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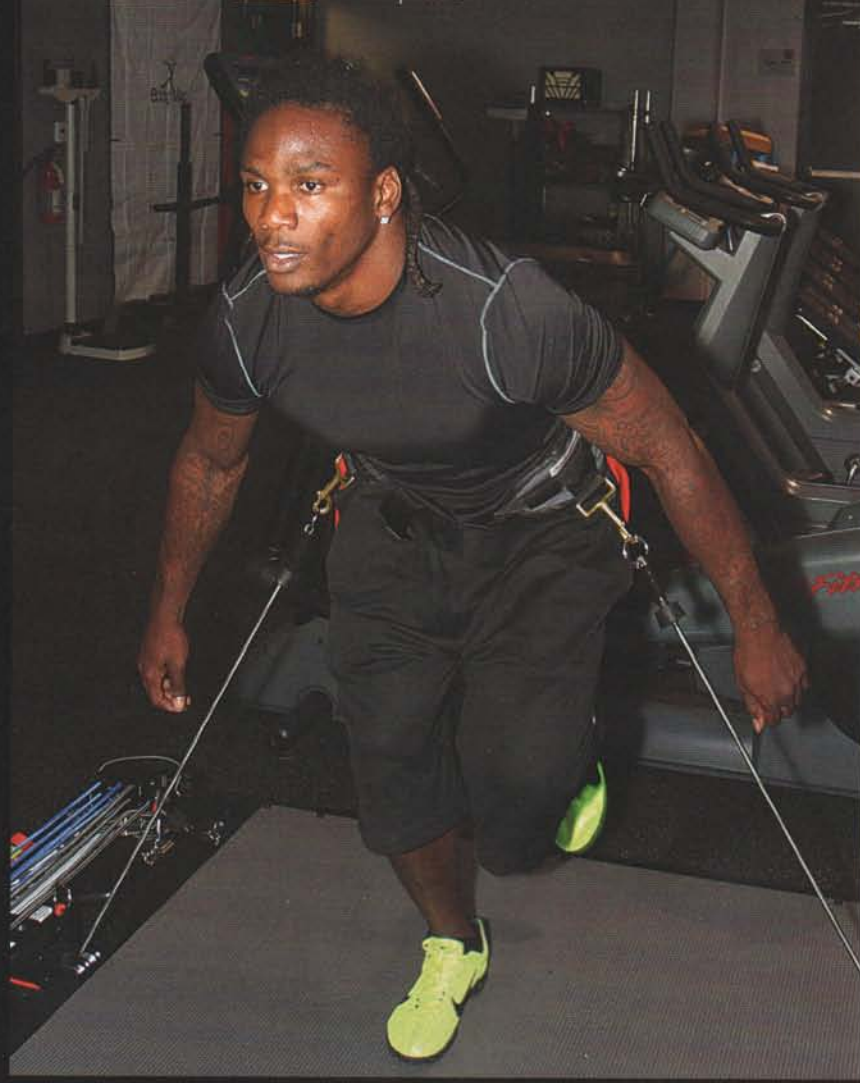
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PHOTOS: CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: GERMAN ALERZIA; TEDSOCI; FRANK FRANKLIN III / AP; COVER, GERMAN ALERZIA

The Fast and Focused

BY JOSH STAPH

His teeth are gold, his hair is untamed and his running style is beautifully unpredictable. But at the heart of Pro Bowl running back Chris Johnson lies an innate, intensely-focused discipline.

Such unwavering discipline is what drives the fastest man in the NFL to become even faster.

This same discipline motivated him as a struggling high school student to attend night classes until 9 p.m. each day to bolster his weak grades and keep alive his flickering dream of playing Division I football.

That steadfast commitment, along with a gigan-

ting) the first game of the [season]. So, I didn't have a lot of schools on me... I wanted to go to a big-time school like the University of Miami or Texas, but they didn't recruit me because of my grades or because they didn't know about me."

Up to that point, Chris wasn't exactly a model recruit in terms of self-marketing and academics, but then his fierce determination kicked in and kept his dreams alive. "I wanted to go to a D-I college," he says. "And I was going to do whatever it took to get there. [During] my senior year, I took four night school classes to get my grades up and qualify to go to East Carolina. I had [offers

4.24 40 at the NFL Combine—the fastest time ever electronically recorded in the history of the mid-winter scouting event.

