

## **Conquering The Gauntlet**

Thanks for signing up and participating in Conquer The Gauntlet's Virtual Training Event. You made the decision to start the year off right, dedicated to fitness and overall improvement. Below is an excerpt from the book "Conquering The Gauntlet", which is a book focused on training for and completing Conquer the Gauntlet (CTG) events.

Enjoy this advanced segment of the book, which has a short excerpt from most of the chapters. The full version of the book will be much more in depth and include strength along with technique training for all the obstacles that CTG offers. This will give you all the power and skills needed to achieve a personal best on race day. The full version will be available in late 2017/early 2018 at CTG events and at Conquer Fitness (CTG's gym in Tulsa, OK).

-Evan Perperis

Conquer The Gauntlet Pro Team Athlete

## Introduction

You sit staring at your computer screen of physically fit people covered in mud. Some look like they are having a great time but others appear to be struggling to finish. "Should I really do this?" you think as your mouse hovers over the registration button. "Maybe I should; a little over four miles, over twenty five obstacles...that shouldn't be too bad right?" you think. After all, you can walk four miles and still finish.

"Maybe I should look at the obstacles one more time", you think. A quick click over on the obstacles page and your mind gets flooded with doubts. Those obstacles...some of them look really hard: Pegatron, Stairway to Heaven, Tarzan Swing, the list goes on. A quick scroll down the web page and you see ones that look like a lot of fun: Torpedo, Belly of the Beast and Hammer Time, just to name a few. You scroll back to look at the new set of Finisher Medals, which have been posted on the Conquer The Gauntlet Facebook page. "Wow, those look awesome", you think; "I need one of those." A mix of excitement, fear, anticipation and doubt swirls through your head.

"I can do this" you think as you click back over to the registration page. You fill out your address, credit card information and finally hit purchase. It happened so fast. The decision to Conquer The Gauntlet has already been made. You sit in front of your computer staring at the registration confirmation that just entered your inbox.

"What have I done?"

Your registration is complete and whether you like it or not, you have made a commitment and will soon be part of the #CTGFamily. This book will help you get ready for your next race at Conquer The Gauntlet (CTG), whether you are a first time participant, experienced Obstacle Course Racing (OCR) athlete or maybe a former athlete who has been inactive for a while. Whatever your goal is for CTG, this book will help you by providing tips for training, diet, motivation and obstacle completion. From the elite athlete to the first time competitor to the New Year's resolution individual that just made the first step in changing their lifestyle for the better, get ready to Conquer The Gauntlet.

## **Chapter 1 Excerpt**

### **Getting to the Start Line**

In this chapter we will be covering common fears associated with showing up to your first Obstacle Course Race (OCR) or an OCR you have never attended. While you may not be a new participant for OCR, every race is slightly different, so even experienced OCR athletes might feel some trepidation with showing up to a new series. The bottom line is if you are feeling a little nervous, do not worry, because that is normal. This chapter and sections of this book that follow will help you get ready regardless of your fitness level.

#### **Are you scared to run Mid-America's best Obstacle Course Racing Series?**

Don't be because we are going to help get you ready over the next couple of weeks or months before race day. The thing that makes most people unwilling to sign up for new or challenging events is the fear of the unknown. Not knowing how well you are going to do on the obstacles, how to complete them or how to train for them can be a point of concern for athletes coming to run Conquer The Gauntlet. What we are going to do is take away that fear, so if you have not signed up for a Conquer The Gauntlet event yet, after a couple of weeks you will be begging the owners, the Mainprize family, to create more events closer to your home town.

The beauty of OCR is there is room for everyone. If you are the hyper-competitive type that wants to push your body to the limit while competing against other like-minded athletes for a chance at the overall win, you can sign up for the first wave of the day and get that experience. However, if you are like the majority of people who show up to race day, you are there to have a good time, burn some calories, challenge yourself and conquer obstacles that you had no idea you were capable of completing.

