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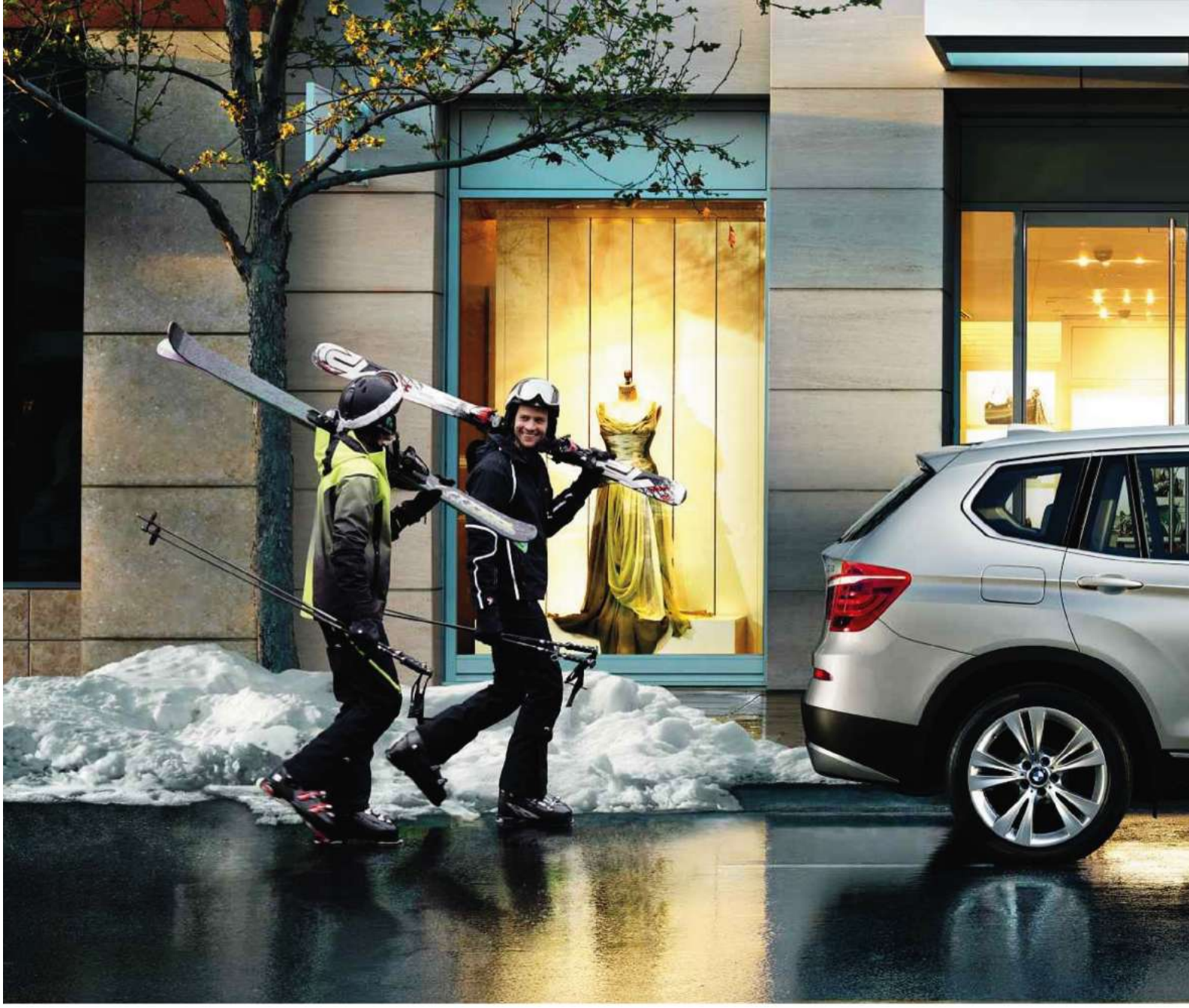

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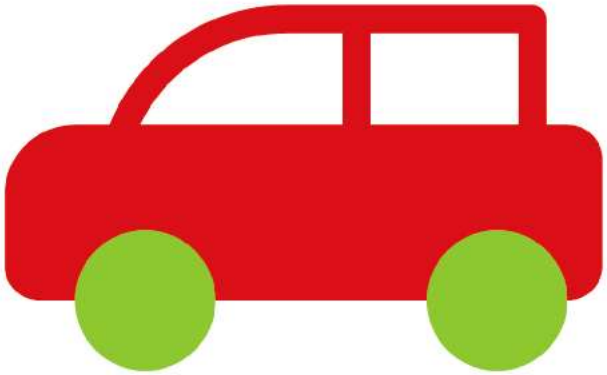

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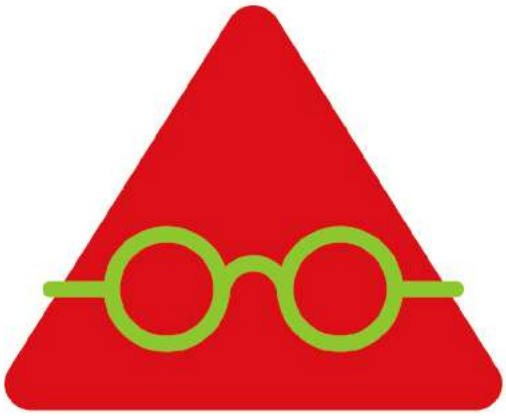

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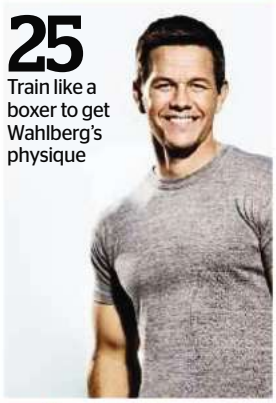

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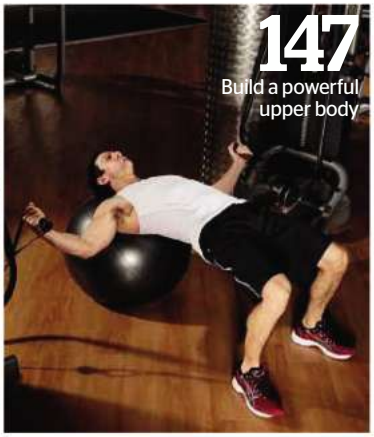

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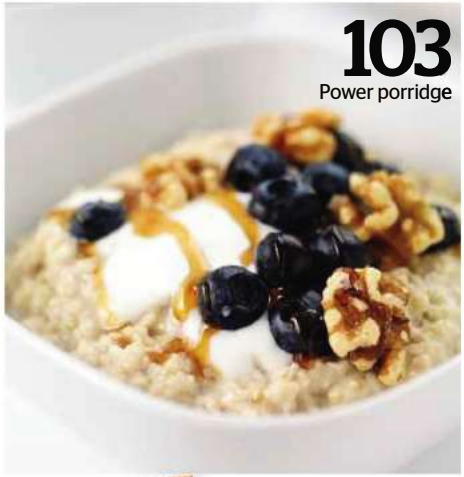

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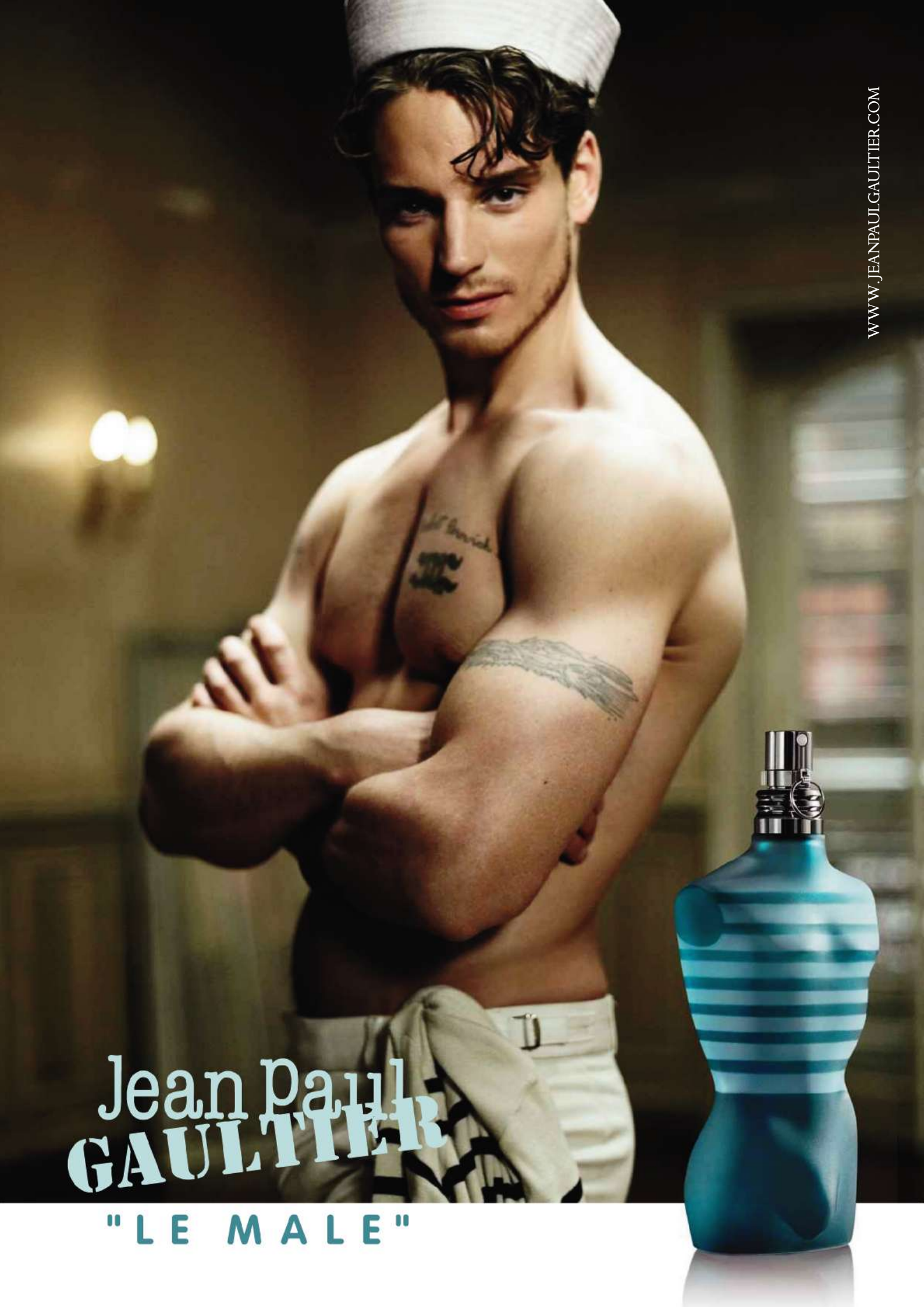
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The *MF*ers

Come rain, come shine

The weather may be getting steadily worse but you just can't keep us in the office

Lucy, staff writer
What I've been up to Cycling over the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco while on my holiday.
What I've learned It doesn't take much to stay fit on holiday – you can use it as a way of seeing the sights. Plus it makes going back to the gym a little easier when you get home.

Richard, publishing director
What I've been up to Completing the testing climbs and uneven tracks of the 8km running course at last month's *Men's Fitness* Tough Tracks off-road event. For a report on the race, see p83.
What I've learned Trail running requires balance, stamina and suitably protective footwear. And a trail run is a lot harder than the same distance on road.

Nick, digital editor
What I've been up to Trying the hardest Friday Challenge we've ever set: two rounds of 50 ballistic press-ups and 30 dragon flags. Try it – you'll find form guides at mensfitness.co.uk/links/fearfulfriday.
What I've learned Including plank variations in your normal workouts will give you the muscle endurance you need.

Pete, editorial director
What I've been up to Taking on the most celebrated – and infamous – climb in the history of the Tour de France: Mont Ventoux. It's 22km of continuous uphill slog. Get the full story on p96.
What I've learned The heat generated from over-braking on descents can cause tyres to explode – not ideal when speeds can hit 80km/h.

