Fitness Plus’ Super Treadmill Fuels High-intensity Results

Athletes looking to refine their running technique and build explosive power have a high-tech tool at their disposal in the Super Treadmill, available at Saint Francis Medical Center's Fitness Plus.

“The capabilities of the treadmill itself and the spotting techniques we use as trainers force athletes to do things they would not otherwise be able to do. That is where the major benefits come from,” explains Marc Mahnke, ACE, certified personal trainer at Saint Francis.

Research shows that incline running works the muscles responsible for forward acceleration at a level that is two or three times greater than running on a level surface. The Super Treadmill’s ability to create as much as a 40 percent incline produces more power with each stride. The machine also provides valuable sensory feedback for athletes, as they can feel changes in their stride and watch their form in a mirror.

Along with its extreme incline capabilities, the Super Treadmill can crank up to speeds of 28 mph, or as fast as a world-class sprinter. The unforgiving pace at which the treadmill maintains its speed is something that an athlete cannot duplicate on a track.

The treadmill’s track gives the athlete a running experience closer to reality than most treadmills. Its hydraulic cylinders also have adjustments that can reduce knee stress by up to 60 percent with additional shock absorption for any size athlete.

(continued on back)
Super Treadmill (continued)

“You naturally want to slow down as you tire, but the machine does not allow you to slow down,” Mahnke says. “Trainers spot the athlete and hold them enough so they can keep running at the speed of the treadmill. It builds muscles in the core and hip flexors to increase running speed on the ground.”

Trainers often have athletes run in brief bursts of speed at inclines to fatigue their muscles, and then take a short break and get them going again. One workout variation calls for the athlete to hold onto a bar in front of them so they can do high knee lifts and work the hip flexors even harder. Trainers also hold onto sprint cords attached to athletes’ thighs and calves for resistance workouts, boosting the intensity level even higher than running on an incline alone.

“The objective in using the Super Treadmill is strengthening the hips to increase stride frequency and length,” Mahnke says. “Workouts vary by sport and the athlete’s fitness level.”

Fitness Plus offers Athletic Republic as a six-week program, up to four days per week for one or two hours per day. For more information, visit www.sfmc.net/SportsMedicine.htm or call 573-331-5345.

Estes Rides Dedication, Fitness Plus Regimen to Two-sport Success

Tyson Estes was an undersized kid with dreams of competing in football and track for Chaffee High School when he decided to ramp up his training regimen following his freshman football season.

Fast-forward four years and Estes now carries 180 pounds on his 5-foot-7 frame – still undersized for Division I college football. But after numerous trips through the advanced training programs offered through Fitness Plus’ affiliation with Athletic Republic™, Estes now has his body in shape for his freshman football season at Southeast Missouri State University.

“I was always a pretty good athlete,” Estes says. “I was never extremely fast, but I am quick. The Fitness Plus trainers gave me a program based around building speed, mainly working the anaerobic system for explosive power and short sprints.”

Estes became a standout player in Chaffee’s football and track programs by his junior year, starting at outside linebacker and running back his final two seasons. He gained 1,431 yards rushing as a senior, scoring 19 touchdowns and six 2-point conversions for a team that finished 5-5. As a sprinter on the track team, he ran the leadoff leg on the 4 x 200 relay and anchored the 4 x 100 relay as both teams won state championships.

A combination of hard work and natural body maturation saw Estes’ weight increase nearly 20 pounds in the past year.

“I do not know of anyone who works harder than Tyson,” states Marc Mahnke, ACE, certified personal trainer at Saint Francis. “He has a lot of solid muscle.”

Fitness Plus trainers use athlete assessments to create a personalized training program that balances the time of year, sport, position played, physical development, skill level, performance level and goals. In Estes’ case, workouts include accelerations and brief incline sprints on Fitness Plus’ Super Treadmill, resistance running on the incline, and quickness exercises.

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