

## 'Hamstrings of Steel'

**Muscles involved:** Hamstring group, gluteus maximus, erector spinae.

**Benefits:** Developing the full range of strength in this exercise will give an athlete a very good level of hamstring strength in both eccentric and concentric movements. It may also increase the tendon strength in the whole muscle tendon unit.

**Who should do it:** All sprinters and other athletes who perform regular full-out sprints in their sport (eg. football, netball, basketball and rugby players).



### **Start position (above right)**

- Place your knees on the glute-ham bench with your ankles firmly supported and assume an upright position, with hips and shoulders in line with knees;
- Tighten your gluteals (buttocks) and tuck your tummy in so your pelvis is in the neutral position.

### **Lowering movement (below right)**

- Slowly lower your whole body forward until you feel a pull in your hamstrings;
- Keep your hips extended by squeezing your gluteals throughout the movement;
- Stop when you feel a little strain in the hamstrings.

### **Return movement**

Pause slightly and then raise your body back to the start position. You will feel the hamstrings working very hard to get your back up;

If you have to bend at the hips a little or use your hands to help your back up at first, that's fine. As you get stronger, you will be able to complete the movement up and down smoothly;

If at first you cannot lean very far forward, this will also improve with practice. Aim to get as far forward as possible, so that you work the hamstrings eccentrically as hard as you can through a full range of motion.

### **Training tips**

Perform two sets of five reps at first, building up the range of motion. Once you can complete a full range all the way down and up, keeping your body straight, increase to three sets of 8-10 reps.

This exercise can also be performed on the floor with a partner holding down your ankles.