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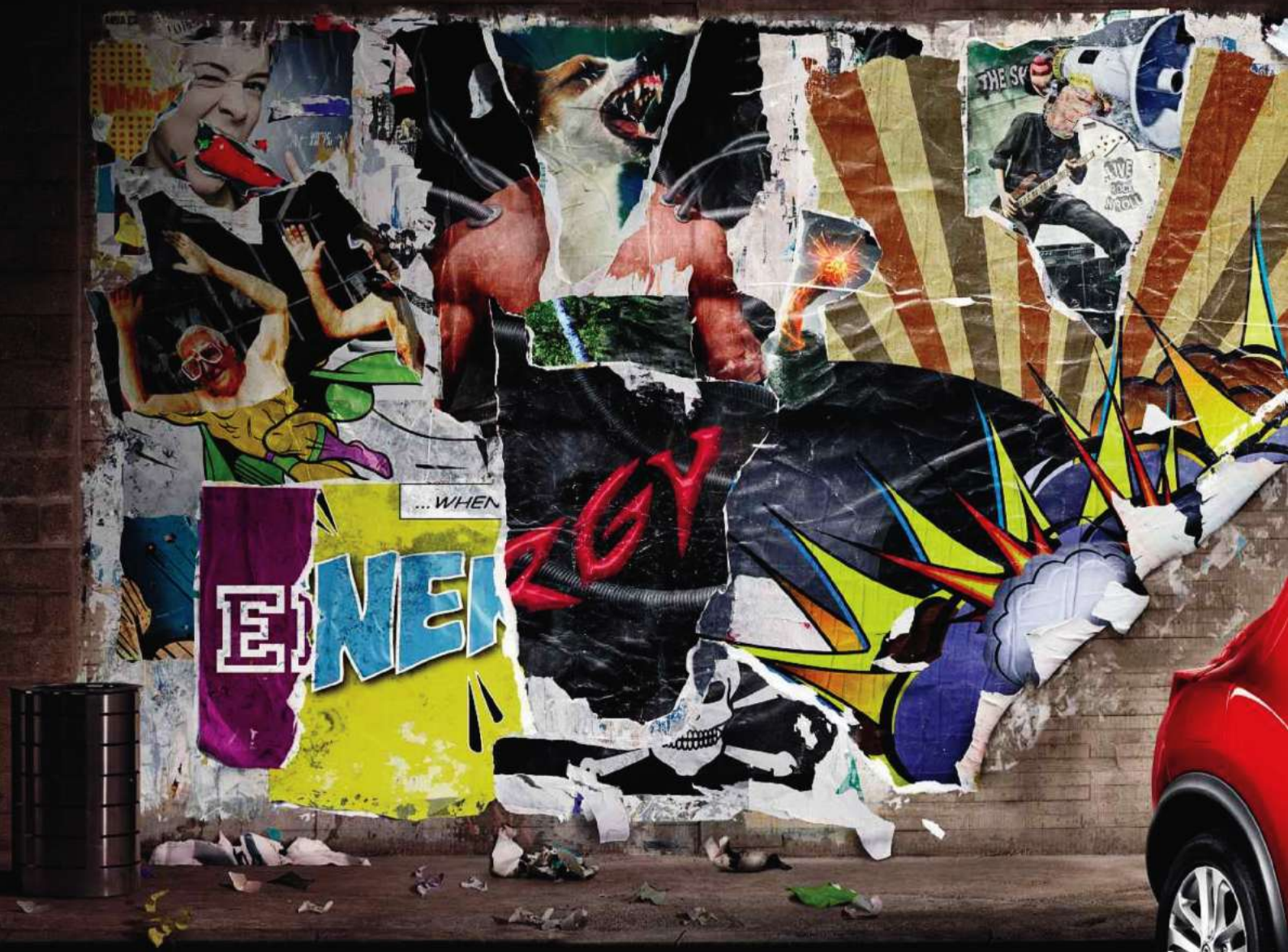

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*Actual model shown is 1.6L Acenta with optional Sport pack priced at £14,095 plus metallic paint at £400. Nissan Motor (GB) Ltd, The Rivers Office Park, Denham Way, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire WD3 9YS.

Fuel consumption figures for Juke petrol range are: URBAN 34.9-27.7mpg/8.1-10.2L/100km. EXTRA URBAN 54.3-47.1mpg/5.2-6.0L Official figures for diesel engine available at www.nissan.co.uk from October 2010.

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/100km. COMBINED 44.8-37.2mpg/6.3-7.6L/100km. CO_2 emissions: 145-175g/km.

*Euromonitor Shampoo Shares 2009.

head & shoulders
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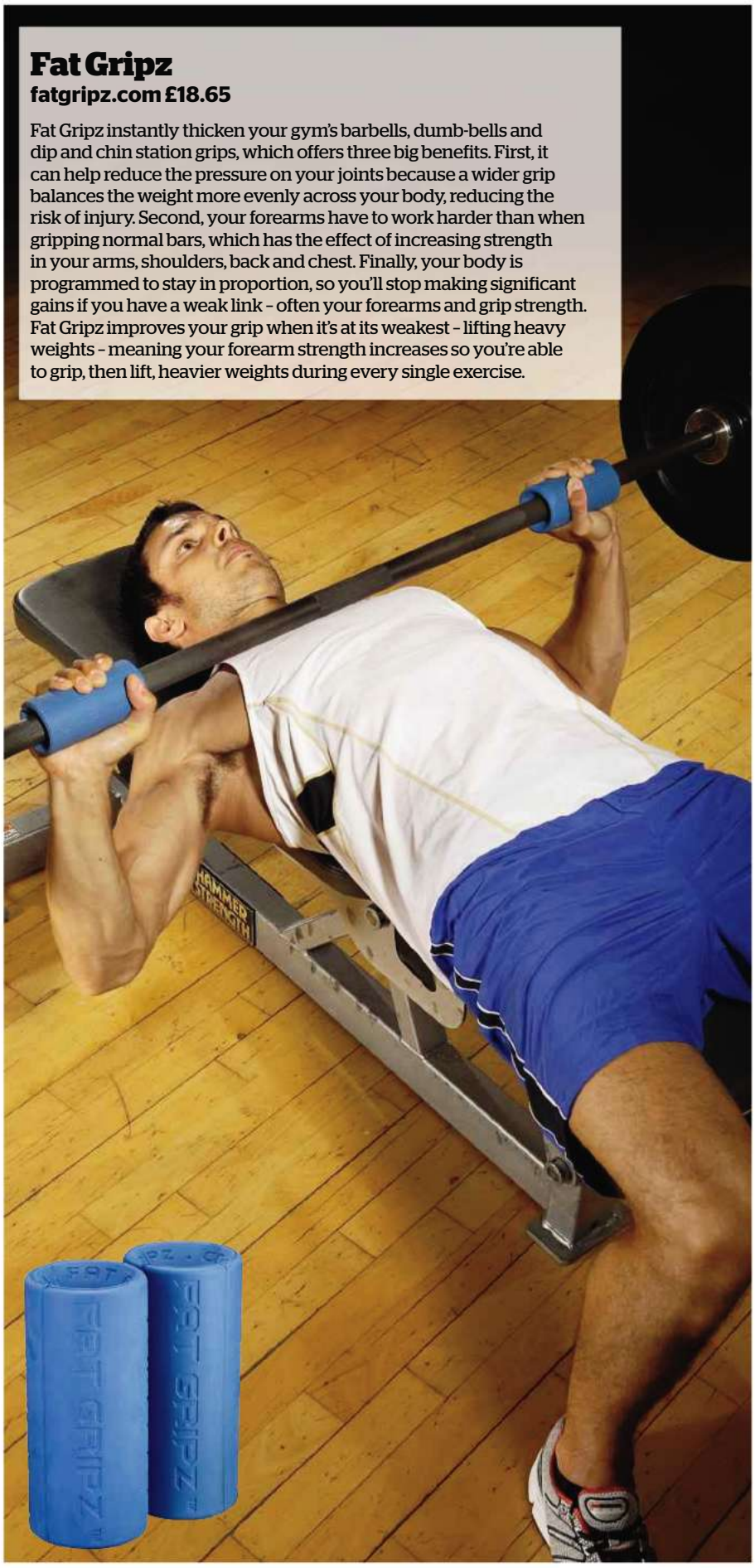
4 gym bag essentials

Work out harder and smarter by taking these simple products to your gym

Fat Gripz
fatgripz.com £18.65

Fat Gripz instantly thicken your gym's barbells, dumb-bells and dip and chin station grips, which offers three big benefits. First, it can help reduce the pressure on your joints because a wider grip balances the weight more evenly across your body, reducing the risk of injury. Second, your forearms have to work harder than when gripping normal bars, which has the effect of increasing strength in your arms, shoulders, back and chest. Finally, your body is programmed to stay in proportion, so you'll stop making significant gains if you have a weak link – often your forearms and grip strength. Fat Gripz improves your grip when it's at its weakest – lifting heavy weights – meaning your forearm strength increases so you're able to grip, then lift, heavier weights during every single exercise.



SmartShake
smartshake.co.uk £9.99

Consuming high-quality protein immediately after your session is essential for packing on size and strength. But ready-to-drink shakes can be expensive and carrying around a day's worth of protein powder and additional supplements in separate containers is a real pain. This space-saving shaker will hold your pre- and post-workout protein plus additional supplements, whether powder, pills or capsules, in its two screw-in compartments that attach to the bottom of the 500ml mixer. Once you're done they fit back inside the shaker, saving even more space in your kit bag. Clever stuff.

The Stick
the-stick.co.uk £34.99

This is a hardcore version of a foam roller and is designed to roll knots out of your muscles, helping prevent injury, improve muscular strength and flexibility, prepare muscles for a workout and disperse lactic acid after your session. With easy-to-grip handles and a firm yet flexible centre portion made up of individual spindles, this effectively irons out any kinks in your muscles, from neck to calves, keeping your muscles relaxed, pain-free and primed for growth. The lightweight Sprinter Stick version is perfect for your gym bag.

Chalk
firstaid4sport.co.uk £4.99

You may have the greatest grip in the world, but it'll count for nothing if you have sweaty palms that keep sliding off the bar. Eradicate moisture from your hands with this handy Mueller tub of chalk, with sprinkler top for a quick and easy dusting, and get a vice-like grip that won't break before your set is done.

Words Joe Warner **Photography** Danny Bird, Duncan Nicholls **Model** Richard Scrivener@WAthletic

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6 cures for common health problems

Get rid of these embarrassing ailments the easy way

1 Shaving rash

Shaving leaves small pieces of hair behind in your follicles. When these start to grow out they can curve around the skin if they're not heavy enough to grow straight. This irritates the skin, resulting in small, itchy red lumps, which are further aggravated by subsequent shaves.

Solution Shave in the direction the hair grows using a good gel, oil or foam, having first laid a warm flannel over your chops to help soften your stubble. Avoid a close shave if you have suffered before or use electronic clippers to minimise irritation.

2 Bad breath

More than 600 types of bacteria live in your mouth and many of them release gases that cause halitosis. Some foods exacerbate the problem, especially dairy products, garlic, onions and spices, while alcohol and tobacco also make matters worse.

Solution The best way to avoid it is flossing. It removes rotting food from hard-to-reach places and the American Dental Association says flossing before brushing allows the fluoride in toothpaste to get between your teeth.

3 Athlete's foot

Athlete's foot is a fungal infection that affects the soles and the areas between the toes. It causes red, itchy, flaky skin and is often picked up in gym changing rooms.

Solution Over-the-counter antifungal creams can treat it. To avoid getting it, never go barefoot in communal changing areas – take flip-flops into the showers. The fungus likes warm, moist environments, so rotate your shoes to keep them dry and go barefoot when you can stay sweat-free.

4 Dandruff

Everyone's scalp sheds dead skin cells, but dandruff occurs when your scalp does this to excess. There are a number of triggers, one of which can be frequent exposure to extreme heat or cold. Another cause is a fungal infection called *pityrosporum ovale*, which feeds off excess oils on the scalp and causes flaking.

Solution Mild cases are easily resolved by daily shampooing. More serious outbreaks can be fixed by using a medicated shampoo.

5 Body odour

Fresh sweat is odourless, but bacteria feed on it and create the bad-smelling chemical compounds we know as BO. Anxiety, being overweight and eating foods such as onions, garlic and spices can make it worse.

Solution There are specialist antiperspirants available for excessive sweaters; most pharmacists sell them. If antiperspirants don't work, longer-lasting solutions including Botox – which works by blocking the nerve signals that stimulate sweat glands – are available. Speak to your GP.

6 Earwax

Earwax is a normal, healthy substance that comprises a mixture of fats and oils. Also called cerumen, it travels along the ear canal, protecting the skin of the ear and trapping foreign particles before working its way out. Excess wax can impair hearing.

Solution A build-up of excess wax can be painful, but it's easily fixed with over-the-counter ear drops that dry out the ear, making removal of wax easier. If this doesn't work, visit your GP who can syringe it out.

