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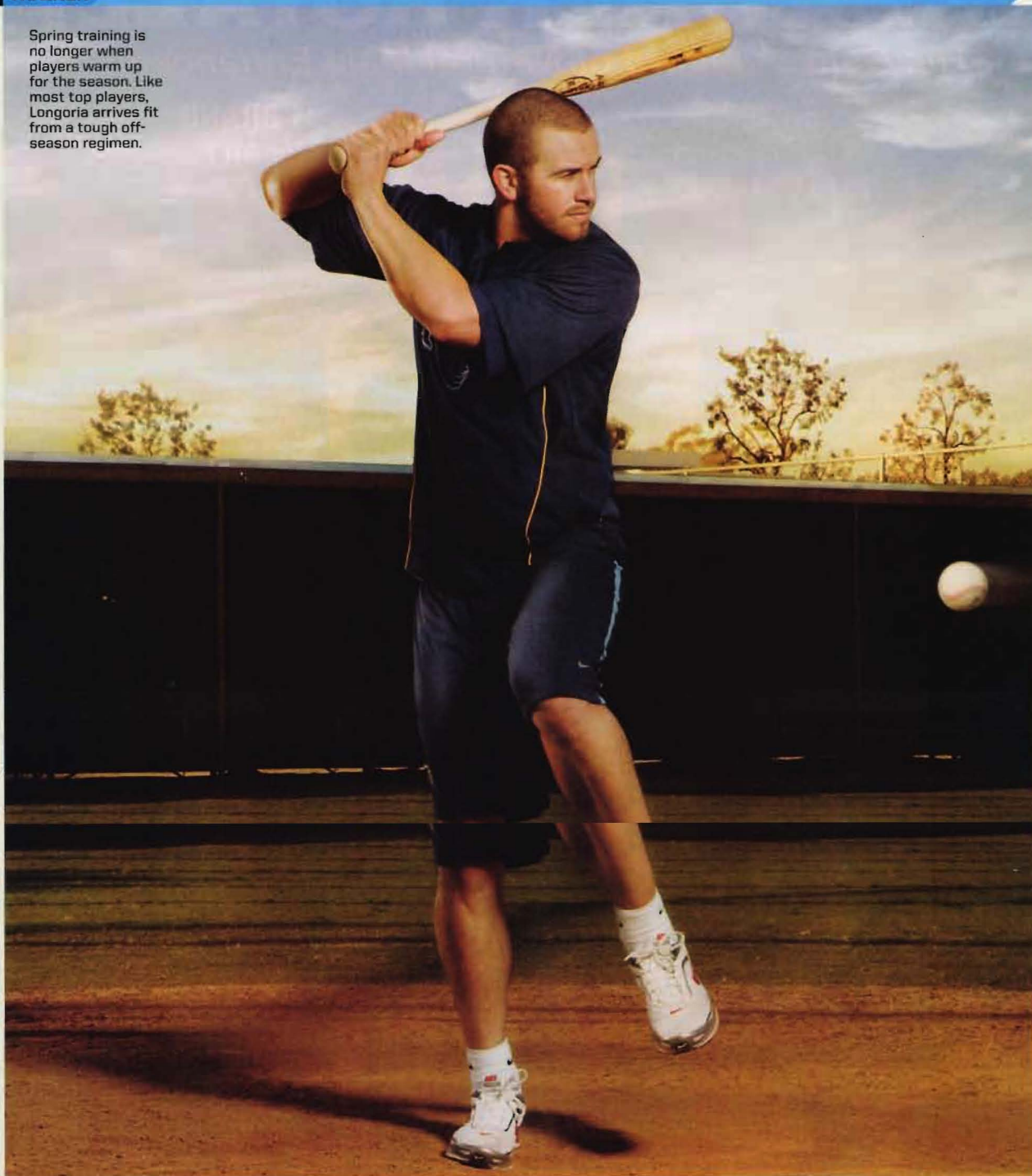
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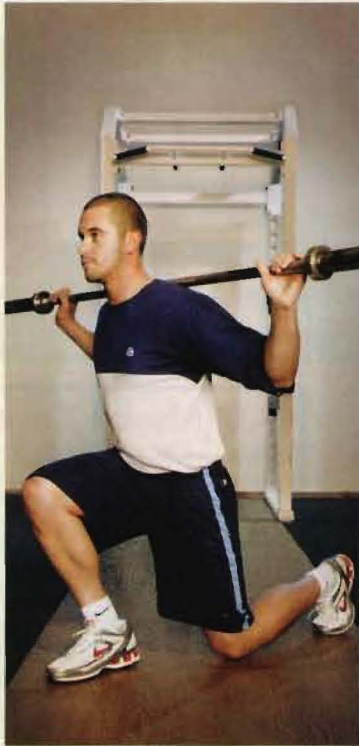
Spring training is no longer when players warm up for the season. Like most top players, Longoria arrives fit from a tough off-season regimen.



