Hard Core Winter fitness

"Core" strength and balance should be a key component to any skier/snowboarder workout. The "core" consists of a number of back and stomach muscles. All of these muscles are under a great deal of stress and load while carving up the slopes. Proper training of the core muscles will not only enhance ones ability to perform on the slopes but will additionally help skiers and snowboards avoid injury.

The Hard Core workout has two components: strength and balance. The workout is intended to be performed in the following order 2-3 times per week.

Core Strength

#1 Back Extensions

Beginner:
Start Position: Knees on ground, ball under stomach, hands behind head.
Action: Slowly lift head and shoulders off the ball while exhaling. Hold this position for two seconds. Slowly return to the start position while inhaling. Rest for one second. Repeat the exercise until the low back gets mildly tired. Approximately 10-15 repetitions.

Advanced:
Start Position: Toes on floor shoulder width apart, knees off floor slightly bent, hands behind head. The further headword on the ball the harder the back extension.
Action: Same as beginner. Repeat the exercise until the low back gets tired. Approximately 20-30 repetitions.

#2 Basic Sit-ups

Beginner:
Start Position: Sit on ball, walk feet forward, rest mid to upper back on ball. Always keep chin tucked in with hands supporting head. Never let your neck extend over the ball.
Action: Suck in you stomach during the entire exercise. Slowly perform a stomach curl. Exhale on the way up. Hold two seconds. Gentle return to the start position while inhaling. Rest for one second and repeat exercise 10 to 15 times.

Advanced:
Start Position: Sit on ball, walk feet forward, resting low back on ball (by moving your body headword on the ball you increase the intensity of the sit-up). Always keep chin tucked in with hands supporting head.
Action: Same as beginner. Repeat exercise 20 –30 times.

#3 Twist Back Extensions

Beginner:
Start Position: Knees on ground, ball under stomach, hands behind head.
Action: Slowly lift head and shoulders off the ball while twisting to the right side (right elbow to the sky). Exhale on the way up. Hold is this position for two seconds. Slowly return to the start position while inhaling. Rest for one second. Repeat the exercise twisting to the left (left elbow to the sky). Alternating sides repeat exercise until the low back gets mildly tired. Approximately 10-15 repetitions.

Advanced:
Start Position: Toes on floor shoulder width apart, knees off floor slightly bent, hands behind head. The further headword on the ball the harder the back extension.
Action: Same as beginner. Alternating sides repeat exercise until the low back gets tired. Approximately 20-30 repetitions.

#4 Twist Sit-ups

Beginner:
Start Position: Sit on ball, walk feet forward, rest mid to upper back on ball. Always keep chin tucked in with hands supporting head.
Action: Suck in you stomach throughout the entire exercise. Slowly perform a curl while twisting to one side (right elbow to left hip). Exhale on the way up. Hold two seconds. Gently return to the start position while inhaling. Rest for one second. Alternating sides repeat exercise 10 to 15 times.

Advanced:
Start Position: Sit on ball, walk feet forward, rest low back on ball (by moving your body headword on the ball you increase the intensity of the sit-up).
Action: Same as beginner. Alternating sides repeat exercise 20 –30 times.

#5 Side Bend Back Extensions

Beginner:
Start Position: Knees on ground, ball under stomach, hands behind head.
Action: Slowly lift head and shoulders off the ball while bending to the right (right elbow to right hip). Exhale on the way up. Hold in this position for two seconds. Slowly return to the start position while inhaling. Rest for one second. Repeat the exercise bending to the left (left elbow to left hip). Alternating sides repeat exercise until the low back gets mildly tired approximately 10-15 repetitions.

Advanced:
Start Position: Toes on floor shoulder width apart, knees off floor slightly bent, hands behind head. The further headword on the ball the harder the back extension.
Action: Same as beginner. Alternating sides repeat the exercise until the low back gets tired. Approximately 20-30 repetitions.

#6 Side Bend Sit-ups

Beginner:
Start Position: Sit on ball, walk feet forward, rest mid to upper back on ball. Always keep chin tucked in with hands supporting head.
Action: Suck in your stomach throughout the entire exercise. Slowly perform a curl while side bending toward the right side (right elbow to right hip). Avoid twisting. Exhale on the way up. Hold two seconds. Gently return to the start position while inhaling. Rest for one second. Alternating sides repeat exercise 10 to 15 times.

Advanced:
Start Position: Sit on ball, walk feet forward, rest low back on ball (by moving your body headword on the ball you increase the intensity of the sit-up).
Action: Same as beginner. Alternating sides repeat exercise 20 –30 times.

Core Balance

#1 Extensor Balance Basic

Beginner:
Start Position: Lying on back looking straight up with the ball centred under knees. Arms are out to the sides, palms flat on the floor.
Action: Slowly lift buttocks off the floor. Maintaining balance, holding position for 5 seconds. Slowly return to the start position. Rest a brief moment and repeat exercise 5 times.

Advanced:
Start Position: Lying on back looking straight up with the ball centred under knees. Arms are straight up to the sky, palms together.
Action: Same as beginner.

#2 Extensor Balance Leg Curl

Beginner:
Start Position: Lying on back looking straight up with the ball centred under calf muscles. Arms are out to the sides, palms flat on the floor.
Action: Slowly lift buttocks off the floor. Maintaining balance, curl the ball until it touches buttock. Holding this position for 5 seconds. Slowly return to the start position. Rest a brief moment and repeat exercise 5 times.

Advanced:
Start Position: Lying on back looking straight up with the ball centred under calf muscles. Arms are straight up to the sky, palms together.
Action: Same as beginner.

#3 Seated Leg extensions

Beginner:
Start Position: Sit on the ball with feet and knees together. Hands are on the sides of the ball.
Action: Using the hands on the ball to help maintain balance, slowly extend the right leg. Once the right leg is straight at the knee, hold for 10 seconds. Slowly lower the right leg to the floor and repeat with the left, then rest a brief moment. Repeat the exercise 5 times.

Advanced:
Start Position: Sit on the ball with feet and knees together. Hands are straight out to the sides with palms facing the sky.
Action: Same as beginner.

#4 Extension Balance Twist

Beginner:
Start Position: Lying on back, looking straight up with the ball held between lower legs. Arms are out to the sides, palms flat on the floor.
Action: Slowly lift buttocks off the floor. Maintaining balance and buttocks off the floor, slowly roll the ball to the right until the right foot comes close to touching the floor. Hold this position for 5 seconds. Slowly roll the ball all the way to the left until the left foot approaches the floor. Hold 5 seconds. Return to the start position. Rest a brief moment and repeat exercise initiating a left directional roll. Repeat exercise 5-10 times.

Advanced:
Start Position: Lying on back looking straight up with the ball held between lower legs. Arms are straight up to the sky, palms together.
Action: Same as beginner.