Illustration Kevin February

Go to **mensfitness.co.uk/links/mycondition** for tips on how to deal with other embarrassing conditions

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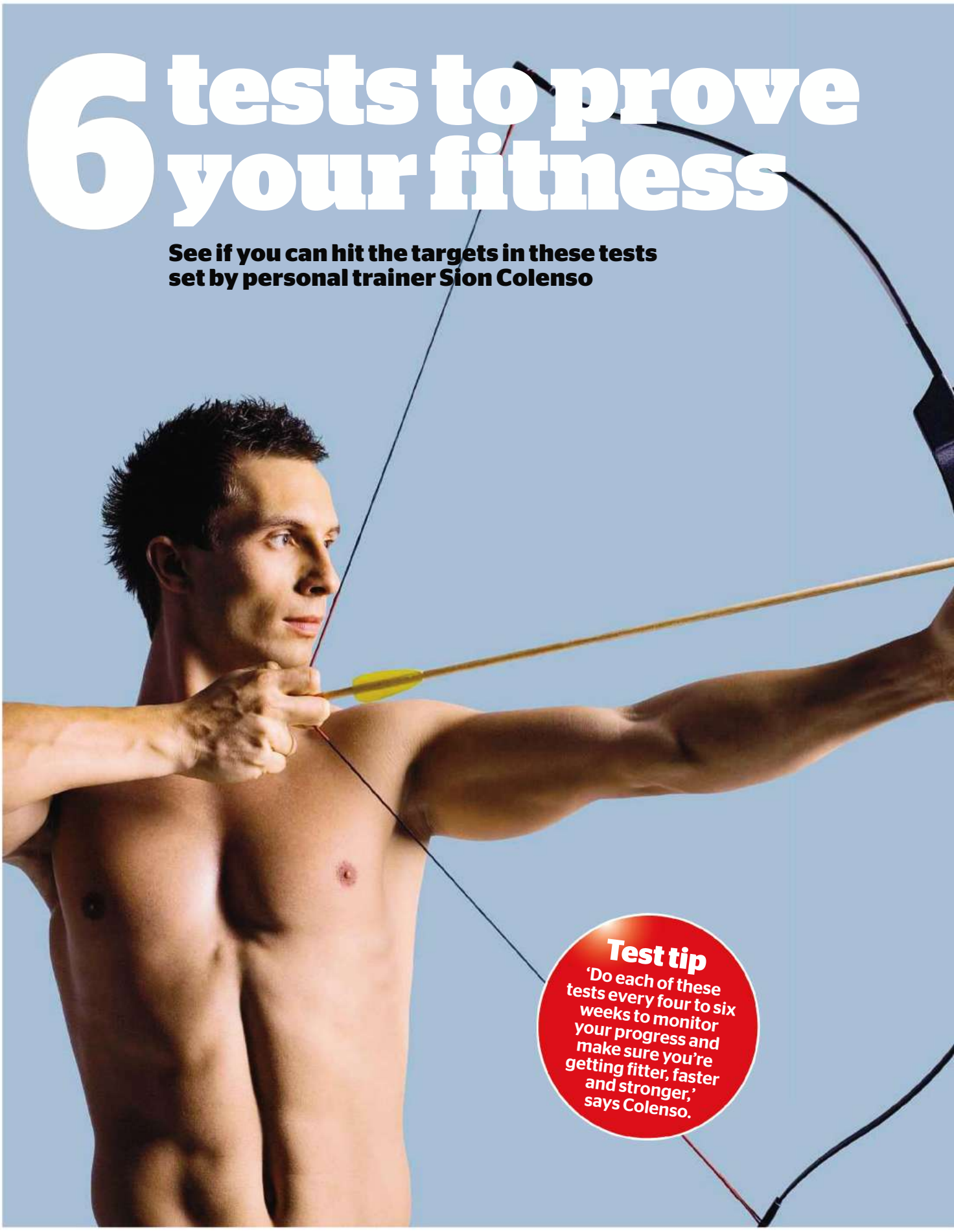
6 tests to prove your fitness

See if you can hit the targets in these tests set by personal trainer Sion Colenso



Test tip

'Do each of these tests every four to six weeks to monitor your progress and make sure you're getting fitter, faster and stronger,' says Colenso.

Words Paul McNally, Joe Warner **Illustrations** Acute Graphics **Photography** Shutterstock

Plank

What it targets Your core strength

How to do it Hold your body in a straight line from head to heels. Keep your feet together and your elbows beneath your shoulders. Look straight down and brace for as long as you can. Focus on keeping your hips from sagging. When they do the test is over.

To improve Perform the plank with your hands, feet or both on an unstable surface such as a gym ball. You won't be able to hold it for long, but it'll make doing this test on stable ground easier.

Time	Level
More than 2min	Excellent
75sec–2min	Good
45–75sec	Average
Less than 45sec	Poor

Bodyweight squat

What it targets Your core, quad and hamstring strength

How to do it Keep your feet shoulder-width apart and toes turned out slightly. Brace your core and lower until your thighs are parallel to the floor and your knees are in line with your feet. Push back to the start through your heels. The test is over when you can't maintain perfect form.

To improve Perform walking lunges with light dumb-bells to build muscular strength in your glutes and legs.

Reps	Level
50 or more	Excellent
30–49	Good
16–29	Average
15 or fewer	Poor

Press-up

What it targets Your chest, shoulder and triceps strength

How to do it Keep your body in a straight line and your elbows pointing back, not to the sides. Lower until your chest is a fist's height off the floor, then push back up. The test is over when you can't maintain perfect form.

To improve Complete a set to failure, rest for a few minutes and start again. This will overload the targeted muscles, making them grow stronger.

Reps	Level
50 or more	Excellent
25–49	Good
16–24	Average
15 or fewer	Poor

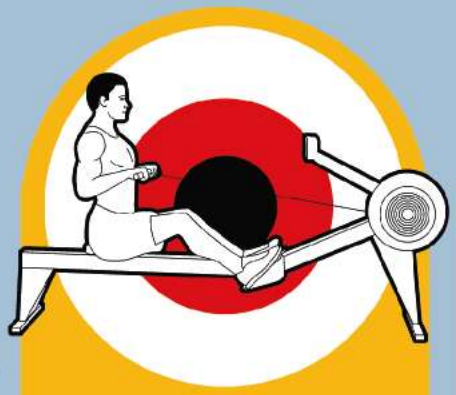
1km run

What it targets Your cardiovascular system

How to do it Set the treadmill elevation to one degree. Keep a constant pace.

To improve Do sets of all-out sprints of between 500m and 800m to improve your ability to maintain a maximum speed for longer.

Time	Level
3min or less	Excellent
3min–3min 29sec	Good
3min 30sec–4min 29sec	Average
4min 30sec or more	Poor



500m row

What it targets Your cardiovascular system and muscle co-ordination between the upper and lower body

How to do it On a Concept2 rowing machine, select level ten resistance. Sit upright with your shoulders back and core braced. Drive with your legs.

To improve Perform sets of max-effort 250m rows, separated by a few minutes of gentle rowing, to improve your endurance.

Time	Level
1min 30 sec or less	Excellent
1min 31sec–1min 44sec	Good
1min 45sec–1min 59sec	Average
2min or more	Poor

Pull-up

What it targets Your upper back strength

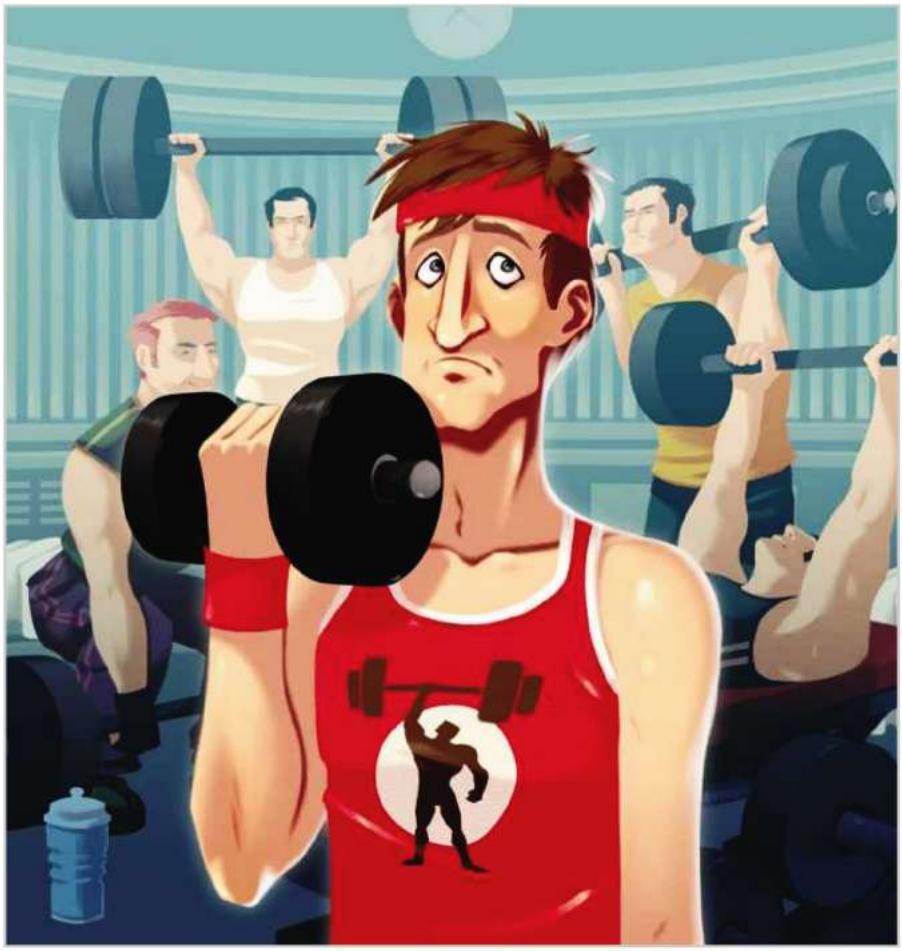
How to do it Grip the bar overhand, extend your arms fully and let your body hang. Pull up until your chin is over the bar, squeezing your lats. Lower again without swinging. The test is over when you can't maintain perfect form.

To improve Do a max set, rest for a few minutes and repeat. Try lat pull-downs on a machine to build back strength.

Reps	Level
12 or more	Excellent
8–11	Good
4–7	Average
3 or fewer	Poor

7 reasons you've stopped gaining muscle

Not seeing results in the gym? Avoid these mistakes and get more bulk



1 You're focusing on isolation moves

Isolation exercises, such as the biceps curl, target just one muscle whereas compound moves, such as squats or bench presses, target multiple muscle groups. The more muscles you work in each exercise, the more testosterone and growth hormones your body produces, which helps build all-over muscle mass. Ensure your training is based around shoulder presses, bench press, deadlifts, lunges and squats.

2 You're keeping the reps too low

If you're doing fewer than six reps per set you are building explosive muscular power, which isn't the same thing as building muscular size. Keep your range between eight and 12 reps per set for all your major lifts, and remember that you should be reaching fatigue on the last couple. If you're not, you need to increase the weight. If you reach fatigue before then, you've started too heavy.

'The more muscles you work in each exercise, the more testosterone and growth hormones your body produces'

3 You're relying on machines

Resistance machines are great for beginners because they place the body in a fixed position where it's unlikely to be injured. However, this means that the smaller muscles that stabilise your body when lifting free weights have nothing to do and so don't grow bigger and stronger. When you move on to compound moves that are vital for big muscles you won't have the requisite strength to go heavy, reducing your muscles' ability to keep growing.

4 You're not having a post-workout shake

It doesn't matter what you do in the gym if you don't have a protein shake when you've finished. After training your battered muscles are crying out for quality nutrients so they can start repairing themselves. Consume around 30g of protein and some high-quality carbs as soon as you've completed your last rep – every session.

5 You're burning too many calories outside of the gym

To build muscles you need to consume more calories than you burn every day. It may be that you're underestimating how many calories you're burning with that game of five-a-side football or by cycling to and from work. Have a healthy snack containing carbs and protein before any form of cardio exercise to keep your energy stores topped up and always have some protein afterwards. This will ensure your body has enough nutrients still build muscles.

6 You're not eating enough protein

Eating around 1.5g of protein per kilo of body weight is often enough to gain muscular size, but if you're still struggling try increasing this to 2g. And make sure high-quality protein makes up at least a third of every meal, along with plenty of fresh vegetables.

7 You're not getting enough sleep

Hitting the hay after midnight and getting up at the crack of dawn? Your body repairs and rebuilds muscles while you sleep, so not getting enough means that you're not giving yourself the time to get bigger. Aim for eight hours every night and get to bed as close to 10pm as you can.

