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[Team](#) [News](#) [Tickets](#) [Community](#) [History](#) [Fan Zone](#) [Coaches](#) [Stadium](#) [Etc](#) [Store](#)

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[Schedule](#) [Roster](#) [Newsletter Signup](#) [Message Boards](#)

NEWSROOM

- ▶ **Newsroom**
- ▶ Training Camp
- ▶ Nolan's Notebook
- ▶ Transactions
- ▶ 49ers Columns
- ▶ Players Columns
- ▶ Fan faithful...
- ▶ News Archive

Fitness Corner: Kettlebells

Friday, March 31, 2006

By: Duane Carlisle

[Back](#)



Carlisle demonstrates the Kettlebell swing exercise.

The kettlebell or girya in Russian is a cast iron weight which resembles a cannon ball with a handle. It is an ancient Russian exercise device which can be used to enhance power, balance, muscular endurance, and overall strength development.

With a goal of implementing Kettlebell training into our off-season regimen, we hired Steve Cotter, world re-known Kettlebell expert to conduct a 2-day in-service specifically geared toward educating our staff on functional exercises for 49er players.

The kettlebells range from 8 to 40 kilograms and there are about ten different exercises that we use the kettlebells with in our weight lifting program.

Bigger players, like tackle Jonas Jennings typically work with the 40 kilogram kettlebells, but that depends on the exercise.

"I've worked with all of the sizes," said Jennings. "I did use the 40 the other day, but I definitely don't use it for every exercise. I'm coming off that shoulder surgery so it allows me to use one arm with a different weight and work it, and then change the weight for

the other arm. You get a great workout using them without just being on the bar all the time, and I've had a lot of success since I started working with them."

Thus far, all of our players have responded well to the Kettlebell training and are realizing gains in their flexibility, mobility, and power development.

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- [6 Critical Areas of Movement](#)
- [Nutrition](#)
- [Improving Health and Fitness!](#)
- [Testing and Evaluation](#)
- [Nutrition 2](#)
- [Nutrition 3](#)
- [Speed, Speed, Speed](#)
- [Flexibility](#)
- [Conditioned Confidence](#)
- [Weight Tips](#)
- [Agility Ladder Drills](#)
- [Pro Days](#)
- [Circuit Belts](#)

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Home	Away
Cardinals	Cardinals
Rams	Rams
Seahawks	Seahawks
Packers	Bears
Vikings	Lions
Raiders	Broncos
Chargers	Chiefs
Eagles	Saints

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