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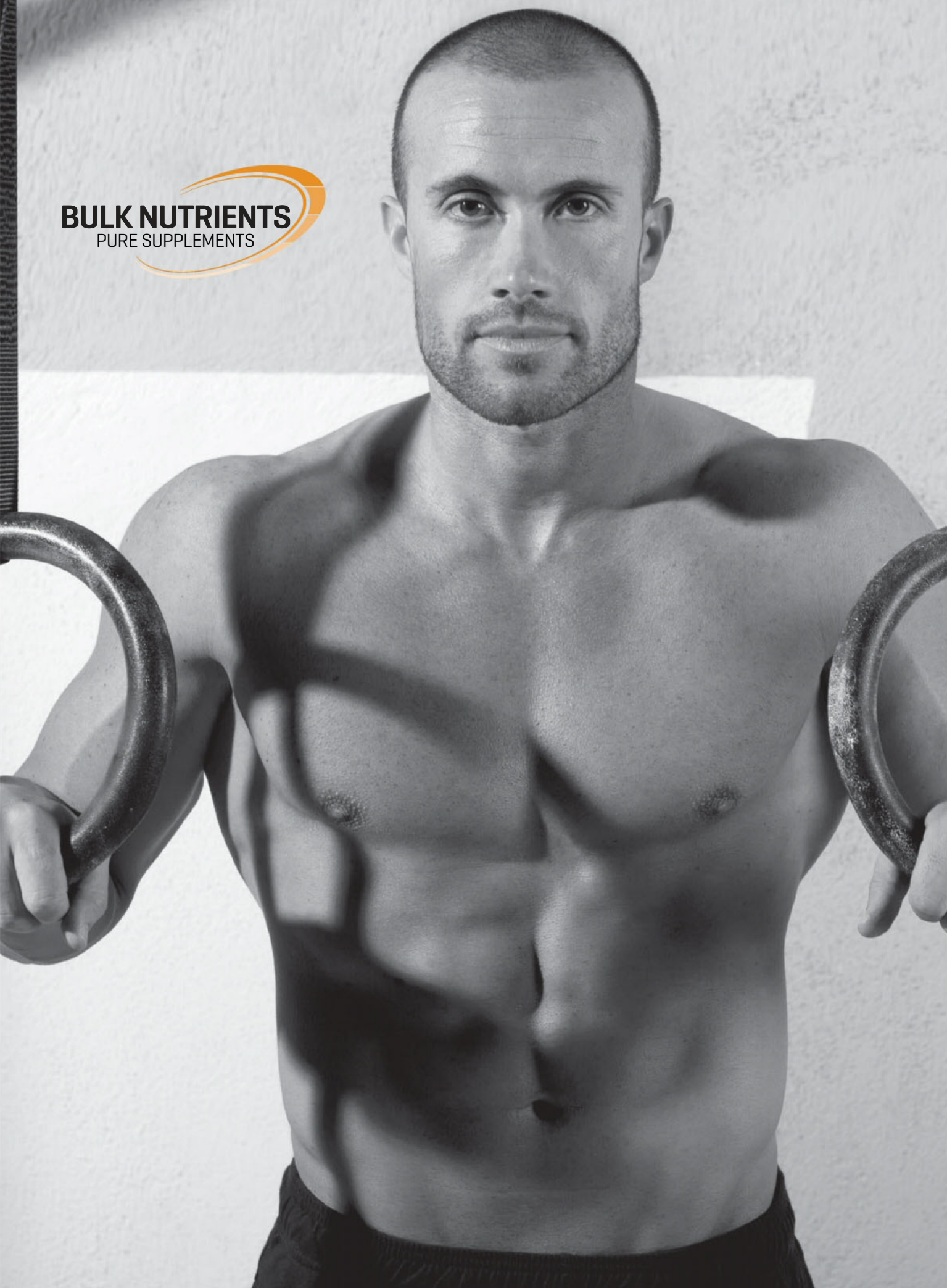
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CrossTalk

JUNE/JULY 2014

BY C.J. LOGAN

“There are only two options regarding commitment. You’re either in or you’re out. There’s no such thing as life in between.”

— Pat Riley

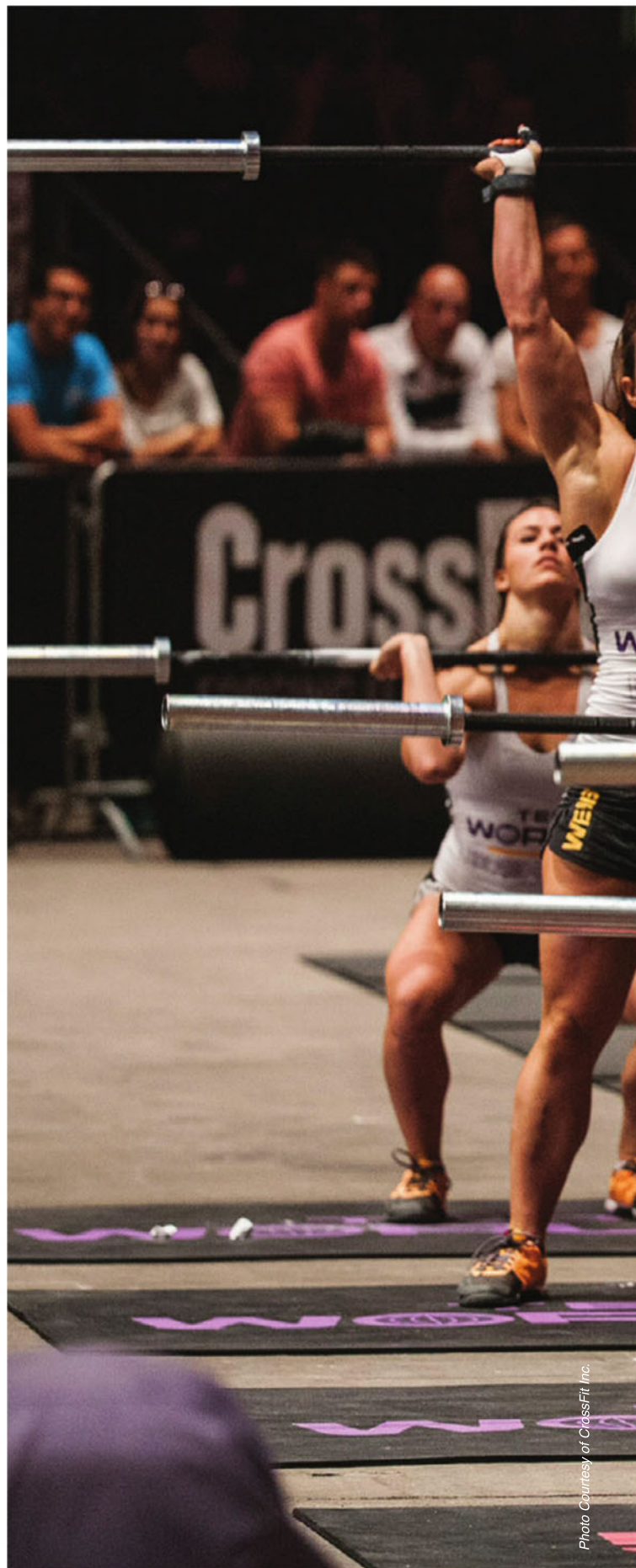


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“TRAIN HARD, EAT WELL AND MOST OF ALL, REST EASY.”

► **As a professional CrossFit athlete and a full-time coach I believe, based on my own experiences, that this is the best advice I can offer to fellow CrossFitters.**

I truly believe for an athlete to perform at 100 per cent “inside their box”, they need to commit 100 per cent to taking care of their body “outside of the box”. This goes for both men and women.

Often when doing WOD’s, aspects outside of our ‘performance’ can be forgotten or over-shadowed by our focus on great results or our ambition for achieving personal bests. Realistically however, factors like diet, medication, supplements, sleep, and mobility are so important and can so easily affect a CrossFitter’s performance.

So as you may have guessed, rest and recovery are very important to me. With the exception of the weeks leading up to the CrossFit Regionals and (hopefully) the Games, I train hard only once a day, five days a week.

The rest of my time I spend replenishing my body and managing my recovery to ensure I can perform at 100 per cent in my next workout. I have found a strong link between performance and recovery that for me is too critical to ignore for my own success as an athlete.

Moving well, training hard and resting right isn’t just a tactic to see me through to the Regionals and then for the 2014 Games. It is about creating a strategy that will help me to keep CrossFitting and doing what I love for the rest of my life. I believe that to perform to your optimum potential you need rest; because you cannot do well in one without the other.

I am very excited about this special women’s edition of The Box Magazine Australia, and hope you can all take away lots of new tips, tricks and insight into the world of CrossFit.



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From Iraq to CrossFit to NASCAR, Christmas Abbott never shies away from a challenge.



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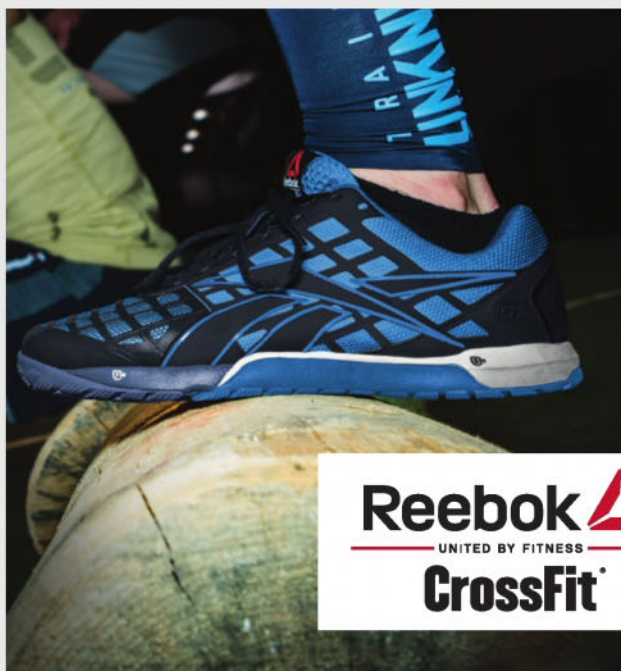
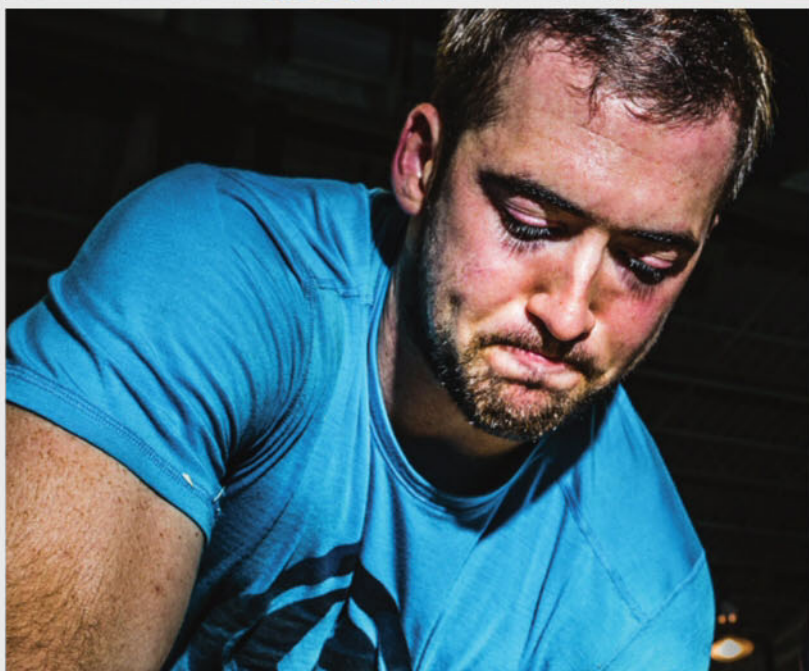


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TESTOSTERONE: THE NEW TRUTH SERUM?

>> The psychological effects of testosterone are given a bad rap in our culture, often linked to aggressive behaviour and an out-of-control libido. But a new study suggests that men with higher levels of testosterone may be more honest than their less-manly counterparts. German scientists administered supplemental testosterone to a group of subjects and then had them self-record their performance while gambling. Compared to the non-testosterone group, the juiced-up subjects were more honest about subpar results. Scientists theorise that testosterone is linked to pride and that proud people tend to lie less frequently.



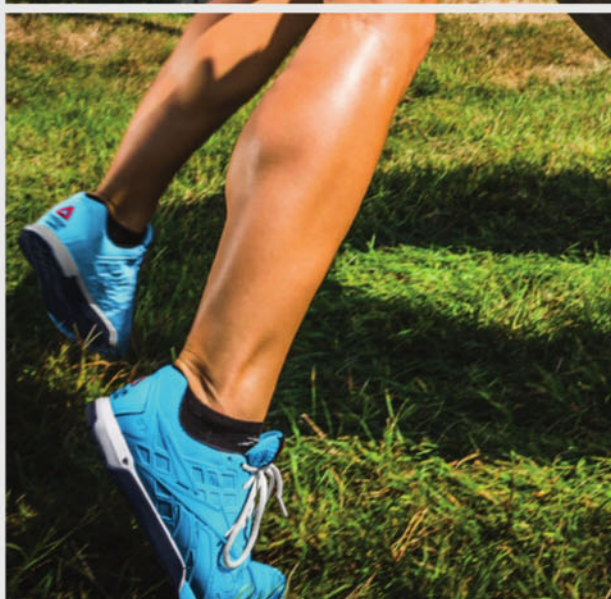
BASSO CARBO! MAMMA MIA!

>> The idea of moderating carbohydrate intake in order to regulate bodyweight has struck the shore of Italy like invading Allied forces landing at Salerno. Italy and pasta are nearly synonymous (there are more than 500 different pasta shapes that are native to the Mediterranean country), but that cultural identity hasn't kept Italians from shying away from their national dish in order to lose weight. A spokesperson for Italy's Barilla, the world's largest pasta maker, claims that pasta sales fell 3 per cent last year. Ten years ago, Italian families ate an average of 40kg of pasta per year. That number has now fallen to just 32kg a year.

CHOW DOWN WITH D

>> As fewer adults drink vitamin-D-fortified milk, and more and more slather on sunscreen (which is good for skin health but blocks vitamin D absorption from the sun), D levels continue to drop. This is worrisome because deficiencies have been linked to a host of health problems, including autoimmune diseases like rheumatoid arthritis and lupus. Fortunately, vitamin D supplements are cheap and effective as long as they're taken correctly. Because D is fat-soluble, it must be consumed with food to be absorbed. Researchers at the Cleveland Clinic have found that the bigger the meal the better when it comes to absorption. Subjects in the study who took the vitamin with their largest meal of the day enjoyed the greatest serum levels of vitamin D in their bloodstreams, regardless of the dose size or type.





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IT'S EASY BEING GREEN

>> Green tea has been linked with so many health benefits (fights fat, smashes skin cancer), it's almost impossible to keep track of this superfood's arsenal of superpowers. And they just keep on coming. For instance, Japanese researchers found that supplemental green-tea extract speeds up recovery between heavy training sessions. In the study, published in *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, mice fed green-tea extract experienced significantly less inflammation after a damaging workout than the ones fed a placebo. Additionally, performance standards returned to normal more quickly in the mice that ingested the green tea. We love drinking green tea, but to reap the true antioxidant impact, we recommend taking 500 milligrams of green-tea extract three times a day on an empty stomach.



CHOCOLATE MAKES YOU LESS DUMBERER

>> Do smart people eat dark chocolate, or does eating dark chocolate make you smarter? The antioxidant flavonoids in cocoa are now thought to boost grey matter, as well.

Researchers at the University of Tübingen Medical School in Germany claim that the flavonoids in cocoa penetrate and accumulate in brain regions that are involved with learning and memory, where they promote the growth of neurons and increase brain connectivity. The study goes on to describe how long-term flavonoid consumption has been shown to protect the brain against age- and disease-related cognitive decline in animal models.

In other news, scientists have still not proven that drinking Mountain Dew makes you dumber, but plenty of anecdotal evidence exists to support this hypothesis.





CROSSFIT AND COCOA

If you can manage to forget the Cadbury and focus on darker chocolate treats, you'll reap significant health and performance benefits.

By Rob Wildman, Ph.D., R.D.

If you went “cuckoo for Coco Pops” as a kid, you’re not alone. But as adults, we are often faced with a tough decision when offered a chocolaty treat. That’s because we know most chocolate comes in the form of fat- and sugar-rich calorie bombs with minimal performance or fitness benefit.

However, tracking chocolate back to its origin and taking a closer look at the fruit called cacao (pronounced cah-COW) — and its rich phytochemical bounty — gives us more to chew on. In this article, we will indulge ourselves with a look at the body benefits of chocolate as they pertain to CrossFit training and general health and fitness.

THE WORLD’S FIRST SPORTS DRINK?

Long before Gatorade there was *xocolatl*, which Montezuma

described as a “divine drink that allowed one to build up resistance and fight fatigue.” This seemingly magical elixir of cocoa powder, water and other ingredients like cornmeal and chilli peppers was referred to as “food of the gods,” which yielded cacao’s scientific name, *Theobroma cacao*, from the Greek words *theo* (god) and *broma* (drink).

Cacao fruit (or “pods”) contain seeds (or “beans”) that are used to make cocoa paste and, subsequently, bitter cocoa powder. Cocoa powder can then be processed and blended with milk, sugar, cocoa butter and other ingredients to make the sinful indulgences we are more familiar with today.

THE ANTI-SUGAR HIGH

Cacao is rich in many compounds, including theobromine, a kinder, gentler relative of caffeine that’s responsible for mild mental stimulatory properties. Cacao also contains tryptophan, which is used to make the calming brain chemical serotonin, along with other nutrients that promote relaxation. These nutrients counteract each other, and research indicates that together they promote a relaxed energy (often referred to as the “cacao buzz”) and positive impact on mood.

COCOA FOR FLOW

Cacao supports circulation and general cardiovascular health. That’s because it’s endowed with specific nutrients called flavonoids, including one called epicatechin, which benefit the cardiovascular system in several ways, including by supporting optimal blood flow as well as desirable blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Optimal blood flow to muscle during and after exercise could translate to performance and recovery maximisation because blood delivers oxygen and nutrients to muscle while also removing waste molecules like carbon dioxide and lactic acid.

But researchers attribute much of cocoa’s cardiovascular support to nitric-oxide levels. Nitric oxide is a key regulator of blood flow and works by dilating (or increasing the diameter of) blood vessels. Regular dark-chocolate consumption has also been clearly linked to lowering total and LDL cholesterol levels.

CELLULAR CHAMPION

Cacao is packed with an antioxidant arsenal that can be of significant benefit to people who burn more calories and therefore produce more cell-damaging free radicals in their muscle tissue. For instance, researchers found that when cyclists consumed dark chocolate daily for two weeks, they experienced a reduction in markers of inflammation during recovery from a strenuous endurance and sprint challenge. In a different study, non-athletic women who included dark chocolate in their diet for a couple of weeks also improved markers of inflammation.

CHOOSING COCOA

When choosing chocolate, look for darker chocolates that contain less fat and sugar, such as those that are greater than 70 per cent cacao. Consuming 40-55g of dark chocolate will deliver a beneficial bounty of flavonoids to support cardiovascular benefits. But keep in mind that even extremely dark chocolate has calories to contend with — roughly 200 calories per 40g. However, these products contain about half the sugar and way more fibre than lower-cacao options, helping swing the product to the “good for you” side of the balance. □

9,480

The number of burpees performed by Lloyd Weema over three days in October 2013. Weema now holds the world record for most chest-to-floor burpees performed in 72 hours.



THE ART OF STRENGTH

With Jesse Burdick

This Month: Raising the Deadlift

>> The deadlift comes up in WODs a lot more often than the bench press or back squat, so it behooves CrossFit athletes to spend time on this lift. (I expect we'll see a deadlift ladder at a CrossFit competition soon.) CrossFitters often perform high-rep deadlifts for time while under a variety of stressors. Seeing people run up to a bar and just start yanking on it makes me cringe. By taking the time to clean up your deadlift form, you can make it safer and more efficient.

Rule 1: Get Tight. During WODs, I see a lot of backs that turn into question marks. The most important part about deadlifting is midline stability, whether you are deadlifting 10 kilograms or 500 kilograms. You want to be tight from the bottom to the top. You need to have every muscle turned on and your belly full of air so you protect yourself through the whole range of motion. With tightness comes safety and strength.

Rule 2: Create a Ritual. You should have a well-rehearsed process that is subconscious when you step to the bar. Place your feet, squeeze your glutes, take a breath of air, find your grip, pull your body down, fix your eyes and push off. Rep one through rep 10 should be identical. Changing your range of motion and technique midset is very inefficient. In fact, rep 10 should be more efficient than rep one. If efficiency doesn't improve, then you are not strong or technical enough for that weight.

Rule 3: Don't Deadlift too Much. Doing heavy deadlifts every day will not fix your deadlift. You need to do rep work, speed work and other exercises that will help develop the deadlift musculature without deadlifting. Do kettlebell swings, wide-stance box squats and good mornings with a band or a bar. Train your abs and lower back constantly.

Rule 4: But Don't Stop Deadlifting. Think of deadlifts as a skill, not an exercise. If you want to get good, it's something you have to practise. □

Jesse Burdick is an elite-level powerlifter and the creator of PowerWOD.com. He coaches some of the world's best CrossFitters, powerlifters and strongmen from his base of operations at Combat Sports Academy in Dublin, Calif.

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RUNNING BEHIND

>> Where have all the Forrest Gumps gone? A recent study out of the University of South Australia's School of Health Sciences and presented at the 2013 American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions found that kids don't run as much or as fast as their parents did in childhood. Fifty studies conducted between 1964 and 2010, involving more than 25 million kids ages 9 to 17 years old, were analysed. Here were some of the key findings:

- > From 1970 to 2000, American kids' cardiovascular endurance dropped an average of 6 per cent per decade.
- > Children are about 15 per cent less cardiovascularly fit than their parents were as kids.
- > Kids are roughly a minute and a half slower in a 1.5km run compared to youngsters 30 years ago. This statistic is particularly alarming. We're not talking about a 90-second drop in a 10K here; it's only 1.5km.

