OPERATION LIVING FIT

Maximizing the Push-up Event

PART 1 OF 3

Illustration by Seamas Gallagher

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Stephanie and I would like to thank you all for the huge support for our START Fitness™ section in *GX* Magazine! Keep the emails coming. It is our intention to share our knowledge and training with as many Guard Soldiers and family members as we can. We all deserve to have a healthier lifestyle and are lucky that military fitness is second to none! If we use the training wisely, we can do anything!

Lately, Stephanie and I have been receiving a great deal of emails in which Soldiers ask how to get a better score in the fitness test. For many of you, a better score means more promotion points. In this issue, we start a three-part workout program to maximize the fitness test; Part 1: Maximizing the Push-up!

What I have done to perform better during the push-up event, while taking one of our START Fitness™ Tests or the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT), is to conduct Push-up Interval Training every other day. I have noticed an increase of 10-20 repetitions in my overall APFT score, after performing Push-up Interval Training for 3-4 weeks. I have also noticed that by adding this training to my current exercise plan, my body fat percentage decreased nearly 2% in 12 weeks.

IMPROVE YOUR APFT

ARMY PHYSICAL FITNESS TEST

Here is how it works:

MONDAY

SET #1
Warm-up *10 MIN.*
(Mostly Aerobic)
Diamond-Grip Push-ups *45 SEC.*
Rest *45 SEC.*
Normal-Grip Push-ups *45 SEC.*
Rest *45 SEC.*
Wide-Grip Push-ups *45 SEC.*
Rest *45 SEC.*
Crunches *1 MIN.*

SET #2
Diamond-Grip Push-ups *35 SEC.*
Rest *35 SEC.*
Normal-Grip Push-ups *35 SEC.*
Rest *35 SEC.*
Wide-Grip Push-ups *35 SEC.*
Rest *35 SEC.*
Crunches *1 MIN.*

SET #3
Diamond-Grip Push-ups *25 SEC.*
Rest *25 SEC.*
Normal-Grip Push-ups *25 SEC.*
Rest *25 SEC.*
Wide-Grip Push-ups *25 SEC.*
Rest *25 SEC.*
Crunches *1 MIN.*

TUESDAY

Aerobics Day – No Push-ups

WEDNESDAY

Repeat Monday Lesson Plan

THURSDAY

Aerobics Day – No Push-ups

FRIDAY

SET #1
APFT Push-up Diagnostic Test *2 MIN. The best performance of Push-ups. "GO TO MUSCLE FAILURE!"*
Crunches *2 MIN.*
Rest *2 MIN.*

SET #2
Modified APFT Push-up Diagnostic Test *1.5 MIN. The best performance of Push-ups*
Crunches *2 MIN.*
Rest *2 MIN.*

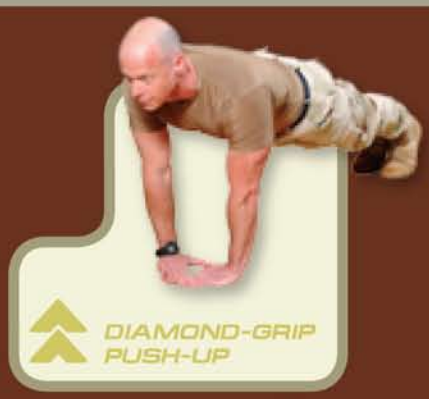
SET #3
Modified APFT Push-up Diagnostic Test *1 MIN. The best performance of Push-ups*
Crunches *2 MIN.*

SATURDAY

Rest – No Push-ups

SUNDAY

Rest – No Push-ups



DIAMOND-GRIP PUSH-UP

NORMAL-GRIP PUSH-UP

THEORY: The reason to begin each push-up set with Diamond-Grip is to maximize the use of your fast twitch muscles (your triceps). Push-ups are the only exercises that will help you perform better during the push-up event while taking the APFT. Weight training on a bench will get you stronger, however, it will NOT improve your ability to perform push-ups.

SUGGESTION: Remember to keep your rear-end muscles contracted during the push-up events to prevent unnecessary back strain. Keep your crunches simple while performing this routine. Raise your back up until your shoulder blades come off of the ground, then return to the start position each time.
Be certain to eat 20-60 minutes after each exercise period for proper muscle recovery.

WARNING: The aerobic and off days of your weekly routine are also necessary for proper muscle recovery. Remember, always consult your physician before attempting any new fitness routine or diet.

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