



# Military Athlete

**Strong. Swift. Durable**

**Jackson, Wyoming**  
[www.militaryathlete.com](http://www.militaryathlete.com)

## RUCK-BASED SELECTION TRAINING PROGRAM

The following program is designed to improve performance with a concentration on rucking-based military selections (Green Beret, Delta, The Activity).

This is a 8-week program that will require the athlete to train up to 6 days a week. The program includes a 2 week taper at the end so you arrive at selection fit, not beaten down.

This program is designed to be employed on the final 8 weeks before your selection begins. If you are further out then 8 weeks from your selection start date, we recommend you continue with the regular Military Athlete programming.

### **CAUTION!**

Selections are designed to push the candidate to the edges physically, and see how you perform. While subsequent selections may have many similar events and durations, there are many differences between subsequent selections simply because cadre and the candidate pool change. Further, the various special forces units are secretive about what to expect.

**The following plan is a suggested preparation program. I do not guarantee that if you complete it, you'll make it through selection. I've never personally attended a selection or even observed one.**

The following program is based on what I've been able to gather about what to expect and some of the suggested train up plans from the Green Berets and "The Activity" plus my knowledge of strength and conditioning.

**This is free advice. Use it for what you will.**

Finally, this is a very intense training program. If you have not been completing the Military Athlete programming for several weeks prior, do not be surprised if you are unable to complete these sessions.

If you have been completing the Military Athlete programming, the exercises prescribed in this program will be familiar to you. If you have not been completing the Military Athlete programming, please visit [www.mtnathlete.com](http://www.mtnathlete.com) and click on the "exercises" link for unfamiliar exercise descriptions.

**The program is built around 4 distinct physical goals:**

**1) Ruck: 18 miles @ 50lbs in 4.5 hours if traveling the road or 6 hrs if traveling cross country.**

Several selections involve and require extensive rucking. We believe the best way to train for rucking is to ruck. The problem is, extensive rucking can and does break the body down. We've tried to design a progressive rucking program which limits rucking to 2x/week, and will build you up but avoids over training, and sends you to selection strong and ready.

**2) Running: 8 miles in 64 min and 2 miles in 14 min.**

Many selections involve extensive unloaded running. Further, running will help build an aerobic base.

**3) 10 rounds (unbroken) of 5x pullups 10x dips 15x pushup, 20x situps**

You can expect to do many pushups, pullups, situps and other body weight calisthenics at selection. This simple circuit is a way to build upper body cal endurance.

**4) 55 reps of Sand bag get ups @ 80# in 10 min.**

The sandbag getup is our favorite core exercise. A strong midsection is key to durability. The goal here is to build a strong core to protect your back and vulnerable limbs from the tests and trials ahead. It's preventative medicine.

**This program includes these less distinct physical goals:**

- Build the athlete's mode-specific aerobic base (running and rucking)
- Prepare the athlete for selection unknowns (we use intense work capacity circuits to accomplish this.)
- Build durability - through rucking with a heavy pack, sand bag get ups, and strength training

**RUNNING FORM**

Proper running and rucking form will not only make a huge difference in your speed, but also make you more efficient - thereby saving energy, and most important, significantly decrease the impact these activities have on your body.

There are several running form philosophies and even books available, but we've found that all of them share key form characteristics: stand tall, forward lean (fall forward), flat foot strike (don't land heel first), 90 steps per minute cadence (shorter steps, faster rpm), forward only arm swing, circular foot rotation.

We strongly recommend you purchase one or more of these books: Chi Running, POSE Method of Running Method and either purchase a metronome and/or download a metronome MP3 for you iPod and begin to learn how run on cadence. Go to <http://www.reztronics.com/prod01.htm> for a metronome MP3.

Footwear - wear the same footwear during your training runs you will wear during selection. If these are boots, so be it.