That is right! The majority of people who will be with you on race day are there to have a good time while experiencing something different than their day to day jobs. Conquer The Gauntlet provides you the opportunity to feel like a kid again and play like one too, by running through the best adult playground in the Mid-West. By climbing over walls, crawling through mud and swinging across obstacles with your hands, it makes exercise fun! There are plenty of people who show up and walk the entire course doing obstacles they feel comfortable with and skipping those that are too challenging. The important thing is that you take that money you were going to waste at the bar, which will blend in with every other night of drinking and put it towards an experience that you will be able to cherish. Trust me; regardless of your fitness level you will be walking away from Conquer The Gauntlet proudly clutching your finisher's medal. Throughout this book, I, a National Strength and Conditioning Association Certified Personal Trainer and member of the Conquer The Gauntlet Pro Team, will help with your journey. It is time to get ready to Conquer The Gauntlet ...after all..."Amat Victoria Curam (Victory Loves Preparation)".

#### **Why Conquer The Gauntlet is Right For You?**

CTG is a family run OCR that has been around since 2012 making it one of the longest running, multi-state OCRs in the country. The obstacles are both challenging and fun allowing for a place for everyone from the competitive to those just looking for a good time. While some of the obstacles will truly test the elite of OCR, those athletes are not allowed to receive help from other racers on the course thus putting them into a different type of challenge than most of you reading this. If you are running in any of the later waves during the day, you will have your friends there with you when you get

stuck trying to get over those five 8 foot walls or below the 12 foot Wall of America. The experience of working together will make this one of your most memorable events to date.

Furthermore, CTG is always developing new obstacles creating a unique race experience for each venue. While some race series roll out their new obstacles at the start of the year and then essentially use the same ones at every venue, each CTG location is distinctive. CTG also showcases new obstacles mid-season, creating a new and challenging race. If you get tired of the cookie cutter experience of other races, CTG will deliver what you are looking for. Whether you fly, drive, ride or run to the start line, the trip will definitely be worth it.

## Chapter 2 Excerpt

### Training

#### General Training Guidance Introduction

Although Conquer The Gauntlet has some of the most challenging obstacles around, they are all doable with some focused training. On the pages that follow I will break down each obstacle (*this advanced reading only covers some of the obstacles*) and discuss what you can do to train specifically for each one. However, before getting started, it is a good idea to be involved in a strength program of your choosing. This program could involve barbells, dumbbells, Crossfit or bodyweight exercises. The important thing is to find something you enjoy because that means you will be more likely stick to your training plan and improve. These exercises will give you a foundation of fitness upon which we will build the obstacle specific skills which result in success. Additionally, you should be performing some sort of regular cardiovascular based training, preferably with a running focus. However, if you are looking just to get out there and have a good time, really anything that elevates your heart rate will be good including, but not limited to, bicycling, swimming, rock climbing, hiking, skiing or any of the cardio machines in the gym.

#### Creating Your Weekly Fitness Plan: Beginner

If you just signed up or are getting ready to sign up for a Conquer The Gauntlet (CTG) event then great; you are already ahead of most of the USA that will spend the year sitting on their couch without ever doing a race. You can show up without training, but chances are at some point during the course you will think I probably should have at least put in some extra effort over the last couple of months to make this easier. Without knowing the background of everyone that is reading this, here is a suggested weekly fitness plan that you can plug in your own workouts so your CTG experience leaves you feeling like you Conquered the Gauntlet and not that the Gauntlet Conquered you.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
REST	<b>Cardio Training:</b> Preferably Running	<b>Strength Training:</b> Your choice weights, bodyweight, barbells, circuit training, etc.	REST	<b>Cardio Training:</b> Preferably Trail Running	<b>Strength Training</b> or CTG Specific Workout	<b>Longest Cardio Session</b> of the Week (try using a local run club to help with motivation)

How long should you make your runs or cardio sessions? That depends on your fitness level. The idea is to spend time on your feet with an elevated heart rate. You do not have to go out there and

try to set a personal best every time; in fact that is not the ideal way to get better. Really hard running workouts can be helpful once or twice a week but they should not be every run. Save that extra effort and mental energy for the day of the race. Even though the race is four miles, you don't have to make every training session that long. As a beginner, you just need to start moving and exercising with some regularity.