You'll find form guides for compound moves at **mensfitness.co.uk/links/alltogethernow**

Words Paul McNally, Joe Warner **Illustration** Rui Ricardo@FolioArt

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3 perfect food pairings

Double the benefit by combining these healthy foods

Tomato and avocado

Need an excuse for eating nachos? In a study at Ohio State University, subjects who ate salsa containing half an avocado absorbed up to 4½ times more lycopene and 2½ times more betacarotene – compounds found in tomatoes that help fight cancer – than those who didn't. Researchers attribute this to the good fats in avocado helping nutrient absorption.

Apple and raspberry

Combining these two fruits enhances your body's ability to fight off cancer, according to a study in the *Journal Of Nutrition*. The research established that ellagic acid, an antioxidant found in raspberries, increased the ability of quercetin, an antioxidant found in apples, to wipe out cancerous cells.

Tuna and broccoli

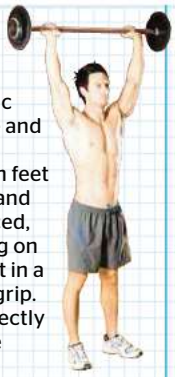
Tuna is a rich source of selenium, which raises your levels of a cancer-fighting enzyme called thioredoxin reductase. Broccoli also promotes this compound thanks to its high levels of sulphoraphane. When eaten together they are 13 times more effective in slowing down the growth of cancer cells than when eaten separately, according to a British study.

4 moves for huge shoulders

Arnold press

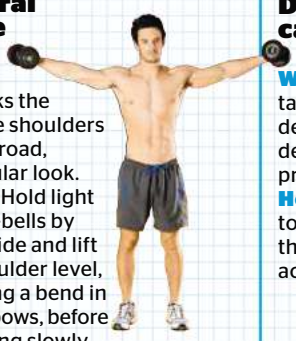
Why? Combining a pressing move with a rotational one, this single move hits your delts from several angles.
How? Start with palms facing you, elbows front. Rotate your palms forward as you press the weight up, then reverse to the start.

Overhead press



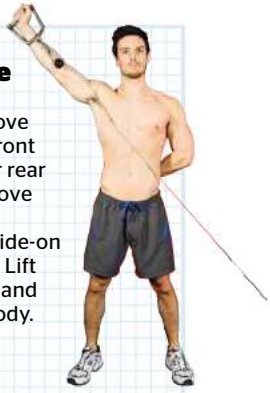
Why? The classic move builds size and strength.
How? Stand with feet hip-width apart and upper body braced, with a bar resting on your upper chest in a shoulder-width grip. Press the bar directly overhead before lowering slowly.

Lateral raise



Why? It works the middle shoulders for a broad, muscular look.
How? Hold light dumb-bells by your side and lift to shoulder level, keeping a bend in the elbows, before lowering slowly.

Diagonal cable raise



Why? This move targets your front delts and your rear delts as the move progresses.
How? Stand side-on to a low cable. Lift the handle up and across your body.

Words Cristian Burbano Photography Shutterstock

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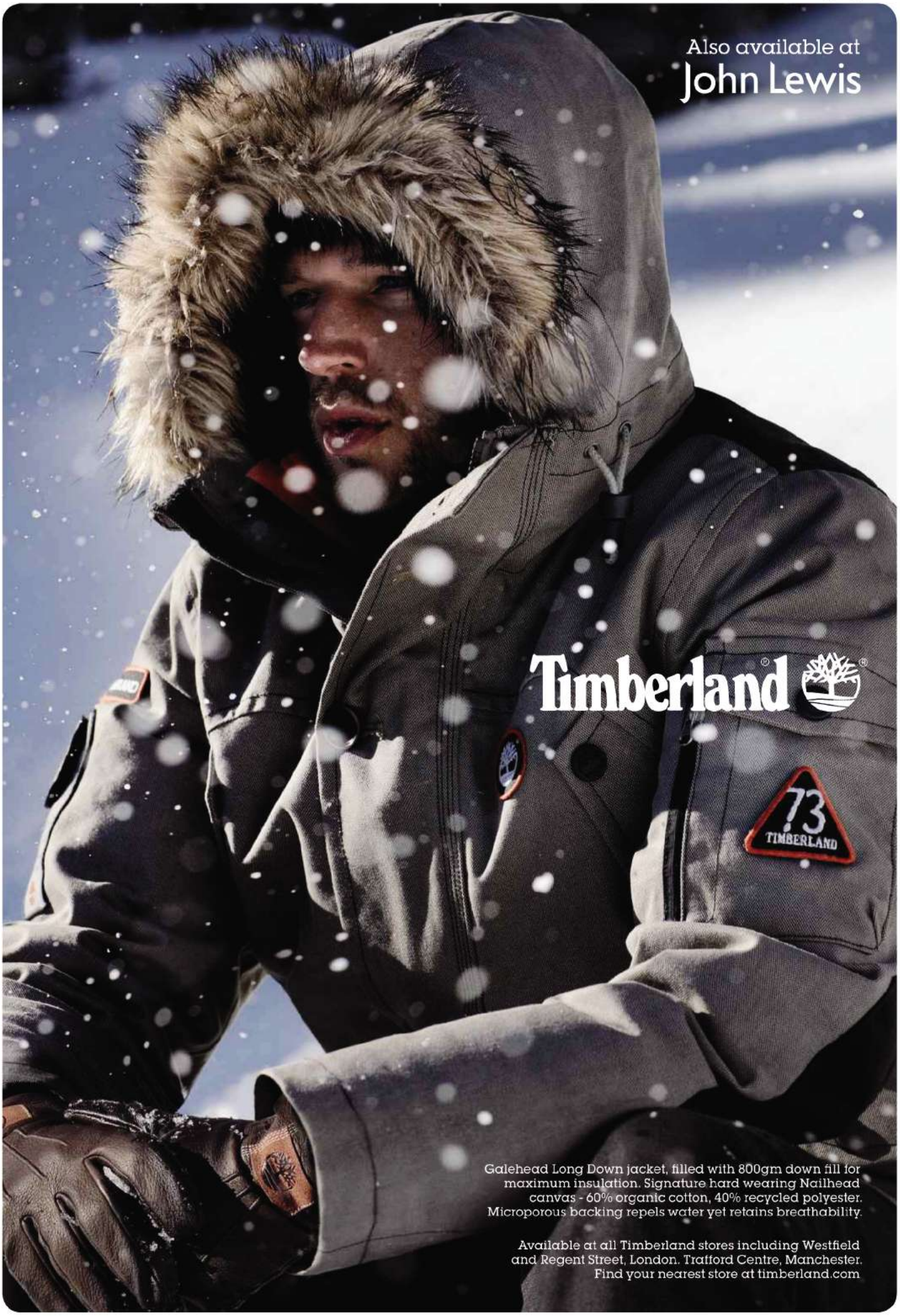

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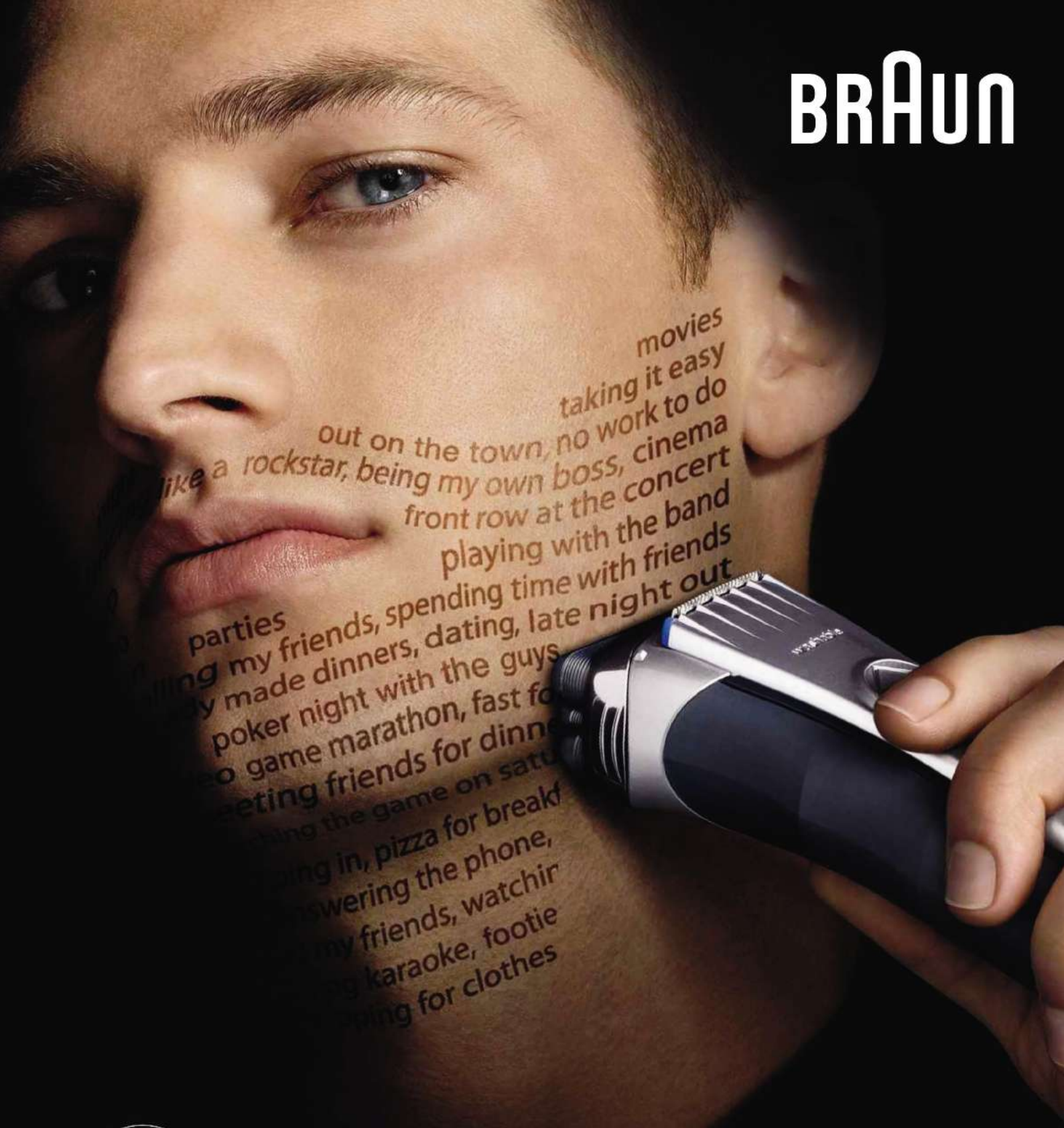

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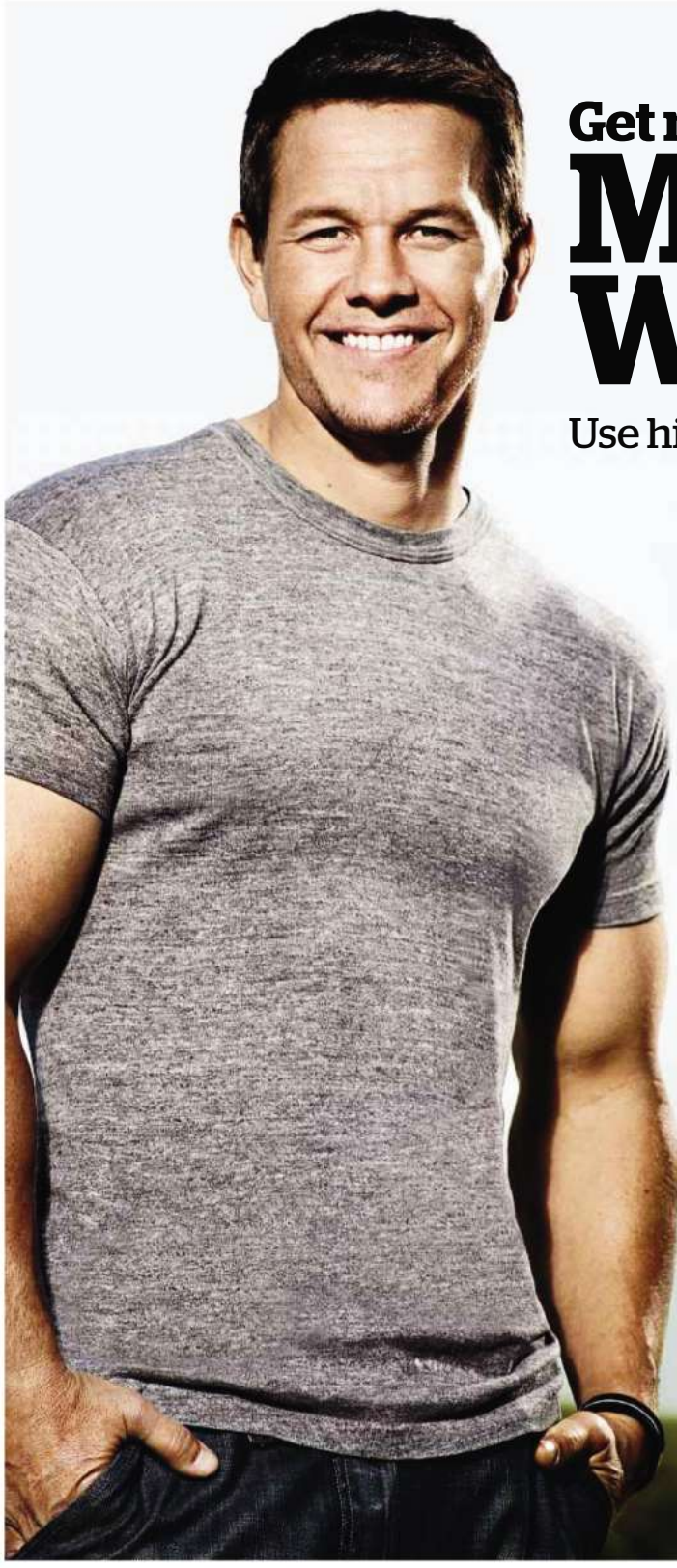
Advice and inspiration from the people who know



Get ripped like Mark Wahlberg

Use his boxing drills to be fighting fit

Mark Wahlberg has always been in great shape, but it was for his starring role as American boxer Micky Ward in his new movie *The Fighter* that the Hollywood star got superfit.