55

Per cent of Australians say they feel stressed during "everyday life," according to a Healthy World Report released in late 2013. In the same report, 64 per cent of subjects say they're stressed during a typical workday.



FUEL FOR THOUGHT

Simple answers to pressing nutrition questions with Matthew Adamcheck

Q: I love eggs and I eat them daily, but should I limit how many I eat because of their cholesterol content?

A: Eggs are amazing. One egg on average contains 5 grams of fat, that amazing substance that provides satiety. The belief that egg consumption leads to high cholesterol is a result of the vast number of uneducated people repeating what they read or saw in the media in the late '80s to early '90s, a time that was also the heyday of high-carb, low-fat fad diets. Recent studies by Dr. Wanda Howell and colleagues at the University of Arizona prove that a person consuming two eggs for breakfast on a moderate-fat diet do not gain increased levels of bad cholesterol. You need strong fuel for your body to run on, whether you're at a desk, the gym or getting the kids ready for school. The high-quality proteins, fats and other great nutrients in eggs make it an amazing food. Keep consuming large amounts of natural food in moderation and you have nothing to worry about.

Matthew Adamcheck is a performance-nutrition specialist and head coach at Plymouth CrossFit (xlr8athletix.com) in Canton, Mich.

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COLD HARD FACTS

>> When in doubt, always pick fresh food over frozen, right? Well, maybe not. When it comes to vegetables, frozen may be just as good. Two separate teams of British researchers released study results in 2013 that compared produce that had been in a refrigerator for three days and produce that had been in a freezer for just as long. While neither could compare to the health factor of just-picked produce (no surprise there), in some cases researchers concluded that frozen can be better than items sold as “fresh.” Later in the year, researchers at the University of Georgia’s College of Agricultural & Environmental Sciences concurred after analysing vitamin and mineral content of eight different fruits and vegetables in two different states: frozen and sitting in a fridge for five days. The result? The frozen fruit and veg were nutritionally equal to and occasionally even better than fresh.

WORLD OF HURT? NOT SO MUCH

>> >> Every CrossFitter would love to debunk the myth that his or her training program leads to more injuries than other domains. Well, here’s a start: a paper recently published online by the Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research, titled “The nature and prevalence of injury during CrossFit training.” According to its UK authors at the All Wales Trauma and Orthopaedic Training Program, it represents the first published scientific study examining injury rates in CF participation. Granted, it wasn’t a large study, with only 132 responses gathered from a questionnaire distributed via CrossFit Internet message boards, but it’s something. Results showed 186 total injuries reported, with only 7 per cent of those requiring surgery, for an injury rate among CrossFitters of 3.1 for every 1,000 hours trained, which is similar to that for Olympic lifting, powerlifting, gymnastics and even competitive rugby. Perhaps the most notable result: zero cases of rhabdomyolysis. Tell that to all the haters. □



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Amount more per day it costs on average to eat a “healthy” diet (rich in fruit, vegetables, fish and nuts) versus an “unhealthy” one (high in processed foods and refined grains), according to research released from the Harvard School of Public Health in 2013.



EXPLODE YOUR WAY TO BETTER PERFORMANCE

The difference between an immediate bound and loaded jump is one that ultimately separates athletes in a WOD.

By Bob LeFavi, Ph.D., CSCS, USAW

We've all seen it happen. Two athletes begin double-unders at exactly the same time. They both use good posture and wrist movements, and their foot heights and rope timing are essentially the same, but one finishes significantly ahead of the other.

Likewise, we've all seen two athletes begin box jumps together. They are both powerful and spend minimal time at full extension at the top. Yet one finishes far ahead of the other. How does that happen? Good question. Here's a description of what is often the primary factor involved.

When we perform an exercise — like box jumps or double-unders — that uses landing movements, we employ a neuromuscular dynamic known as the "stretch-shortening cycle."

The cycle involves three distinct phases. In the first phase, the agonist muscles (in the case of box jumps and double-unders, the plantar flexors and knee extensors) are lengthened and contract eccentrically on the landing. Think of how an athlete's gastrocs stretch at the bottom of a box jump. During this portion of the cycle, termed the "eccentric" (lengthening) phase, the activated muscles store energy coming from two main sources: the spring-like action of stretched tendons, called "series elastic component," and a neurophysiological reflex in the muscles' "spindles" — a mechanism that protects against the potentially dangerous forceful and fast stretching of a muscle.

Once the lengthening action is completed, there is a slight delay between the eccentric phase and the subsequent contraction. This pause is called the "amortisation" phase, and it is often what separates the athletes described above. This phase must be kept as short as possible.

Think of it this way. When a person takes out a loan, the interest is accounted for — or spread out — over time. This is referred to as the "amortisation" schedule. In the same way, the stored energy in the agonist muscles (the main ones involved in the exercise) is spread out over the length of the amortisation phase. Therefore, the longer the amortisation, the less energy is available for subsequent contraction, called the "concentric" (shortening) phase.

In other words, if an athlete wants to make the best use of the energy stored in the agonist muscles and exert a more powerful contraction during the movement, he or she must minimise the amortisation phase; otherwise, all that energy will be dissipated and lost. This is critical, and we've all seen it whether we have recognised it or not. For instance, we've all seen a person performing box jumps who "bounds" instead of "landing, loading and jumping." The difference between an immediate bound and loaded jump is one that ultimately separates athletes in a WOD.

So how does an athlete actually get better at minimising the amortisation phase? Three things. First, focus on technique to minimise loading time. For instance, in a box jump or double-under, athletes should land midfoot with a very quick subsequent touch of the heel before exploding upward. Avoid any amount of time on flat feet. Likewise, when performing wall balls or thrusters, athletes should remain in a stable foot position, avoid rocking on their heels or toes, and explode out of the bottom of the squat in a ballistic manner. Avoid even the slightest amount of time sitting at the bottom.

Second, train to be explosive. Research shows that the stretch-shortening cycle can be trained. So when performing other movements in the box, athletes should practise minimising the amortisation phase by exploding at the moment the stretch is completed. Virtually any movement in a box can be used to refine one's stretch-shortening-cycle action.

Third, remember that becoming more explosive and shortening amortisation is, ultimately, a mental game. It all starts in your head. Athletes should concentrate on calling into contraction the agonist muscles immediately on the completion of the stretch or eccentric phase. □

WALL BALL

Wall balls are a staple of several CrossFit workouts, from “Karen” (150 wall balls for time) to “Filthy 50” to the wall ball/double-under/muscle-up workout that appeared as Games 12.4 and was repeated as 13.3. Wall balls are usually performed with a 9kg medicine ball for men and a 6kg medicine ball for women; the required men’s height is 3 metres; the women’s height is 2.75 metres. Because the athlete is often required to hit a certain target, accuracy is also involved.

The basic movements are similar to a thruster: front squat combined with push press. However, in this case, you’ll be driving a medicine ball upward and tossing it to a designated height. The ball must touch the wall. Catch it as it falls and repeat.

We break the movements down, but keep in mind that the reception-squat-drive-toss should be one fluid motion.

By John Whitman • Photos by Robert Reiff

1 THE SET-UP

The ball must start on the floor at the beginning of the first movement. If you let the ball drop during the reps, you have to restart with the ball in a still position on the floor (no bouncing).

Find a good distance from the wall. If you’re too far away, you’ll expend energy tossing the ball forward instead of upward, and it might not fall back down close enough to you. Too close and you’ll have trouble receiving the ball as it returns, or the ball might touch the wall before it reaches the designated height.

Because you’re about to do a full squat anyway, the most efficient way to start or restart the exercise is to clean the ball.

2 THE SQUAT

Keep your elbows down and slightly inward under the ball to help support it. Keep your chest up and (as with all squats) maintain a good lumbar curve. If the ball tips forward, it will feel much heavier and your back will fatigue much faster. Keep your head and neck in a neutral position as long as possible, but you’ll probably end up looking upward to track the ball’s movement.

Stay in your heels as you squat. As with all squats, the crease in your hips must pass below your knees. Keep your glutes activated during the movement.



3 THE THRUSTER/TOSS

Drive up and out of the bottom of your squat. Near the top, use your arms to push the ball upward. Your heels may come off the ground at this point as you drive upward.

Let your legs do most of the work. If you release the ball too late, you will have lost leg power.



4 THE RECEPTION

After ball meets wall, gravity does a bit of work for you. Receive the ball with arms over your head and cushion it back down to chin or upper-chest height as you begin your next squat. □

Don't wait to start the squat until after you've caught the ball or you'll lose time. Squat and then drive directly into the next toss.

Maintain integrity in your back, and keep your elbows below the ball. Don't tip forward.





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#VITARGO

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CARBOHYDRATES: From Paleo to Performance

Paleo nutrition and related archeology lack a critical element of knowledge when applied to the CrossFit® (CF) athlete: timing-specific and individualized eating patterns. Could a Paleo person have eaten differently (partly by choice) after hunting a large, fast animal, compared to a gatherer after awakening from a night of sleep? Could the metabolic and fuel demands of an intensively training CF athlete differ from a person doing only yoga, treadmill jogging, or light resistance training?

CF training and competition—high intensity, interval-based, often with minimal-zero rest periods (AMRAP) and with sustained high power outputs—have high carbohydrate (“glycolytic”) demands as a major fuel source. Given the high heart and work rates sustained during CF training/competition, carb burn rates could exceed 75-100 grams/20 minute WOD. The major body reserves of carbohydrate are in muscle and liver (stored as **glycogen**; gly-kuh-jen). Glycogen can be made from three sources: dietary protein (certain amino acids), lactate in the blood (produced during rest and exercise), and dietary carbohydrate. The first two “sources” listed are inadequate to replace glycogen reserves after intense training. Dietary carbs that are digestible (fiber is a carb but largely indigestible) remain the predominant and most efficient “precursor” of body glycogen—the major fuel reserve in CF training.

The Glycemic Index Myth: Higher is NOT Faster

Textbooks and experts usually describe just two different types of digestible carbohydrates: “simple” (like sugars, honey) and complex (like starches from grains and vegetables—like sweet potatoes). But then it starts to unravel. The textbooks and experts often say, “Sugars enter the blood faster, while complex carbs enter the blood more slowly, for sustained energy.” Read familiar? It’s not that simple, it’s partly WRONG, and largely UNPROVEN.

In 1981 a measuring tool was born, comparing the blood sugar response of different foods: the **glycemic index**¹. What spawned from low, medium, and high glycemic index (GI) foods was the grossly incorrect assumption that low glycemic meant “slow” absorbing and high meant “fast” absorbing. Fact: GI—the cumulative blood sugar value over a short time window, as a percentage of a reference carb source (dextrose or white bread)—does not measure the speed of sugar entering the blood (nor does a blood sugar “spike”)³. GI (and blood sugar readings) simply reveal the net result of how much sugar entered the blood (primarily from glucose absorbed from the intestine) minus how much exited the blood (primarily into liver and muscle) over a certain period of time. In the first study that measured the speed of glucose entering the blood, a “classic” low glycemic food (All Bran® cereal) was shown to deliver glucose into the blood at the same rate as a classic “high glycemic” food: corn flakes cereal⁴ (fiber has minimal impact on glycemic index)¹. How can this be? The speed of sugar entering the blood from the bran cereal was the same as corn flakes but the bran cereal sugar exited the blood faster (entering into tissues) in these fit, non-obese subjects⁵. This effectively drained the blood of sugar, rendering All Bran cereal “low” glycemic but as fast as a “high glycemic” food. Other studies have confirmed this with starch-based foods⁶.

Vitargo®: VIRTUOSITY in Fueling and Recovery

Many avoid carbs for “fear” of spiking insulin, and yet are unaware that most protein sources, like whey protein isolate (especially hydrolyzed whey protein), have moderate to profound insulin spiking effects⁷⁻⁹. Even though dextrose (AKA glucose) is “ready” for digestion, it appears to be no faster than maltodextrin, a homopolysaccharide comprised of small chains of glucose molecules (AKA glucose polymers) and a small portion of sugars⁹. When maltodextrin was introduced in the 1970s it was considered a giant leap forward in carb fueling. And then something happened in Sweden twenty years later.

In the early 90s some athletes—less than impressed with maltodextrin and sugars—asked a large Swedish starch manufacturer if they could make a better carb, for recovery and performance. Out of that request emerged Vitargo®. Vitargo starts “hidden” within starch—the mother of all digestible, sugar-free carbs in plant foods—and is selectively pulled out as a unique, ultra “complex” amylopectin starch fraction (like pulling whey protein isolate out of whole milk). Vitargo was first extracted from potato starch, and is patented (NOT patent pending) in five countries/continents. Vitargo is a branched chain of about 3,500-4,000 glucose molecules, with **zero sugars, zero maltodextrin**. But any carb’s size, chemistry, shape, or “special processing” means nothing until biology proves what it does in your (human) body.

Proof Before Promises® - University Born

About 1 out of 1,000 nutrition products has ANY independent scientific evidence that the actual product works in humans, better than a placebo (or anything else). Vitargo is one of those rare products reinforced by multiple university studies, conducted in top research laboratories led by world class scientists. The evidence showing Vitargo to be the “Fastest Muscle Fuel” links a critical metabolic sequence, unmatched by any other carb: from gut transit to glycemic response to glycogen recovery to recovery performance. In each of these studies Vitargo was compared head-to-head against the fastest generic carb, maltodextrin:

• **BLOAT-PROOF** – 2.3x faster movement through the stomach into the intestine, in just 10 minutes after a 75 gram dose¹⁰. So you can gulp (not sip) Vitargo pre-WOD or even intra-WOD and not worry about bloating or “seeing it again”

• **GLYCEMIC SURGE—CRASH-PROOF** – Just 10 minutes after a 100 gram dose of Vitargo, the speed of blood sugar (glycemic) rise is 2x faster, with no glycemic “cliff dive”¹¹. Fuel your brain and your muscles faster, without carb “crashing”

• **GLYCOGEN SPEED** – Intense exercise, of any type, relies on muscle glycogen as the major fuel source, even under low carb/low glycogen conditions¹²⁻¹⁴. Two hours after exhaustive exercise, Vitargo led to 1.7x higher and faster muscle glycogen replacement¹⁵. Part of this may be due to the 1.8x higher and faster insulin spike just 10 minutes after taking it¹¹. It’s not how high/fast is the glycemic (or blood insulin) response but how high/fast are muscle carbs (glycogen) being replaced after intense WODs or competition. Vitargo is fantastically suited for carb loading, especially carb back loading, due in part to it moving so quickly through the gut. . .

• **RECOVERY PERFORMANCE ROCKET** – What does recovery mean? You do an intense, glycogen-depleting training session, followed by 2 hours of rest. With Vitargo as your immediate post-training carb, you would be able to crank out up to 23% more (10% average) maximal endurance work over 15 minutes, just two hours after pounding your muscles into submission¹¹. That’s real world, measurable recovery—recovery performance, not just “I think I feel recovered”. Using more than ≈ 20 grams of protein alone after intensive training causes the extra protein to be burned as an energy source, or converted into sugar (glucose)¹⁶, an expensive way to replace glycogen. In a university pilot study, Vitargo alone worked as well as Vitargo plus a whey protein blend, for intense, resistance leg training acute recovery performance¹⁷ (but we advocate taking Vitargo with your favorite protein source, post-WOD or competition, until **Vitargo POST—Vitargo + hydrolyzed whey protein—comes out!**).

Vitargo—the PERFECT Mixer... ANY TIME

• **PRE/Before:** Gulp Vitargo 15-30 minutes before a WOD or CF competition. Fuel your brain and muscles

• **INTRA/During:** Gulp it during WODS (for bloat-free fueling)



NUTRITION MYTH BUSTING

MYTH/FAITH

PROOF/EVIDENCE

Simple carbs are “fast” and complex carbs are “slow”

The few studies that have directly measured the SPEED of carb sources show this to be false^{2,3}

Low glycemic = slow to enter the blood; high glycemic = fast

Glycemic index of a food or supplement provides NO indication of speed into the blood^{2,3}

Protein does NOT affect blood sugar or insulin

Protein has a minimal effect on blood sugar, but can dramatically INCREASE blood insulin (especially hydrolyzed whey protein)^{4,5}

Protein ALONE is adequate for acute muscle RECOVERY

Protein ALONE has a negligible impact on muscle FUEL recovery; doses of protein above ≈ 20 g are burned as a fuel¹⁶, and converted into sugar

If a supplement or drink says “legal”, “banned substances free”, or “gluten-free”, it IS

The ONLY way to prove this is through independent, expert testing on EACH batch, AFTER manufacture

• **POST/After:** Mix up Vitargo with your favorite protein source and take right after a hard WOD or competition event. Add in your favorite amino acids (like creatine monohydrate; if you’re vegan: BCAAs plus a vegetarian protein). Address all three aspects of recovery: replace the primary fuel you burned (glycogen carbohydrate), shut off muscle protein breakdown (by raising insulin in the blood), and support muscle protein rebuilding (through providing a quality protein source).

If you mix Vitargo correctly—it’s easy, just follow the directions—it will stay mixed and “clump-free” for up to 5-7 days in the refrigerator, ready to be gulped. You can mix Vitargo half or full strength, or even as concentrated as a pudding or gel (1-3 oz of water for every scoop or half packet). NOTE: Vitargo S2 comes in an UNflavored/UNSWEETENED version that is taste-neutral, and mixes well with ANY flavor. **Vitargo may make almost everything else work better.**

What NOT to mix with Vitargo? Any other food, drink, or supplement that provides more than ≈ 10 grams of carbs (**why mix jet fuel with low octane pump gas?**).

Banned Substances and Gluten Tested—on EACH batch

No other performance nutrition brand is as meticulous as we are. Every batch of every flavor is tested (after cGMP manufacturing) for banned substances (we have since our first batch) by the most experienced lab in the world—the same lab that unveiled the BALCO scandal—led by the founder and former director of the US Olympic Drug Testing Laboratory, Dr. Don Catlin. That’s not enough. Vitargo is currently extracted from non-GMO barley starch. Barley is a gluten-containing grain (glutens are a class of proteins). We test EACH batch, EACH flavor (after manufacturing), for gluten using a state of the art enzyme/immune method called ELISA. Vitargo is LAB TESTED gluten-free. No other brand goes this far—every flavor, every batch, every time.



Expert-Guided and Led

What else makes us different? The guy steering the ship did his Masters research (in nutritional and exercise biochemistry) at UC Berkeley—Anthony L. Almada, MSc, FISSN. He’s been a co-investigator in dozens of university studies (in humans) looking at nutrition and its impact on performance, metabolism, and body composition. He also was the co-founder of EAS (back in 1993), the company that introduced creatine monohydrate to most of the world, and also Vitargo (back in 1997, in a product called Myoplex® Mass). He’s worked in the nutrition industry since 1975. For him, and for us, it’s all about the proof and evidence. . . **everything else is just evangelism.**

Proof Before Promises®

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May 31, 2014

Reebok Spartan Race, Perth

The world's most popular competitive national obstacle racing series, Spartan Race Australia, has commenced for 2014.

Not for the faint hearted, Spartan Race courses are carefully designed to avoid bottlenecks so participants can push themselves to the limits and finish as quickly as possible. The Sprint Race involves battling through seven gruelling kilometres and 15 demanding obstacles that will take racers to the brink; crawling under barbed wire, jumping through flames and confronting burly gladiators. Competitors will be timed

and ranked as they battle their way through the course of rope climbs, mud pits and sand bags.

Spartan Race Australia is also introducing the world's first Spartan Rookie Pass, giving first time Spartan Race Challengers the chance to compete in a Spartan Race without incurring the infamous penalty of 30 Burpees for each obstacle they don't complete.

For future Spartan event details and bookings visit www.spartanrace.com.au

May 31, 2014



3vs3 Showdown Arena Joondalup, WA

The 3vs3 is Perth's first Triplet CrossFit Competition, proudly presented by Infused CrossFit & OT. On Saturday 31st May 2014, teams of three males or three females will take over 1500 square metres of Arena Joondalup to test their fitness against the rest of the WA CrossFit community. There will be three categories of team registrations – beginner's teams, intermediate teams and Rx'd teams.

Registrations opening soon – in the meantime, sign up to the Facebook page for all the updates and get your teams ready.

or visit 3vs3showdown.com

August 16 -17, 2014



Tough Mudder Sunshine Coast

The Sunshine Coast will again host 'probably the toughest event on the planet', as Tough Mudder returns to Queensland in 2014 – bigger and better than ever. Stretched out over nearly 4,000 hectares of flat, wide open Australian wilderness, Tough Mudder Sunshine Coast is the biggest Tough Mudder course on the planet. A gruelling 18-20km military-style obstacle course designed by British Special Forces, Tough Mudder Sunshine Coast will test all round strength, stamina, mental grit, team work and camaraderie. Lined with 20 military-style obstacles and packed full of hills, mud, water, ropes, walls and electric shocks, Tough Mudder will push you to your limits and unlock a sense of accomplishment unlike anything else.

For more information, check out toughmudder.com.au/events/2014-sunshine-coast-au

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LOCATED IN ADELAIDE'S EASTERN SUBURBS, IN A QUIET ONE-WAY INDUSTRIAL STREET, LIES CROSSFIT PROFICIENT. IT'S THE PERFECT SPOT TO SMASH OUT SOME QUICK 200M SPRINTS, THEN BACK TO THE BOX TO USE THE LATEST IN CROSSFIT TECHNOLOGY – WODIFY. CROSSFIT PROFICIENT USES WODIFY TO TRACK ITS ATHLETES' PERFORMANCE AND MANAGE MEMBERSHIPS. ACCORDING TO OWNERS PETE AND JESSE, THE SYSTEM MAKES THEIR JOBS EASIER AND MEMBERS LOVE LOGGING THE WOD PERFORMANCE AND SEEING THEIR PROGRESS OVER TIME.