**RUCKING FORM**

Perhaps no other activity you'll do during this train up program has the potential to break down your body as rucking. We've limited your rucking during this program to just two days per week, because of it's impact. Further, developing proper rucking form will also decrease its impact. Here are keys to consider:

- Never run or jog with your pack. Strive to increase your walking pace.
- Never step landing heel first. Land flat footed, with your foot under your body
- Ruck with a pronounced forward lean. "Fall forward" into the next step. Step from your hips, not your quads.
- Strive to increase your step cadence. Take faster, smaller, steps

- Use your pack's hip belt. Carry the load on your hips, not on your shoulders. Use the same pack you'll use at selection. Get it dialed.
- Ruck wearing the same boots/pants/pack you'll use during selection. Don't let there be any surprises. Dial your boots during training. Do not show up to selection with new boots.
- Same with sock systems. Don't let foot care/blisters become an issue at selection. Dial your sock systems now - this could be one pair of wool blend socks, a liner with an outer sock, two pair of liners, etc. Find out which works for you during this train up. Also, know what blister treatment systems work for you and have it prepared for selection.
- Pack. Ruck with the pack you'll use during selection. No surprises.

**Another Tip:** Duffle Bag - If possible, purchase and take a duffle bag which has a full length zipper, rather than a top-only opening for selection. This will make it much easier and faster to sort and find needed gear and clothes.

## **NUTRITION**

If possible, take a body building mass gainer shake mix and a shaker to selection and use it as a way to slam fast calories between meals. We understand that this isn't allowed at many selections. If it is at your selection, take mass gainer and use it. But, prior to selection, test out a brand or two to find one that agrees with your system.

Cramping can be a major issue. If possible, take electrolytes to selection and use them regularly to ward off cramps. Commercial brands of electrolytes in a pill or power form (dump into your drinking water) are available. I've used Hammer Nutrition Endurolytes Electrolyte Pills with success.

Also - soreness can be an issue. If you can, some of our athletes have had success reducing soreness by taking "SportLegs" supplement pills.

Finally, we recommend going into selection 10 pounds overweight. Understand that caloric restriction and lack of sleep are part of the game. Going in with a few pounds of fat on your body will give you some buffer before your body begins eating muscle to fuel itself.

## **TECHNICAL/TEAMWORK/LEADERSHIP SKILL PREPARATION**

Don't let your concern about the physical demands of selection cause you to ignore the technical, teamwork and leadership skills which will also be assessed at selection. Understand that the instructors will often use physical demands not to test your fitness, but to simply stress you out. Now, in this fatigued, stressed out condition, the real assessment will begin - can you still perform technical skills? Are you a good teammate? Do you stand up and lead?

Some military athletes feel these intangible attributes, (team work, leadership) can't be trained. "You either have them or you don't." We disagree, and feel these attributes can indeed be trained and learned, and need to be trained. Think these through. Read, plan, train for these situations. Visualize how you'll react under stress.

## **MENTAL PREPARATION**

Selections ultimately are not a test of physical prowess. Rather, physical tasks are a means to push the candidates beyond their limits in an effort to test and observe character, leadership, teamwork, resolve and determination. Regardless of your physical preparation, the best cadre will find a way to push you to your physical limit to observe how you react.

Below are a few strategies, guidelines, and tips to assist you in meeting this mental/character challenge:

### **1. The thought of quitting is poison.**

You cannot let the thought of quitting enter your mind during selection. No matter how fit you are going in, or what you've accomplished in the past, if you entertain the thought of quitting, you are going to quit. You will need to exercise extreme mental discipline to block the thought of quitting from any consideration. Once you consider quitting, this thought will act like poison, weakening your resolve. Eventually, quitting will be all you'll think about, and you'll act on it.

## **2. Short term thinking will carry you through.**

During selection, don't allow yourself to think long term, about all the shit you have to endure to finish. Instead of thinking, "I've got to make it to the end of the week," think, "I've just got to make it to the end of the day," or "I've just got to make it to the next meal," or, "I've just got to make it to end of this ruck, run, set of push ups, etc."

The darker, and more desperate things get, the shorter term your thinking needs to become. Long term thinking will overwhelm your resolve and determination. Think short term to survive.

**3. Enthusiasm.** Enthusiasm is the opposite of dread and is rooted in the bedrock of positive thinking and adventure. It has no relation to your physical state.

Thought is energy. Negative thoughts will suck you dry. You will not be able to control what you have to do physically. But you will always be in total control of your thoughts and attitude toward your predicament. Use this control to direct your energy. Force yourself to be enthusiastic about the next beat down. Embrace the suck.

**4. Humor.** Laughing will shield and protect you from all kinds of negative shit. Laugh at yourself, laugh with others, laugh at the absurdity of the situation. Just fucking smile. Don't discount the restorative power of humor.

**5. Humility.** The cadre are looking for prima donnas. They are looking for people who want the prestige of the special forces pin, but don't understand the deeper meaning, tradition and responsibility of the teams. Prima Donnas will be selfish. You have to want this for the right reasons. Be humble.