'By the end of our time training together Mark could have fought professionally,' says Bo Cleary, the fitness coach behind Wahlberg's incredible new physique. 'Mark has always been a hard trainer, but he surpassed himself in the gym and in the ring, and you can see the results in how he's looking.'

'By the end of our time training together I could've put Mark in a pro fight and he'd have won'

The movie centres around the life of professional boxer 'Irish' Micky Ward and his older brother, played by Christian Bale.

'Christian would train with us sometimes too, joining us for a run or doing some drills in the ring,' says Clearly. 'Both guys are true pros and prove that working hard in the gym is the quickest way to getting into really great shape.'

With Wahlberg playing a boxer renowned for his fighting style and boxing ability, Cleary designed a training programme that wouldn't be out of place for a genuine title contender. He'd make him skip, spar and do bag work.

'We'd do 15 rounds some days, so I was really pushing Mark all the time, trying to force as much out of him as I could,' says Cleary. 'He was getting better every day and looking more and more like a pro. I could have put him in a pro fight and he'd have won. That's how hard he'd worked and how good he'd become. His punch was hard and he's got a rock-solid chin. He took some blows during our training and he didn't bat an eyelid.'

Turn over for Mark Wahlberg's workout »»

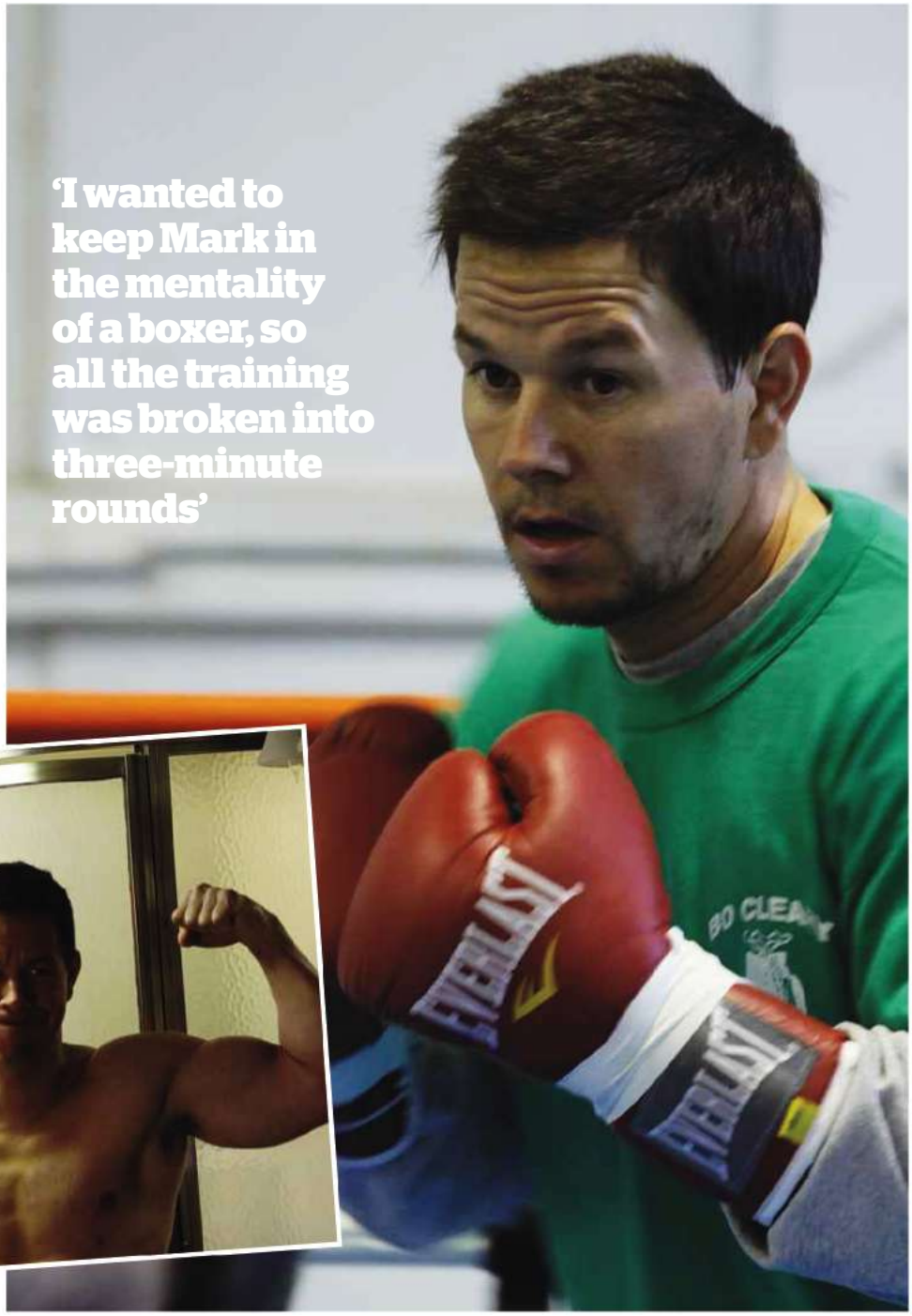
Words Joe Warner **Photography** Peter Mikkel Gaardmand Zäll, Art Streiber

Wahlberg's workout

Get fighting fit

'I wanted to keep Mark in the mentality of a boxer, so all the training was broken into three-minute rounds,' says Cleary. 'Do the workout below in order, taking a minute's rest between each three-minute round. Mark also did a lot of plyometric and bodyweight training, so he did box jumps, pull-ups and press-ups, to get stronger and fitter, but not so big that he lost flexibility, which is so important to boxers.'

Bo Cleary is a US-based fitness coach. Go to **bocleary.com** for details



Bo Cleary shows off his star pupil

Workouts put boxing skills and fitness to the fore

The workout

- **3 minutes of shadow boxing** to warm up all the major muscle groups
- **3 minutes of easy stretching**, especially chest, back, shoulders and legs
- **3 x 3 minutes of combination punching on the speedball** to improve reaction speed
- **3 x 3 minutes pad work in the ring** to improve movement and delivery
- **3 x 3 minutes rope skipping** to improve footwork and cardio fitness
- **3 x 3 minutes on the speed bag** to work on hand-eye co-ordination
- **3 x 3 minutes sparring** to improve everything
- **3 minutes of total-body stretching** to cool down

Want more celebrity workouts? Go to **mensfitness.co.uk/links/shreddedstars**

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Rebuild yourself

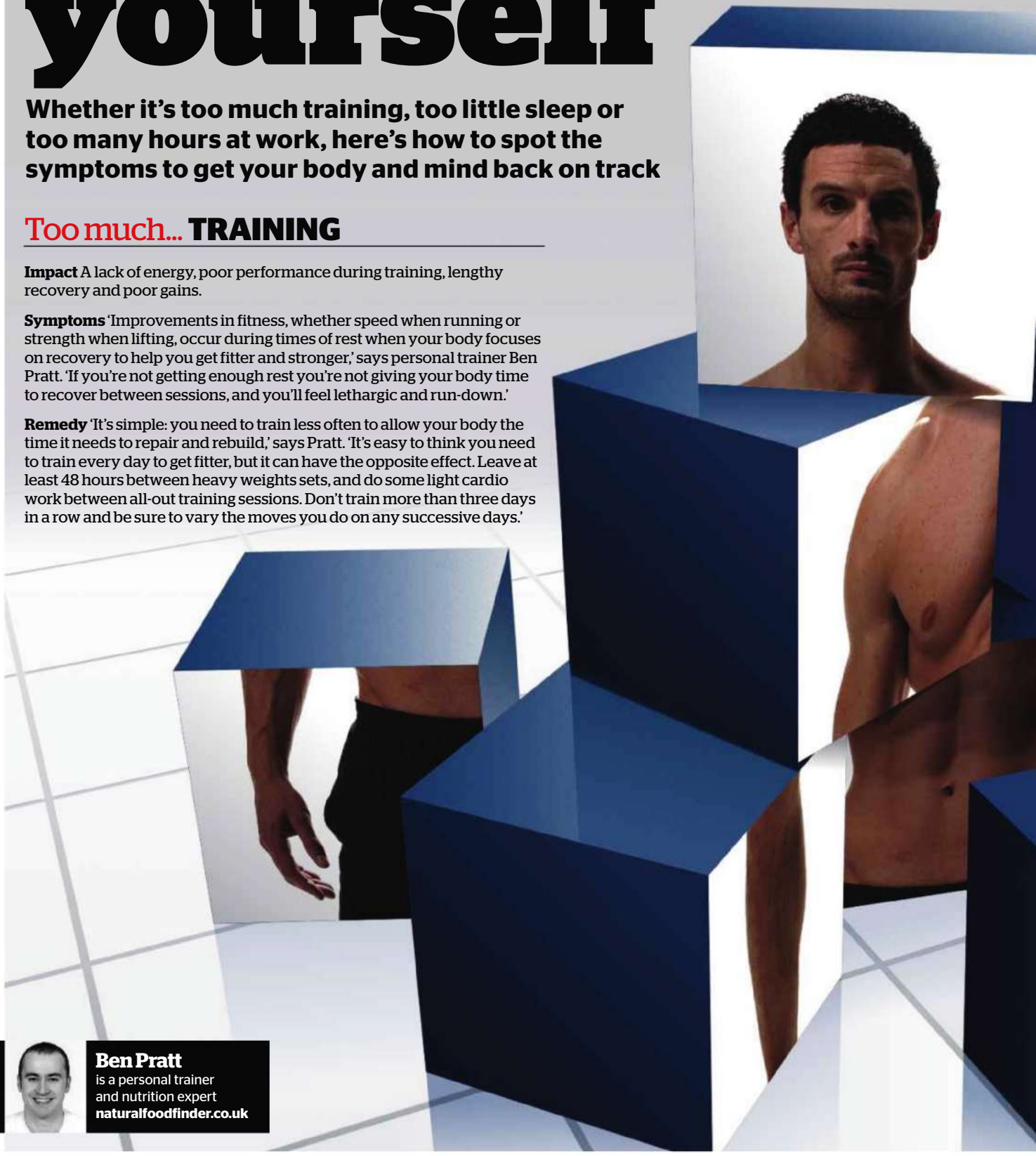
Whether it's too much training, too little sleep or too many hours at work, here's how to spot the symptoms to get your body and mind back on track

Too much... TRAINING

Impact A lack of energy, poor performance during training, lengthy recovery and poor gains.

Symptoms 'Improvements in fitness, whether speed when running or strength when lifting, occur during times of rest when your body focuses on recovery to help you get fitter and stronger,' says personal trainer Ben Pratt. 'If you're not getting enough rest you're not giving your body time to recover between sessions, and you'll feel lethargic and run-down.'

Remedy 'It's simple: you need to train less often to allow your body the time it needs to repair and rebuild,' says Pratt. 'It's easy to think you need to train every day to get fitter, but it can have the opposite effect. Leave at least 48 hours between heavy weights sets, and do some light cardio work between all-out training sessions. Don't train more than three days in a row and be sure to vary the moves you do on any successive days.'



Ben Pratt
is a personal trainer and nutrition expert
naturalfoodfinder.co.uk

Words Paul McNally, Joe Warner **Illustration** Sudden Impact

Too much... ALCOHOL

Impact Headaches, upset stomach, dehydration, poor concentration and motivation and a constant urge for bacon sarnies.