BUT IT ISN'T ALL HIGH TECH, THE ESSENTIALS ARE STILL THERE. BUMPERS, KETTLEBELLS, RINGS, TRX'S, TRACTOR TYRES – AND EVERYONE'S FAVOURITES, THE BARBELLS.

THE BOX MAGAZINE CAUGHT UP WITH PETE AND JESSE TO LEARN A BIT MORE ABOUT CROSSFIT PROFICIENT AND ITS OWNERS.



Hey Guys, can you start by telling us a bit about the first ever session at CrossFit Proficient?

Yeah, we had a big AMRAP for our first session! Our programming has come a long way since that day. We have learnt a lot and continue to every day.

How big is a usual class at your Box?

Around 10-14 people.

Give us a shout out to your top CrossFitters:

Rachael Rohde, Renae McIntosh and Matt Kondos.

Box Name: CrossFit Proficient

City & State: Adelaide, South Australia

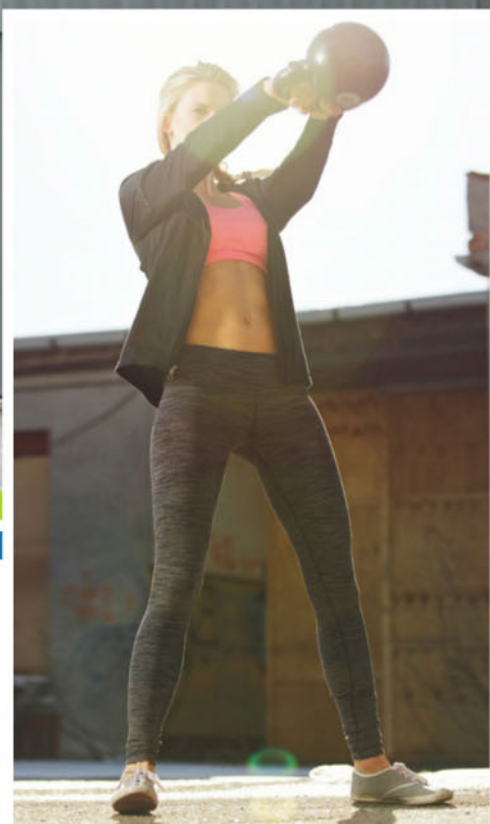
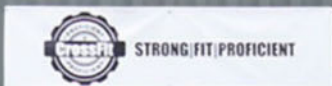
Website: crossfitproficient.com.au

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CrossFitProficient

Box Manager/owner: Jesse Humphrys & Pete Rohde

Opened: 23 February, 2013

Members: 85



Which member deserves a special mention and why?

Giulia Luzzi – She is one of our long-term members who has lost a stack of weight and always rolls up to the class (even if she doesn't want to do the WOD). She is a silent achiever who quietly smashes out PBs week after week.

What are some of the most important changes you see in people after they start training at CrossFit Proficient?

Increased confidence and willingness to try new things. Also caring about how they

treat their body with proper nutrition, rest and training.

What has been the most rewarding aspect of running your own Box?

Seeing our athletes become healthier, stronger and fitter along with the satisfaction of seeing them reach their goals.

What advice would you give to anyone wanting to get into CrossFit?

Start today, don't wait for tomorrow.

Finally, what's in store for CrossFit Proficient?

Expanding our range of equipment to diversify our WODs and continue to have constant variety in our training. We also have plans to introduce a CrossFit Kids program and a yoga class.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ➔

Kettlebell Photo by: Shutterstock.com



"Our athletes become healthier, stronger and fitter"

Q&A WITH OWNER:

PETE ROHDE ▶▶

QUALS:

- CROSSFIT LEVEL 1 TRAINER
- CERT IV IN FITNESS
- LEVEL 2 KETTLEBELL INSTRUCTOR
- TRX INSTRUCTOR
- PRE/POST NATAL
- LEVEL 2 THUMP BOXING
- NAKA ATHLETICS GYMNASIAC WORKSHOP (CARL PAOLI)

Describe yourself in three words: Dedicated, loyal, funny.

What do you love about training at your Box? I mostly train by myself, so the ability to play my favourite music is awesome.

What's your favourite WOD? And what's your best time? Taylor (Hero WOD) – 15:48RX after a shoulder injury – looking to improve a lot!

What WOD do you most want to improve on? Helen – I love the combination of exercises.

Who is your CrossFit hero? Why? Adrian Bozman – he was my level 1 trainer.

What are the staples in your fridge? Eggs, butter and fresh vegetables.

Name five (5) things you can't live without? iPad, peanut butter, my bed, my wife Rachael, foam roller.

Q&A WITH OWNER:

JESSE HUMPHRYS ▶▶

QUALS:

- CROSSFIT LEVEL 1 TRAINER
- CERT IV IN FITNESS
- LEVEL 2 KETTLEBELL INSTRUCTOR
- TRX INSTRUCTOR
- PRE/POST NATAL
- LEVEL 2 MILITARY FITNESS (BOOTCAMP INSTRUCTOR)
- LEVEL 1 MMA FITNESS

Describe yourself in three words: Stubborn, honest, hardworking.

What do you love about training at your Box? A different training partner every day.

What's your favourite WOD? And what's your best time? Annie 6:10 – I love double unders.

What WOD do you most want to improve on? Diane – Need to get stronger at deadlifts.

Who is your CrossFit hero? Why? Kelly Starrett – I love mobility and he knows it all.

What are the staples in your fridge? Organic butter, eggs and beer.

What are you currently preparing for? Fit Wars 9.

concept 2

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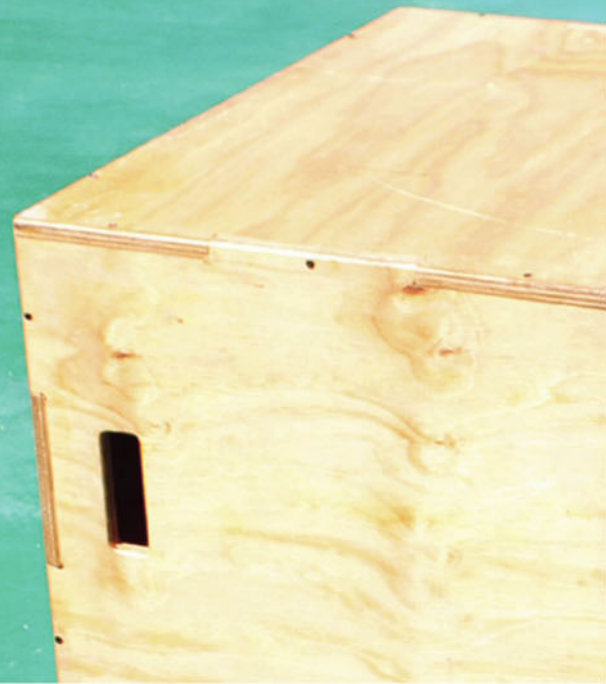
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THE NEXT LEVEL

Taking that next step is always difficult, particularly when the next step is the leap from grinder to certified Level-1 CrossFit coach.

By James Toland



If you do CrossFit long enough, there comes a point at which you will start to think about moving to the next level, which of course means completing the Level-1 Trainer's Certification Course. Now that I am three and a half years into my journey, I have contemplated this step many times. Over the years, I have seen several athletes from my local community start up, train, compete and then move on to the L1 very quickly.

In an attempt to be sensible, I've been hung up on the cost-benefit analysis. The price (\$1,000 for the two-day course plus any travel, food or lodging, depending on the location of the seminar) has held me back for sure, and time can be an issue depending on my soccer coaching schedule. The other internal debate I've had is what I would get back or, more important, *give* back by completing this process. Meaning, if I complete my instructor's cert, what would be the benefits to me as a CrossFitter and how could I efficiently use this knowledge to help others?

A major complaint outside (and occasionally inside) the CrossFit community is that you pay your money, sit through a two-day seminar, take a test and then, boom, you suddenly have the right (though not always the knowledge or ability) to own, open and operate a certified CrossFit affiliate. While this may be the correct path as mandated by CrossFit HQ, I don't think anyone with any sense would think that's sufficient training to open a box and start coaching people.

So where do I fit in? When I graduated from college with

my bachelor's degree and passed my state test, I was certified to be a teacher and also to coach any number of sports. What I learned was that although the state said I was able to be a teacher and coach, a certification does not a teacher make. It took years of trial and error to be as effective and confident as I am in my classroom. I spent the first nine years of my coaching career as a junior varsity and assistant coach of half a dozen different sports before I ever took a shot at running my own program.

The reason I took my time with those elements of my day job is the same reason I have always baulked at the idea of the L1 CrossFit cert. I want to make sure I am coaching and instructing with quality because I have the knowledge and ability to do it properly, not just because a paper certification says I have the *right* to do it.

So I've made my decision: This is the year I'm taking the plunge. I'll be paying my fee and (hopefully) getting my certification to be a L1 CrossFit instructor. But not without a plan. Over the next few months, I'm going to be spending some time with my coaches and other coaches in the area so that I can see both sides of the bar. I'll study with them about technique and instruction but also programming, operating a CrossFit box and any behind-the-scenes aspects that your everyday grinder doesn't even know about. This will all culminate in completing my own cert and hopefully becoming a CrossFit coach when I (and my trainers) think I'm ready. It will be a heck of a journey, and I'm equally excited and apprehensive. Stay tuned. □



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NEVER

GIVE UP

An Interview with
JESS MORGAN

AFFILIATE: CROSSFIT BROADBEACH

AGE: 26

HEIGHT: 165 CM

WEIGHT: 60 KG

The CrossFit community is very close, even people from different boxes are really close... It's just such a great community base to be a part of.

Tanned, tall and blonde; Jess Morgan is the epitome of the Australian ideal. So it's hard to believe that this siren-firebreather was born and raised in the notoriously wet and windy country of Wales, Great Britain. Luckily for us, Jess has called Australia home for the past ten years. For the last two of those years, she has dedicated herself to the flourishing Australian CrossFit movement.

With a background in personal training, it was an easy transition for Jess, who got the idea to try CrossFit from a friend on her local volleyball team. It was love at first WOD, and Jess immediately cancelled her gym membership to give this new sport her full attention. For Jess, CrossFit combines her passion for training with a deep desire to compete. And compete she does, with her team CrossFit Broadbeach winning their first competition in December 2013. Now, there's no stopping her.

We chat to Jess about muscle-ups, motivation and what makes her CrossFit-clock tick.

For those who aren't familiar with CrossFit, how would you describe the sport?

JM: It's the practice of functional movements that help you with day-to-day things. It's not isolated and never boring. The biggest motivation is the fact you're always trying to better your own lift.

Has CrossFit changed you in any way?

JM: I'm a lot stronger thanks to CrossFit, both physically and mentally, because of the workouts you're put through every day. I love it; you're always improving your score and your lifts, so it makes it as fun as well.

Tell us, how else has CrossFit impacted your life?

JM: I've found lifelong friends through CrossFit. You've got something in common; you want to keep fit, break personal bests and spend time together doing what you love – it creates some pretty strong bonds. The CrossFit community is very close, even people from different boxes are really close and we all get to know each other through competition. It's just such a great community base to be a part of.

What's your favourite WOD or exercise?

JM: The snatch is my favourite lift and I'm pretty good at box jumps; I enjoy doing a lot of body weight stuff. I'm trying to master muscle-ups at the moment, which is the most frustrating aspects of CrossFit for me! Bi muscle-ups are where you pull yourself up to the bar and extend yourself up and over it and 'rings' are where you pretty much do the same thing, you just swing before you go up and do the tip. It's the most challenging part of CrossFit because of the strength and skill involved in it. It takes a lot of practice because the rings are moving the whole time.

What is your biggest motivation?

JM: Definitely competing against yourself; you're constantly trying to better your own lift. I just love the diversity and how there are so many different elements and skills involved. The variety keeps me motivated.

Can you give our readers a taste of your weekly training regime?

I follow Drew Griffith's Coach-RX program. I train around four hours a day Monday to Friday; two hours in the morning and another two hours in the afternoon. I also train on Saturday morning for a good 3-4 hours but I take Sunday off most weeks. At the moment we've got a rest day during the week where I do a swim (active rest) but I'm not very good at resting or keeping still so I have to keep moving!

Do you have a quote you live by?

JM: It's short and simple, but the mantra that always gets me through a workout is 'never give up!' It always works to say it to yourself during a session. Plus, my coach would kill me if I actually did stop during a workout!

Finally, what's next for Jess Morgan?

JM: I really want to do my CrossFit Level-1 so I can do some coaching! I'd also love to do some more competing; it puts the training to use, bringing it all down to the one moment you've been striving for. □

- WORKOUTS -		- MAXES -	
FRAN	3:56	CLEAN & JERK	75 KG
HELEN	9:52	SNATCH	60 KG
GRACE	2:42	DEADLIFT	105 KG
5K RUN	22:45	BACK SQUAT	85 KG

In Her Wheel- house.

FROM IRAQ TO CROSSFIT TO NASCAR,
CHRISTMAS ABBOTT
NEVER SHIES AWAY FROM A CHALLENGE.

BY LINDSAY BERRA
PHOTOS BY ROBERT REIFF



Styling by Elisabetta Rogiani - Hair and Makeup by Nancy Jambazian

THE VOICE IN CHRISTMAS ABBOTT'S HEAD YELLS "3-2-1, GO!"

BUT THIS IS NO CROSSFIT WORKOUT ABBOTT IS BEGINNING. RATHER, THAT INTERNAL COUNTDOWN HELPS ABBOTT TIME THE INSTANT SHE VAULTS OVER THE BARRIER THAT LINES PIT ROW AND ALLOWS HER FOOT TO HIT CONCRETE WITH THE VERY MILLISECOND A 1.5 TONNE NASCAR CAR SLIDES TO THE LINE.

Before the car has even come to a stop, Abbott has locked her eyes on its front right tyre — specifically, the yellow-painted lug nut that rests at 3 o'clock. She slides to her knees by the tyre and hits first that lug nut, then the following four in clockwise succession, with an air-powered impact wrench. They fly off like so many pieces of popcorn, and Abbott, who is just 160 centimetres tall and 52kg, yanks the old, 30kg tyre off the car to make way for the new one. Her partner at the front end of the car, known as a tyre carrier, slams a new tyre into place, and Abbott hits the five new lug nuts with the wrench to secure it. Then she sprints around the nose of the car, ponytail

flying, dives into place beside the left front tyre and repeats the process again.

Removing or securing five lug nuts takes about 1.5 seconds, and the entire process is done in less than 15; 13 if the pit crew is good. Winners and losers in NASCAR can be separated by the smallest fraction of a second, so speed is imperative, which is why Abbott spent most of last spring and summer practising to cut down on her times. "The whole thing is so fast and so explosive yet so precise," Abbott says. "And if I miss a lug nut, we could lose the race."

Such is Abbott's life as a front-tyre changer. And it began because of her life as a CrossFitter, which began in a dusty military





Photo by: Robert Reiff

camp in Iraq, where she never would have been if her life hadn't been changed forever on Nov. 17, 1996.

Abbott was a happy kid. She grew up in Lynchburg, Virginia, with her parents, Barbara Nichols and Ed Abbott, her older sister Kole and younger brother Chris. Nichols named her daughter Christmas Joye because, when she was born on Dec. 20, 1981, she was, in fact, the best Christmas gift her mother had ever received.

Abbott played a few years of baseball — not because she had a burning desire to compete against the boys but because she has always been small; her tiny

hands made it difficult to hold a larger softball. In middle school, she did the happy-medium kind of cheerleading that falls somewhere between shouting with pompoms and doing back handsprings the length of the football field. "I did cartwheels," she says.

But when Abbott was 13, her whole world turned upside down.

She was a passenger in a car with her sister and a friend on the way home from a party. The car flipped and rolled seven times. Kole was thrown from the car and fell into a coma. In what was another holiday miracle for the Abbotts, Kole came to on Thanksgiving Day. But

Christmas was shaken. "When you take your hero and strike them down and make them human, it affects you," she says. "I almost lost my sister, and the doctors didn't know how any of us had survived."

Kole would have to relearn how to walk and would lose two months' worth of memories surrounding the accident. Christmas, who walked away with hardly a scratch, remembers the car flipping and rolling, totally out of control.

She would follow suit.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ➔

The Abbotts had always been religious and went to church together on Sundays. Christmas stopped going to services. She started smoking, drinking and sneaking out. Her grades slipped. For nearly nine years, she was adrift. As her friends grew up and moved on with their lives, she struggled to find a path. "After the accident, I was angry and depressed," she says. "I kept drifting further and further away." And she would have to go even further to get back on track. In January 2004, Christmas, then 22, found herself on an armoured bus leaving the Baghdad airport for the Green Zone, the area of the city held by

She started as a laundry attendant, collecting dirty laundry and reissuing it once it was clean. She moved on to become an operations specialist, coordinating all the needs of camp and working with military and security personnel to arrange convoys to get food and supplies. Along the way, she learned to fire a gun. Several guns, in fact. "During my second stint in Iraq, we were required to qualify in five different weapons, which means you had to be able to use them safely and proficiently," she says. "I had to carry a gun and was issued a 9mm Glock."

In Iraq in 2006, Abbott was introduced to something else she had never done

their hands on: ammo boxes, sandbags, cinder blocks. "CrossFit made me an athlete," she says. "And it filled a hole in my heart."

It was around that time that Abbott's mum says she started to see her daughter's "greatness" come out.

CrossFit quickly became Abbott's life. After returning from Iraq in early 2008, she landed a job on CrossFit's seminar staff, got an English bulldog puppy and named her "Fran" after the infamous benchmark lady and started working on her goal of opening her own gym. In December 2010, she opened CrossFit Raleigh in

CrossFit made me an
Athlete, and it filled a
hole in my Heart

international forces after the coalition invasion in 2003. She had followed her mother to Iraq to work as a civilian contractor for the military, and her welcome was a bit of a rude awakening. "They had found an IED — an improvised explosive device — in the road, and we had to pull over and wait for a few hours," Abbott explains. "I had no idea what I was getting into. I asked, 'Can't we just drive around it?'"

Abbott was soon introduced to the sounds and stresses of war: the whistle of rockets, the thud of missile launches, the boom of car bombs. Every day, there was gunfire outside the camp, but she did her best to get about her duties.

before: CrossFit. By the time she went overseas, she had already quit smoking and begun to work out. One day in the camp's gym, a Marine showed her the famous online video of Nicole Carroll, Annie Sakamoto and Eva Twardokens performing "Nasty Girls": three gruelling rounds of 50 squats, seven muscle-ups and 10 hang power cleans, for time. Abbott was hooked. "I saw girls my size doing things I didn't think girls my size were able to do or were supposed to do," she says. "I didn't necessarily understand what I had just seen, but I knew I wanted to do it."

Abbott started doing CrossFit workouts outside with soldiers in her camp, using whatever equipment they could get

North Carolina with several partners. A year later, Abbott went out on her own and renamed the box CrossFit Invoke, with the tag line "Invoke Your Inner Athlete" because that is what CrossFit did for her.

"I love lifting heavy," she says. "One of the cool things about being so small is that it really is quite impressive when you can move a lot of weight. When a 70kg woman cleans 77kg, it's impressive. But when a 52kg woman does it, it's even more amazing."

Seven years into her CrossFit career, Abbott is still hitting PBs; right now, she can do that 77kg clean-and-jerk. She also can deadlift 115kg, snatch 65kg and overhead squat 90kg. She would



Photo by: Robert Reiff



love to make it back to the CrossFit Games as a competitor — her CrossFit Raleigh team finished 16th overall at the Games in 2011 — but first, she's concentrating on balancing her CrossFit goals with her dream of becoming the first female to hop over the wall as a member of a NASCAR pit crew.

When Abbott accompanied a group

of CrossFit friends to Charlotte, N.C., for the Pit Crew Challenge organised by Ted Bullard, then of Turner Motorsports, in January 2012, she had been a lifelong NASCAR fan but had never changed a tyre in her life. That day, they played at jacking up cars, and Abbott was able to hit five lug nuts in 1.7 seconds — much faster than any

of her CrossFit comrades and not too far behind the professional standard of 1.3 seconds. She loved the high-pitched squeal of the wrench and knew right away it was a toy she wanted in her arsenal.

Bullard invited Abbott to train with Turner Motorsports pit coach Shaun Peet, and she was a quick learner. In February 2013, she signed with Michael Waltrip Racing and began training six days a week in the pits. She had the opportunity to shadow the pit crews of drivers Clint Bowyer and Mark Martin during NASCAR Sprint Cup Series races and worked the pits for female driver Jennifer Jo Cobb in NASCAR's Camping World Truck Series.

The attention Abbott received as a beautiful woman working the pits dwarfed even the attention she had received as a beautiful CrossFit competitor. Bryant Gumbel called her a "pint-sized Superwoman" on HBO's *Real Sports*. She was featured on ABC's *Nightline*, CNN, ESPN and Fox Sports and in the pages of *Cosmopolitan* and *Inked* magazines. And indeed, she is tattooed, 14 times and counting.

A weeping willow on her calf reminds her of playing as a child in Virginia. The classic revolver on her hip commemorates her time in Iraq. The compass rose on her rib cage reminds her to stay true to her path. And like Abbott herself, the sword-wielding goddess on her arm embodies beauty and brawn.

In July, Abbott, who is 32, decided to take some time away from the gruelling NASCAR schedule to concentrate on running her gym and possibly opening a second box. And despite a note on her Facebook page at the end of October announcing her departure from Michael Waltrip Racing, she is currently talking with several NASCAR teams and hopes to sign on for the 2014 season. "The things I have been the most scared of in my life have been the things that have changed my life," she says. "CrossFit is one of them, and NASCAR is another."