### Creating Your Weekly Fitness Plan: Intermediate

Maybe you have already done a couple of obstacle races and are looking to finish the obstacles with a little greater ease at a little faster pace. If you are looking to be on the higher end of the open waves or maybe looking to make the transition to the competitive or elite wave, this can be a good training plan for you.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
REST	<b>Strength Training AND 30 min of Easy Cardio Training</b>	<b>Interval Running</b> 1 mi Warmup Intervals 1 mi Cooldown	REST	<b>Strength Training or CTG Specific Workout AND 30 min of Easy Cardio Training</b>	<b>Trail Running</b>	<b>Longest Run of the Week</b> (try using a local run club to help with motivation)

For the running training, the majority of it should be done at an easy pace. Save your hard running for interval day and the day of the race. For interval running, alternate weeks between short intervals (400m-1200m) and long intervals (1mi-2mi). For short intervals, your total interval mileage should be around 2-4 miles and for long intervals your total mileage should be 3-6 miles. Here are two example workouts:

Short Interval: 1 mi warm up, 4-6x800m w/ 2 min rest between each, 1 mi cool down

For your short intervals run at a hard pace, so you should be moving at slightly faster than your 5k (3.1 mile) road race pace. Your intervals should be about evenly paced, so all your 800m intervals should take about the same amount of time.

Long Interval: 1 mi warm up, 1.5 mi, 1.25 mi, 1 mi, .75mi, .5 mi with rest interval ½ work interval, 1 mi cool down

For your long intervals run at a fairly hard pace, so you should be moving at around 10k (6.2 mile) road race pace. Your intervals should be evenly paced so that your last mile repeat should be about the same as your first mile repeat. The point of intervals is to teach your body to run hard but at a consistent pace. Feel free to build up to the above workouts over a couple of weeks instead of just starting out doing every interval.

## **Chapter 3 Excerpt**

### **The Obstacles**

This chapter will cover the topic that raises the most questions: What type of obstacles will I be facing? How do I train and prepare for them? What are different techniques for conquering them? The list of questions for obstacles could go on forever. Everyone has a slightly different method for completing even the simplest of obstacles like a wall. The key is to find something that works for you and to practice that movement ahead of time so you will be ready to conquer it on event day. We will start off with probably the most important part of any event, which is having a strong mind.

#### **The Most Important Rule for Completing Obstacles**

The most important rule for completing obstacles is this: Believe in yourself. Nothing will cause you to fail an obstacle faster than thinking you are going to fail when you approach it. Having a positive mindset and attitude will help you persevere when things get tough. Here is an example from Conquer The Gauntlet Wichita 2015.

Troy Bruns, Cody Peyton and I ran in the open wave for some additional training and encountered Nikki Call at the Stairway to Heaven obstacle. She had been stuck there unable to cross Stairway to Heaven for a while without success. After seeing her, we briefly talked to her and basically told her that “You got this” without giving her any obstacle specific advice or technique suggestions. I watched as she easily went up one side and down the other seemingly without issue. You would have never known she was having problems at that obstacle based on how easy she finished it. She went on to finish 2<sup>nd</sup> overall for females taking her spot on the podium and I think it was the positive belief that made that possible.

Now that we have highlighted the importance of a positive attitude and believing in yourself, we can move into the obstacle completion portion. These techniques are proven methods that have been used by some of the best in the sport. Although the tips and techniques listed below are one hundred percent focused on Conquer The Gauntlet, many of the same methods can be applied to similar obstacles in other race series. Many of the obstacles you see below are also broken into sections highlighting technique or strength to help focus your training on what your specific issue is.

In order to successfully complete obstacles, it usually requires a good mixture of both. Although you can muscle your way through a lot of obstacles, that is usually not the best use of your energy. Having some strong technique will make things easier, conserve energy and allow you to move faster and more efficiently. Those are things that everyone wants from the top level pro to the first time participant.

#### **Cliffhanger**

Technique

First up is Cliffhanger, which is a set of monkey bars about 20 feet long that go up on an incline and then down on a decline to the far side. To break this down, monkey bar completion is composed of technique and strength. For technique, I teach three different methods of crossing monkey bars: beginner, intermediate and advanced.