**6. Don't expect it to be fair.** The cadre will use your sense of fairness against you. Expect to be punished for invalid reasons. Expect rules to change without notice. Expect to be set up to fail, then punished for failing. How to react? Short term thinking. Embracing the suck. Acting with humility. Humor. Enthusiasm.

**7. Have some Faith.** Faith can be religious, but doesn't have to be. And faith is not hope. Hope is the belief that things will get better. Faith is the understanding that things may not get better, and they may not be fair, but that things aren't random, and that everything happens for a reason. Some of which we may not understand until later. Faith brings with it immense strength. Strong faith is something you can lean against when things are tough.

Questions? Good Luck!

- Rob Shaul, 307-200-1968, [rob@militaryathlete.com](mailto:rob@militaryathlete.com), July 19, 2009

## **RUCK-INTENSIVE SELECTION PREPARATION PROGRAM**

The following fitness program is designed to be completed sequentially. It is a six day a week program. Train 6 days in a row, take one day of complete rest.

Some of these sessions have both gym and sprint or gym and running parts. These can be split over the course of the day. Do what your schedule allows but get both in.

Train Hard. Train Safe.

Good Luck! – Rob Shaul

### **\*\*\*\*\*WEEK 1\*\*\*\*\***

#### **Session 1**

Warm up: 10 min Sandbag Get Up (SBGU) @ 80 lbs.

Rest 5 min.

Training:

- (1) 10 rounds
  - 30 step ups @ 40 lbs (15x each leg)
  - 5x thrusters @ 65#
  - 7x Ankles-to-Bar
  - 15x Swings @ 24kg
  - 30 seconds rest

Sprint through the Step ups, thrusters, Ankles-to-Bar and Swings. Don't milk the rest.

- (2) Run 5 miles, moderate pace

**Moderate Pace = comfortable but not easy**

Work on running form

#### **Session 2**

Ruck = 60 min @ 35lbs

Moderate Pace

#### **Session 3**

Warm up: Run 1 mile

Training:

- (1) 10 rounds
  - Sprint 30 seconds (Max effort)
  - Rest 30 seconds

- (2) 4 Rounds

Barbell Complex (85, 95, 105, 115#)  
HAM – Hip Mobility Drill

- (3) 5 Rounds
  - 4x Bench Press (increase load each round until 3x is hard, but doable)
  - 5x Y+L

- (4) 5 Rounds
  - 3x Curtis P (increase weight until 3x is hard but doable)
  - 8x GHD Sit up
  - HUG – Hip Mobility Drill

- (5) 4 rounds
  - 10x Dead Lift @ 135# (Dead Stop, no bouncing)
  - 15 Second "Jane Fonda" (Alternate Legs each Round)

#### **Session 4**

Run: 3 rounds  
Run 1 Mile at Threshold pace  
2 min rest

**Threshold Pace = fastest pace possible without straining**

#### **Session 5**

- (1) 7 rounds
  - 5x pullups (strict, no kipping!)
  - 10x dips
  - 15x pushups

- (2) 3 rounds
  - 1 rope climb
  - 5x Y+L

#### **Session 6**

Ruck: 8 Miles @ 35 lbs, in 2 hours (road) or 2.5 hours (cross country)

### **\*\*\*\*\*WEEK 2\*\*\*\*\***

#### **Session 1**

Warm Up: 10 min SBGU @80lbs

Training:

- (1) 5–4–3–2–1–2–3–4–5 for time (go as hard as possible)
  - Step ups @ 40lbs x10
  - Scotty Bobs @ 25lbs

Round 1 = 50 step ups, 5x Scotty Bob  
Round 2 = 40 step ups, 4x Scotty Bob

- (2) Run 5 miles, moderate pace  
Work on running form

### Session 2

Ruck: 120 min @ 40#, cross country preferred  
Moderate Pace

### Session 3

Warm up: Run 1 Mile

Training:

- (1) 6 rounds  
    Sprint 1 Minute  
    Rest 1 Minute
- (2) 4 Rounds  
    Barbell Complex (85, 95, 105, 115#)  
    HAM – Hip Mobility Drill
- (3) 5 rounds  
    20m lunge lap @ 2x45lbs  
    10x jumping lunges (20x total)  
    HUG – Hip Mobility Drill
- (4) 5 Rounds  
    5x Mr. Spectacular @ 24kg  
    8x Box Jumps @ 24" Box  
    Hip Swivel Stretch
- (5) 4 rounds  
    10x Dead Lift @ 135# (Dead Stop, no bouncing)  
    15 Second "Jane Fonda" (Alternate Legs each Round)