The Tennessee Titans overlooked Chris' small-school origins, grabbing him and his big-play potential with the 24th overall pick in the 2008 NFL Draft. Although Chris was now recognized in a big way, the experience did little to calm the source of his angry running.

"If players tell you that they don't look at other players on TV and think 'I'm better than that guy,' they're lying," he says. "In college I saw a lot of dudes I used to play with in high school who went

“I always had to work my way up, so I will *always* play with a chip on my shoulder.”

tic chip-on-the-shoulder attitude, also drives the most explosive athlete in pro sports to repeatedly push his body to the limit coming off a record-breaking NFL season.

"I was never a guy who wanted to just go off my talent," Chris says. "Where I'm from, there are a lot of dudes with talent who didn't make it. So, I always knew that working hard was one of the most important things."

Throughout high school, Chris was focused and insanely talented. In addition to tearing it up on the football field at Olympia High School in Southwest Orlando, Chris blazed the seventh fastest 100m time in the nation. He was barely edged out in the state finals by Walter Dix, who eventually went on to claim the 100m Olympic Bronze medal at the Beijing Games.

Athletic success was abundant, but recognition lagged considerably due to bad luck and a less-than-stellar approach to the recruiting process. "Coming out of high school, I didn't go to any Nike camps or football camps," Chris recalls. "My grades [weren't] up to par, and then I broke my leg senior year [dur-

from] UConn, East Carolina, Eastern Kentucky and a couple other I-AA schools, but I [chose] East Carolina because they stuck with me throughout the whole process."

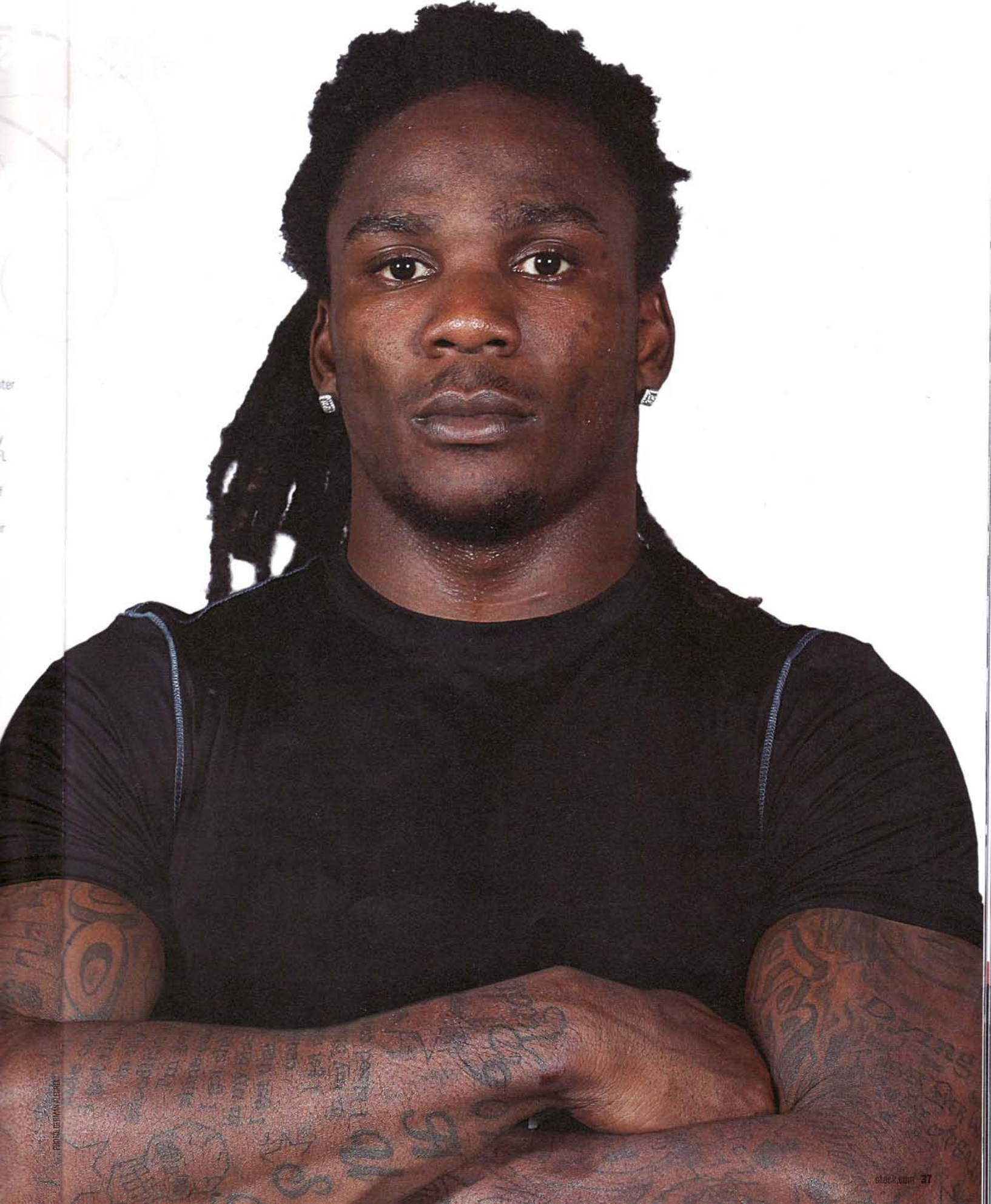
East Carolina is hardly a launching pad for NFL stardom, but Chris made the most of it, and luckily for him, world-class speed does wonders for getting a dude noticed. "It really doesn't matter how big of a school you go to," Chris says. "These days, you see a lot of big-school guys going to the League and being busts [while] a lot of small-school players are becoming some of the best players in the NFL. Just look at guys like Brian Westbrook and guys like me. If you do what you have to do, they're going to find you."

