**EXERCISES OF THE MONTH**

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**Basic**

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**Back Squat**

**Starting Position**

- From a starting position in the squat rack, grasp the bar with an overhand (pronated) grip, slightly wider than shoulder width.
- Position the bar across the trapezius muscles of the upper back (above the posterior deltoids) at the base of the neck.
- Keep the chest up and out, the back tight and slightly arched; pull the shoulder blades toward each other, focus the eyes straight ahead.

**The Exercise**

- Stand up and slowly step backward 1 or 2 steps.
- Position the feet shoulder-width apart or wider, with toes pointed straight or slightly outward.
- Track the knees over the feet.
- Do not bounce at the bottom.
- Ascend rapidly, but with control.

**Muscles Used**

Quadriceps, gluteals.

**Variations**

Position the bar across the posterior deltoids at the middle of the trapezius (low bar squat). A hip harness or dumbbells may be used instead of a barbell.

*Note: A more detailed description and review of literature is available in the NSCA position paper, "The Squat Exercise in Athletic Conditioning."

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**One-Leg Squat**

**Starting Position**
- Balance on the right foot, stand on a box or platform as illustrated.
- The box or platform should be high enough to keep the left foot from touching the floor when reaching the bottom position.
- Keep the eyes focused straight ahead or slightly downward.
- A nearby wall or power rack may be used to assist with balance.

**The Exercise**
- Bend the right hip, knee, and ankle; descend slowly with control until the top of the right thigh is parallel with the floor.
- Keep the right foot flat on the box or platform.
- The balance should be over the middle of the foot.
- Inhale while descending, exhale past the sticking point on the ascent.
- Keep the torso as straight as possible throughout the movement.
- Track the knee over the foot.
- Do not bounce at the bottom.
- Ascend rapidly, but with control.
- Switch legs and repeat.

**Muscles Used**
Quadriceps, gluteals.

**Variations**
Weight can be added through the use of a weighted vest or dumbbells.