Symptoms 'Alcohol causes a toxic burden on the liver and kidneys, zapping vitamins and minerals which are needed for optimum health,' says Pratt. 'Too many boozy nights out will cause rapid variations in blood sugar levels, making you more likely to eat unhealthy snacks as the night goes on. If it happens too often you may put on weight. Your body also prioritises getting rid of alcohol over many other functions, including building muscle.'

Remedy The simplest option is to lay off the booze for a while to let your body recover. If you can't avoid work or social occasions that revolve around drinking, offer to drive or make more sensible drink choices. A pint of strong beer has 2.8 units, compared with just 1.3 in a bottle of four per cent ABV beer or one unit in a single shot of spirit and mixer. Also, always separate alcoholic drinks with a soft one.

Too little... SLEEP

Impact Waking up tired, restless sleep, waking at the same time each night, struggling to get going in the morning and reaching for caffeine or 'pick me ups' all day long.

Symptoms 'Too many late nights and early mornings will quickly lead to fatigue and near-constant tiredness that can impact every aspect of your life, from work to training to your relationships,' says Pratt. 'As your stress levels rise it can be harder to get to sleep at night and difficult to wake each morning, creating a vicious cycle that can be hard to break.'

Remedy 'The average man needs between seven and eight hours of good-quality sleep each night. Eight hours of poor-quality sleep may make little difference,' says Pratt. 'It's no good playing catch-up at the weekends with long lie-ins because this doesn't make up for lost hours in the week, according to recent research. Improve your chances of nodding off quickly and enjoying good-quality sleep by avoiding caffeine after lunch, making sure your room is pitch black, unplugging electric gadgets, not watching TV for half an hour before turning in, and even having a cup of hot milk to release sleep-promoting hormones.'

Too much... WORK

Impact Feeling stressed, anxious or even depressed, constant snacking, irritable, moody and putting on weight.

Symptoms 'Long-term exposure to stressful situations in the workplace has many mental and physical impacts on your body,' says Pratt. 'Increased levels of cortisol encourage your body to burn muscle and store fat, as well as weakening your immune system so you're more susceptible to illness. Relentless stress causes physical and mental exhaustion.'

Remedy 'Don't reach for alcohol, cigarettes or junk food to try to relax as this will only exacerbate your health problems,' says Pratt. 'Tackle the root of the problem by speaking to your bosses to find a solution to ease your workload. Having more time away from the office to relax and exercise will promote feelings of wellbeing.' It would also be wise to improve other restorative areas of your life such as sleep and diet so that your ability to cope with stress improves.

The perfect rep

Get more out of every single lift with these technique tips from trainer Robert Bray

1 Know the form

Correct form will isolate the correct muscles in the right way, breaking down your muscle fibres so that they grow back bigger and stronger. Incorrect form can place excess pressure on supporting muscles and joints and is likely to cause injury. Make sure you have a full understanding of the move and, if you are unsure, ask one of your gym's trainers. The start position is the most important: if you don't get this right, you'll always go wrong.

2 Feel your muscles

During each rep concentrate on feeling the muscle or muscle group that is working, rather than the feeling the resistance you're working against. Concentrating on what your muscles are doing, rather than what the bar is doing, means you are less likely to cheat during the rep by bouncing the weight or using other muscle groups. This means you get a more thorough set.

3 Complete a full range of motion

A muscle must work through its full range of motion to break down the maximum amount of muscle fibres. Failure to do so will result in poorer returns in muscular size and strength, and can lead to muscular weakness and ultimately injury.

4 Know your reps target

Without a reps target you probably aren't lifting the correct weight for your goal. If you want to build strength then you should be aiming for four to six reps per set. For muscle size, six to ten reps is ideal, while more than ten reps will improve muscular endurance. If you end your set feeling that you have more in the tank, then increase the weight accordingly next time. But if you don't make your target, it's too heavy.

5 Every rep should look identical

The last rep of your set should look exactly like the first one did. If your muscles are fatigued to the extent that your body has moved into a different position to cope with the load, that means you're not working effectively and you're putting yourself at risk of injury. As soon as you notice your form changing, stop the set and adjust the resistance accordingly.

Robert Bray is a personal trainer and founder of myfitnessstudio.co.uk.

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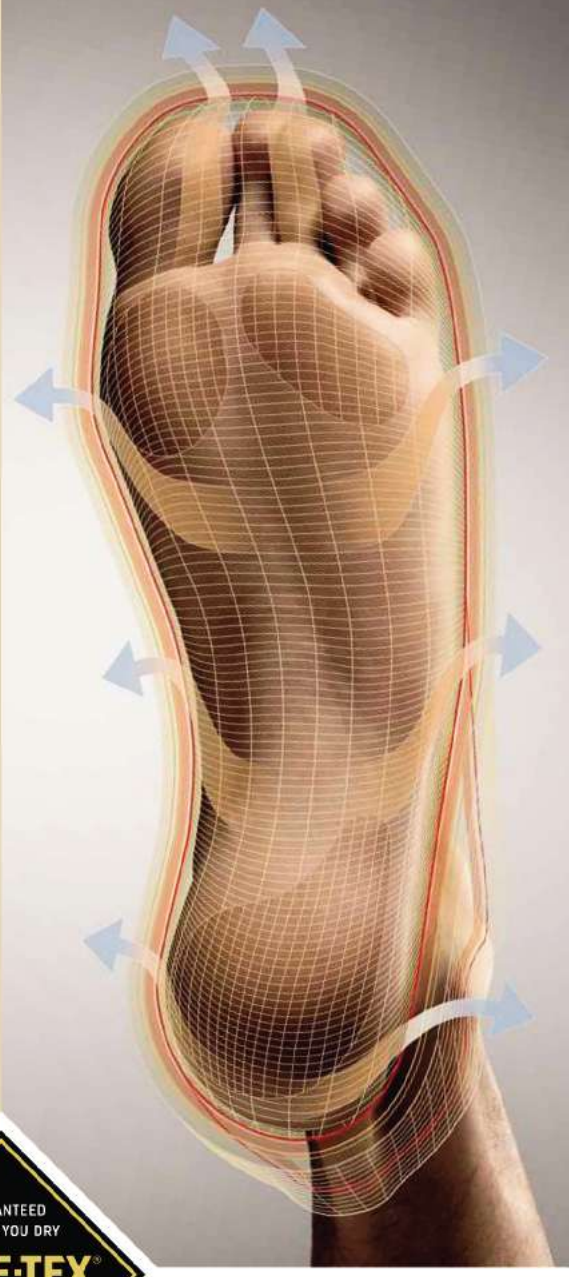

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Stretching: not just for girls

As you've no doubt noticed, most of the stretching in the gym done is by girls. Add in this neglected workout component to your workout and get stronger and faster

Be honest: how often do you stretch your muscles? Before and after every workout? Just after a really hard session? Or only ever when accompanied with a yawn as you get out of bed?

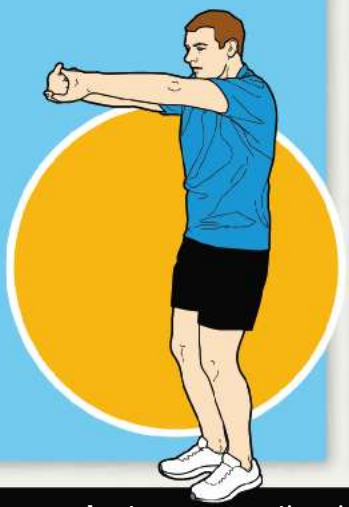
'Stretching is often an overlooked factor in training, whether you want to get faster or stronger,' says sports therapist Claudia Ferreira. 'Get it right and stretching can have a big impact on your results, assisting recovery and improving your muscles' elasticity, but if you get it wrong it can do more harm than good. Here's all you need to know.'

Static stretching

What is it?
Stretching a muscle or group of muscles to its furthest point, then maintaining that position for 30 seconds or more. Breathing deeply while holding a stretch delivers more oxygenated blood to the muscles, helping them recover from exercise and improving their elasticity.

Why do it?
To improve recovery and flexibility, static stretching should be performed only after exercise. Numerous studies have shown that doing these type of stretches before exercise has a detrimental effect on explosive movements and strength output.

Upper back stretch
Bring your arms out in front of you and interlock your fingers with your palms facing outwards. Push your hands away. You should feel the stretch in your upper back.

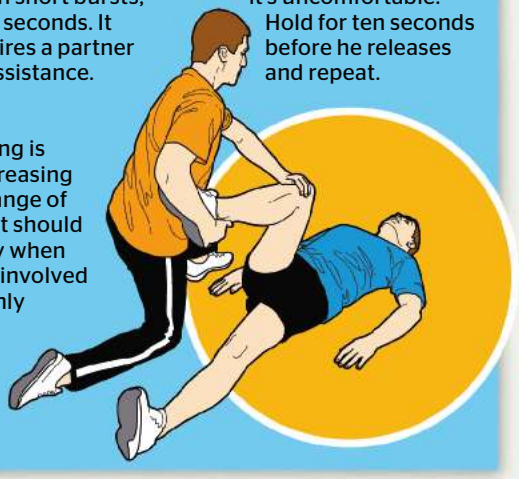


PNF stretching

What is it?
A proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation (PNF) stretch involves alternating between the contracting then relaxing of an agonist and antagonistic muscle (such as hamstring and quads) in short bursts, typically ten seconds. It usually requires a partner to provide assistance.

Why do it?
PNF stretching is great for increasing a muscle's range of movement. It should be done only when the muscles involved are thoroughly warmed up and not before exercise.

Glute stretch
Lie on your back with one leg straight on the floor and the other bent. Get your partner to lift the bent leg and, supporting it at the ankle and knee, push it towards your chest until it's uncomfortable. Hold for ten seconds before he releases and repeat.



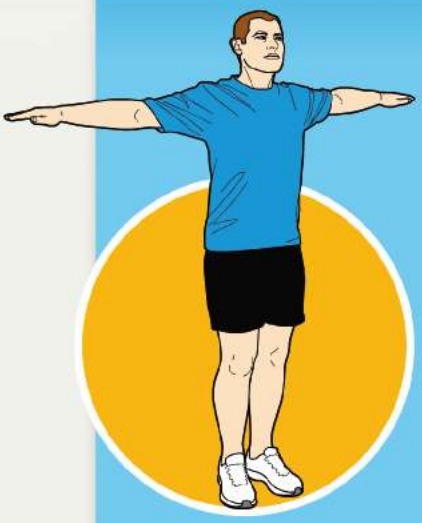
For a quick and effective pre-workout warm-up routine visit **mensfitness.co.uk/links/readytotrain**

Words Joe Warner **Illustrations** Sudden Impact **Photography** Getty

Claudia Ferreira is a sports therapist and founder of integratedphysio.net.

Dynamic stretching

What is it?
Slow and controlled movements to work a muscle or group through its full range of motion.



Why do it?
This form of stretching prepares the body for exercise and sports performance because it increases range of movement and blood and oxygen flow to the muscles, priming them to perform and lowering the risk of injury.

Shoulder and chest stretch
Stand upright with your knees bent slightly and your core braced. Raise your arms out to the sides and rotate them in a large arc, keeping it slow and controlled, to move the muscles of your shoulder and chest through a full range of movement.

