

## PREPARATION AND RECOVERY

Johnson talks a lot about the importance of recovery from his intense physical training, but doesn't get too bogged down on the mental side: all that training and preparation clearly gives him all the confidence he needs.

"With the mental side, you've just got to be confident, because you don't know what the game's going to hold for you and the team. I rely on my preparation and on the guys around me that we're going to perform well. I know physically what I've done during the week and that helps my mind know that I'm ready to play."

**1 RECOVERY:** "All our training in-season is based on recovery. We'll do a lot of recovery early in the week and then we'll have one big hit-out, probably in the middle or end of the week, and that's basically it before we play on the weekend. We do a lot of recovery-based sessions leading into a game, because it's important that you're as fresh as you can be when you hit the field to play."

**2 DEALING WITH PAIN:** "I've got to have confidence that the medical and the fitness staff wouldn't play me if I wasn't right, so I know that I might be a little bit sore but I'm OK to be out there. The most important thing is my first contest. If I've got a little niggles or I'm a bit sore, I attack my first contest, and when I get through that my confidence levels grow from there. I've had to play through certain things during my career, but I just battle on and keep attacking every contest like I would if I was fit and healthy, and normally I get through it."



## Yo Gotta Be Kidding

As if the dreaded beep test wasn't enough, sadistic coaches have developed it further, to vary the type of work done. Meet the yo-yo intermittent recovery test.

"We do the yo-yo test about three times in our pre-season: one when we start training, one pre-Christmas, and we'll do another one just after Christmas."

"It's very similar to the beep test, in that you work to a beep, but once you cross the finish line you have to go around a cone a couple of metres past the start/finish line (as a short recovery period). You then start again at the start line, exactly when the beep goes. There's two forms of it. There's an endurance one and there's a speed-endurance one, which doesn't go for long but, obviously, you blow up a bit quicker – it's a harder test."

And he's not kidding – if you can't complete the out-and-back shuttle in the allocated time, you get a warning. Once more and you're out.

## WORK-OUT

The game has changed a lot since I started; it's quicker now and there are a lot more rotations. Training is more structured on an individual basis – not everyone does the same thing. Our midfielders will do more distance running and break it up with a lot of interval stuff, because they work longer and harder during a game. Forwards and defenders will do a lot more sprint efforts – sprint, stop, then sprint again.



## SLOW JOG

It's important to get the body moving (after stretching, see right) and the best way is to do a nice slow jog for five minutes as a warm-up. Then you could do a straight distance run, perhaps 4km, working as hard as you can.



## SHUTTLE RUNS

If you're going to do an interval session, you'd do that on its own. You might run over, say, 40m, with a cone at 10m, 20m, 30m and 40m. Run to the first cone, back to the start, run to the second cone, back to the start... Run as fast as you can.

## A week in the life of a super trainer

### MONDAY

**10AM** At the club for injury clinic.

**11AM** Walk some laps and stretch.

**1PM-3.30PM** All afternoon is caught up with meetings where we review the game just played and see what we need to do in the next game.

**LATE AFTERNOON** Jump in the ice bath. It's very nasty but necessary; you feel great afterwards. Then head home and relax.



## SPRINT DRILLS

You might do your shuttles, have five minutes' rest, then do some sprint efforts – five to eight efforts over 100m. At the end of each one, you walk back and go again. That recovery is very important – make sure you give it enough time.

### TUESDAY

**DAY OFF** I'm up nice and early with the kids. I will normally use this day off to catch up with a few people, but most of the guys will at least come to the club and do massage and physio. Ideally, you wouldn't go for a run or do anything physical like that, because you really need that day off to relax and recover before the rest of the week.

### WEDNESDAY

**9AM** Get to the club. Do a light skills session, so we get out on the ground and kick the footies around and do light drills.

**1PM** An opposition meeting, where we look at who we're playing for the next game. Most guys will bring their lunch, or we'll have it supplied.

**3PM** Weights session.