Once, a car crash sent Abbott reeling. Now, it's cars that drive her home. □

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IS CROSSFIT DANGEROUS?

A series of yellow diagonal hazard stripes, similar to those found on caution tape, extending from the bottom left towards the top right, positioned below the main title.

THE “SPORT OF FITNESS” HAS A PUBLIC-RELATIONS PROBLEM THAT’S ONLY GROWING AS IT BECOMES MORE POPULAR. BUT IS IT WARRANTED?

By Bob LeFavi, Ph.D., CSCS, USAW



If you ask CrossFitters about CrossFit, you will likely hear a litany of benefits and a recounting of their success stories, all expressed by athletes brimming with excitement and a desire to share their personal journey in functional fitness. But if you ask non-CrossFitters about CrossFit, you may get the following response, “CrossFit? Isn’t that dangerous?”

Why is there such a disconnect between those involved in CrossFit and everyone else? Where does this perception of CrossFit as dangerous come from?

If we had to wager, we’d say that some of this misperception stems from how the average non-CrossFitter experiences CrossFit — on ESPN in the form of the Games. Sure, if you sit on your couch and witness freaks of nature performing unimaginable feats, you might think, “I’d kill myself trying to do that!” And they might. But that isn’t the important question here.

What’s truly vital is this: is CrossFit actually dangerous?

We cannot adequately analyse this question without first agreeing on the definition of “dangerous.” Most of my sports-medicine colleagues would agree with me that it’s reasonable to define “dangerous” as “able to cause harm or injury.” That’s fair, isn’t it? And therein lies the problem with this term because *anything* can be dangerous. To wit, here is an actual conversation I had recently with a fitness colleague:

Colleague: “What are you researching these days?”

Me: “We’ve been looking at CrossFit movements.”

Colleague: “I’ve heard CrossFit is dangerous.”

Me: “Dangerous? Compared to what?”

Colleague: “Well, you know, other forms of exercise.”

Me: “Like what?”

Colleague: “OK, like running.”

Me: “Running? What about shin splints, patellofemoral pain syndrome, stress

fractures, plantar fasciitis, iliotibial band syndrome, Achilles tendonitis. Want me to continue?”

Colleague: “No, I’m talking about serious injuries.”

Me: “Most studies show that there is one sudden cardiac death for every 100,000 marathon participants. As far as I know, no athlete in all the thousands of CrossFit boxes around the world performing multiple workouts per week has ever died from a CrossFit workout.”

This brief conversation highlights an important point — that “dangerous” is a relative term. In other words, because any activity carries with it some level of risk, the use of the word “dangerous” only has meaning in relation to something else; it matters what we compare it to. (And even in the extreme case, in which we compare participating in CrossFit to doing nothing, then we have to evaluate the health risks of being sedentary.)

What should be clear here is that the question “Is CrossFit dangerous?” is loaded with assumptions about risks that are inconsistent with the experiences of athletes and the available data. What data? Good question.

INJURY RATES

When evaluating risks of injury in any sport, we look at epidemiological data supplied by schools, hospitals and physicians’ offices. In the case of CrossFit, only one small study has ever been done on injury rates. When orthopedic researchers at Cardiff University in Wales investigated the prevalence of CrossFit injuries, they found an injury rate of 3.1 injuries for every 1,000



1 SUDDEN
CARDIAC DEATH

100,000
MARATHON
PARTICIPANTS



NO KNOWN DEATHS FROM
CROSSFIT WORKOUTS

hours trained. They conclude, “Injury rates with CrossFit training are similar to that reported in the literature for sports such as Olympic weightlifting, powerlifting and gymnastics.”

At 3.1 injuries per 1,000 hours trained, CrossFit’s injury rate appears to be much lower than contact sports, track and field, and the sport with the highest injury rate — soccer. Therefore, the perception of danger in CrossFit really does appear to conflict with reality. This begs the question: if CrossFit truly is as dangerous as people assume, where are all the bodies?

THE INFLUENCE OF BIOMECHANICS

To be fair, we are not suggesting that participating in CrossFit carries no inherent risks. In fact, there are two biomechanical factors affecting potential injury in CrossFit. The first is velocity of movement. Because of the speed of performance necessary in WODs, acceleration and deceleration forces place stress on joints and connective tissue. Athletes feel this as “impact” and should not be encouraged to exert force as fast or as hard as possible without sufficient conditioning and training.

The second factor is fatigue. As one fatigues, performance technique suffers. When one’s technique changes because of fatigue, the efficient biomechanical pattern that has been trained to perform the movement is altered. Different muscle groups are called on, thereby placing stresses on tissues that

(a) have not been adequately trained to handle them or (b) are not involved in the most efficient biomechanical pattern to perform the movement. Injury can result from acute or chronic stress to such tissues.

Now, when CrossFit athletes read this, they are sure to say, “Speed and fatigue? Dealing with those things is what makes CrossFit what it is! You can’t take them out of CrossFit!” And that’s true.

However — and more to the point — what is also true is that negotiating velocity, fatigue and biomechanics is what makes CrossFit genuinely “functional fitness.” In other words, the factors that make CrossFit effective, practical and functional are precisely the same factors that can — if one is not careful — increase risk of injury.

An example: Person A goes into a standard gym and burns 250 calories performing a circuit of slow, controlled movements on resistance-training machines. Person B goes into a CrossFit box and burns 250 calories completing “Grace.” Because of the movements involved, it is reasonable to assume that Person A would have a lower risk of injury than Person B during the workout. But who would I call for help moving a couch up a flight of stairs? Person B. And if Person A comes along to help Person B move the couch, guess who gets hurt.

The bottom line is that there is no evidence to support the assertion that participating in CrossFit brings with it a significantly higher risk of injury than participating in other physical activities. Indeed, there is every reason to assume that the physiological adaptations CrossFitters experience (delayed fatigue, improved speed of movement, negotiation of acceleration and deceleration forces, etc.) enable them to enjoy other physical activities with a reduced risk of injury — as long as they are adequately prepared for it.



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“MY EXPERIENCE IS THAT THE MOST COMMON CROSSFIT INJURY IS A SHOULDER INJURY IN AN INEXPERIENCED CROSSFITTER PERFORMING A HIGHLY TECHNICAL MOVEMENT FOR TIME.”



“THE FACTORS THAT MAKE CROSSFIT EFFECTIVE, PRACTICAL AND FUNCTIONAL ARE PRECISELY THE SAME FACTORS THAT CAN — IF ONE IS NOT CAREFUL — INCREASE RISK OF INJURY.”

MINIMISING RISK OF INJURY

How can we prepare athletes for high-intensity CrossFit WODs? Read on.

Correct Form

CrossFit Law No. 1 should be: correct form! Every trainer must make this his or her mantra. No newbie should ever perform a WOD with highly complex movements without clear indication that he or she can perform those movements correctly and do so repeatedly. My experience is that the most common CrossFit injury is a shoulder injury in an inexperienced CrossFitter performing a highly technical movement for time.

The two forms of exercise that most lend themselves to injury are the Olympic lifts and plyometrics (box jumps and ballistics movements). In and of themselves, these movements can push ranges of motion, connective tissue and

neuromuscular systems that have not been well-developed, but that isn't the real problem. The problem can occur when these movements are performed in a fatigued state, which brings about technique breakdown. Then different inefficient and untrained biomechanical patterns are called on to assist. Tissues that are not adequately prepared for mechanical stresses are taxed, and injury then becomes much more likely.

Experience is a key factor here. There's an enormous difference between the technique breakdown of a Rich Froning and the technique breakdown of a beginner. The consequences of Froning's breakdown are minimal. When he does fatigue, (a) his deviation from optimal technique is small, and (b) he has the experience and ability

to call on related musculature that has been adequately trained. Not so for the beginner. When a beginner's technique begins to break down significantly, that person should stop exercising.

A Beginner Program

“On-Ramp” or “Beginner” programs are absolutely essential. They are necessary to ensure that those entering the WODs can perform CrossFit-based movements correctly and do so repeatedly. It doesn't matter who the person is or what he or she looks like. The standard is the same everywhere and for everyone: The athlete must demonstrate his or her mastery of core CrossFit movements. That may take a month or it may take three months.

A good friend of mine who owns a

box decided — just once — to relax her mandatory “On-Ramp” rule for a young former cheerleader who swore she had done and could perform all the necessary movements with proficiency. The owner knew the family well and relented. Within the first week, the young woman was performing pull-ups with a band under one foot. She fatigued, and — instead of releasing the band — released her grip on the bar. Down she went with one foot still in the band, landing right on the box. It was ugly. Yet being able to get out of that relatively common situation was something this young woman would have learned on Day One of the “On-Ramp” program.

she should continue to search for one in order to maximise performance and minimise risk of injury.

Consider what it takes to become a CrossFit Level-1 trainer: sit through a two-day seminar and pass a multiple-choice exam. That’s it. That enables a person to open a CrossFit box and start training people. I’ve been through the course. As a professor of sports medicine and a CrossFitter, I honestly cannot tell you whether the course is “sufficient” or “insufficient,” mostly because I’m unsure what CrossFit wants participants to get out of it. Some of the material was very good information;

use of high-intensity physical activity, the military being the most common. Second, rhabdomyolysis is the result of inappropriately applied intensity. It’s simple: someone did not gauge and manage intensity correctly; the athlete did not slow down or stop when he or she should have. To minimise risk of rhabdomyolysis, athletes should have trainers who understand this medical condition and its causes and can help them gauge and manage their own intensity level. It’s a reflection of an error in judgment, not a reflection of some factor inherent to CrossFit programming.



Her family was angry about the injury, and the young woman never returned to the box. Since then, the owner hasn’t let anyone bypass the “On-Ramp” program, no matter who they are.

Knowledgeable Trainers

The more boxes I experience, the more I appreciate a genuinely knowledgeable trainer. Some (not all) trainers can see what an athlete is doing incorrectly. Fewer than that can see what the athlete is doing wrong and know why he or she is doing it incorrectly. Fewer still can see what the athlete is doing wrong, know why and know how to correct it.

A good trainer for you is one who knows you — your strengths and weaknesses, your previous injuries, your technique idiosyncrasies, how to gauge your intensity and how fatigue affects you. This personal relationship can be difficult to develop in a big box or one that grows too quickly. If an athlete doesn’t have this relationship, he or

other parts were more CrossFit “Kool-Aid.” However, what I can say is that there is a wide range of experience, skills, education, knowledge and capabilities among Level-1 trainers. And your trainer’s abilities affect you — not only your progress but also your risk of injury.

A NOTE ABOUT RHABDO

No discussion of risk in CrossFit would be complete without a look at rhabdomyolysis. Here’s a brief primer on this medical condition.

During extended periods of high-intensity physical activity, muscle cells can become damaged. When they break down, they release a protein called myoglobin into the bloodstream. (While hemoglobin carries iron and oxygen in the bloodstream, myoglobin carries iron and oxygen in muscle cells.) The presence of myoglobin in the bloodstream is a very common effect of physical training, but when an excessive amount builds up, it can essentially clog up the kidneys and even cause them to fail.

We should keep two things in mind regarding rhabdomyolysis. First, it is in no way unique to CrossFit. We have seen it in various venues that make

How often does rhabdomyolysis occur in CrossFit? We simply do not know. While it can occur, the study mentioned above found no incidences of rhabdomyolysis among the injuries reported.

DANGER AND CONTEXT

All this considered, the question “Is CrossFit dangerous?” is one that requires context. Think about it: if you’re an adult, you know that life is dangerous. Stepping off a kerb is dangerous, riding a bicycle is dangerous, driving a car is dangerous. But — and this is important — you have had knowledgeable people in your life who have taught you how to do all these things correctly and safely. Same with CrossFit, which by the way was never designed for spa bunnies or posers.

So seek out the best trainer for you; focus on technique; know your strengths, weaknesses and limits; and gauge and manage your intensity — and then go have fun! Leave the injuries to the distance runners. □

Bob LeFavi, Ph.D., CSCS, USAW, is a professor of sports medicine at Armstrong Atlantic State University in Savannah, Ga., and was a 2013 CrossFit Games Masters competitor.



Photo by: Peter Lueders



POMEGRANATE POWER

Ancient civilisations revered this antioxidant-rich superfruit, but its benefits to training and recovery are only now being studied.

By Rob Wildman, Ph.D., RD

Don't have to tell you that CrossFit is an extremely demanding sport. WOD success depends on the match between mental expectation and physical capacity. Nutrition is absolutely vital to building the energy stores that power workouts as well as providing protein and other nutrients that build strength, power and endurance over time. Moreover, certain ingredients may provide acute benefits by increasing energy, vitality and even muscle efficiency. Among the latter group is pomegranate, a superfruit that contains nutrients that support physical performance and recovery. In this article, we will peel the skin off the pomegranate in order to discuss the performance and general benefits to CrossFit performance provided by this exotic fruit.

POMEGRANATE'S PERFORMANCE POTENTIAL

Pomegranates have long been known to be good sources of essential nutrients like vitamin C, potassium and iron. Pomegranates also deliver phenolic molecules and nitrates. Nitrates are simple nitrogen- and oxygen-endowed molecules, but they and their molecular relatives nitrites are exciting nutraceutical concepts because they contribute to blood vessel nitric-oxide balance within tissue, especially tissue with high oxygen demand like muscle. Nitric oxide is one of the factors that can help expand the diameter of smaller blood vessels, thereby increasing blood flow to high-oxygen-demanding tissue like muscle.

To see what pomegranate could do for heavy weight trainers, researchers at the University of Texas gave men who routinely performed resistance training pomegranate juice for several days and scheduled a strenuous training session in the middle. The researchers saw that the return of strength was improved by pomegranate juice. They confirmed this in a follow-up study, published in the *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*, and found that those participants also experienced less muscle soreness. In another study that was recently completed and published in the *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport*, runners received a pomegranate-fruit extract 30 minutes before an intermittent sprinting challenge. Here, the pomegranate juice increased blood flow after 30 minutes and then supported higher-intensity running and then increased blood flow during recovery. Lastly, in a study involving CrossFit athletes, published in the *Journal of the International Society of Sports Nutrition*, pomegranate extract as part of a pre-workout regimen helped improve WOD performance.

So there you have it. Pomegranate juice or extract seems at this time to have great potential as a CrossFit-performance-supporting food and supplement. Supporting optimal circulation and, potentially, exercise efficiency is certainly desirable for any CrossFit competitor. Meanwhile, reducing soreness and hastening the return of strength after a tough WOD can help the body tolerate more frequent training. □

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HIGH ON CROSSFIT

Name:

Jessica Coughlan

City:

Sydney, NSW

Occupation:

Manager at
CrossFit Norwest

Age:

25

Height:

170cm

Weight:

65kg

Australia is brimming with female CrossFit talent and Jessica Coughlan is no exception. The 25-year-old has never been a stranger to training hard - having started gymnastics at the tender age of three, her passion for exercise only grew stronger as time went by. Finding CrossFit was like hitting the jackpot for Jess, who admits that training is her life.

"It has always been something that I have loved and couldn't imagine my life without - there's no high quite like the one from exercise!"

"Pre CrossFit I was a primary school teacher and training 2-3 times a day at my local gym - free weights, group fitness classes, PT sessions... the works. Training was my priority even though I wasn't training for anything specifically."

It was a personal trainer from her local gym who convinced Jess to give it a go, setting off a chain of events that would

lead Jess into the competitive and addictive world of CrossFit.

"I didn't think I was ready and continued training in 'preparation.' My PT then took me for a couple of CrossFit-style sessions and one of these included Fran. I was so disappointed in my time (it took me 5 minutes at 35kg) when compared to scores online that I knew I had to start training CrossFit properly. Three weeks later after learning the kipping pull-up and performing the WOD at the correct weight I did my first Fran in 2:51."

"Since starting CrossFit I have learned that fitness is being equipped with the capacity and skills to be able to take on anything which life throws at you. That's the kind of fitness I want to possess!"

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ➔

“

Since starting Cross-Fit I have learned that fitness is being equipped with the capacity and skills to be able to take on anything which life throws at you

”





Photo by: Xavier Pixels

Now Jess manages CrossFit Norwest in Sydney with her partner Rob and smashes Fran in just 2:15. But while she loves the training side of things, Jess has no interest in becoming a coach and is happy doing the admin and running the show behind the scenes.

It makes sense, as Jess wants to focus all her energy on success, and understands that being at your peak requires dedication. Jess said, "I have never been the most genetically gifted athlete for the sports I have chosen: not flexible enough for gymnastics, not lean enough for running and not particularly mobile for CrossFit. However, I have still managed to have some success in all of them because I have always been prepared to work hard."

Luckily, Jess loves what she does and enjoys putting in the hard yards at the gym on a daily basis. It's through her hard work that Jess has seen positive changes in herself, not only physically, but mentally and emotionally as well.

"CrossFit increases your mental toughness due to the workload and challenges you face daily in the gym. Through constantly pushing the physical and mental boundaries I have become a lot more confident in my ability. The support from the CrossFit community (at your own box, and in general) is amazing and can only amp you up and improve your self worth."

"I also think I have become more emo-

tional (just ask my partner), particularly during training because I care so much about my performance and my progress. Tears of frustration can be a regular occurrence. Physically, I have always had a bit more muscle than most; I have added to that but now I am in a community where a strong muscular appearance is celebrated and valued."

This CrossFit community that Jess mentions is what draws many people to the sport. Jess said that it's important to be surrounded by people who share the same passion, and celebrate physical achievement and performance rather than image.

"The members at your box will always be your biggest cheer squad and the challenge of the workouts brings out a unique camaraderie amongst your fellow members."

"Training at my box, CrossFit Norwest, makes me feel as if I am a part of a tight-knit family; you get to know everyone and everyone is there for the same reason, supportive of each other and determined to work hard. The feeling of team work and camaraderie is awesome!"

There have been injuries, both before and during CrossFit, and it is through these experiences that Jess has learned to respect her body more, and now invests heavily in recovery. "My investment in terms of time and money in mobility and rehab is now huge and I

encourage any serious CrossFitter to do the same." She believes it's important for everyone, but especially women, to respect their bodies and the CrossFit process.

"Women are generally high achievers and need to understand that everyone's CrossFit journey is different and no one becomes a superstar overnight. Take it slow, invest in quality training and look after yourself. With a consistent approach and the right mental attitude, results will follow."

But even the self-confessed animal lover struggles with motivation from time to time. She suggests the best way to overcome this is to do something you enjoy and keep setting realistic goals.

"I love training but there are days when I would rather curl up in bed and read, so I remind myself why I'm training in the first place and how I would feel later on if I missed a session. It also helps to have someone who makes you accountable: your coach, training partner, 6am crew etc."

Jess believes that the future is very

Competition Diet

SUPPLEMENTS – magnesium, multivitamin, fish oil and calcium

BREAKFAST – a shake with berries, banana, coconut water, Raw Greenz and protein powder

TRAINING – Infrared NRG or Anabolic State

POST TRAINING/LUNCH – rice, eggs, spinach and chicken or tuna

TRAINING - Infrared NRG or Anabolic State

DINNER – meat and vegetables are fairly standard, I will occasionally mix it up with homemade pizza or Mexican

SNACKS: I will snack on baby food throughout the day – there are tons of options and it is clean!

QUICK QUESTIONS >>

Describe yourself in three words:

Driven, dedicated and (a bit) uncoordinated.

What WOD do you most want to improve on? Karen. I despise wall balls but have attempted to make them my friend this year.

Who is your CrossFit hero? My partner Rob Downton, for his ridiculous mental strength.

What is your favourite home-cooked meal? Who cooks it? Butter chicken – me!

What are the staples in your fridge? Eggs, coconut water, bacon, bananas, spinach, rice, ginger nut Paleo bars and meat.

Do you prefer to train outdoors or indoors? Outdoors, because I do it less and love the change of environment, the people and animal watching opportunities, the sunshine and fresh air.

What is your favourite feature? My legs. I used to think that they were too big but now I realise they are perfect for CrossFit.

How many times a week are you at the Box? 6 times a week.

What are your other favourite types of exercise? Les Mills Body Attack (100% true) and running.

What do you have in store for the future? CrossFit Norwest is about to open a new premises 1000 sq m inside and 800 sq m outside.

What's next? The 2014 Regionals.



Photo by: Travis Cooper

Jess's Advice for Beginners:

“Do your research. Choose a box based on its trainers, program (make sure it's right for you) and members – NOT on its price.”

bright for women in CrossFit: “The physical and mental strength displayed by CrossFit women of all levels on a daily basis is incredible. We are surrounded by awesome role models in our own boxes and in the wider community. Female participant numbers are only going to increase and so are the weights expected of us!”

To find out more about Jess and CrossFit Norwest go to www.crossfitnorwest.com and www.rawstrengthandconditioning.com



GET ROPE DIPPED IN

Hone your rope-climbing skills with this insider's guide to one of CrossFit's most bemoaned activities.

By C.J. Logan

**Photos by
Peter Lueders**

*Daniel Wu
Owner/Coach at
CrossFit Code 3*

An intense fear of heights is probably the No. 1 reason people avoid rope climbing. The No. 2 reason, then, has to be an intense hatred of rope climbing. But why such disdain for an activity so joyous that primary school PE teachers have kept it in their curriculum for decades? If kids can enjoy it, why can't adults?

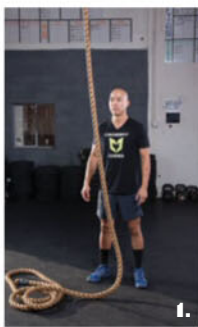
Because so many of us haven't been taught the proper way to climb a rope, that's why. To change this, we sought the help of two rope-climbing experts: David Bowman, a coach at CrossFit Steele Creek in Charlotte, North Carolina (crossfitsteelecreek.com), with 15 years of experience competing in the Firefighter Combat Challenge; and Drew McKenzie, owner and head coach of CrossFit Hyperperformance in Savannah, Georgia. (crossfithyperperformance.com), and a former CrossFit Games competitor. Heed their tips, and if you aren't eventually scaling a rope in two or three quick pulls, you might need to seek psychological help for your acrophobia.