For Chris, that involved making an immediate impact his freshman year, keying the Pirates' victory over powerhouse Boise State in the 2007 Hawaii Bowl; leading the nation in all-purpose yards his senior season (212.7 per game); and roughing up and running past big-school opponents in the Senior Bowl in front of a national audience and a slew of NFL scouts. The crowning jewel of Chris' coming-out party was his

to bigger schools. I knew they weren't better than me. I was never that guy who was given anything or who was among the top-ranked players. I always had to work my way up, so I will *always* play with a chip on my shoulder."

Since snatching everyone's attention and respect, Chris spent his first two NFL seasons showing off what he had all along. "I've got speed, and I'm tough," he says. "I can run on the inside and the outside. That's one of my biggest assets."

No wonder Chris refers to himself as "Every Coach's Dream." True for Titans head man Jeff Fisher. But for every other NFL coach, Chris will continue to be a nightmare.



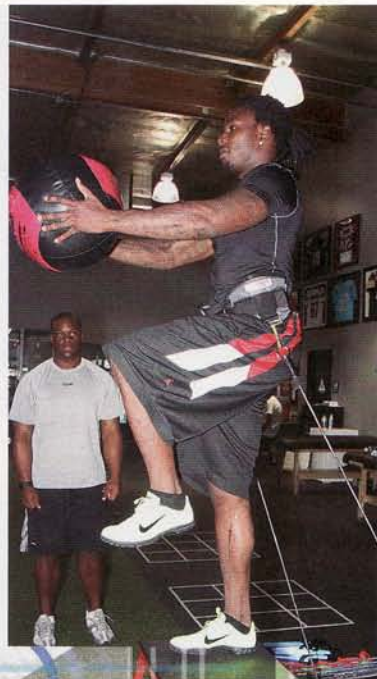
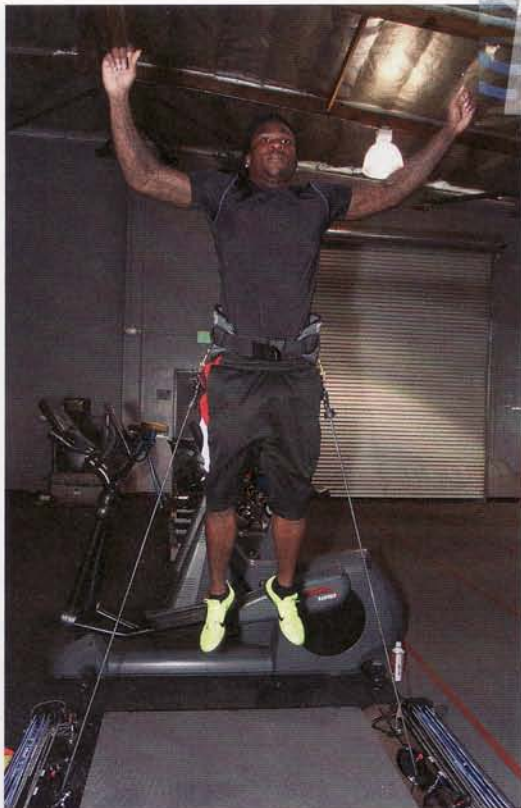
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PHOTO: LETHIAS FERRER

