

The Aging Athlete

With Proper Training, We Can Slow Down Father Time

by Greg Roskopf



As we look at our Colorado Sports Hall of Fame inductees from the outside, we see all of the successes that these athletes experienced in their careers. They became successful in their sport by optimizing their personal athletic performance to a level that is extremely difficult for others to attain. They are truly the best of the best.

What we don't see from the outside, however, is the commitment that it took for these athletes to achieve the elite status that they've achieved. The time and energy spent on training and rehabilitation in an attempt to keep their bodies performing at optimal levels is the most difficult task any athlete faces. Injuries could have ended any of their careers prematurely, taking away their chances to reach the elite status that they ultimately achieved.

Typically, it is an injury or series of injuries that ends an athlete's career. Aging athletes, such as Shannon Sharpe, a future Hall of Famer, spend countless hours in their offseason training at Velocity Sports Performance keeping their bodies in proper movement patterns to reduce their likelihood of injury from overstress. This type of training is essential to keeping their bodies performing at peak athletic levels.

John Elway, a newly inducted Pro Football Hall of Fame athlete, retired after earning the MVP honor in his last Super Bowl. He was able to play 16 years before retiring. In his retirement speech, he stated that his body could no longer handle the physical requirements that come with the game.

Terrell Davis, another potential Hall of Fame athlete, was forced to retire prematurely due to a series of injuries that led to the degeneration of his knee. Who knows what he might have achieved had he remained healthy?

The body breaking down; it's what every athlete fears. Especially, since an injury or series of injuries is typically what forces an athlete to have to retire. We blame it on age. The body just can't do the things that it used to be able to do.

Muscle Activation Techniques (MAT) and Velocity Sports Performance believe that this "aging process" does not have to be a fact of life. The body is a complex piece of machinery and if it is properly prepared, it will continue to function at high levels. It is when the body is not properly prepared, that it begins to break down.

MAT and Velocity have brought together programs which keep the body functioning at optimal levels and, most important, pain free. Many people are forced to alter their exercise or are even forced to stop exercising because of pain. This is the same reason noted for athletes having to retire prematurely. The question usually asked but never answered is, "What causes the pain"?

Typically the pain we experience as we age is due to an accumulation of stresses being placed on the body that the muscles and joints can no longer handle. When the muscles and joints become overstressed, the result is pain. Muscles control body movement. If the muscles are imbalanced, they can't function properly, the body gets out of alignment and it can no longer perform the way that it should. These imbalances begin affecting other parts of the body, starting that person on a downward spiral.

Muscle Activation Techniques and Velocity Sports Performance can stop this downward spiral and even reverse the process by balancing the muscular system. MAT is a technique designed to correct body alignment so that the body can function more efficiently and pain free. By correcting the muscular imbalances, the MAT treatments improve structural alignment, which, in turn, will reduce the stress on joints and tissues. Combining the MAT treatment with a Velocity Sports Performance adult program, which focuses on keeping the body stable and in balance through proper movement training, is a key to keeping aging athletes at the top of their game. ■

MAT and Velocity are working together to change the way athletes perform and therefore have co-located near Centennial Airport. For further information on the MAT Physical Therapy clinic, please call (303) 925-0101 or visit their website at www.muscleactivation.com. For more on Velocity Sports Performance call 303-768-8988.

