparation. In speed strength period the loads get lower and the execution tempo accelerates. Typical speed strength exercises are different jumps with weights, fast weightlifting and medicine ball throwing.

A challenging and difficult period in the training is the transition of the strength from weightlifting to fitness and competitive aerobics. This is done with gymnastics training. In gymnastic-strength training the load is usually your own body weight and the exercises are close to the "original ones in aerobics" (same tempo and joint angles). The gymnastic-strength can also be done by making aerobics-moves more difficult with extra loads; for example push ups with a weight on the upper back.

Between strength and endurance training there is the muscle endurance training. In fitness and competitive aerobics it is reasonable to perform muscle endurance training with aerobic-moves. With the choice of aerobic-moves to the circuit training two goals are reached with one effort. Usually the muscle endurance training is done during early training periods (basic training period). Aerobic-Circuit is an excellent method to increase fitness level for the competition routine.

With the strength training it is not the main point to get big muscles and weight lifting records, the most important thing is to "get the strength out" in the competition routine.

CIRCUIT TRAINING FOR COMPETITION STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE

- an excellent training method to develop general strength (muscular endurance)
- improves also anaerobic performance
- the work is done against own bodyweight (gravity)
- the elements are chosen from the obligatory moves and other moves, and from the moves of the competition routine
- e.g.: presses, planches, push-ups, 1-arm push-ups, high leg kicks to front and side, jumping jacks, turns from front support to back support, squat-front support-squat - jump upward, running the lines, high knee running, dips, sit ups, toe raises etc.

Execution

- * 2-3 rounds
- * 10-15 stations
- * working time 15-30 sec. (can differ between rounds, e.g. 30-25-20)
- * rest between stations 5-10 sec., between rounds 2-3 minutes
- * don't choose two stations for the same muscle group in a row !

Example:

- * 2 rounds
- * 14 stations
- * working time 25 sec.
- * rest 5-10 sec. / 3 minutes

1. high leg kicks
2. sit ups
3. squat jump
4. push ups
5. jumping jacks
6. lying back hyperextensions
7. squat-support-squat-jump
8. dip
9. running lines
10. presses
11. skating jumps
12. toe raises
13. toe touch crunches
14. kicks in back support

TRAIN WITH DESIRE, DESIRE TO BE BETTER TOMORROW THAN YOU ARE TODAY.



Connie