CLIMB THIS WAY

There are two common methods of climbing a rope that are taught in most CrossFit gyms: the S wrap and J hook. The basic premise of each technique is to use one foot to establish an anchor point off which to press with the opposite foot. The method you should choose is mostly a matter of personal preference — which you feel more comfortable with, as well as which one proves more efficient at getting you up the rope. For each method, specific technique can vary from person to person. For example, with the S wrap, the rope usually starts on the inside of the leg and moves outward. But you may feel more comfortable starting it on the outside of the leg and wrapping it around in the opposite direction. There are countless ways to adapt each technique to suit your needs. Here, we break down, step by step, the general parameters of the S and J methods.

**S WRAP
(AKA "SPANISH WRAP")
STEP BY STEP**

1. Stand in front of the rope so that it runs straight down the middle of your body.
2. Reach up as high as possible and grab the rope with one hand over the other.
3. Lift one foot up and wrap the rope behind the lower leg and then back forward so it crosses over the front at about the top of the shoe with the rest of the rope hanging toward the floor.
4. Holding onto the rope tight with your hands, extend your leg (the one with the rope wrapped around it) so it's out in front of you, then step with the opposite foot on the portion of rope in contact with your shoe.
5. Bring your hips back into the rope while reaching farther up it, hand over hand,



TRAINING

until your arms are fully extended above you. This is the completion of one "pull."

6. Take your top foot off the rope and slide the opposite leg up it by bending the knee, maintaining the S wrap, then go into another pull by stepping on the rope at the top of the shoe with the opposite foot.

Repeat in this fashion until you've reached the top of the rope.

Lower yourself down the rope under control with your arms, hand under hand, keeping the rope wrapped around your leg and your opposite foot pressed lightly against it to keep the rope steady.

COACHING CUES

>> "A lot of people who are brand new to rope climbing feel more connected to the rope using the S wrap," Bowman says. "The problem is, with the S, the rope often comes up with you, and you don't get any distance when this happens, so people get frustrated. You have to do a little kick to free the rope after each pull."

>> "I think the S wrap is a bit more beginner oriented," McKenzie says, "where you're getting used to climbing the rope and making sure your legs are lifting your mass and not your arms so much. It can help build confidence on the rope."

J HOOK

(AKA "RUSSIAN WRAP")

STEP BY STEP

1. Stand in front of the rope so that it runs down one side of your body. (If you're right-handed, this will probably be your right side.)

2. Reach up as high as possible and grab the rope one hand over the other.

3. Lift your right foot up along the inside of the rope, then immediately lift your left foot so it comes up underneath the rope. Your right foot should then be stepping down into the J-shaped loop created by the left foot.

4. Extend your legs, then reach hand over hand to travel farther up the rope.

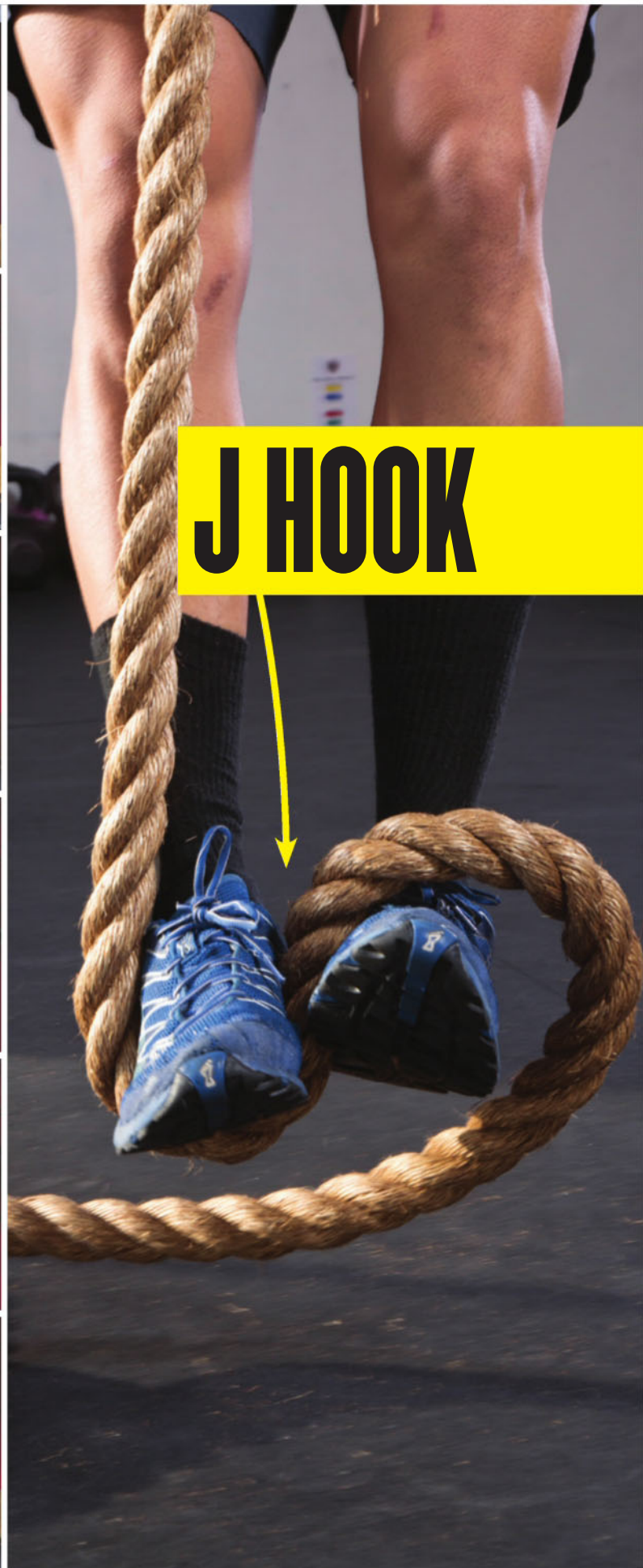
5. From here, bend your hips and knees to bring your legs up as high as possible in front of you, establishing the J-shaped clinch on the rope once again. Extend your legs, reach up the rope with your hands and repeat the sequence until you're at the top of the rope.

6. Lower yourself down the rope under control with your arms, hand under hand, maintaining the J hook lightly with your feet to control your speed on the descent.

COACHING CUES

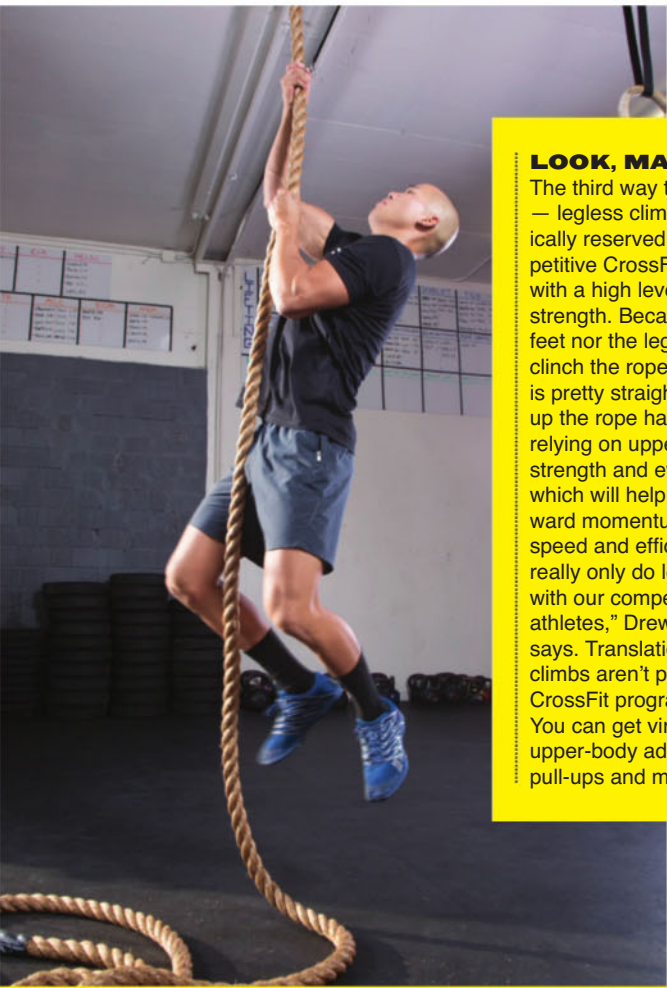
>> "The J hook method is speed," McKenzie says. "If I have to get up the rope quick, I'm not going to want to spend time wrapping and re-wrapping my leg. I'm going to J-hook the whole time. I'm 160cm, and using the J-hook, I can get up a 5m rope with two pulls — a jump and two pulls and I'm at the top. Using an S wrap, it's three or four pulls."

>> "The analogy with the J is, you're doing knees-to-elbows," Bowman says. "Knees-to-elbows, then stand tall."



LOOK, MA, NO LEGS!

The third way to climb a rope — legless climbing — is typically reserved only for competitive CrossFitters and those with a high level of upper-body strength. Because neither the feet nor the legs are allowed to clinch the rope, the technique is pretty straightforward: move up the rope hand over hand, relying on upper-body pulling strength and even kipping, which will help generate upward momentum and improve speed and efficiency. "We really only do legless climbs with our competitive CrossFit athletes," Drew McKenzie says. Translation: if legless climbs aren't part of your CrossFit program, no worries. You can get virtually the same upper-body adaptations with pull-ups and muscle-ups.



CAN'T CLIMB YET?

The following exercises and drills, recommended by Dave Bowman and Drew McKenzie, will help enhance upper-body and grip strength as well as teach lower-body technique so you'll be scaling a rope in due time.



» **SEATED HIP PULLS:** Seated on the floor, position the rope on your legs and feet in the S-wrap position with your legs in a 90-degree kick-out position, then pull your hips to the rope. That's one rep. "This will get you used to the wrap, and it will also show you what it feels like to pull your hips to the rope," McKenzie says. "After you get used to this, you can switch to standing up and kicking out from there."



» **LETDOWNS:** With your feet flat on the floor, Bowman advises, lie on your back with your knees bent and the rope running between your legs. Grasp the rope in both hands and pull yourself up, hand over hand, using only your upper body, until you reach a standing position. Reverse the motion to let yourself down to where your back is once again touching the floor. McKenzie uses a similar drill, only with the legs extended throughout, called "body trips."

Workout Scaling Option: three letdowns or body trips equals one rope climb.



>> TOWEL PULL-UPS:

Drape a towel over a pull-up bar and perform strict pull-ups. This will enhance grip strength above all else.

Workout Scaling Option: three or four towel pull-ups equals one rope climb, McKenzie says.



SCALE THIS WAY

Here's another scaling option: half rope climbs. If a WOD calls for multiple climbing reps and you're still shaky on technique, upper-body strength or comfort level, climb only halfway up the rope before coming back down on each rep. "Climbing a 5m rope is a little intimidating," Drew McKenzie says. "You want to get that confidence built up, and as a coach, you want to make people successful. You don't want people failing out in a training workout, especially on the rope."

TRAINING



>> BOX STARTS: This drill is best for individuals who already possess the strength to climb a rope but need help getting comfortable with technique. Place a plyo box next to the rope and begin by standing on the box. Grab the rope with your hands as high as possible and clinch it with your legs in either an S wrap or J hook. From here, attempt to go up the rope, or simply lower yourself down the short distance if you're not comfortable ascending upward yet. "I like doing this with beginners because sometimes it's just a matter of having all this rope on the floor that gets people mixed up," Bowman says. "So if I start on a box, I'm already up the rope a little ways and I can try the up-and-down part from 30 centimetres off the ground and test how I'm going to address the rope." *Workout Scaling Option:* perform all climbs in a given WOD starting from on top of a box.

>> OTHER EXERCISES: Use these moves to improve your rope-climbing skills: kipping or strict pull-ups, knees-to-elbows, toes-to-bars, farmer's walks (for grip strength).

CLIMBING PITFALLS

Are your rope skills lacking? Assuming you're not acrophobic (afraid of heights), the culprit could be one of the following mistakes:

>> USING MORE ARMS THAN LEGS. David Bowman says effective rope climbing should be roughly 70 per cent lower body and core exertion and 30 per cent upper body. "The grip is only used in transition while we're moving our feet," he says. "A common mistake I see, especially with guys, is trying to pull with the arms more than using the legs," Drew McKenzie says. "People get that mindset of muscling through the rope, and yeah, you can do it for one or two reps, but when the workout calls for multiple rope climbs, you have to learn how to use your legs."

>> JUMPING OFF THE ROPE ON THE DESCENT. You may be close to the bottom on the way down, but that doesn't mean it's OK to jump off, even from only a few feet up. Doing so is not only potentially jarring on the knees, but landing on the rope and turning an ankle is common. Nobody climbs a rope well when injured.

>> BURNING YOURSELF. Sliding down the rope in a hurry can cause some pretty gnarly skin burns (particularly on the legs when using the S wrap), which can negatively affect future performance. "If I'm in the middle of a workout and I've burned my leg already," Bowman says, "it's going to be hard for me to jump back up there and do the second, third and fourth rope climbs." McKenzie adds: "I don't advocate dropping down from the rope unless maybe you're Rich Froning." To help

protect yourself from burns, wear long socks when practising climbing and during WODs that include rope climbs.

>> POOR FOOT AWARENESS. "With the J hook, one of the mistakes I see a lot is people not looking at where their feet are going," McKenzie says. "Watch your feet actually lock onto the rope so that you know the lock is secure before you stand. If you're doing it right, your feet are going to be up around chest height. Once you're up, it's just a quick glance down to make sure you're locked in so you're not having to search for the rope with your feet."

>> KICKING DOWN, NOT OUT. With the S-wrap technique, many inexperienced climbers find themselves in the middle of the rope going nowhere. This is often caused by a tendency to kick the feet in the wrong direction. "A lot of times, once folks wrap with their feet, they end up kicking down because of flexibility issues," McKenzie says. "Once they do this, their legs are already locked out and their hips are already really close to the rope, so they don't go anywhere. We tell them to kick their legs straight out in front of them once the rope is locked so the legs are at 90-degree angles at the hips. Then, to move vertically, all I'm doing is basically pulling my hips up to the rope. Then reset, kick out and repeat." □



CWCKOQ

for

COCONUT

LATELY, IT SEEMS LIKE THE WHOLE WORLD HAS **GONE BONKERS FOR COCONUT**. BUT WE'RE WILLING TO BET THAT MOST PEOPLE STILL DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT IT. **IS IT A FRUIT, A SEED OR A NUT? AND WHAT'S INSIDE IT — COCONUT MILK OR COCONUT WATER? AND ISN'T IT FULL OF SATURATED FAT? READ ON FOR ALL THE ANSWERS.**

BY ELKE NELSON, PH.D.





SOME YEARS AGO, YOU COULD FIND COCONUT CAKE ON SOME RESTAURANTS' MENUS, AND YOU COULD FIND COCONUT-SCENTED SHAMPOO IN THE TOILETRIES AISLE AT YOUR LOCAL GROCERY STORE. YOU COULD EVEN, IF YOU WERE LIVING IN A BIG CITY WITH A THRIVING NATURAL-FOOD SCENE, FIND GRATED COCONUT IN HEALTH-FOOD STORES. AND, OF COURSE, IF YOU WERE LUCKY ENOUGH TO FIND YOURSELF ON A TROPICAL ISLAND, YOU COULD FIND COCONUTS LYING AROUND ALL OVER THE PLACE.

BUT THESE DAYS, COCONUT IS APPEARING EVERYWHERE FROM WATER TO JUMBO-SIZE JUGS IN WAREHOUSE STORES, AND NOT JUST BECAUSE IT'S TASTY AND REMINDS YOU OF YOUR LAST VACATION.

Coconut 101

The first thing you need to know about coconuts is that they're not in fact nuts. The word "coconut" is typically used as an umbrella term to describe the entire coconut palm (*Cocos nucifera*), the seed and the fruit. But botanically, coconuts are classified as drupes, a type of fruit that contains three layers: an outside layer or skin (exocarp), a middle fleshy layer (mesocarp) and a hard inner layer (endocarp) that encloses the seed. The term "drupe" might be a new one, but if you've ever had peaches, cherries, almonds or olives, this isn't your first rodeo.

Fresh coconut meat contains some protein, carbohydrates and fibre but is predominantly made up of fat, and it's that fat that's responsible for giving coconuts their bad reputation.

Fat Follies

One of the major controversies that erupts when discussing the Paleolithic

diet involves saturated fat. It usually goes something like this:

Me: "My diet is rich in meat and coconut because the types of fats they contain offer a lot of health benefits."

Lipophobe: "Fat from meats and coconuts? Isn't that saturated fat? You're supposed to avoid saturated fat. Isn't that what gives people heart attacks?"

At this point, I try to explain that it's the type of saturated fat that dictates its health impact. This is not an easy sell; most people have heard over and over again that consuming saturated fat is directly linked to atherosclerosis, heart attack and other significant cardiovascular incidents. The US Department of Agriculture still recommends keeping saturated fat intake to less than 7 per cent of total calories to reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.

But what the USDA will not tell you is that a growing body of research

suggests that it may not be saturated fat that's detrimental. A more likely culprit is all the other junk that hitches a ride with saturated fat. For instance, we are highly unlikely to benefit from eating a diet high in saturated fat sourced from frozen pizza and Oreos, or to improve our health by consuming lots of saturated fat in addition to superfluous amounts of processed carbohydrates and sugars. A diet full of quality, grass-fed meats and coconut fats, on the other hand, can work wonders for your health.

At this point, it should come as no surprise that the fat in coconuts is saturated. In fact, pure, virgin coconut oil contains more than 90 per cent saturated fat, the highest amount of any fat. But unlike the saturated fat found in, say, beef or dairy, coconut oil contains a mixture of short- and medium-chain fatty acids (also known as medium-chain triglycerides), namely lauric (about 50 per cent of the total), myristic (about 18 per cent) and

Coconut Many Ways

Coconut is not just a vehicle for saturated fat. In fact, some refer to it as the “tree of life” because it produces drink, fibre, food, fuel, utensils and musical instruments, among other things. Fortunately, the sheer variety of coconut products makes it easy to incorporate the healthy drupe into your everyday diet. Some examples of coconut products include the following:

capric (about 6 to 7 per cent) acids. It's this unique composition of fats that sets coconut oil apart from harmful sources of saturated fats, like those Oreos.

Interestingly, it's the saturated fats in coconut that have been recognised for making it healthy. Studies suggest that coconut's major medium-chain triglyceride, lauric acid (in the form of monolaurin), has anti-viral, anti-bacterial and anti-protozoal properties. (The only other notable natural source of lauric acid is breast milk. Perhaps this could explain why babies who are breast-fed longer are generally healthier?)

But medium-chain triglycerides also have performance benefits. Because they don't get metabolised the same way as longer fatty acids, they're a quick source of energy and a poor source of stored fat. According to studies, MCTs can increase energy expenditure, promote satiety and support healthy weight control, particularly when used in the place of sources of long-chain triglycerides. This doesn't mean that you should start eating coconut oil straight from the jar every day, but it does mean that researchers have recognised its potential as a weight-loss tool compared with other forms of fat.

Similarly, MCTs do not have the same bile requirements as other fatty acids, so they may be a more innocuous fat source for people with gall-bladder issues. Or, if you're someone who has low levels of “good cholesterol” (HDL), coconut oil might be something to consider. Although a high intake of coconut oil can increase total cholesterol, its potential to improve HDL might be a worthwhile trade-off.

Coconut oil also might do wonders for your liver. One study evaluated the ability of coconut oil compared with silymarin (the active ingredient in milk thistle) to protect liver damage in rats. Researchers fed rats either silymarin or coconut oil for seven days and then dosed them with massive amounts of acetaminophen (Tylenol) to damage their livers. Both silymarin and high doses of coconut oil were reported to have liver-protective effects.

Given all these benefits, why does coconut have a bad rep? Two words: politics and economics. Without getting into too much detail, coconut oil was wrongly accused based on a perfect storm of misinformation. It began in the 1950s with the concept that hydrogenated vegetable oils cause heart disease and was propagated by the anti-saturated-fat and anti-tropical-oil campaigns that proliferated in subsequent years.

It's also worth noting that some of the research that bashes coconut oil uses oil that has been hydrogenated. Hydrogenated coconut oil is a whole different animal compared with the virgin stuff, full of murderous trans fats, just like any other hydrogenated oil.

★ COCONUT MEAT

This is the fruit of the coconut. When you crack open a coconut and are left with the white “flesh,” that's the meat. Next time you're at your local food store, pick up a coconut and a cleaver and get crackin'. Or if you're lucky, you might be able to find coconut among other fresh fruits already cut up and in a ready-to-eat container.





★ **COCONUT FLAKES/COCONUT CHIPS/SHREDDED COCONUT**

This is dried, unsweetened coconut meat, and it's a great addition to any trail mix. Bring some with you when you travel or use it in your next baking recipe. But make sure to buy the natural, unsweetened kind rather than the sweetened stuff that tends to sneak into the baking aisles of local grocery stores.

★ **COCONUT MILK**

Among the most common coconut products, coconut milk is a hearty, satiating source of good fats. The canned stuff can be found in most stores and makes a great addition to smoothies and sauces. If you're looking for a healthy addition to your morning cup o' Joe or you're sick of drinking black coffee, try whipping some coconut milk and adding a dollop of this non-dairy whipped-cream alternative.

★ **COCONUT BUTTER/COCONUT CONCENTRATE/COCONUT MANNA**

Coconut butter is just ground-up coconut meat, and the stuff is delicious. Use it in place of nut butters or for baking.