Vertimax Squat Jumps

- Assume athletic stance, feet at hip width, with Vertimax resistance attached to waist
- Keeping chest up and knees behind toes, lower into quarter-squat position
- Explode up for maximum height and drive arms overhead
- Land softly with bent knees and immediately perform next rep

Sets/Reps/Recovery: 3x10 with 45 seconds rest
Gains: This is pure vertical explosion. Chris has to explode up as hard and fast as he can.

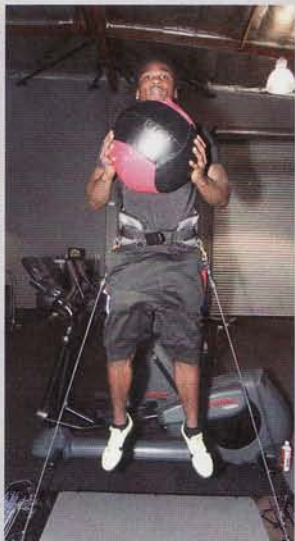


Vertimax Med Ball Step-Up

- Assume athletic stance with Vertimax resistance attached to waist; hold med ball in front of chest
- Step onto box and drive up until leg is fully extended
- Drive opposite knee high and press med ball forward at top of movement
- Step down with control to start position and perform rep with opposite leg
- Continue alternating for specified reps

Sets/Reps/Recovery: 3-4x4-5 each leg with 30-45 seconds rest
Gains: This is another great explosive exercise that improves core strength and balance while reinforcing running mechanics with the toe-up, knee drive.

Vertimax Med Ball Jumps



- Assume athletic stance, feet at hip width, with Vertimax resistance attached to waist; hold 10- to 16-pound med ball at chest
- Keeping chest up and knees behind toes, lower into quarter-squat position
- Explode upward for maximum height and drive med ball overhead
- Land softly with bent knees and immediately perform next rep

Sets/Reps/Recovery: 3-4x8-10 with 45 seconds rest
Gains: This is a great explosive exercise that works Chris' core strength, balance and overall athletic ability by forcing him to explode up while controlling the med ball.



Note: If Vertimax is not available, perform all Vertimax exercises with partners holding light band resistance attached to a weight belt around your waist.



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About STACK

What is STACK?

STACK is the nation's leading producer and distributor of sports performance, training and lifestyle content for active sports participants.

Recognizing the need, and in response to the demand, for state-of-the-art sports performance information, Nick Palazzo and Chad Zimmerman, two former collegiate football players, launched STACK in February 2005. Their singular goal was to improve the lives of young athletes by providing safe and effective advice on how to boost performance without the use of steroids or other illegal performance enhancing drugs. Since the company's founding, the STACK editorial team, which produces all of the company's original content, has been forging relationships with the best and brightest in the sports performance, sports nutrition, strength and conditioning, recruiting, sports psychology, and related fields, all of which are vital to developing a well-rounded athlete. Via recorded interviews and video shoots, more than 400 experts have contributed to STACK's content library, providing readers and website visitors with easy access to the cutting-edge and groundbreaking techniques that help already-elite athletes get even better. This access is what separates STACK from other media properties and what makes STACK's content real, raw and authentic.