### Session 4

3 rounds  
Run 1.5 miles @ threshold pace  
2 min rest

### Session 5

- (1) 7 rounds  
    5x pullups (strict, no kipping!)  
    10x dips  
    15x pushups
- (2) 3 rounds  
    1 rope climb  
    5x Y+L

### Session 6

Ruck: 10 miles @ 40 lbs in 2.5 hours (road) or 3.5 hours (cross country)

## \*\*\*\*\*WEEK 3\*\*\*\*\*

### Session 1

WU: 10 min SBUG

- 1) 5 rounds  
    10x front squat @ 115#  
    2 min step ups onto 20" box (unloaded)  
    30 second rest
- (2) 5 Rounds  
    8x Power Cleans @ 115#  
    Run 400m  
    30 second rest
- (4) Run 5 miles, moderate pace  
    Work on running form

### Session 2

Ruck: 10 miles @ 50 lbs (cross country preferred)  
Moderate pace

### Session 3

Warm up: Run 1 mile

- (1) 6 rounds  
    Sprint 90 sec  
    Rest 90 sec
- (2) 4 Rounds  
    Barbell Complex (85, 95, 105, 115#)  
    HAM – Hip Mobility Drill
- (3) 5 rounds  
    4x "The Exercise" (increase each round until 4x is hard but doable)  
    Rope Climb  
    Hip Swivel Stretch
- (4) 5 Rounds  
    4x Dead Lift (increase load each round until 4x is hard, but doable)  
    30m Tire Drag  
    SAM – Shoulder Mobility Drill
- (5) 4 rounds  
    10x Ankles-to-Bar  
    15 Second "Jane Fonda" (Alternate Legs each Round)

### Session 4

Run:  
20 min @ Threshold Pace  
3 min recovery jog  
15 min @ Threshold pace  
2 min recovery  
10 min @ Threshold pace  
1min recovery  
5 min @ Threshold pace

#### **Session 5**

- (1) 10 rounds  
5x pullups (strict, no kipping!)  
10x dips  
15x pushups  
3x Y+L

#### **Session 6**

Ruck: 12 miles @ 50 lbs in 3 hours (road) or 4 hours (cross country)

\*\*\*\*\*WEEK 4\*\*\*\*\*

#### **Session 1**

Warm up: 10min SBUGU @80lbs

- (1) 5 rounds for Time  
10x Power Clean + Push Press @ 95#  
Run 400m

- (2) 10min SBUGU @ 80 lbs

- (3) Run 5 miles, moderate pace  
Work on running form

#### **Session 2**

Ruck 120 minutes @ 50lbs  
Moderate pace

#### **Session 3**

Warm up: Run 1 mile

Training:

- (1) 8 Rounds  
Sprint 800m  
Rest 2 minutes
- (2) 4 Rounds  
Barbell Complex (85, 95, 105, 115#)  
HAM – Hip Mobility Drill
- (3) 5 Rounds

3x Squat Clean (increase load each round until 4x is hard, but doable)  
Hip Swivel Stretch

- (4) 4 rounds  
10x Dead Lift @ 135# (Dead Stop, no bouncing)  
20 Second "Jane Fonda" (Alternate Legs each Round)

#### **Session 4**

Run:  
30 min @ Threshold pace  
3 min recovery (jogging)  
20 min @ Threshold pace  
2 min recovery (jogging)  
Run 10 min @ Threshold pace

#### **Session 5**

- (1) 10 rounds  
5x pullups (strict, no kipping!)  
10x dips  
15x pushups  
3x Y+L

#### **Session 6**

RUCK:  
14 miles @ 50# in 3.5 hours (road) or 4.5 hours (cross country)

\*\*\*\*\*WEEK 5\*\*\*\*\*

#### **Session 1**

Warm up: 15 min SBUGU @ 80lbs

Training:

- (1) 5 Rounds for time  
10x thruster @ 95lbs  
10x Box Jumps @ 24#  
10x Weighted Situps @ 45#
- (2) Run 5 miles, moderate pace  
Work on running form