Passive stretching

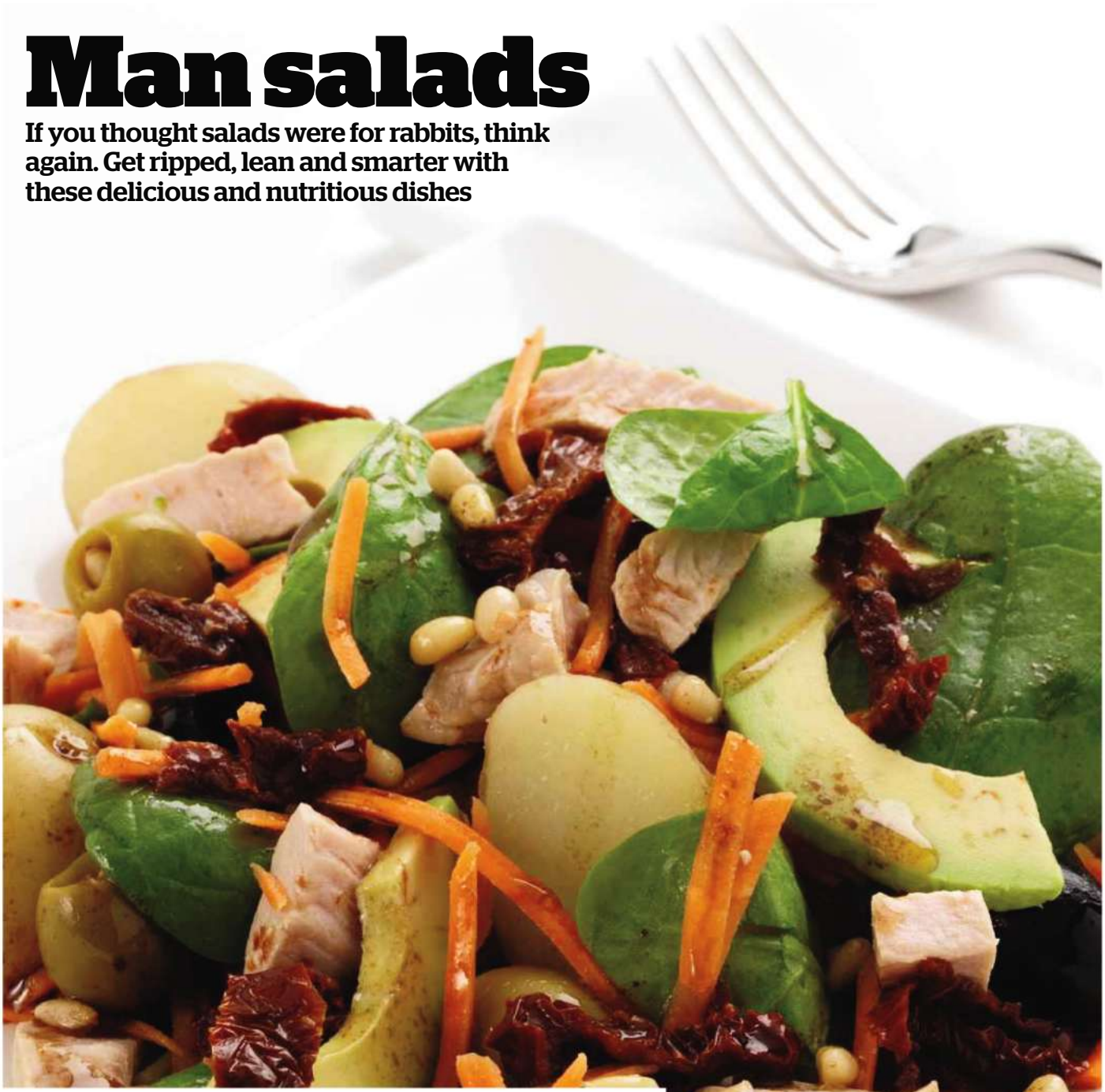
What is it?
A passive stretch is one in which your muscles are moved by an external force, such as a stretch band. You use it to exert pressure on a limb stretching the targeted muscle through a full range of motion before holding it at the extent of its elasticity for up to 15 seconds.

Why do it?
This is a good approach for a post-workout stretch that allows your muscles to recover ready for the next session.

Lying hamstring stretch
Lie flat on the floor with one leg bent and the other straight. Loop a stretch band around the calf of the straight leg and raise that leg off the ground as far as you can, keeping it straight. Once you reach your limit, pull on the stretch band to nudge it on a little further, and maintain that position.

Man salads

If you thought salads were for rabbits, think again. Get ripped, lean and smarter with these delicious and nutritious dishes



Muscle salad

'Fill your salad with foods high in nitrogen,' says dietician Rachel Redman. 'Nitrogen is a key component of all amino acids, which form the structure of protein and are needed to build new muscle. You'll also need a good portion of carbohydrates to replace your glycogen stores after a hard training session to enhance your recovery and optimise your next gym session, so go for spuds. Use high-quality lean meat such as turkey for a big protein kick, avocado and olives for healthy fats, and throw in some grated carrots and sun-dried tomatoes for essential antioxidants to help prevent the oxidative damage from free radicals released during exercise.'

Ingredients

- 2 grilled skinless **turkey breasts**, chopped
- Boiled **new potatoes** in their skins (boil for 15 minutes), sliced
- 25g **pine nuts**
- ½ an **avocado**, sliced
- Handful of **olives**
- 6 sun-dried **tomatoes**, chopped
- ½ **carrot**, grated

Add these ingredients to a large bowl of chopped baby spinach leaves and basil leaves. Drizzle with olive oil and balsamic vinegar and season to taste.

RACHEL REDMAN is a registered dietician and founder of Expert Nutrition **expert-nutrition.co.uk**

You'll find loads more fitness-enhancing meals at **mensfitness.co.uk/links/thisfoodsfit**

Words Joe Warner **Photography** packshotfactory.co.uk **Food styling** Georgie Besterman

Brain power salad

'Choline is an essential nutrient that acts as a precursor to an important neurotransmitter involved in brain function and the central nervous system. It's found in a variety of foods, including beans and vegetables such as broccoli and cauliflower. Omega 3 fatty acids are also associated with cognition and brain function. This salad is packed full of choline-rich foods and omega 3 fats, which are found in oily fish, nuts and seeds.'

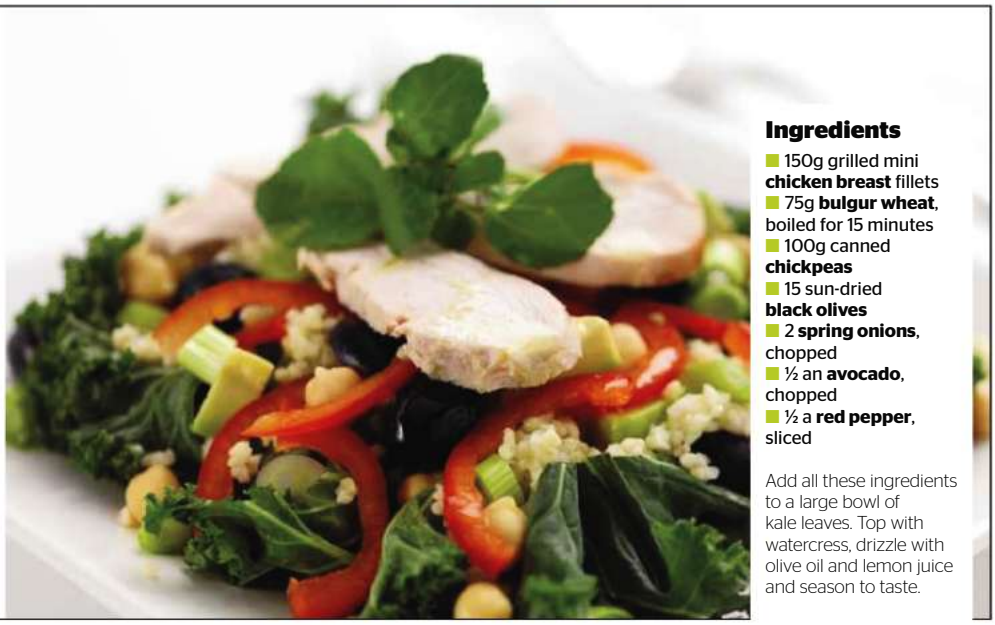
Ingredients

- 100g grilled **salmon fillet**, flaked
- 100g canned **butter beans**
- Handful of diced **sweet potato** cubes (boiled or baked)
- 1-2tbsp **linseeds**
- 30g **walnuts**, chopped
- Cooked and cooled broccoli **florets**

Add all these ingredients to a large bowl of mixed lettuce leaves and basil. Drizzle with rapeseed oil and lemon juice and season to taste.

Energy salad

'To optimise your energy levels, you need slow-release carbohydrates and B vitamins. These play key roles in energy metabolism, which means they release energy both from food and from your body's own energy stores. Lacking these nutrients can lead to muscle weakness and fatigue. This salad is full of foods high in B vitamins, and contains low-GI carbohydrates to help prevent mid-afternoon energy slumps, which are often associated with a high intake of refined carbs and sugar.'



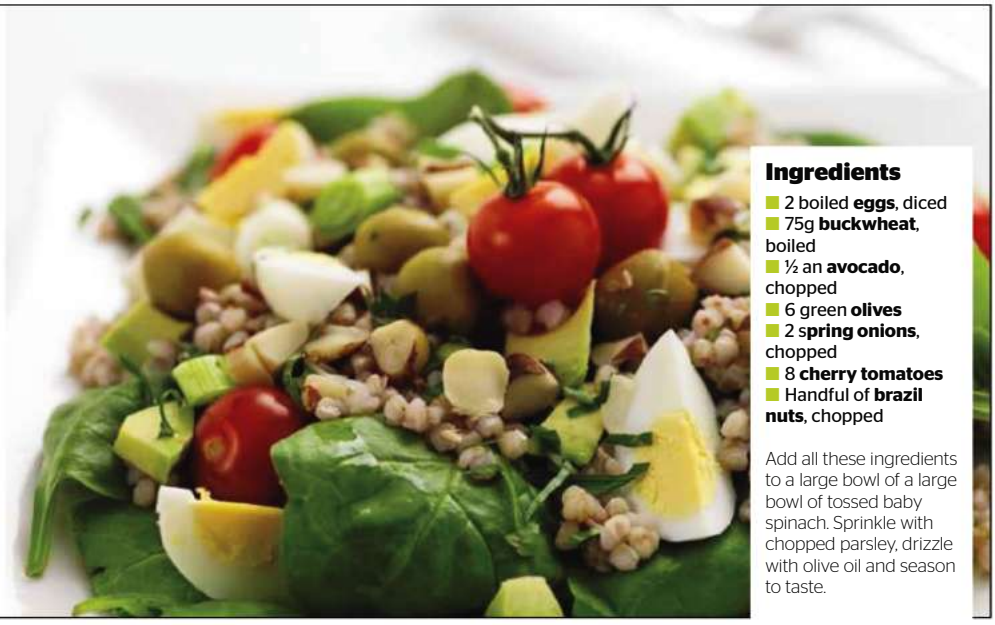
Ingredients

- 150g grilled mini **chicken breast** fillets
- 75g **bulgur wheat**, boiled for 15 minutes
- 100g canned **chickpeas**
- 15 sun-dried **black olives**
- 2 **spring onions**, chopped
- ½ an **avocado**, chopped
- ½ a **red pepper**, sliced

Add all these ingredients to a large bowl of kale leaves. Top with watercress, drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice and season to taste.

Fat loss salad

'When your stomach is full, receptors and hormones signal to your brain that you're no longer hungry. If you can slow the rate at which your stomach empties after a meal (called gastric emptying), you can feel satisfied for longer and avoid reaching for those tempting snacks between meals. This salad is designed for that very purpose. It provides high-quality proteins and fats, low-GI carbs and an abundance of vitamins and minerals for a real health kick.'



Ingredients

- 2 boiled **eggs**, diced
- 75g **buckwheat**, boiled
- ½ an **avocado**, chopped
- 6 green **olives**
- 2 **spring onions**, chopped
- 8 **cherry tomatoes**
- Handful of **brazil nuts**, chopped

Add all these ingredients to a large bowl of a large bowl of tossed baby spinach. Sprinkle with chopped parsley, drizzle with olive oil and season to taste.

Ask the experts

MF's resident gurus are on hand to answer your health and fitness questions

How often do women think about sex?

Everyone thinks about sex. It's a natural interest that's hard-wired into our brains. It's true that most men think about sex more often than most women (there are always exceptions) but the key difference between guys and girls is *how* we think about sex. Women are biologically programmed to think less about the act of sex but more about what the consequences are – romance, relationships, babies – whereas men are more focused on the physical act. That said, hormones are powerful things and some women may absolutely crave sex at certain points of the month, specifically when they are at their most fertile.

Why do I always have big bags under my eyes no matter how much I sleep?

It's caused by a combination of age and your genes. As you get older the tissue under your eyes loses elasticity and the skin gets thinner, so fatty tissues and blood vessels appear more obvious than before. Bags can also be caused or made worse by allergies – hay fever, pet and dust mite allergies are common culprits – and too much alcohol, tobacco or caffeine, as well as insufficient sleep. Applying a cold spoon or an ice pack will cause the blood vessels to dilate and help reduce the appearance of eye bags.

I think I may have shin splints. What is it?

Shin splints – the technical name is medial tibial stress syndrome (MTSS) – is pain in the lower, inner part of the shin and is particularly common in those who do sports that involve high impact, such as running and jumping. Athletes often report pain at the start of exercise, which settles then returns the longer they continue. Anatomical studies indicate that the toe flexors and soleus (deep calf muscle) are the most likely cause. They exert a traction on the outer lining of the bone that can cause inflammation and pain.

Poor foot posture, tight or underactive lower limb muscles and an increased body mass index (BMI) are all risk factors for the condition. Once correctly diagnosed, shin splints is usually resolved by appropriate physiotherapy and podiatry management.