★ **COCONUT OIL**

This is 100 per cent fat extracted from coconut meat. The high saturated fat content of coconut oil makes the substance solid at room temperature. But don't be alarmed — saturated fats are stable fats. This means that, in the context of heat or cooking, coconut oil is a better choice compared to less stable unsaturated fats like olive oil. If you're looking for a quick, delicious source of healthy medium-chain triglycerides, try blending coconut oil into your morning coffee.

★ **COCONUT WATER**

Available almost everywhere, it has become nearly impossible to keep up with all the different brands and flavours of coconut water that have popped up in the last couple of years. Although coconut water is predominantly sugar and should be consumed moderately, it can be a great choice in the right context. Coconut water contains more potassium than a banana, so if you find yourself dehydrated, sick or in need of replenishing after a tough workout, it's a good choice. According to the Library of Congress, doctors used coconut water in place of IV solutions during World War II and during the Vietnam War when availability of IV solution was limited.

★ **COCONUT FLOUR**

After the oil is extracted, coconut meat can be ground up to make flour. Coconut flour is a gluten-free and relatively nutrient-dense alternative to flour. Coconut flour can be found in most stores and can be used in a variety of different foods. Next time you decide to make pancakes or muffins, grab yourself a bag of coconut flour instead of White Wings.

★ **COCONUT AMINOS**

This product comes from something referred to as coconut sap, which can be obtained from coconut tree blossoms before they mature into coconuts, and it is rich in vitamins, minerals and amino acids — which makes sense, given its purpose is to feed the growing coconut. After the sap is aged, the result is coconut aminos, a great soy-free alternative to soy sauce. However, collecting the sap kills the flower, which means coconut production is sacrificed. Guess we can't have our (coconut) cake and eat it, too. ☐

Elke Nelson, Ph.D., is the assistant manager of a clinical writing group; the founder of ESNFit LLC, a company devoted to improving health and performance through personalized meal and fitness plans; a member of the Whole9 seminar team; an editorial board member for the scientific Journal of Evolution and Health; and a Level-1 CrossFit coach.

CHILL OUT WITH THIS
**COCKTAIL-INSPIRED
POST-WORKOUT SHAKE.**

Recipe developed By Danielle Radvak
photography Maya Visnyei

**Nutritional
Breakdown**

29% CARBS
65% PROTEIN
6% FAT

Kick Back and Relax

MOJITO PROTEIN SHAKE

Ready in 5 minutes
Makes 1 serving

1 scoop vanilla whey protein
powder

1/3 cup unsweetened almond milk

1/2 tbsp honey

10–12 fresh mint leaves

1 tsp lime zest

Juice of 1/2 fresh lime

1 cup ice cubes

**Blend all ingredients
until smooth. Serve.**

Nutrients per serving:

Calories: 150, Total Fats: 1 g,
Saturated Fat: 0 g, Trans Fat: 0 g,
Cholesterol: 5 mg, Salt: 100 mg,
Total Carbohydrates: 11 g, Dietary
Fibre: 0 g, Sugars: 9 g, Protein: 24 g,
Iron: 0 mg



SMASHING STEREOTYPES

WOMEN IN CROSSFIT

✦ by Erin Leckie



Photos by: Shutterstock.com

Fran, Chelsea, Angie, Diane, Barbara, Elizabeth... These aren't the girls next door. They're the leading ladies of CrossFit, and if you're a veteran firebreather, you'll have already been introduced. For the rest of us, the first time you meet one of these girls can be a rude shock. These are the names of CrossFit's benchmark workouts, designed to measure performance and improvements through repeated yet irregular appearances in your workout of the day. If you're new to the sport, it's about time you got acquainted. Just make sure you don't forget Grace and Helen, or they might get upset.

It's only natural that these physically gruelling, mentally exhausting WODs take on such classic female identities. Women are dominating CrossFit boxes all over the world. Finally, preconceptions of the frail and submissive female are being smashed with every snatch, squat and muscle-up. The era of seriously fit chicks has begun.

There have been many misconceptions over the years when it comes to women's strength training. Some high-profile fitness 'experts' even seem hellbent on keeping us on the never ending, calorie-counting treadmill. One famous Hollywood personal trainer even advocates that a woman should never lift more than 1.5kg for fear of turning into a she-hulk. Luckily for women everywhere, this kind of fitness quackery is coming unstuck through the sheer strength and physiques of CrossFit's top female athletes.

The Box cover model and owner of CrossFit Invoke, Christmas Abbott, is just one fine example... with a deadlift of over twice her bodyweight! Then there's Annie Thorisdottir, Stacie Tovar, Lauren Plume, Andrea Agar and Australia's very own Denae Brown, just to name a few.

Despite the elite fitness, mental toughness and superstar success of these women, some people are still questioning the place of women in CrossFit. Undoubtedly the biggest

question mark hangs over whether or not the female body is designed for the demands of CrossFit, leading some to ask, "Is CrossFit unhealthy for women?"

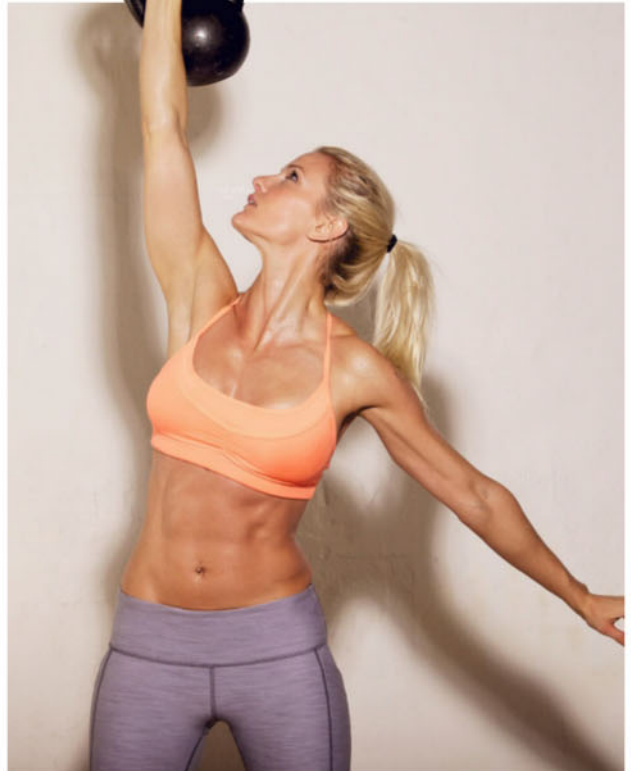
There's no doubt that CrossFit can be dangerous, just like any other sport or activity. We covered this topic extensively on page 42 in the article: 'Is CrossFit Dangerous?' But it's been proven that women who practise the same, well-designed strength building programs as men benefit not only from decreased body fat, but an increase in lean muscle mass, soft-tissue modelling and perhaps most importantly, enhanced self-confidence.

A study published in the *Physician and Sports Medicine* Vol. 26, *Strength Training for Women: Debunking Myths That Block Opportunity*, found that, based on a strength-to-lean-body-mass ratio, men and women are of roughly equal strength and 'when strength is calculated per cross-sectional area of muscle, no significant gender difference exists'. The study explained that when it comes to any type of physical exercise, each person must be assessed individually, and their training scaled appropriately, rather than being based on preconceived ideas about gender.

So with women (literally) being able to do anything men can do when it comes to exercise, there seems to be no plausible reason why anyone should think CrossFit is particularly more dangerous for females. Still, it's hard to get that across to the haters.

The next argument against women in CrossFit is the myth that CrossFit, and other weightlifting sports, make women 'bulky'. Not only is this generalisation offensive to many, it's also just plain untrue. Only women with a genetic predisposition for hypertrophy will see significant changes in physical size when participating in high-volume, high-intensity training – and this isn't necessarily a bad thing.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ➔



Photos by: Shutterstock.com

Others will simply reduce body fat and increase lean weight, which can only ever be a good thing.²

When it comes to propagating this kind of body-hate, the worst offenders are the keyboard warriors. Sadly, these are mostly other women who, instead of building people up and praising them for their hard work and achievements, remain solely fixated on the superficial world of aesthetics. Maybe it's because the female

CrossFitter physique is relatively new. Never before have we seen so many everyday women defining their bodies and themselves through such vigorous means. Thankfully, there are an equal amount of ladies (and men) out there who appreciate this very visual display of strength and even aspire to reach it.

We asked our Aussie Profile girl, Chloe Sadler, what she thought about the body image debate. Chloe said all women who

are starting CrossFit should simply throw away the scales. "You are not getting bigger! Trust the process because you will use muscle you never thought you had. Muscle does weigh more than fat, so get off the scales and have a DEXA scan every 3-6 months instead." After CrossFitting for 12 months, Chloe's body fat percentage dropped from 25 per cent to 10 per cent, and she said she now looks and feels the best she ever has.

But still there are some people out there who say that muscle-ups, wall balls and box jumps are just downright unfeminine. And although I'm sure there aren't any CrossFit women out there who would agree (and I dare you to say it to their face), it comes down to personal preference. If you don't like it, don't do it. If you don't want to lose fat and lean out, stay back. And if you don't want to gain mental, emotional and physical strength, stick to your shiny cross-trainer.

CrossFit and its 'girls' are working miracles in crushing the social stigma around women and weights, and allowing ladies everywhere to achieve their physical and well-being potential. Now you don't have to be an Olympic athlete to look like one, or need a man to open your jar of jam. You just need to start CrossFit. □

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**BENEFITS OF CROSSFIT
FOR WOMEN**

- **INCREASED BONE STRENGTH, REDUCING THE RISK OF OSTEOPOROSIS**
- **IMPROVED JOINT STABILITY TO HELP PREVENT INJURY**
- **DECREASE IN NON-FUNCTIONAL BODY FAT AND INCREASE IN LEAN MUSCLE MASS**
- **HIGHER METABOLIC RATE**
- **INCREASED FUNCTIONAL STRENGTH FOR EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES**
- **ENHANCED SELF-ESTEEM AND CONFIDENCE**

WOMM

THE WORKOUT:

DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY

Technical: 9.0
 Metabolic: 9.5
 Volume: 7.0
 Strength: 7.0
 OVERALL: 8.125

CLASSIFIER

Firebreather: 10-plus rounds
 Excellent: 7 to 9 rounds
 Good: 4 to 7 rounds
 Fair: 4 to 7 rounds scaled

AS MANY ROUNDS AS POSSIBLE
 IN 10 MINUTES OF:

- ❑ 3 SQUAT CLEAN-AND-JERKS
 (MEN: 90 KILOGRAMS / WOMEN: 45 KILOGRAMS)
- ❑ 6 BAR-FACING BURPEES
- ❑ 9 TOES-TO-BARS

10 MINUTES TOO LONG

This strength-and-stamina sprint combines the complexity of Olympic lifts with the suck of burpees.

By Isaiah Rhodes

Ten minutes. To most of the fitness community, this doesn't even qualify as a workout. "What could you possibly get done in that amount of time?" they might ask. Tommy Hackenbruck, team captain of Hack's Pack UTE, which posted consecutive Affiliate Cup championships at the 2012 and 2013 Reebok CrossFit Games, has the answer: a metabolic bruiser that will feel about 10 minutes too long.

"The goal here is a lot of reps and really high intensity," Hackenbruck says.

This AMRAP gauntlet's 3-6-9-rep scheme may look innocuous enough, but let us know how you feel after one round.

"Men may scale down the weight to 60 or 50kg, and women can scale down to 45 or 33kg," Hackenbruck says. "Generally, do not exceed 75 per cent of your one-rep-max clean-and-jerk on this workout. Toes-to-bar can be scaled to knees-to-elbows or to a sit-up, for beginners. Also, beginners should just work on a power clean-and-jerk or even a hang clean-and-jerk. Don't be afraid to scale back to simpler movements and get a lot of reps in." Petranek says. "Do not let your butt come up into the air as if you were in Downward Dog. Keep a wide stance, which will help with balance."

COACH SAYS

1. HIGH INTENSITY WINS:

"Set yourself up for success on this one," Hackenbruck says. "Scale weights slightly or use simpler movements so you can keep moving the whole time."

2. PRIME THE MOVEMENTS:

"If you're doing squat clean-and-jerks, make sure to do a few reps beforehand at a heavier weight to prep your body," Hackenbruck says. "If doing as prescribed, for example, I would do a few reps at 85 to 115kg, then practise a couple of sets of three touch-and-go clean-and-jerks at 70kg to get ready."

3. TOES-TO-BAR REDUX:

"If you're tired or unable to string together nine toes-to-bar, then break up your sets," Hackenbruck says. "It's easy to burn out on this movement. As soon as your rhythm gets off, you should drop and reset. I would break sets up into 5+4 or 3+3+3 toward the end of the workout to make sure you don't miss any reps." ❑



PALEO PROWESS:

WOMEN'S EDITION

By Joanna Guy

The Paleo diet is the recommended diet for male and female CrossFitters. For many women, though, it can be confusing to know whether this is the right diet for them and if it covers all their nutrition needs. The Paleo or "caveman" diet conjures up thoughts of traditionally male concepts such as lots of animal protein and hearty meals. Not to mention most of the leaders in the Paleo movement have been men.

Evolution, however, is not discerning between genders. The Paleo diet or a similar template may be the best nutrition plan for females. Here is why.

ELIMINATES SUGAR

You would have to be living under a rock if you haven't heard about the dangers of sugar.

It is highly addictive and interferes with the hormone leptin, which signals to our bodies and brain that we are full. This means it is impossible to know when to stop eating sugar and is therefore the main culprit in weight gain.

This has significant health impacts for women because fat cells produce estrogen. Excess estrogen in the body results in cramps, cysts, PMS and mood swings. Sugar also stimulates testosterone production in the ovaries. This may lead to decreased fertility, decreased libido, acne, hair loss or male pattern hair growth.

Sugar can fast track the ageing process, something every female would like to avoid. It interferes with collagen and elastin production, which are the building blocks of the skin. Even small amounts of sugar can lead to dark circles under the eyes, wrinkles and dehydrated skin.

ELIMINATES SOY

Whilst there is a lot of conflicting evidence around soy, the Paleo movement encourages eliminating all soy products. This is because it is a phytoestrogen, which means it can mimic the effects of naturally occurring estrogen. This may result in a number of negative health effects particularly for women, which are mentioned above.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Joanna received her Bachelor of Nutrition and Dietetics from Monash University, Melbourne, in 2006.

After working in Corporate Health for a number of years, Joanna is now the National Sales Manager for PurePharma Australia.

ENCOURAGES OPTIMAL OMEGA-3 TO OMEGA-6 RATIO

If you do CrossFit, it is extremely important to reduce inflammation in the body. Not only is inflammation the root cause of health problems like heart disease, it will also significantly affect your recovery. For women, inflammation may also increase menstrual cramping and high levels of Omega-6 fat in the diet can even decrease frontal lobe

formation and intelligence of offspring*.

The Paleo diet supports limiting (inflammatory) omega-6 fats, including seed oils such as vegetable, corn and soybean oils, grains and grain-fed animal products. It is also encouraged to increase (anti-inflammatory) omega-3 fats by eating wild deep-sea fish such as salmon and taking a high quality fish oil supplement. An ultra clean fish oil supplement is recommended over high in-

takes of fish due to the increasing levels of toxic mercury in our fish supply.

ELIMINATES GRAINS

Bread, pasta and cereals are off the list when it comes to Paleo. Although these can sometimes be the hardest foods to give up, many people will experience an increased level of health and wellbeing, with less bloating and fewer gut issues. Grains are inflammatory to

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ➔

the body, which again can impact your training and recovery. They can also be inflammatory to the digestive system and may lead to leaky gut. This is a condition where the intestinal lining becomes more porous, with more holes developing that are larger in size. This results in larger, undigested food molecules and other “nasties” (yeast, toxins, other forms of waste) that your body normally doesn’t allow through, flowing freely into your bloodstream.

Leaky gut can give rise to autoimmune diseases frequently found in women such as rheumatoid arthritis and Hashimoto’s thyroiditis.

On top of this, grains are broken down by the body into sugar. Too much sugar results in a myriad of health issues for women that we have discussed earlier, including reduced fertility, loss of libido and acne.

IT’S NUTRIENT-DENSE

The Paleo diet not only eliminates problematic foods, it also

focuses on high quantities of nutrient-dense foods. Nutrients such as magnesium, zinc, Vitamin C and folate are particularly important for females doing CrossFit and training at high intensities. The types of nutrient-dense foods include plenty of vegetables rich in vitamins and minerals, fruits such as berries that are high in antioxidants, free range eggs and animal products that are higher in omega-3 fats and other nutrients like choline and Vitamin K2. These foods are extremely important to reduce inflammation, balance hormones and have a healthy reproductive system.

ENCOURAGES AWARENESS OF HUNGER SIGNALS

One of the most beneficial parts of the Paleo diet is that it does not require counting calories. It does not encourage you to be restrictive with your food intake. It actually encourages you to eat when hungry and stop when full. This is one of the most important factors for balancing female hormones and being at



SAMPLE PALEO MEAL PLAN

PROTEIN AND CARBOHYDRATE PORTION SIZES WILL VARY DEPENDING ON THE INDIVIDUAL AND THEIR ENERGY EXPENDITURE, GOALS ETC. PRE- AND POST-WORKOUT MEALS MAY ALSO NEED TO BE INCLUDED FOR FEMALE CROSSFITTERS.



BREAKFAST

2 scrambled eggs, ¼ avocado, large handful sautéed kale and mushrooms

LUNCH

Large chicken salad with mixed leafy greens, cucumber, roast sweet potato, red onion, ¼ avocado, sprinkle sunflower seeds, dressing of olive oil and lemon juice

SNACK

Celery and carrot sticks with a tablespoon of nut butter

DINNER

Salmon, asparagus, mushroom, broccoli, bamboo shoot coconut curry on cauliflower “rice”

DESSERT

1/2 cup mixed berries, slivered almonds and cinnamon

Photo by: Shutterstock.com

a healthy weight. Normal hormone production and being in sync with your natural hunger signals go hand in hand. Over-eating can increase hormone production above healthy levels, whilst under-eating can decrease them below healthy levels. Both over- and under-production of hormones can lead to impaired mental health, mood disturbances, fatigue, infer-

tility and insomnia. Whilst nutrition is by no means “one size fits all”, the Paleo diet certainly has a number of benefits for females doing CrossFit. It helps to reduce inflammation and enhance recovery; it promotes a healthy and sustainable weight; it can help to boost fertility and sex drive and supports good mental health. □

References
*www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12509593

GEAR BOX

Men's Must Have

Reebok Men's CrossFit Performance Boardshorts

RRP: \$84.99

The Reebok Men's CrossFit Performance Boardshorts feature PlayDry fabric technology, which wicks sweat and moisture away to keep you cool and dry. The two-way stretch woven fabric offers great range of motion, while the antimicrobial fabric finish keeps you feeling fresher for longer.

Features

- Fabric: 87% polyester, 13% elastane
- PlayDry fabric technology
- Antimicrobial fabric finish keeps you feeling fresher for longer
- Two-way stretch woven for freedom of movement
- Bonded stretch gusset for comfort
- Contrast graphic for style

Pick one up from reebok.com.au

Women's Must Have

TheBrave Women's Burnout Combo Top

RRP: \$54.95

This versatile long-sleeve is no doubt set to become a wardrobe staple. With the perfect combination of fabrics; utilising the soft and breathable poly/cotton blend for the sleeves coupled with their vintage combed cotton for the body, there is little doubt TheBrave's Burnout Combo is both a sight to behold and certainly passes the 'extreme comfort' test.

TheBrave are hell-bent on testing their garments before release so you can be sure this top will stand up to the rigors of training. However, given the fresh, colourful design, it would easily look just as good on the street as it does in the gym.

Features

- Preshrunk
- Tri-blend material
- Lightweight, breathable and durable
- 50% Polyester/25% cotton/25% rayone

Get yours from thebrave.com.au

PALEO BLONDIES

If cavemen had had this recipe, they too would have made blondies. This is a nutrient-dense treat that will handily address even the most insistent sweet tooth.

BY ELKE NELSON, PH.D. ◊ PHOTO BY ROBERT REIFF





Ingredients:

3 eggs, room temperature
1 cup organic creamed coconut
¼ cup organic raw honey
1½ teaspoons organic vanilla extract
½ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon Himalayan pink sea salt
¼ cup organic coconut flour
⅓ cup pecans, chopped
⅓ cup dark chocolate chips/chunks
1 tablespoon coconut oil or coconut oil spray
(for pan)
Optional: 1 teaspoon cinnamon

Preheat the oven to 160°C. Beat eggs in a medium/large mixing bowl. Melt creamed coconut and add to the bowl, then mix in the remaining wet ingredients. In a separate bowl, mix together the dry ingredients. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients and mix. Spoon mixture into a greased 27cm x 17cm brownie pan and spread evenly across the pan. Bake in the preheated oven for 20 to 25 minutes until the edges turn golden brown. Let cool and cut into squares. Store in the refrigerator. Makes 15 squares/servings.

Nutrition Facts (per serving): 187 calories, 3g protein, 13g carbs, 14g fat

OUT OF BULIMIA

AND INTO THE BOX



CHLOE'S STORY

By Erin Leckie



IT IS ESTIMATED THAT
**ONE
IN 5**

**AUSTRALIAN
WOMEN WILL
SUFFER FROM
BULIMIA NERVOSA**

AT SOME POINT IN THEIR LIVES, WITH THE ONSET OF THE DISORDER TYPICALLY OCCURRING BETWEEN 16-18 YEARS OLD*. WHAT'S EVEN SCARIER IS THAT FACT THAT MOST SUFFERERS WILL HIDE THEIR TORMENT FROM OTHERS FOR UP TO TEN YEARS, AT A GREAT COST TO THEIR PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH. WITH CONSTANT BOMBARDMENT FROM THE MEDIA AND EXTERNAL PRESSURE TO ACHIEVE THE 'IDEAL' BODY, IT'S NO WONDER SO MANY YOUNG WOMEN (AND MEN) TURN TO SUCH DRASTIC METHODS.