STACK's Objectives

The three pillars of STACK's mission to athletes are to provide:

- Information, instruction and advice on training and nutrition, which help athletes enhance physical well being, improve on-field performance, and avoid injury
- Emphasis on important life skills, which teach lessons in areas such as team building, goal setting, mental preparation and overcoming adversity
- Advice on college selection and the recruiting process, including tips and suggestions on character building, presenting oneself properly to coaches, and focusing on strong academics.

STACK Platforms

STACK reaches its ever-expanding audience through STACK Media, STACK Magazine, STACK.com, STACK TV and MySTACK.

STACK Media is one of the top sports properties on the Internet, with an average of four million unique visitors and 100 million page views per month, according to comScore. Recognizing that active young males are hard to reach online, STACK Media combines its unique and appealing editorial content with product and service offerings from a number of related partner sites to fully engage its audience through a distributed media network. From its origins as a magazine publisher, STACK Media has become the acknowledged leader in reaching active sports participants online. For more information on STACK Media, please visit www.stackmediagroup.com.

STACK Magazine, requested by more than 9,000 high school athletic directors, has a circulation of 800,000 and a readership of nearly five million high school athletes. In keeping with the company's mission, the magazine is devoted to helping shape well-rounded athletes now and in the future. Published six times throughout the school year, the magazine is loaded with expert advice from top professional athletes and their trainers. STACK Magazine teaches young athletes the proper way to train, eat and develop their skills, while also educating them on how to be good teammates, respect their opponents and handle adversity—lessons based on the experiences of pro and college athletes who have reached the pinnacle of success in their sports.

STACK.com, the digital home for all STACK content and web-based tools, provides content exclusively for youth sports participants. With coverage of more than 20 sports, and content featuring lifestyle information as well as training, nutrition and sports skills, the site offers something for everyone with an interest in sports performance.

STACK TV, an online platform with eight channels and several categories of unique, proprietary videos, constitutes the largest video library of sports performance content on the web. More than 4,000 (and counting) videos feature top professional and collegiate athletes, coaches, trainers and sports nutritionists, all offering the benefits of their expertise to young athletes seeking to improve their performance.

MySTACK is a social network and recruiting site that allows athletes to create profiles with their personal information and stats, upload highlight films and photos, and send their profiles to college coaches. Tens of thousands of athletes have signed up as MySTACK members, and many use the network to connect (and compete) with each other as well as to take control of the recruiting process, confirming the proposition that competition breeds success.

STACK's Accomplishments

In just under five years, STACK has:

- Established a trusted and dominant consumer sports brand
- Attracted the largest audience of youth sports participants on the Internet and in print
- Created a Professional Network of 400 service content experts, including the four best sports performance trainers in the U.S.—Tim Grover, Mark Verstegen, Chip Smith, and Tom Shaw, and
- Forged strong relationships with over 70 blue chip brand marketers, including Nike, Eastbay, Reebok, U.S. Army, U.S. Marines, Gatorade, Under Armour, New Balance, Sony Playstation, Foot Locker and Old Spice.

STACK's Editorial Advisors

Tim Grover
Michael Jordan and 7% of the current NBA

Known as the "trainer to the pros" and as one of the top trainers in the business, Tim Grover has spoken to audiences around the globe. Grover also has been recognized as one of the leading sports enhancement specialists since 1989, with his selection as the exclusive trainer to Michael Jordan. Grover's clients include Dwyane Wade, Ben Gordon, Elton Brand, Antoine Walker, Alex Rodriguez, Simeon Rice and many other sports stars.

Mark Verstegen
Olympic Teams and MLB Stars

One of the world's elite performance enhancement specialists, Mark Verstegen, founder of Athletes' Performance in Tempe, Ariz., has trained numerous first-round NFL draft picks, WTA Grand Slam champions, top PGA/LPGA players, AL and NL Major League Baseball rookies of the year, MLB batting champions, NBA all stars and world-class athletes from many other venues. Verstegen authored the acclaimed training book *Core Performance: The Revolutionary Workout Program to Transform Your Body and Your Life*. Athletes' Performance clients include Nomar Garciaparra, Curt Schilling, Carl Crawford, Brett Favre and Mia Hamm.