**Beginner:** This is the two hands per bar method, which requires each hand to touch both bars. While this does create a more stable grip on the bar, it also takes longer. The longer you are on the bars the harder the obstacle becomes. Use this technique if you cannot hold onto the bar with one hand or if the bars are especially slippery or muddy.

**Intermediate:** The intermediate method involves using one hand per bar as you cross the obstacle. As you cross you use the natural swing of your body to help you cross. Going across this way often appears very smooth and graceful to those watching. Use this technique when working your way towards the advanced technique.

**Advanced:** This also involves one hand per bar but you are not letting your body swing naturally and instead are actually pulling yourself across the bar. Ideally you want to make it to this level because you will move across the bars so fast, it actually makes things easier. The important part is having the required forearm, arm and back strength to effectively pull yourself across the bar.

That is three techniques for crossing the Cliffhanger that you can use as a guide to measure progress. Although I refer to them as beginner, intermediate and advanced, I will often use all parts of the technique depending on the obstacle, location in the race and how wet or dry the obstacles are. Even if you think you are an elite racer, don't think you can't use the beginner technique. Rather these are three different methods of crossing that you should keep in your tool box and use each one as needed.

## Strength

Besides having a good technique for completing monkey bars, you also need the requisite strength to be able to conduct the movement. The Cliffhanger is often in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the race when participants are the most tired. To successfully complete this obstacle some monkey bar specific work is preferable. Next time you are out running or driving around pay attention to local playgrounds. Many have monkey bars that are large enough for an adult if you curl your legs. I like to find monkey bars near a track or decent sized field. When I know my monkey bar technique needs work, I will do this workout:

10 min warm up consisting of easy running

1 lap of the field .25 to .50 mile in length followed by a set of monkey bars

Repeat the above process until you hit your mileage goal or can no longer make it across the bars. We want to teach success not failure, which is why you stop when you can no



longer make it across the bar. The repetitions of successful crossings will build that positive mental image in your mind, allowing you to perform on event day.

10 min cool down

Let us say you cannot find a set of monkey bars but you have access to a gym. You can do “endless monkey bars” on a pull-up bar. Endless monkey bars means you hang from the bar and then alternate hands coming off the bar reaching down and touching your hip before returning your hand to the bar and doing the same thing with the other hand. If that is too difficult, you can just practice lifting a hand off the bar without reaching down to your hip. Do three sets of these with evenly distributed repetitions. For example, instead of doing a set of 20, a set of 10 and a set of 6, try doing three sets of 12.

With general strength training combined with the specificity of training for these movements, you should be able to fly through the Cliffhanger with greater ease even when your hands are muddy and the bar is wet.

## **Stairway to Heaven**

Technique

Next is the often talked about but rarely completed Stairway to Heaven. Boasting an 82% failure rate, if there is any obstacle on the course that is going to give you problems, it is going to be this one. Climbing up then down this 17 foot high bottom side of a set of stairs will challenge your back, bicep and forearm strength. Stairway to Heaven is one of CTG’s signature obstacles. It is so unique and challenging that it was one of the obstacles used for the Obstacle Course Racing World Championship held annually in October. Since so many people have problems with this obstacle, I will be going into more depth than usual. As with The Cliffhanger, this can be broken into two categories: technique and strength.

To complete Stairway, you will only be allowed to use your hands and arms. Legs and feet are not allowed on the steps of Stairway. Starting the obstacle, you want to try and minimize swing as much as possible. Excessive swing will make it much harder to grasp the board. To minimize swing get as far underneath the obstacles as you can, without falling in the water and reach up to grab the bottom step. To successfully complete this obstacle most people will have to use the beginner technique, placing two hands on each board before moving to the next one. Just like with The Cliffhanger, the faster you move, at a controlled pace, the easier this obstacle becomes. For each step you are essentially going to do a pull-up and then quickly transition your lead arm to the next step. Then you consolidate grips on that step before repeating. Be sure to go all the way to the top before attempting to make the transition to the far side, otherwise the reach is too great for most people.

When heading downward, do so in a controlled manner minimizing swing. Again, excessive swing will make this obstacle more difficult to grasp. Continue moving down using the beginner method

(two hands per board) all the way down to the bottom step. Finally, reach down with your feet wrapping them around the base of the obstacle to secure your landing and pull yourself through back to solid ground.