Photo by: Xavier Pixels



CHLOE'S ADVICE FOR WOMEN CONSIDERING CROSSFIT:

- Go for it
- Take small steps
- LOVE yourself and throw away your scales
- Do not compare yourself to ANYONE
- Don't feel intimidated, we all started at the beginning and I promise you will not regret it.

But there are some who are blazing a new path, out of the bingeing and into the box. Meet Chloe Sadler. Chloe was a self-confessed yo-yo dieter and gym junkie who spent hours every week at the gym, slaving away on a treadmill. Like many young women her age, Chloe was overwhelmed with self-doubt, self-sabotage and guilt, which eventually lead to bulimia. That is, until she found CrossFit.

Now Chloe is a registered personal trainer with a level one CrossFit certificate. She even owns her own box. She said that finding CrossFit finally allowed her to face her demons. "My life was like a merry-go-round, I had tried everything. I listen to so much crap out there and then realised that I was my own answer and that helping people change their lives and see their full potential was my passion and what I wanted to do for a living."

"It's given me a whole new meaning to my life. Honestly, who knows where I'd be or what I'd be doing had I not given it a go and met my partner Shane. Now we own our own CrossFit gym, CrossFit HF in Penrith, and seeing it grow and change lives makes my heart smile."

Physically, Chloe is happy to finally see her muscles take shape and admits she loves it when people ask her, "do you lift?" The petite powerhouse firmly believes that strong is the new skinny. But her outer appearance wasn't the biggest challenge. Chloe confessed that her mentality had to change before anything else would follow.

"I had to change the way I thought about training and nutrition. Training for three hours a day wasn't necessary and eating more foods (like healthy fats) was. I then had to change the way I thought about myself and my appearance. These things impacted my

performance a great deal and when I finally let go of the worry and trusted the process it all fell into place."

Chloe said CrossFit allowed her to get in tune with herself.

"I feel stronger internally and find it easier to deal with life's daily challenges and struggles, I think feeling strong in the box reflects having strength in life."

Now Chloe is fitter and stronger than she ever imagined. "Let's just say I never thought I'd be programming muscle-ups in a WOD for myself!"

But the journey hasn't been all rainbows and butterfly pull-ups. Chloe admits she even copped criticism from her family when she started to make life-changing decisions. "People fear change and I made it my mission to show them it can be done. This motivated me to get me where I am and now I'm just enjoying lifts getting heavier and bench marks getting faster."

Chloe loves all aspects of CrossFit, especially the community training. She says when you're training with a community of like-minded people, it doesn't matter if you're the first or the last person to finish; you always have the support and encouragement from a genuine group of people. And when motivation is low, Chloe will pump up the music and do a longer-than-usual warm-up.

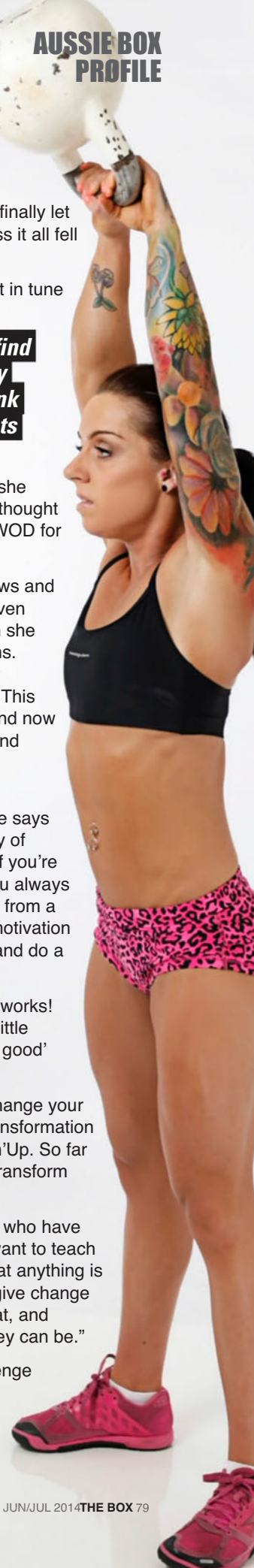
"I highly suggest a longer warm-up, it works! By the time you're really warm and a little sweaty you have the energy and 'feel good' endorphins to keep going."

Chloe believes it's never too late to change your life for the better and runs her own transformation program called Chloe's 30-day Hard'n'Up. So far she has helped over 300 individuals transform themselves at the box.

"There are too many people out there who have walked in similar shoes to me, I just want to teach it to the world one person at a time that anything is possible if you just let go of fear and give change a go. Everybody deserves to feel great, and everybody deserves to be the best they can be."

Visit Chloe's 30 Day Hard'n'Up Challenge Facebook page for more inspiration.

*The National Eating Disorders Collaboration. (2012). An Integrated Response to Complexity – National Eating Disorders Framework 2012.





HABITS OF
HIGHLY
EFFECTIVE
CROSSFITTERS

By C.J. Logan • Photography by Robert Reiff

**IF YOU'RE A BADASS AT CROSSFIT, YOU
PROBABLY DO ALL THESE THINGS. IF YOU'RE
NOT, IT'S TIME TO START.**

Businessman and keynote speaker Stephen R. Covey wrote the self-help book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* in 1989, and it quickly became a best-seller, selling tens of millions of copies worldwide since. The premise is simple and, well, effective: here are a handful of things successful people tend to do on a regular basis; do them and you too can be successful.

We figured that the concept was infinitely applicable and thought that we'd borrow it and apply it to fitness. So what follows are seven specific habits we've identified as being common denominators in most high-level CrossFit athletes' repertoires. It's very simple: adopt these practices and you too can and will be effective inside the gym and out.

HABIT Nº 1

WARM UP LIKE IT'S PART OF THE WORK- OUT (BECAUSE IT IS)

The ineffective CrossFitter tends to think of a warm-up as some casual form of exercise performed at an easy pace — perhaps a light jog or a brisk walk on the treadmill — with the sole purpose of raising body temperature for the serious exercise to follow. The effective CrossFitter, on the other hand, realises that the real work begins with the warm-up and that “casual” and “easy pace” don't apply, nor do jogging or a treadmill, for that matter. A proper warm-up addresses, among other things, flexibility, joint mobility and skill transfer, thus setting the stage for the subsequent WOD as well as providing long-lasting performance, injury prevention and functional real-world benefits when performed on a regular basis (sort of like training, since that's what it is). If breaking a sweat is all your warm-up is accomplishing, it needs to be reassessed.

COACHSPEAK: “You should always start your workout with a thorough warm-up consisting of light human movement, general mobility, then specific movement and mobility depending on what the day's work is,” says Josh Elmore, owner and director of training at CrossFit Eternal (crossfiteternal.com) in Charlotte, North Carolina. “For example, here's the warm-up I used with athletes at the Mid-Atlantic Regional last year for Event 1, “Jackie”: (1) Row 500 metres at RPE 7, then do two rounds of 10 inchworms, 10 lunges, 10 gymnastic beat swings and a 15-second handstand hold; (2) wall quad stretch (30 seconds per side); lacrosse-ball external rotation; light partner smashing for internal rotation and two-position forearm stretching with 10 beats at each position; (3) a Crossover Symme-



try (crossoversymmetry.com) complex to warm up and strengthen the shoulders; and (4) three rounds, not for time, of a 200-metre row, 12 thrusters (20kg) and six pull-ups.”

ATHLETE TESTIMONIAL:

“I consider a good, comprehensive warm-up to be essential, not only to

maximise performance but to maintain health and prevent injury.” — Elisabeth Akinwale, 10th place, 2013 CrossFit Games

HABIT
Nº 2

MASTER
THE CLEAN

If you pinned us down and asked for the single most important exercise for the CrossFitter, it would probably be the clean. Being good at CrossFit requires high levels of strength, power and efficiency of movement — and that’s exactly what it takes to be good at cleaning. If you can clean properly, it probably means you can squat properly, too, because the traditional Olympic clean involves dropping to a full squat at the bottom of each rep (as opposed to a power clean or hang clean). Other key exercises the clean crosses over to: any jumping movement, like box jumps, because of the explosive nature of the move; and snatches because the pull from the floor to around waist level is identical in both exercises. Perfect your clean, and most other lifts will fall into place.

COACH SPEAK: “The clean requires good mobility and stability of joints, which is important for development of an athlete, and also a good predictor of their injury risk,” says Brian Strump, owner of CrossFit Steele Creek (crossfitsteelecreek.com) and Premier Health & Rehab Solutions in Charlotte, North Carolina. “It’s a lift that requires explosive hip extension, unlike the squat or deadlift, and it’s safer in generating hip explosion than max-height or high-rep box jumps. Those other movements have importance in training, but if I could only choose one that would have the most carry-over to sports or other movements in CrossFit, it would be the clean.”

ATHLETE TESTIMONIAL:

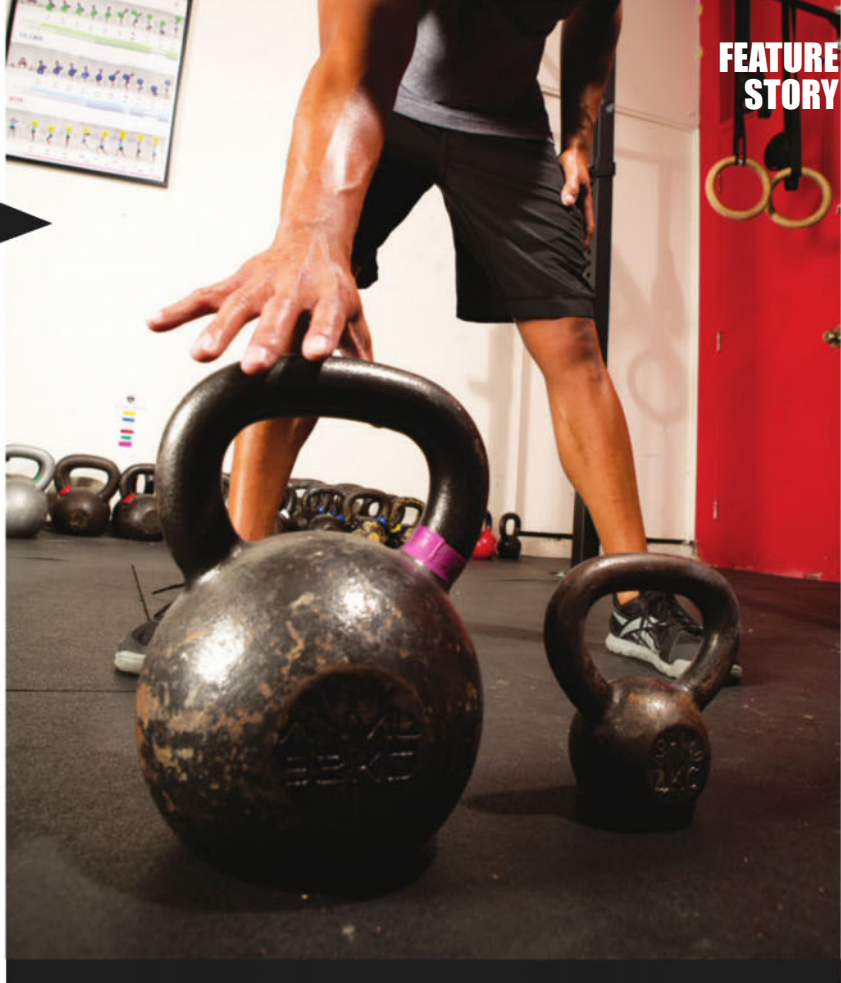
“Cleans are awesome for getting a lot of work done in a short period — what CrossFit is all about. Because of this, I do workouts with high reps/low weight as well as low-rep/high-weight cleans multiple times per week” — *Daniel Petro, 13th place, 2013 CrossFit Games*



HABIT Nº 3

SCALE AS NEEDED

Ego often gets in the way of being an effective CrossFitter — specifically, always chasing the “as prescribed” distinction in a WOD. In many cases, however, doing a workout exactly as it’s written, as strange as it may sound, actually isn’t the best way to train. Every workout you do is designed to cause a certain adaptation in the body, even if that means scaling (i.e., going lighter than what the whiteboard says). A met-con, for example, is intended to be a very high-intensity, short- to medium-duration workout. If you do it as prescribed but the weight loads are too heavy, intensity may still be high, but duration will end up being longer than intended, which defeats the purpose of the workout. The effective CrossFitter is one who completes “Fran” in five minutes, doing, say, 25kg thrusters and jumping pull-ups, not the one who does Fran as prescribed (43kg, unassisted kipping pull-ups) in 15 minutes.



COACH SPEAK: “Most everyone should be scaling,” says Logan Gelbrich, owner of the recently opened Deuce Gym (deucegym.com) in Venice, Calif. “As prescribed’ is the ceiling, and most of us are living somewhere below the ceiling. If me, you, my mum and some guy who needs to lose 70kg are all doing a workout that’s three rounds of an 800-metre run, 25 pull-ups and 10 push-ups, we need to find out what a relative 800-metre run is for my mum and the guy who needs to lose 70kg. They don’t need to run that far; it’s not the stimulus we’re looking for. Scaling would do a lot of people a lot of good because with it you get an intensity that’s relative.”

ATHLETE TESTIMONIAL: “When the workout is supposed to be light, don’t be afraid to go even lighter, and when it’s supposed to be heavy, don’t be afraid to pile on the weight. Understand the design of the workout and set your difficulty accordingly.” — *Daniel Petro*

HABIT Nº 4

ATTACK ALL WEAKNESS

Cliché alert: a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. You’ve heard this phrase many times before, and that’s because it’s true. The whole point of CrossFit is to be well-rounded and minimise any “holes” in your fitness. Everyone has weak areas, and if you constantly avoid working on them, those areas will grow even weaker in relation to your strengths. When this happens, the risk of injury increases and progress is stunted. Elite CrossFitters make a habit of attacking their weaknesses — whether it’s running, Olympic-lifting technique or strength. They identify a hole and work on it until it no longer holds them back.

COACH SPEAK: “When it comes to working on your weaknesses, make sure you work on technique, volume, intensity and CrossFit integration,” Elmore says. “Neglecting any of these four parts will always leave you behind

the intended mark of weeding out weakness. Let’s use an example of an athlete who has a few muscle-ups but has difficulty when they pop up under intensity. If all you do is two muscle-ups on the minute for 30 minutes three days a week, you’ll log 180 reps in a week. That’s a lot of volume, but if you try and translate that into intensity — like when doing the ‘13.3’ WOD — you can run into issues. Performing 30 muscle-ups for time and 60 muscle-ups over 30 minutes are very different in the demands they require.

“A week’s worth of weakness programming for the muscle-up should include technical work on the pull, transition, dip and reload; volume and intensity on the movement itself; and it should also include integration into a CrossFit event like 13.3.”

ATHLETE TESTIMONIAL: “There is no way to be successful as a CrossFit competitor without a focus on eliminating weaknesses. I continuously work to be as well-rounded and balanced an athlete as I possibly can.” — *Elisabeth Akinwal*

HABIT
No. 5

EMBRACE
RUNNING WODS

If there's one thing that doesn't fly in CrossFit, it's going through the motions. Yet that's exactly what many ineffective CrossFitters do on days when running monopolises a WOD — for example, having to run a 5K or multiple 400s or 800s in a training session. Maybe you hate to run or aren't particularly good at it. We get it. But such WODs need to be approached with the same enthusiasm as a one-rep-max workout or short met-con. Not only will improving your runs shave minutes off workout times, but it's also a requisite for being well-rounded from a fitness standpoint.

COACH SPEAK: "Whenever I think of running, I remember what I read on a shirt somewhere — something to the effect of, 'Be great at some things, be good at everything, suck at nothing,'" Strump says. "Some CrossFitters love running WODs and others loathe them. However, if you want to be in the top echelon in the sport of CrossFit, you need to embrace the running. I recommend sprinkling your training with a 1500m run post-WOD or a 5K on the weekend outside of your regularly scheduled training. If you want to be on top, it needs to be about more than just 'surviving' the run."

ATHLETE TESTIMONIAL:

"I have at least two or three workouts per week that involve 400s or 800s. I think it's absolutely necessary for a competitive CrossFit athlete to have running-focused workouts in their training." — Daniel Petro

HABIT
No. 6

ALWAYS REFUEL
AFTER WORKOUTS

Your muscles won't adapt to your training and grow stronger if you don't feed them shortly after workouts. In the hour (or so) following an intense training session, muscles are in a damaged state and need to be repaired. They're low on glycogen, the stored form of glucose, while levels of cortisol, a muscle-wasting hormone released under stress, are in high concentration in the body and need to



be brought down immediately. The solution to all these issues is post-workout protein and carbohydrates, preferably in liquid form to deliver the macronutrients to the muscles as quickly as possible.

COACH SPEAK: "A great post-CrossFit-workout nutrition plan should include a protein drink that contains at least 30 grams of quality protein," says Doug Kalman, Ph.D., RD, director of nutrition and applied clinical trials at Miami Research Associates (miamiresearch.com). "Ideally, this drink should be ingested within the first hour of finishing the workout. The protein is essential for muscle recovery, to stimulate new muscle growth and to help support the immune

system. Whether or not the drink has carbohydrates is up to the individual athlete, but including some carbs helps restore glycogen levels. If the WOD is less than 75 minutes long (which most are), there's no need for anything greater than a 2:1 or 3:1 carbohydrate-to-protein ratio. To maintain the benefits, it's wise to eat a whole-food meal within the next hour."

ATHLETE TESTIMONIAL:

"I truly make an effort to get all my nutrition through food; however, sometimes with the workloads that I'm dealing with on a daily basis, it's hard to eat that much. So after my workouts I supplement my nutrition with a protein shake." — Daniel Petro

HABIT
Nº 7

GO TO BED EARLY

You can't get stronger and progress if you don't recover, and you can't recover fully if you're only squeezing in five to six hours of sleep a night. Every CrossFit athlete we talk to who's preparing for a regional competition or the Games — and we interview a lot of them — mention at some point that they're making sure to get adequate sleep on a daily basis. And if the athlete doesn't happen to mention it, his or her coach does. Most experts advise getting eight to 10 hours a night, with a recent Stanford University study placing special emphasis on the top end of that range. Researchers told members of the Stanford men's basketball team to sleep six to nine hours a night for two to four weeks and then aim for 10 hours a night the following five to seven weeks. After the 10-hour sleep period, the players experienced decreased levels of fatigue while also seeing a significant increase in shooting percentage — the latter showing evidence that more sleep can enhance highly technical sport skills, of which there are many in CrossFit.

COACH SPEAK: “Many athletes don't consider what can be done outside the gym or off the playing field before problems arise,” Strump says. “Getting the proper amount of sleep is usually low on most people's priority scale, but it's very important for an athlete. Growth and recovery occur when we rest. Getting eight to 10 hours of sleep a night is ideal, especially for those athletes with high training volume.”

ATHLETE TESTIMONIAL: “I think sleep is incredibly important to my performance, right up there with training and nutrition. Inadequate sleep to facilitate recovery undermines all the work I do in training.” — *Elisabeth Akinwale* □

For more from Elisabeth Akinwale, visit elisabethakinwale.com.

Learn more from Daniel Petro at petrofitnessrx.com.



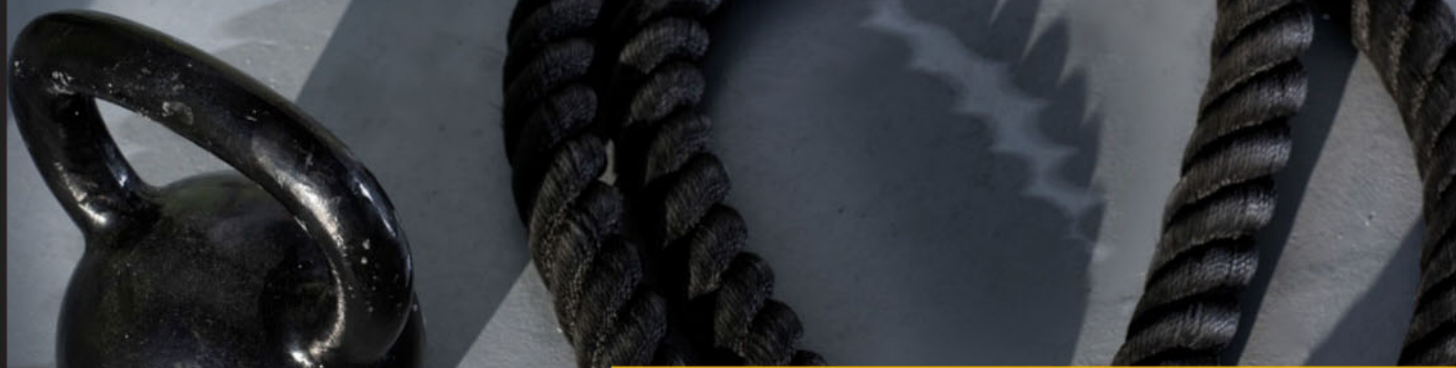
The Aftermath of the
CROSSFIT OPEN

By John Kim



Photo by: Shutterstock.com

“With the right mindset, CrossFit can sharpen and strengthen you, like it’s designed to”



There’s never been another sport where just anyone can compete with professional athletes in a worldwide competition. It’s what makes the CrossFit Open so revolutionary, exciting and extreme. But it’s this same energy that can turn something some people do alone in a garage into the ultimate pressure cooker. Let’s face it, CrossFit is an extreme sport. If you’ve tasted the Kool-Aid, you’ll know. And extreme sports attract extreme people who think in extremes. Thoughts like “all or nothing” or, “you either win or lose - there’s nothing in between”. This polarised thinking (seeing things as absolutes) can be crushing.