#### **Session 2**

Ruck 120 minutes @ 50lbs  
Moderate pace

#### **Session 3**

Warm up: Run 800m

Training:

- (1) Run:  
1 mile for time

Fully recover  
1 mile for time

- (2) 4 Rounds  
Barbell Complex (85, 95, 105, 105#)  
HAM – Hip Mobility Drill
- (3) 5 rounds  
5x Front Squat (increase load each round until 5x is hard, but doable)  
5x KB Floor Press  
SAM – Shoulder Mobility Drill
- (4) 4 rounds  
10x Dead Lift @ 135# (Dead Stop, no bouncing)  
20 Second "Jane Fonda" (Alternate Legs each Round)

#### Session 4

Run:  
40 min @ Threshold pace  
3 min recovery (jogging)  
30 min @ Threshold pace

#### Session 5

- (1) 10 rounds  
5x pullups (strict, no kipping!)  
10x dips  
15x pushups  
3x Y+L

#### Session 6

Ruck 16 miles @ 50# in 4 hours (road) or 5.5 hours (cross country)

### \*\*\*\*\*WEEK 6\*\*\*\*\*

#### Session 1

Warm Up: 10 min SBGU @ 80 lbs for reps (goal test – 55x)

- 1) 5 rounds for time  
w/ kit or 25# vest  
10x thruster @ 95#  
5x pullups
- (2) Run 4 miles, moderate pace  
Work on running form

#### Session 2

Ruck 120 minutes @ 50lbs  
Moderate pace

#### Session 3

Warm up: Run 2 miles for time (Goal test)

- (1) 4 Rounds  
Barbell Complex (95, 95, 95, 95#)  
HAM – Hip Mobility Drill
- (2) 6 Rounds  
5x Mr spectacular @ 24kg  
10x russian twist  
SAM – Shoulder Mobility Drill
- (3) 4 rounds  
10x Weighted sit ups @ 45#  
20 Second "Jane Fonda" (Alternate Legs each Round)

#### Session 4

Run:  
8 miles for time (Goal test)

- (1) 10 rounds (do this at least 3 hours after the run)  
5x pullups (strict, no kipping!)  
10x dips  
15x pushups  
3x Y+L  
(Goal test – complete all rounds unbroken)

#### Session 5

OFF DAY

#### Session 6

Ruck: 18 miles @ 50lbs for time (GOAL TEST) – in 4.5 hours (road) or 6 hours (cross country)

### \*\*\*\*\*WEEK 7\*\*\*\*\*

#### Session 1

Warm up: 50x SBGU @80lbs

- 1) 5 rounds for time  
Mini Leg Blaster  
5x Scotty bob @25  
5x Ankles-to-Bar
- (2) Run 4 miles, moderate pace  
Work on running form

#### Session 2

Ruck: 75 minutes @ 35lbs  
Moderate pace

#### Session 3

Warm up: Run 1 Mile

Training:



(1) 4 Rounds  
Barbell Complex @ 95#  
HAM

(2) 10 Rounds  
30 second burpees  
30 second rest

(2) 4 Rounds  
21x Swings @ 20kg  
20 sec. Jane Fonda

**Session 4:**  
Complete APFT  
(Go hard for best score possible)

**Session 5**  
OFF DAY

**Session 6**  
Ruck: 9 miles @ 50 lbs  
Threshold pace (fastest pace possible without straining)

\*\*\*\*\***WEEK 8**\*\*\*\*\*

#### **Session 1**

Warm up: 30x SBUGU @ 80lbs

Training

(1) 10 Rounds  
Mini Leg Blaster  
5x Scotty Bob @ 25#  
3x Jeremy Special (Ankles-to-Bar + pull up)

(2) Run 3 miles  
Moderate Pace (work on running form)

**Session 2**  
Ruck: 60 min @ 35lbs  
Moderate pace

#### **Session 3**

Warm up: Run 1 mile

(1) 5 rounds  
60 second 25m Sprint  
60 second rest

(2) 4 Rounds  
10x Dead Lift @ 135#  
20 sec Jane Fonda

**Session 4**  
Warm up: Run 2 miles @ Threshold pace

(1) 7 rounds  
5x pullups (strict, no kipping!)  
10x dips  
15x pushups  
3x Y+L

**Session 5**  
OFF DAY

**Session 6**  
Ruck: 7 miles @ 50 lbs  
Threshold pace (fastest pace possible without straining)