### Strength Part 1: Pull-ups

If you understand the technique but are still having issues completing the obstacle, the problem might lie in your strength. In order to get better at this obstacle, you are going to have to practice three things in your training: pull-ups, grip strength and transitions. The first is pull-ups to strengthen your back and arm muscles. Here are a couple of suggest pull-up routines you can do to gain strength.

Pull-up Pyramid Down: 10, 8, 6, 4, 2

Pull-up Pyramid Up/Down: 2, 4, 6, 8, 6, 4, 2

Pick a Number: ex. 40 pull-ups then do as many sets as you need to reach that number

What if you cannot do any pull-ups? Then hopefully your gym has a Gravitron machine (counterweighted pull-up machine), which allows you to pull a smaller percentage of your bodyweight. If there is no counterweighted pull-up machine, pull-up assist bands (like giant rubber bands) can be used to take weight off of your body. If a spotter or friend is assisting you, have them spot you from the waist and not the legs. When spotting from the waist it forces the person exercising to use their back muscles instead of their legs to get over the bar.

For those of you who are looking to improve your maximum strength, like intermediate or advanced athletes doing weighted pull-ups or the beginner looking to complete your first pull-up stick to a low repetition range. To do that, follow this routine:

4 weeks of: 5 sets of 5 reps

2 weeks of: 3 sets of 3 reps

2 weeks of: 2 sets of 2 reps

The next week: Attempt a single pull-up with no assistance for beginners or one rep max for weighted pull-ups for intermediate/advanced athletes

This should increase your maximum strength for one repetition. The important part is to use as little counterweight as possible, so the 5 reps should be a struggle every time. If you are improving your strength week to week, use less and less counterweight. Every time the rep range drops you should also be using less counterweight. This progressive increase will improve maximum strength.

Another option to improve pull-ups is to do one of these intensity boosting techniques to augment your current strength training regiment:

Set of pull-ups after every exercise

Burnout set (max repetitions of pull-ups added to the end of your workout)

Weighted pull-ups

The one mistake I often see people make is trying to do pull-ups every day as a method of improvement. If you do not take time to rest after you stress your muscles and let things heal, it may stagnate your ability to get better. Therefore, when training to improve pull-ups, at most do pull-up training every other day. For most people, once or twice a week will produce optimal progress without overloading the system.

## Part 2: Grip Strength

The second aspect of strength required to complete Stairway to Heaven is grip strength. To grip the Stairway to Heaven steps requires a grip with your fingers pointed 90 degrees away from your body. For this grip your thumb touches your pointer finger (sometimes called a false grip). This is a hold most people are not used to. In order to improve this, we want to practice using a similar grip during training. I know what you are thinking, my gym does not have a "Stairway to Heaven", but that is not a problem. The trick is finding an elevated surface requiring a similar grip. For example, you can use the Smith Machine, the top of a squat rack or the crossbeam of a pulley machine. These usually have wide surfaces that prevent you from wrapping your entire hand around them. Hang on to these surfaces while practicing pull-ups, transitions and even static hangs for time.

If you are not in a gym, you can also still get adequate false grip training in by finding a similar surface. I like to use the crossbeams of swing sets on playgrounds. They provide a nice wide surface that is hard to hold onto. Whether you are in a gym or out on the road, you need to think outside the box to find training sites for yourself. The training options are literally limited only by your imagination.

If you happen to live in the Wichita area, you may want to check out the Mid-America Obstacle Course Racers training site Xtreme Obstacle Training (XOT). They built their own mini-Stairway to Heaven that allows you to practice as much as you want. They typically allow the first visit for free and you can find details about their training site along with their location on Facebook. If you live in Kansas City, check out KCOCR who conducts weekly training sessions at various sites including the ninja gym, Thunderdome. Best of all, if you live in Tulsa, visit CTG's gym, Conquer Fitness for practice on the same obstacles that will be at the race course.

## Part 3: Transitions

The third and final aspect of strength required to complete Stairway to Heaven is transitions. This is the strength required to hold onto something one handed while your other hand is moving to a

new surface. To practice this we are going to use similar surfaces that we used for our false grip strength training. Look around your gym for the Smith Machine, squat rack and crossbeam of the pulley machine. All three of these provide a perfect surface. By hanging from these machine and moving across or to different crossbeams, it provides similar training required to complete Stairway to Heaven.