The Regionals is the new CrossFit Games. Due to how fast and competitive this sport is growing, the odds of you making it to the Games are pretty slim, and slim just left town. So now the focus is on conquering your region. Although it’s still ridiculously difficult to qualify, it’s a lot more realistic than the Games. Many train all year to compete with the best in their region. But there’s also more layers to this competition that no one talks about. Since the leaderboard is on the internet and displays everyone’s standings, you are also consciously or subconsciously competing

with people in your own box, friends from other boxes, the fire breathers in the neighbourhood, people you used to know, etc. And if you’re not competing, then you’re comparing (which means you’re competing). Add another layer if you’re a box owner, a coach, or someone with a track record. Now it’s not only about you. You don’t want to let down the people who look up to you. Well, at least that’s the record playing in your head.

Somewhere in this process, you can lose grip of why you do CrossFit in the first place. Somewhere after doing the week’s workout five times and watching 20 strategy videos, the community turns blurry and you’re left standing alone. I know because it happens to me every year, even after making a conscious effort to “compete only with myself”. Is that even possible due to the structure of this sport? I don’t know. This year I landed 30th in my division, about 15 spots better than last year. But instead of seeing it that way, I see it as 15 spots better and I would have made Master’s Regionals. If you choose to see it through that lens, the CrossFit Open can leave a bitter aftertaste in your mouth.

Like any relationship, the relationship you have with CrossFit can be healthy or un-

healthy. Without the right mindset, there’s a lot of space for internalisation, tying performance tightly to your worth. And right behind that door, anger, resentment, and jealousy will be knocking. Suddenly what once turned your life around is now holding you down. But with the right mindset, CrossFit can sharpen and strengthen you, like it’s designed to, using everything it has to offer, especially the community, to transform your mind as well as your body and raise your quality of life. It’s a daily choice. And it takes hard work like any relationship does, to build something fulfilling and lasting.

Maybe after the Open is a great time to ask yourself: “How healthy is my CrossFit?”

- Angry



BIO:

John Kim, aka The Angry Therapist, is a licensed marriage family therapist / CrossFitter with a “public” practice. He does most of his sessions online, pioneering the intersection between therapy and technology. His latest therapeutic tool is an

iPhone app called the “Strainr”. You can meet John and pick up his book, “MIND/SET”, a therapeutic approach to the mental game at www.theangrytherapist.com

STRONG IS THE NEW SEXY

Name: Philippa Kate
(aka "Pip") Malone

Age: 24

Home: Newcastle, NSW

Height: 163cm

Occupation: Athlete

Weight: 63kg

Growing up, Pip Malone competed in trampoline sports, power tumbling, and acrobatic gymnastics at both national and international levels. She started gymnastics at just 18 months old, competed at her first elite national championship at age nine, and by the tender age of 11, Pip had become a dual Australian Champion. She went on to represent Australia three times, won seven national titles and around 40 state titles. It wasn't until midway through 2011, that Pip found CrossFit and in 2012, she officially retired from gymnastics and began taking CrossFit seriously.

Now Pip shines as a role model to female CrossFitters everywhere. At just 24, her perspective on what it means to be a successful and grounded female athlete is inspiring. But she hasn't always possessed this calm, self-confident attitude. In fact, throughout school, Pip was bullied for her athletic body shape, and for having more muscular arms and legs than the other girls. It got to a stage where her appearance really started to play on her mind.



PIP'S COMP DIET

BREAKFAST: coffee, protein shake, breakfast frittata (made with eggs, mince, veggies) fish oil, multi vitamins

POST-WORKOUT: BCAAs and recovery shake, water

LUNCH: Salad with meat and or eggs, water

PRE-WORKOUT SNACK: protein bar or a banana, water

POST-WORKOUT: BCAAs, water

DINNER: Meat with rice or sweet potato

AFTER DINNER: Some chocolate, magnesium and fish oil

"I was obsessed with how I looked in a leotard, and worried about how I looked in normal clothes. I was heading down a dark road of self-image issues to say the least," she said.

But, as it often does, CrossFit turned Pip's mentality around. "I was suddenly surrounded by strong women and people who saw my shape and build as an asset and something I'm very lucky to have and what they wanted to work towards. My body and sporting background suited it perfectly and I knew I had found my place," she said.

Pip was introduced to a community of people who were positive about nutrition and celebrated different body types, and she embraced it. "I started to look at myself in a different light that I hadn't in many years. I thought, 'I can use these big arms for impressive athletic performance, in fact I'm going to work hard to make them even stronger!', rather than 'I hate my arms, they don't fit into this dress or I stand out and don't look the same as everyone else.'"

Pip believes that CrossFit has already helped change world views on strong women and body types. "Strong is the new sexy and it's here to stay," she said, "You may as well get on board."

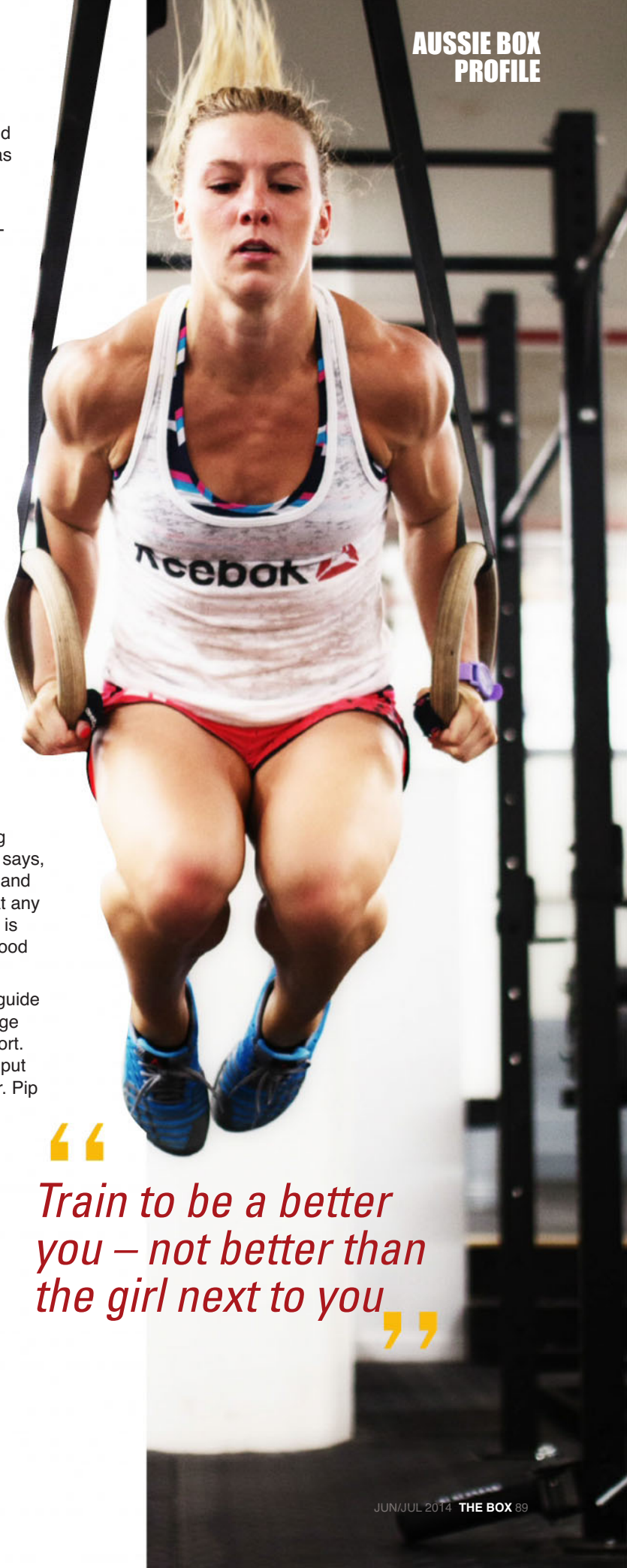
She advises women to never compare themselves to others as everyone has different bodies and different goals. "Train to be a better you – not better than the girl next to you."

She is also a strong advocate of the fact that lifting weights won't make you bulky. What it will do, Pip says, is burn fat, give you energy, strength, confidence, and an all round better life. "Any workout is possible at any fitness level or no fitness level at all. The first step is to get moving and get yourself to a box that has good coaching because it makes all the difference."

With her strong mental attitude and dedication to guide her, Pip made the CrossFit Games in 2013 – a huge achievement for her first year competing in the sport. And although Pip was the new girl in the mix, she put everything on the line and made people notice her. Pip believes that when you want something bad enough and you don't let external influences get in your way, you can do anything.

"CrossFit helped me to go above and beyond physically and mentally what I ever thought I was capable of. It has given me a belief in myself that I never managed to grasp in 20 years of sport. It's certainly not where I thought I'd be... But I'm very happy with how it has turned out so far."

**Follow Pip's success on Facebook
at www.facebook.com/philippa.pip.malone**



“
*Train to be a better
you – not better than
the girl next to you*
”

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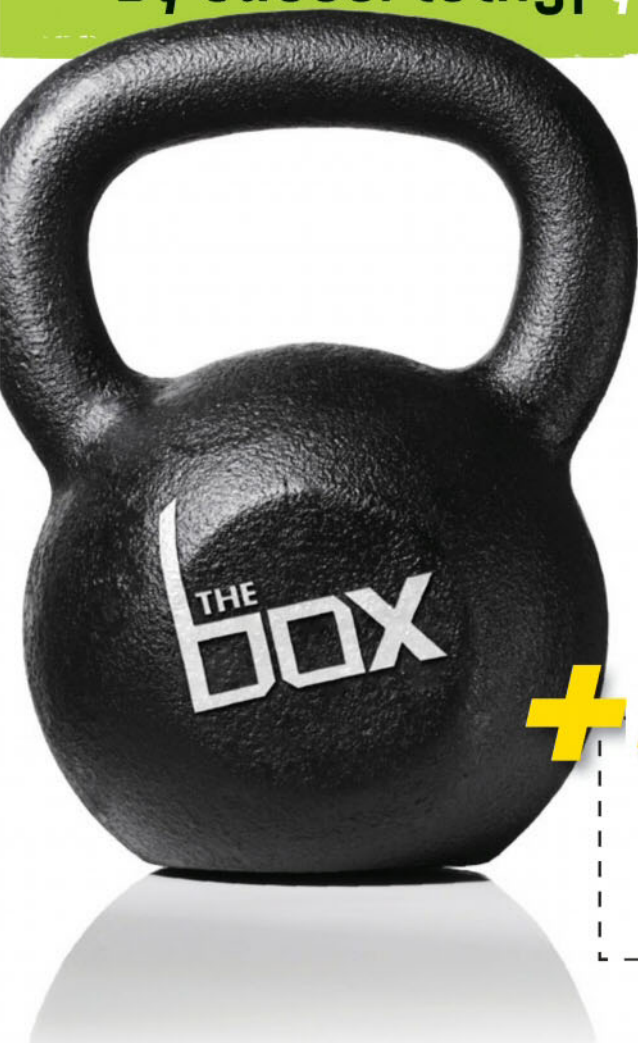
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NEW BOX

ON THE BLOCK



Box Name: CrossFit Cuties

City & State: Perth, Western Australia

Website/Facebook: www.crossfitcuties.com.au

Box Owner: Simone Irvine

Opened: 7th December 2013

Number of members: 30



THERE'S A NEW BOX ON THE BLOCK IN PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA. AND DON'T LET THE NAME FOOL YOU, CROSSFIT CUTIES IS AS HARD-CORE AS THEY COME. THE ONLY DIFFERENCE? NO BOYS ALLOWED.

SIMONE IRVINE, OWNER OF CROSSFIT CUTIES, STARTED UP IN DECEMBER OF LAST YEAR WITH THE INTENTION OF CREATING PERTH'S FIRST AND ONLY ALL FEMALE CROSSFIT BOX. THEY PRIDE THEMSELVES ON BEING A COMMUNITY THAT ENCOURAGES EACH MEMBER INDIVIDUALLY, NO MATTER WHERE THEY ARE AT ON THEIR CROSSFIT JOURNEY. IT SEEMS THAT THESE GIRLS JUST WANNA HAVE FUN, GET FIT, AND LOOK FABULOUS!





Every box has different set-ups and vibes but the sense of community and support is something you just can't find anywhere outside of CrossFit!



Before opening up CrossFit Cuties, Simone was a teacher on the Gold Coast for 12 years and while she loved it, she was always looking for something more. When she was introduced to CrossFit through Reebok CrossFit Gold Coast, Simone found herself addicted – and in a good way! She coached at Reebok CrossFit Gold Coast and CrossFit Leonidas before finally making the decision to take a break from teaching, move back to W.A. and follow her dreams.

Now Simone is a CrossFit Level-1 Trainer with certificates in CrossFit Kids and CrossFit Gymnastics and has realised her dream of opening a box, focusing on females and kids. We caught up with Simone to hear more about CrossFit Cuties and it's girl-power attitude.

Hi Simone! Tell us about the pivotal moment that motivated you to start up your very own CrossFit Box?

Watching friends achieve their dreams of opening their own boxes gave me the kick I needed to take the risk and finally open my own up!

Can you remember the first ever training session you held at CF Cuties?

It wasn't that long ago so yes! The saying "your workout is our warm-up" definitely rings true now at Cuties. The girls are always commenting, "I remember when this would be our whole WOD!" Plus with a more established membership and the girls' goals in mind - our programming has more direction.

What is the most popular equipment at the box and why?

The rings and the bands. The girls are super keen to get their first strict pull-ups so we have been using them to build up our strength so we can get closer to our goals.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ➡

It's always good to keep setting goals! What are some of the most important changes you see in people after they start training at CrossFit Cuties?

Confidence is definitely the biggest thing I notice that improves in our girls. They feel empowered to try things they thought would be impossible or had always found hard and this starts them believing in themselves. As a result of the increased confidence I find they have a better understanding and love of their bodies and their nutrition naturally improves. The focus changes to feeling good and looking healthy rather than weight loss.

Who are your top female CrossFitters? Being a new box and most of the girls new to CrossFit, everyone has their own strengths and working on their weaknesses. Monica is killing it on the leader board with her squats, Melina is our gymnastics pocket rocket, Charlie, Chloe and Dani are teaming up shortly to do their first ever team comp and Tracey, Tash, Danica, Sal, Taylor, Sharon and Janice are getting stronger by the minute. It's amazing considering most of the girls have gone from barely being able to jog 400m to running it numerous times in WODs!

“As a result of the increased confidence I find they have a better understanding and love of their bodies and their nutrition naturally improves.”

Which member deserves a special mention and why? Christina. Her transformation has been amazing to see - she is a passionate Paleo convert and CrossFits five times a week, and always brings her daughter Teeya.

What has been the most rewarding aspect of owning a CrossFit Box? Seeing the girls' faces when they get their first double under or overhead squat or toes to bar or even finished Opens WOD 14.5. That was one of the hardest WODs the girls had done and regardless of the weights they chose they gave it their all. Watching the Cutie Pies excited to WOD during CrossFit Kids also gives me goose bumps. I love hearing the girls describe the box as their home away from home. I am lucky to be rewarded daily by such an inspiring and awesome bunch of females!

What advice would you give to someone wanting to get into CrossFit? Don't wait any longer! Go and check out your local box, if you don't immediately fall in love with it - try another one. Every box has different set-ups and vibes but the sense of community and support is something you just can't find anywhere outside of CrossFit.

What's in the future for CrossFit Cuties? To keep having fun and getting girls fit! Help the Cuties achieve their goals and to continue to build a strong, friendly and supportive community. We have Tye from Affiliate Solution coming out to visit soon, so together I am sure we can brainstorm lots of great things for CrossFit Cuties future! □

OWNER Q&A: SIMONE IRVINE

Describe yourself in three words: Fussy, thoughtful and shy.

What do you love about training at your Box? I can play the music I want, and use as much chalk as I want.

What's your favourite WOD? And what's your best time? I like chippers! I used to love Annie - I think my time was around 5-6 minutes.

What WOD do you most want to improve on? Elizabeth - ring dips are NOT my friend. I think I cry in frustration every time I do it. Anything with muscle ups too!

Who is your CrossFit hero? The CrossFit Cuties girls inspire me just as much as some of the elite CrossFit athletes. I have a soft spot for Jessica Coughlan because I was lucky enough to train with her for a year at RAW and had so much fun but I do think Annie Thorisdottir is amazing. She just seems like she would be the sweetest person and she is always smiling.

What are the staples in your fridge? Dark chocolate, soda water, Coconut water, baked sweet potato, apples, boiled eggs, smoked salmon, baby spinach and Paleo bars.

Name five things you can't live without: My phone, family, sunny weather, laughter and CrossFit!





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MOBILISE YOUR MUSCLES WITH SCEPTRE

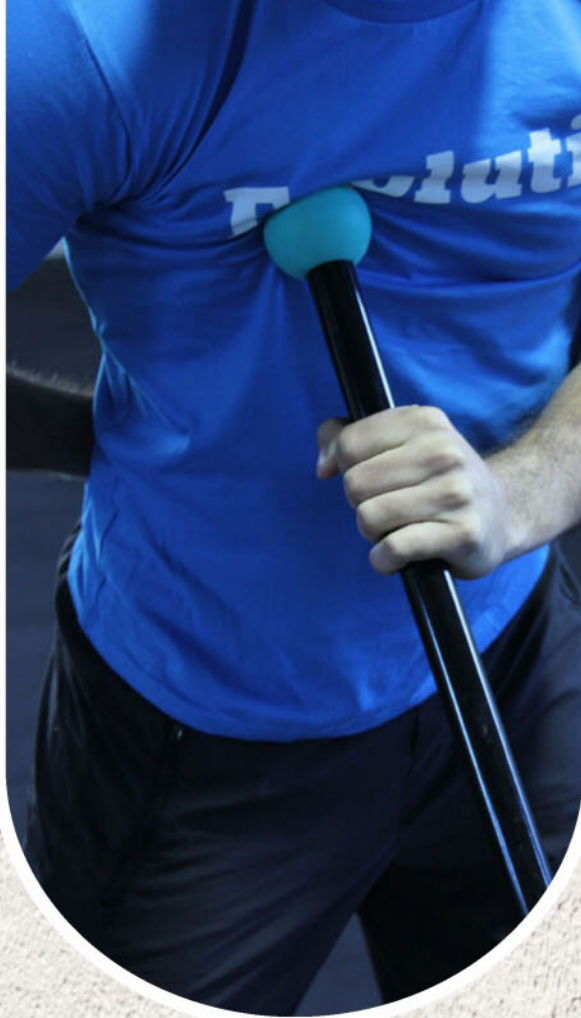
The Sceptre is the first of a string of new mobility and injury prevention products to come from the team at Evolutio. Designed from 150cm of handmade, durable yet extremely light wood with Evolutio's unique density mobilisation ball, it's both practical for individual mobility work and for affiliates to beef up their mobility equipment. It's even a great replacement for the wooden dowel, giving dual purpose for the same space.

Each Sceptre comes with a free downloadable Ebook which demonstrates eight

different ways to utilise it, including detailed pictures, information on the muscles it's operating on, how to utilise it, educational information and what CrossFit movement it will help to improve.

It's a must have for preventing 'CrossFit Shoulder' as it helps to release the pectorals, first rib and rotator cuffs. Evolutio continues to bridge the gap between the CrossFitter and Health Professional with the 'Sceptre.'

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The Pack-up-Cup is also dishwasher- and microwave-friendly, and comes in a variety of colours, so your entire family can discover the joys of collapsible cup living! Light My Fire Pack-Up-Cup RRP: \$9.95.

For more information on Light My Fire and the Pack-up-Cup visit
www.outdooragencies.com.au





A REAL PALEO HERO

This muesli could be the death of us here at The Box Magazine. Not only does this Muesli taste AMAZING it is gluten, dairy and grain-free. The entire Paleo Hero product range is made from 100 per cent all natural ingredients and contains no additives or preservatives. This diverse muesli is perfect as a standalone breakfast option (with coconut yoghurt for the Paleo heads) or as a snack in between meals and can even be added to salads and smoothies.

Check out www.paleohero.com.au and view their wide range of Paleo-friendly products.



JAW DROPPING PULL-UP GRIPS

JAW Pull-up Grips are completely unique in every aspect. They were personally designed by JAW founder, Kym Rayfield. Having been an avid CrossFitter for years, the use of tape and other leather grips just weren't doing the trick when it came to constant ripping and tearing, not to mention comfort.

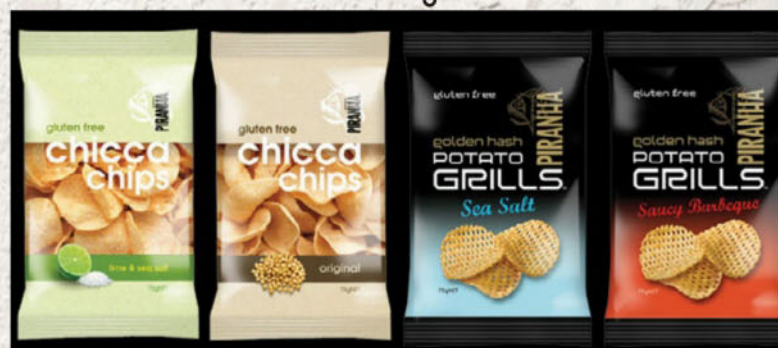
Designed to move with the reflexes of the wrist, these grips will allow you to jump on the pull-up frame and pump out numerous reps without ripping your hands to shreds. Even if you form blisters, your palms remain protected and will allow you to continue your set. Made from cloth they are designed to withstand sweat, friction from rubbing and won't harden from perspiration.

RRP \$30.00 and available in a range of colours and sizes from www.justanotherwod.com

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Elemis Sp@home Musclease Herbal Bath Synergy relieves muscle tension, relaxes joints and de-stresses neck and shoulders, helps ease muscle spasm, releases active ingredients to the body via aroma and skin absorption and is a good source of minerals and trace elements.

RRP: \$120.00



FIREBREATHER

JESS MORGAN

“Don't stop when you're tired, stop when you're done.”



Photo by: Dallas Olsen



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