Chip Smith
200 NFL Players

One of the foremost speed and strength experts in the United States, Chip Smith has trained more than 200 current NFL players. He offers one of the best Combine preparation programs in the nation for scores of players selected each year in the NFL Draft. Smith did post-graduate work in speed and strength studies at the world-renowned Soviet Sports Institute. He is trainer to many NFL, NBA and MLB stars, including Brian Urlacher, Champ Bailey, Antwaan Randle El, Mike Williams, Kendrick Bell and Ashley Lelie.

Tom Shaw
70 First-Round NFL Draft Picks

Tom Shaw is one of the nation's leading authorities on flexibility and strength conditioning programs for football, track and baseball. Since 2001, Shaw has been the assistant strength and conditioning coach for the Super Bowl champion New England Patriots. Prior to that, he served in the same position for the New Orleans Saints. Shaw offers one of the premier NFL Draft Combine preparation programs, having worked with 70 first-round draft picks in the past eight years. Shaw's clients include Deion Sanders, Michael Vick, Peyton Manning, Tom Brady, Laveranues Coles, Jevon Kearse and many other top NFL stars.

STACK's Founders

STACK was created by Nick Palazzo and Chad Zimmerman in 2000, while they were both still college football players, at Harvard and Carnegie Mellon, respectively. As serious athletes, the two men were continually frustrated by the lack of credible sports performance and training information. They wrote an award-winning business plan to create an athletic empire, whose sole mission is to help athletes improve their performance. The business plan included strategies to launch online, publishing, event and consumer product businesses.

Nick Palazzo (Co-Founder, Co-CEO) A 2003 cum laude graduate of Harvard College, Nick compiled a distinguished athletic and academic record. As a running back, he finished among Harvard's all-time leading rushers and scorers, earning the Vic Gatto, Buzz Crain and Henry Lamar Awards during his career. Academically, Nick was honored as a Harvard Scholar, Holland Scholar, Harvard's nominee to the National Scholar-Athlete Hall of Fame and Academic All-Ivy League. Since his graduation, Nick has served as STACK's Co-CEO, overseeing the buildout of STACK's sales, marketing and business development operations. Nick has also been intimately involved in establishing and maintaining relationships with more than 50 blue chip marketers and several strategic partners. With his unique insights into the mindset of the high performing and highly motivated athlete, Nick provides feedback and perspective to marketers, creating relationships that go beyond advertising and sponsorship.

Chad Zimmerman (Co-Founder, Co-CEO) In 2004, Chad earned a degree in Chemical Engineering from the prestigious Carnegie Institute of Technology and ranked among the top student-athletes at Carnegie Mellon University. An All-America and All-Region honoree in his senior year, Chad was a team captain, four-year starter at offensive guard and three-time First Team All-Conference selection. Academically, Chad won the Enterprise Award with Special Distinction from The Donald H. Jones Center for Entrepreneurship and the Senior Leader Award from the Carnegie Mellon University Faculty. Upon his graduation, Chad became STACK's Co-CEO and Editor in Chief. Since 2005, he has built STACK's editorial team, which powers all of its content properties. Leveraging his knowledge of sports performance and the mentality and attitude of athletes, Chad ensures that STACK's content is authoritative, that it accurately conveys the message of its expert contributors, and that it speaks authentically to the athletes who trust and rely on it. STACK's sports performance content is enthusiastically embraced by its consumers, by the 350 professional experts who contribute, and by its advertisers and marketing partners.

STACK Board of Managers

Name	Position	Affiliation/Past Experience
Nick Palazzo	Co-Founder and Co-CEO	Current: STACK, LLC
Chad Zimmerman	Co-Founder and Co-CEO	Current: STACK, LLC
Jeff Lucier	Chairman, Senior Editor	Former: Chairman/CEO, All-Stater Publishing and Banks-Baldwin Law Publishing
Robert McCreary	Director	Current: Chairman, CapitalWorks, LLC
Mark Morris	Director	Former: Chairman, Ted Bates Agency
Peter Johnson	Director	Former CEO, Sports & Entertainment - IMG
Thomas Vardell	Director	Current: Managing Director, Northgate Capital