If you want to take things a step further and really improve your transition strength, try one arm counterweighted pull-ups. Using the Gravitron pull-up machine, set the counterweight as light as possible and follow this rep scheme.

4 weeks of: 5 sets of 5 reps

2 weeks of: 3 sets of 3 reps

2 weeks of: 2 sets of 2 reps

This will help increase your one arm maximum pull-up strength and allows you more flexibility while completing obstacles. While I do not expect you to be able to do one armed pull-ups, it will increase the strength of those muscles, so when you miss a bar or do not have a firm grasp on the next platform, it will buy you time to adjust.

## **Walls of Fury**

### **Strength**

Although other Obstacle Course Races (OCRs) have walls in their course, Walls of Fury takes things to a different level. What makes them so challenging is their placement in the race and the distance between walls. Typically, Walls of Fury makes its appearance in the last mile of the event. Since the body is already fatigued, jumping and climbing over walls can prove to be a challenge too great for some. The second part that makes them difficult is that the walls are close to each other. This second aspect means your running start is gone. Luckily if you are not in the elite wave, you will be able to get assistance from your fellow racers or use the support structure to help you get over this grueling obstacle. If you are racing in that first wave though, be prepared to complete this on your own without assistance.

To improve strength for this obstacle we want to work on the two parts required to complete it. First is the jumping required to grab onto the wall and second is our ability to pull ourselves over the wall. To improve jumping ability I recommend box jumps, which will improve you ability to reach the top of the wall. To improve pulling yourself over the wall try doing muscle-ups, pull-ups, leg lifts or static hangs. Try this modified Tabata interval added to your normal training for specific work on this obstacle:

5x ( 20 sec of box jumps, 10 sec rest, 20 sec of upper body exercise, 10 sec rest)

Start with a low box to avoid hurting yourself. As you become more comfortable, you can gradually increase the height of the box from week to week. The upper body exercise should either be muscle-ups, pull-ups, leg lifts or static hangs. Choose the upper body and box height based on your fitness level. If you reach muscle failure on muscle-ups or cannot do any muscle ups like most people, do pull-ups instead. If you reach muscle failure on pull-ups do static hangs or leg lifts. Static hangs will improve grip strength. Leg lifts will improve lower abdominal strength and is a motion similar to pulling one of your legs over the wall.

If you are an elite competitor, you will have to get over the wall without help, which means you either do a muscle up or you hook a leg to the top of the wall to get yourself over. Muscle-up improvement will be covered in the Wall of America section of this book. The strength to do muscle-ups means you will be able to get over the wall as long as your fingertips can make it to the top.

## Technique

If you are not running in the first wave of the day, chances are you will have other athletes around to help you over the Walls of Fury. Instead of muscling your way through these final set of walls, use the rest of your fellow conquerors to assist each other over the walls. Just like with the Great Wall of America, the ways to help each other over the wall are endless. Feel free to give people a boost by stepping on thighs and shoulders in addition to lifting people up to reach the top. Using the support structures to get the necessary reach and leverage is also okay. Whatever technique you use, just be sure to follow CTG etiquette. If you need help over the wall, be sure to reach back and help the next person over the wall. After all, we all showed up to Conquer The Gauntlet together.

To make sure you are getting the latest and greatest tips for conquering these obstacles be sure to follow the CTG main Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/ConquerTheGauntlet](http://www.facebook.com/ConquerTheGauntlet)) and the CTG Pro Team page ([www.facebook.com/CTGproteam](http://www.facebook.com/CTGproteam)). Technique videos are posted for specific obstacles on #TechniqueTuesday.

## **Chapter 4 Excerpt**

### **The Workouts**

One workout will not transform you from an okay participant to a great athlete. The physical improvement that most people are looking for requires dedication. However, you can incorporate some of these workouts into your training regime so you have CTG specific training mixed into your regime.

#### **Conquer The Gauntlet Race Preparation Workout #1: All Around CTG workout “The 10s” for time**

10 min dynamic warmup (jogging, calisthenics, etc.)