“NEVER SHUT YOURSELF DOWN”

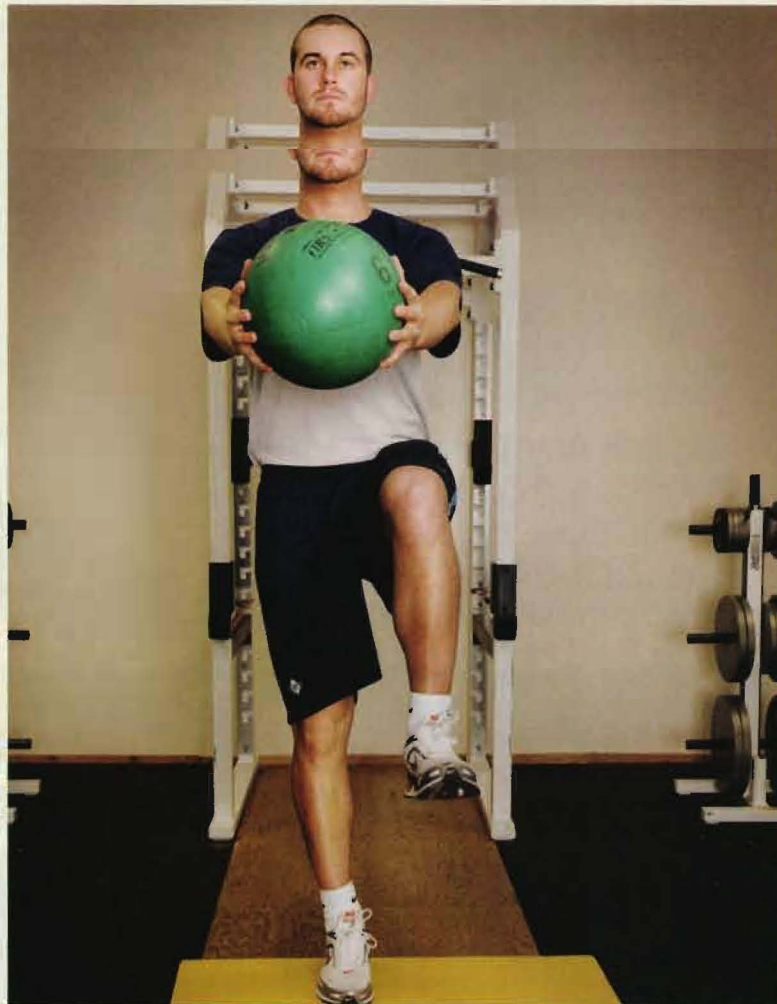
TAMPA BAY STAR EVAN LONGORIA BUILDS HOME-RUN STRENGTH—
DURING RIGOROUS WINTER WORKOUTS | *By Chris Strauss*

One of the best bits of advice Evan Longoria received during his rookie year came from veteran teammate Eric Hinske: Do some sort of exercise first thing in the morning, every morning. “Whether riding a bike for 10 minutes or getting a 30-minute workout, never shut yourself down,” says Longoria, who went on to become the 2008 American League Rookie of the Year. He continued his morning maintenance during the off-season when he also hit the gym three times a week, working through a series of exercises that improve strength, agility, and core strength. Here are five exercises from Longoria’s regimen that will benefit any serious athlete. The entire eight-week off-season training plan can be found at mensfitness.com/longoriaworkout



LUNGES

"Evan has a background in Olympic-style lifts," says Tampa Bay Rays strength coach Kevin Barr. "But it doesn't really correlate to performance in this sport." Instead, Barr has Longoria do lunges to generate lower-body strength, with a bar to add a little extra weight. The eight-week program begins with three sets of 10 reps per leg.



BOX STEPUP WITH MEDICINE BALL

So much of a hitter's strength and range of motion come from his core. Holding a 9 kg medicine ball directly in front of him, Longoria works his legs and midsection with two sets of 15 stepups.



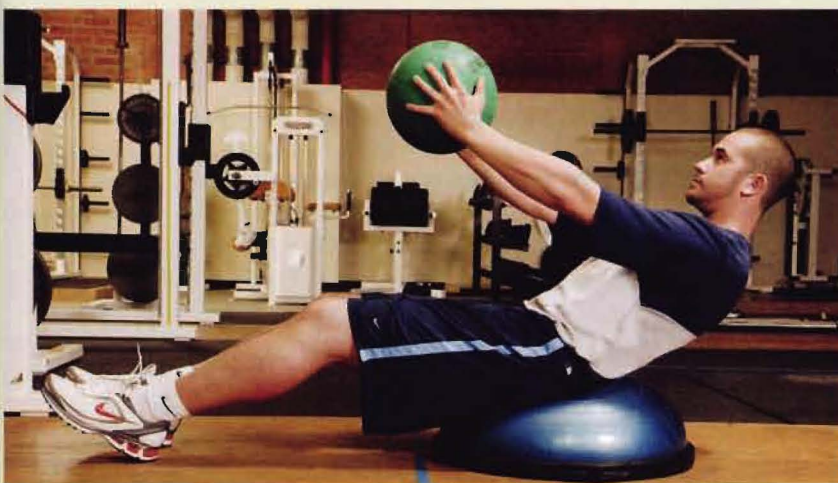
SINGLE-ARM CABLE ROW WITH ROTATION

"One thing we don't do with position players are barbells with any upper-body movements," Barr says. "Just dumbbells and cables, to protect the throwing athlete's rotator cuff." To assist with both the long throw from third to first and his swinging motion, Longoria attaches a long cable to a squat rack and performs a traditional arm row, adding a rotational twist at the end. He does three sets of 15 reps.



SPLIT SQUAT

"This exercise loads up the leg on the ground, which strengthens running mechanics in ballplayers," Barr says. Using a barbell (medicine ball and dumbbells are other options), Longoria places a bent leg on a box and lowers himself into a squat position. He does two sets of 10 reps for each leg.



BOSU CRUNCHES WITH MEDICINE BALL

"This is the only seated ab workout we do," Barr says. "We try to strengthen the obliques and lower back, more so than emphasizing crunch movements in this sport." Sitting on a Bosu ball, Longoria holds out a medicine ball and elevates for three sets of 15 crunches.