

# MAN ALIVE!

## PAIN & RECOVERY

Mortlock came into rugby two years into union's professional era, but already the game is faster, stronger and tougher. "The game has got quicker and the contests in the game have become consistent. When I started playing, there were only a couple of guys in each team who were professional at pilfering ball and making it a real contest at the breakdown. Now every single player goes hard."

### DEALING WITH PAIN

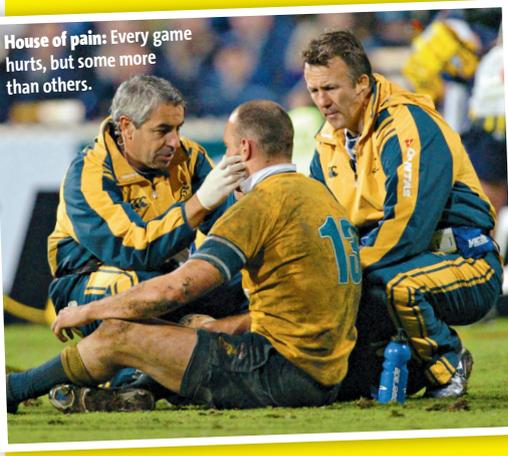
"Injury is different to pain. Every match you play you'll be hurting on any number of occasions. It's all about your ability to push through it. That's standard in elite sports – you're always going to be hurting."

"With injury, I've had three shoulder reconstructions, so I've had three long-term lay-offs and have had to do a lot of work. There have been many setbacks. But my aim has always been to surround myself with quality people, to get the best medial treatment that's possible and the best physios – to rip into my rehab and work extremely hard. The harder you work, the luckier you become. After every injury, I've had to work extremely hard to recover. The hard work and the pain give me the resolve and the drive to make the best of my time out there playing."

### RECOVERY

"It's hard to say if the one-on-one tackles are much more fierce nowadays, but certainly there are now contests all around the park – everywhere. And, especially this year playing the ELVs (experimental law variations), there's been less recovery time. But along with all the physical improvements there's been a lot of improvements with recovery techniques, so that's kept pace. And I'm older now as well, so it takes it out of you a bit more than when you're 21 and bullet-proof."

House of pain: Every game hurts, but some more than others.



## NUTRITION

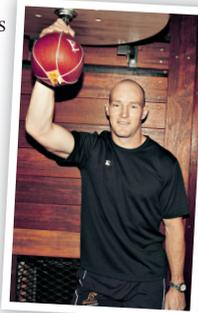
"When we're training and doing all the work we do, we can eat whatever we want. But if you take an active role in making sure you put quality food into your system, it reflects in you performing at your optimum levels."

"Early on in the week, especially after a game, when you've been through some work and had some hard knocks, protein is good for you – a lot of the boys love their steaks. Otherwise, you try to get veggies and carbs – not just a massive amount of meat. Closer to a Test match, Thursday and Friday, I'll certainly be carbo loading, so lots of rice, pastas."

"I find supplements invaluable, especially when you're working hard in the gym. Protein powders and supplements before and after work-outs give me a lot of gain. Musashi has a new product called Reactivate, which is an awesome supplement before a work-out. On game day, I sometimes add it in. If I haven't really felt like eating as much as I thought I should, I'll go for a supplement as well."

## THE WARM-UP

Mortlock points out that these exercises don't represent a single work-out, and should be selected in combination. "Usually our strength work-outs have a power/ dynamic component to them and some other standard lifts. It all depends on what you've done previously and what equipment you've got to work with. The power component may be the snatch and squatting. The other parts might be some chin-ups, lat pull-downs or the shoulder press – they're not nearly as explosive or demand as much from you. It's all about getting the balance right."



**FLUTTERS** These are general exercises that most guys would normally do in the gym, whether they've had a shoulder injury or not. They're good to help normal function of the shoulder. With the flutters, you're trying to squeeze your scapulars (shoulder blades) together and control the movement of your arms up and down. Rotate 20 times.



**ARMS OUTSTRETCHED** Again, rotate 20 times. These are about making sure you've got good scapula control – crucial in any exercise using the upper body. If your scapulars aren't functioning properly, then you're compromising different muscle groups, whether it's your chest, back or shoulders, whatever.

## A Wallabies week in the life of Stirling Mortlock

### SUNDAY

**7.30AM** Up relatively early, out of the hotel by nine.  
**8AM** Medicals, then a big breakfast. We eat a lot of food. Coming off a big game, you want to replenish.  
**12PM** Individual recovery; swim, walk or, if at home, take the kids to the park and do a bit there.  
**3PM** A little bit of activity, not much.  
**6PM** A few drinks with dinner.

## THE WORK-OUT



**BENCH PRESS** Before any exercise, do at least one warm-up set, then get into it. Don't go into anything 100 per cent cold. If you want to put on a bit of lean muscle, then you'd up the reps and possibly the sets as well – at least 12 reps and four sets. In season, in a power phase, you'd go as low as three-five reps with a really heavy weight.



**GAMBETTA CIRCUIT** This is a bodyweight exercise that you can do in 10 minutes, but it will absolutely blast your pins. With all these exercises, your hands are on your hips, so you're getting the power just from your legs. You go from 20 bodyweight squats to 10 fast lunges; then 100 each side of dynamic step-ups, finishing off with jump squats. The key is only 90 seconds rest before going again. By the third one, you're praying for someone to tell you to stop.



**CLEAN AND PRESS** You can go a little bit heavier on this exercise because you're starting at chest height and pressing it from there. It's purely explosive, so you focus on bar speed; make sure you have a flat back. Both these exercises are about bar speed – it's getting you to be more explosive.

### MONDAY

**7AM** Get up.  
**8.30AM** Meeting to discuss the match ahead.  
**9.30AM** Training is more of a light run, but still getting a bit of volume. You can't demand too much of guys who've played a big Test 36 hours previously.  
**2PM** Weights session tailored to how you're feeling.

### TUESDAY

**8AM** Meeting. Team leaders and coaching staff will have come up with a game plan, pinpointing plays and outlining things we'll try to achieve over the weekend.  
**9.30AM** Training session. More contact and a bit more intensity.  
**12.30PM** Lunch back at the hotel.  
**2PM** Weights session.  
**5PM** Hour's stretching session.