

Circular Strength Training®

By Ryan Murdock

Created by world-renowned coach, Scott Sonnon, and further developed by his elite Faculty Coaching Staff, CST is the cutting edge of health, fitness and sports performance enhancement. It's unique among fitness systems in offering a complete "health first" approach. Other systems place function (attributes like strength, endurance or speed) first, valuing those things over and often at the expense of health. Many people value physique first and are willing to do anything, including practices like shooting steroids or crash-dieting that will damage their long-term health, all for the instant reward of a magazine cover physique. That may work in the short term, but the short term can be shorter than you think.

Everything in CST builds off of and leads back to this health first approach. As a result, CST will get you to the function and physique that you seek faster, and it'll keep you there longer, without compromising your health and longevity. The rock mantra of "Burn bright and die young" was put out there by record producers who are living off *your* royalties!

Circular Strength Training® is made up of three "wings" or sub-disciplines. Though they can and are practiced independently, the three wings of CST integrate seamlessly into a stand-alone health and fitness system.

Intu-Flow® is an incrementally progressive system of dynamic joint mobility exercises designed to feed and lubricate your joints and connective tissues and restore all of your joints to their full, healthy range of motion. Beginning CST athletes start with Intu-Flow®, and long term athletes use it to release stored tension, speed recovery from training, and to maintain the health and longevity of their bodies.

Prasara yoga takes the range of motion and co-ordination that you recovered with Intu-Flow® to the next level. It transforms physical performance by teaching one how to re-integrate the breath, movement and structure—the key to accessing flow state in any activity. Prasara specifically focuses on the releasing of chains of tension throughout the body. Tension caused by fear, anxiety, trauma, habit, and even exercise are pulped and released through the practice of Prasara yoga.

Think of someone who hunches over a desk—or a guitar—for hour after hour. The body adapts to this posture and becomes more efficient at holding it by forming thick leathery bands of fascia that act to keep that person hunched. Remember making faces as a kid, and someone telling you, "Be careful or it'll freeze like that"?

Prasara works into the opposite and teaches you to release this habitual tension. Paired with Intu-Flow®, Prasara will give you the ability to strut around the stage and contort yourself in a freakish display of athleticism while holding a note and making it look easy.

Clubbell® Athletics is the third weighted wing of CST. Unlike machines, free weights, and kettlebells, the Clubbell® was specifically designed to be moved in three dimensions, just as people move in the real world. Clubbells allow one to develop the rotary and angular strength of the prime movers (translating directly to athletic performance in any activity), to develop selective tension (the ability to apply exactly the right amount of force for the task at hand, rather than the “full on/full off” approach of traditional strength training), and to develop incredible grip strength and stamina. Clubbell® Athletics is simply the most sophisticated, fun and creative vehicle for strength and conditioning ever conceived. You’ll never be bored by the dull routine of weight workouts again!



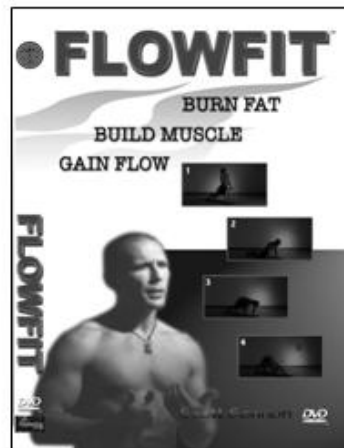
Like art, CST is a vehicle for your personal transcendence and expression; for becoming more of your true, best self. Hundreds of thousands of people from all walks of life—from grannies to grandmasters, elite athletes to professional musicians—have embraced CST and gone on to recover their health and well being. All of the people that I have worked with have been amazed to discover just how much untapped potential was waiting inside of them all along. What they’d long accepted as their limits were only the first step to embracing their full birthright as humans.

FlowFit™



FlowFit™, which is the program that Jaime Vendera religiously practices, is a specific CST program that's designed to be done in fourteen to eighteen minutes at a time, three to four times per week—the optimum health and fitness on the hurry for busy people. The program contains four incrementally sophisticating progressions, so as your movement gets better it gets more challenging. It's accessible to anyone, regardless of beginning physical condition.

Apart from the obvious benefits of melting fat and shredding muscle, FlowFit™ was carefully and specifically designed to tap into the body's Neuroimmunoendocrine (NIE) response. “What the heck is that?” which is what you're probably asking right now, right?



You've heard of the “runner's high” or “second wind”, right? It happens when the body hits a point of circulo-respiratory distress (CRD), a fancy name for that gasping, heart pounding, sweating, “think-I'm-going-to-die” point where most people quit. If you push through that barrier, you'll experience an “up shift” where your body kicks into the next gear (and there are many more than just two) and everything is suddenly cruising.

That up shift has tremendous health benefits, including the stimulation of the immune system. Because the immune, endocrine and nervous systems are interrelated, an adaptation in one is reflected in the other two. Do this over time and your health and vitality will soar. You can't have vocal power if your lungs are a mess or if your body is weak and sickly. On the other hand, if you learn to channel the power of your entire body and express that through your voice as Jaime is instructing you to do, the results will be astounding. Jaime personally told me that by adding FlowFit™ to his routine to improve his cardio strength, he has been able to shatter eight wine glasses in a row!

One of the most brilliant things about FlowFit™ is how easily it allows you to tap into this NIE response. Runners have to run for increasingly long times to access it. Other activities, like cycling or high repetition weight training, can access it too,

but at the same time the repetitive motion in limited ranges create other unwanted adaptations in the body, such as chains of tension linked to those movements and/or repetitive strain injuries.

FlowFit™ was designed to move the body through all six degrees of freedom (heaving, swaying, surging, pitching, yawing and rolling). Moving through all of these degrees prevents repetitive stress, and it naturally compensates for any specific conditioning (including hunching over a desk or guitar) that you've experienced throughout your day. You hit the NIE response in a healthy way and you hit it sooner than with other activities because moving through all six degrees at that pace is *hardcore!* What other workout would satisfy a metal-head?

If you want to maximize your health and minimize your exercise time you only need to punch through that membrane into second gear. For the average person doing FlowFit™ this happens at between fourteen and eighteen minutes, sometimes sooner depending on the level of de-conditioning. Once you up shift, you're done for the day!

I use FlowFit™ with all of my athletes, and in my own training. Jaime Vendera swears by it, and I've used it to humble metal god and Jiu-Jitsu athlete Jim Gillette on more than one occasion.

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Ryan Murdock is an RMAX Faculty Coach and Senior Editor of RMAX Magazine, the internet's largest fitness and martial arts publication. He is the creator and star of the RMAX Powered Bujinkan DVD series and author of the RMAX Training Group Manual. He has been involved in martial arts for the past 20 years, and strength training for the past 25 years. In 2006 he was inducted into the International Martial Arts Hall of Fame as Master Instructor of the Year. In addition to his work with RMAX, Murdock is a widely published travel writer / explorer. An Associate Editor of Outpost Magazine, his article "Taklamakan: The Worst Desert in the World" was nominated for a Canadian National Magazine Award in 2006.