10 Pull-ups

10 Box Jumps (your choice on height)

10 Sledge Hammer Swings (each side)

10 step each leg Sandbag Lunge

10 Dips

100m Sandbag Carry

10 Box Jump followed by a pull-up (or 10 Muscleups if you are really strong)

(Repeat entire routine 1-5 times depending on fitness level and length of desired workout)

10 min cool down (jogging)

#### **Conquer The Gauntlet Race Preparation Workout #2: Conquer the Tabata Interval**

10 min of jogging and calisthenics warmup (jumping jacks, pushups, low box jumps)

8x (20 sec of sledge hammer swings against a tire, 10 sec rest)

5x (20 sec of box jumps, 10 sec rest, 20 sec of upper body exercise #1, 10 sec rest)

5x (20 sec of dips, 10 sec rest, 20 sec of upper body exercise #2, 10 sec rest)

8x (20 sec of sandbag lunge, 10 sec rest)

10 min jogging cool down

For upper body exercises choose either muscle-ups, pull-ups, leg lifts or static hangs.

## Chapter 5 Excerpt

### Training Accessories

Conquer The Gauntlet Training on less than \$100

Just like any sport, you can quickly get caught up into having to buy all the latest gear and the best equipment. While I do recommend buying some of the nicer equipment like climbing holds from Atomik Climbing because of their high quality and their ability to simulate exactly what you will face on race day, your budget may be tight. If you do not have access to a gym or you are just looking to step up your training within budgetary constraints, here are some good training items you can buy so you can train in and around your house.

**Doorway Pull-up bar \$25:** Purchase online or in a Walmart type store. This is one of those doorway pull-up bars you can put up or remove as necessary and only requires assembly without installation. Use these to practice pull-ups and improve upper body muscle in preparation for things like the Cliffhanger, Stairway to Heaven and Pegatron.

**Atomik Climbing Holds or Olympic Style Rings \$30 for a Set of Two:** Purchase online ([www.atomikclimbingholds.com](http://www.atomikclimbingholds.com)) or in a Walmart type store. Attach these to your pull-up bar to practice transitions and improve grip strength for Tarzan Swing and other upper body focused obstacles.

**Ropes \$10:** Purchase ropes online, as a specially made fitness tool, or buy them from a home improvement store. They will be used to hang from the pull-up bar to practice transitions, improve upper body/forearm strength and practice for upper body obstacles like Tarzan Swing.

**10 lbs. Sledge Hammer \$30:** Purchase from a home improvement store. Used for swings to practice for Hammer Time.

**Target for your Hammer (Tire, Stump or Block of Wood) Free:** With some creative research or by cutting off a piece of a dead tree. Try using some thrown away old tires or unwanted fire wood. Used as an impact point for sledge hammer swings to practice for Hammer Time.

**Sandbag \$4:** Purchase from a home improvement store. Used to practice for Conqueror's Carry along with use as a functional weight for exercises such as cleans, lunges, presses and deadlifts.

For around \$99 or cheaper, depending on what you want to focus on you can get ready to Conquer The Gauntlet without a gym. If you already have some of this stuff or do some creative shopping around, you can train for CTG without having access to a fancy gym.

## **Conquering The Gauntlet**

### **Coming to you in 2017**

Be sure to follow Conquer The Gauntlet on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/ConquerTheGauntlet](http://www.facebook.com/ConquerTheGauntlet)) and Instagram as well as the Conquer The Gauntlet Pro Team ([www.facebook.com/CTGproteam](http://www.facebook.com/CTGproteam)) for the latest news on CTG. The full book will be available in late 2017 and 2018 and will be sold at CTG events and at their training gym Conquer Fitness in Tulsa. It will also have several more chapters that feature topics including dealing with injury, day to day nutrition, race day nutrition and motivational stories from #CTGFamily members.

Whether you have been with us since 2012 or this virtual event is your first exposure to CTG, we welcome you to the #CTGFamily. After experiencing CTG you will soon realize why our participants say #CTGFamily is not just a hashtag. I hope you enjoyed the virtual event and I look forward to seeing you on the course in 2017!