I'm healthy and active. What should my resting blood pressure be?

Less than 120/80 mmHg

Health
Dr Steven Bradshaw is a medical doctor and writer qualified in all areas of medicine.

Nutrition
Dr Sarah Schenker is a nutritionist at the British Nutrition Foundation and a sports dietician.

Cardio
Matt Hart is a personal trainer and runs TORQ Fitness Training and Consultancy.

Photography Shutterstock

My grip fails well before my muscles during big lifts. How can I strengthen it?

This is a common problem and it can be frustrating, because if you can no longer hold the weight safely during a set you never get to really fatigue your target muscles. Try wrapping pipe insulators or a towel around a barbell or chin-up bar and perform those exercises where your grip often fails. Forcing your hands around a wider grip is the quickest way to improve grip and forearm strength.

My mate says he gets enough exercise by walking to work every day. Will this maintain fitness?

Solely walking will not condition you for anything more than walking. If you want to lose weight, add muscle mass or improve cardiovascular fitness then you need to spend at least 30 minutes five times per week pushing yourself out of the comfort zone through either lifting weights or high-intensity cardio. Walking to work every day is a good base for people starting out to better health, but to get fitter you need to work up a real sweat.

What's the difference between omega 3 and omega 6 fats?

From a scientific point of view, it's all down to the way carbon molecules bond together. From a simple health perspective, there's a big difference. Omega 3 has been shown to reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes, decrease blood cholesterol levels and maintain blood pressure, whereas too much omega 6 may increase the chances of various diseases and depression. Many western diets have a ratio of omega 6 to omega 3 of 10:1, but the ideal ratio is 4:1 or even lower.

Should I train when feeling under the weather?

There is no general rule, but if your cold symptoms are mild and from the neck up, such as a head cold, you're probably fine to train. Studies have shown that moderate exercise doesn't alter the severity of a mild cold. However, you're likely to feel sluggish because your body is trying to fight off an infection. If your symptoms are below the neck, such as a chesty cough or muscular aches and pains, then you need time off to rest and recuperate. It's also more considerate to stay away from busy places such as gyms where you could spread the bug easily.

What does my body fat percentage need to be before my six-pack shows?

Ten per cent

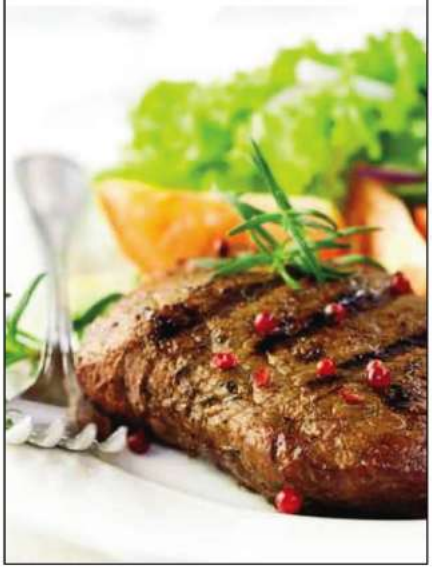
Why can I only train for an hour every other day, or else risk overtraining, while elite athletes train for hours every day?

The volume of training that your body is able to cope with depends on a number of factors, including rest, recovery, nutrition and avoiding stress. A pro athlete will invariably have much more sleep than you do, won't have a stressful job, will have time to relax and unwind, and will be following a dedicated nutritional plan. Training every other day for about an hour is good advice for a novice. As your body becomes better adapted, you will be able to increase your training load. The secret to progressive fitness revolves around stressing the body (exercise), allowing sufficient recovery (rest), then stressing the body a little bit harder.

How much red meat can I have per week?

The World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) recommends eating no more than 500g of cooked red meat per week. Why? Red meat contains substances such as haem, the compound that gives the meat its colour, which has been shown to damage the lining of the colon. The WCRF also suggests you should avoid processed meats such as ham and sausages to reduce the risk of bowel cancer. Studies also show that people who eat a lot of red meat tend to eat fewer plant-based foods, so they benefit less from their cancer-protective properties.

However, red meat is a good source of protein and iron, which are important if you are physically active, so a small amount won't do you any harm.



Muscle
Jason Anderson
is a fitness expert and director of Movement3 (movement3.co.uk).

Women
Sue Ostler
is a relationships expert and author of *Relationships That Rock*. Visit flirtdiva.com.

Physio
Richard Norris
is a physiotherapist at The Physiotherapy Centre in Liverpool. Visit thephysiotherapycentre.com.

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GARMIN®

Build the perfect home gym

We'll show you the best kit to buy. Getting the girl is your problem

Short on space? Low on budget? Having a home gym doesn't mean building an extension to your house. You just need to be cunning about the equipment you buy and how you use it.

MF has highlighted the training kit we think is most effective – for your body and your bank account. Start with item one, dumb-bells, and then add the subsequent kit to your gym when money or space becomes available. You'll soon have everything you need to get the body she wants.

Words **Joel Snape**
Photography **Glen Burrows**

1

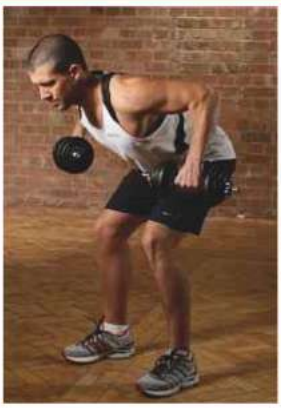
Dumb-bells

Why get them?

When investing in equipment, dumb-bells should be your first port of call. Not only will they allow you to add weight to a lot of bodyweight moves, they'll let you hit muscles that are tricky to target otherwise. 'They're one of the best bits of kit you can get,' says Chris Rogers, a personal trainer with Fitness First. 'And there is very little difference between models, so there's no problem with investing in a cheap pair.'

How to use them

Key dumb-bell moves for all-over benefits



Bent-over row

'You need to balance out all the pushing you'll be doing with some pulling,' says Will Purdue, a personal trainer and functional training specialist. 'The one-arm dumb-bell row is one option, but the bent-over row will work your legs at the same time as your back.'

Lunge

'People sometimes under-emphasise unilateral moves,' says Purdue. 'If you're a beginner, split squats – when you assume the lunge position but just bend the front knee – as well as forward or walking lunges will test your stability and work your legs.'

Military press

The classic military press is a staple of any strength programme, and it'll benefit your development in other areas. 'Studies have been done in which people stopped benching and focused on the press,' says Purdue. 'When they went back to benching, their max had often improved.'

MF PICK

York's cast-iron dumb-bells are quick to load, easy to grip and fairly cheap. One caveat – at 20kg in total they'll be too light for certain moves after a while, so you'll need more plates.

£34.99 fitness-superstore.co.uk

2

Gym ball

Why get one?

Portable, easy to store and easy on the wallet, a gym ball is one of the most economical improvements you can make to your new training set-up. 'It'll let you work your core, balance, flexibility and mobility,' says Matthew Moulton, a personal trainer with Nuffield Fitness. It'll also mimic a bench for certain moves. Just make sure you get the right size – 75cm is likely to be too unwieldy for some moves, so the 65cm variety is probably your best bet.

MF PICK

Reebok's balls are durable and cheap and will happily take up to 100kg of weight. If you're planning on lifting heavy, you'll need to get a burst-proof ball from a specialist fitness store.

£14.99 fitness-superstore.co.uk

How to use it

These mass-building moves exploit the ball's instability

Dumb-bell bench press

One of the benefits of a ball is that you can use it as an impromptu bench, with the benefit of instability work for your core. 'This is a staple in a lot of my workouts,' says Purdue. 'But I'm also a fan of the seated overhead press.'

Jackknife

Owning a gym ball opens up a whole range of rolling-based moves, from the classic jackknife – using your abs to bring the ball in – to moves such as the glute bridge.

Plank

Once you can hold a plank on the ground for upwards of a minute, you're ready to make it tougher by keeping your forearms or feet on a ball. 'This will be a challenge at first,' says Purdue. 'But as you improve you can do the move with your feet on a chair.'

3

Pull-up bar

Why get one?

'The pull-up is one of the best back exercises there is,' says Rogers. 'It works the back and biceps, requires core stability, and will give you a V-taper like nothing else. Also, exercise variations are endless – weighted, thick grip, towel grip...' Simply put, you could do a decent workout with just a pull-up bar and your own bodyweight. If you haven't got room for a dedicated pull-up station, a doorway bar works just as well. Some screw into the frame, although you might not like such a permanent addition to the house. Others use leverage and your bodyweight to keep them up, although you'll need a door with a proper frame on it for them to work properly.

How to use it

Three essential bar moves

Pull-up

With a pull-up, the backs of your hands face you and you work your back muscles. 'If you can't do many to start with, halve your max number of reps, and do five sets of that number,' suggests Purdue. Or you could do what's known as 'greasing the groove' – do a couple every time you pass the bar.

Chin-up

When you face your palms, it's a chin-up and you're working the biceps. 'Several studies suggest that the chin-up is a better biceps builder than the curl,' says Purdue. 'Once you can do 12, really emphasise going slowly on the downward part of the move, or add weight.'

Knee raise

A classic core move with the added benefit that you're working your grip. 'If you're going purely for strength, move on to strict leg raises as soon as possible, even if it's for low reps,' says Purdue. If you're simply after a six-pack, knee raises will do fine.

MF PICK

The Powerbar folds out to clip on to a doorframe, won't scuff the paintwork and gives more clearance from the ground than other bars.

£29.99 power-bar.co.uk

4

Kettlebells

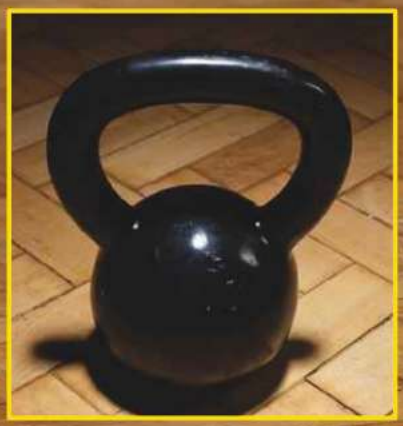
Why get them?

An old-school bit of kit that's had a revival in recent years, a kettlebell can be used to work strength, muscular endurance and cardio in a tiny space. Remember, though: not all kettlebells are created equal. 'The design of the bell can be crucial to safe and effective training,' says Ben Walker, head of the Great Britain Kettlebell Association. 'Look at the gap between the underside of the handle and the very top of the "bell", which should be at least 7cm. Any less and you risk putting your wrist into unsafe positions or, even worse, smashing the bell into your wrist rather than cushioning with your forearm.' Don't bother with the rubber-based ones – they aren't very stable.

MF PICK

With a thick handle, well-shaped bell and resilient coating, the London Kettlebell is a comfortable and aesthetically pleasing option. They range in weight, but you're best off starting with a 16kg and moving up in weight as your technique improves.

£30 londonkettlebells.com



How to use them

Safe, effective kettlebell drills to include in your sessions

Swing

It's the move the kettlebell was designed for, but a lot of people do it wrong. 'Make sure you drive with your legs,' says Purdue. 'The way you push your hips forward should feel similar to a deadlift, and will actually build strength for the move.'

Halo

One benefit of the kettlebell is that its handle lends itself to moves in planes of motion you can't normally hit, such as the round-the-legs figure-eight, or this move where you grip it in both hands and circle it around your head. This is a great way to build core strength – it's a staple among MMA fighters.

Clean and press

Less hard on the forearms than the snatch, the clean and press is a full-body compound move. If you're going for a lung-burning, metabolic conditioning workout, use your legs for the press. If you want to give your shoulders a bit more work, stand up straight and be strict.

5

Suspension trainer

Why get one?

'One of the best investments you can make in your gym,' says Moulton. 'They take up virtually no space and let you tackle a whole range of different exercises.' Because of the instability that they add to moves such as the press-up, they'll also work your stabiliser muscles. And you can take them to the park when it's sunny.

MF PICK

The FITKIT pro is used by the likes of Manchester United FC and Ironman world champion Chrissie Wellington, is easily adjustable and comes with two anchor straps – rather than the usual one – for extra reliability during bodyweight exercises.

£149.50 fitkitpro.co.uk

Models Jacqueline Freeman@MOT, Thai@IMM

How to use it
Add variety and instability to traditional moves

Inverted row
Good on a bar, great on straps. 'The straps increase your range of motion and open up your chest,' says Purdue. 'They also add an element of instability.' To make sure you're at the right angle, keep your feet under the points the straps hang from, set the handles at waist height and lean back. Your hands should hit your armpits at the top of the move.

Press-up
You can tackle these with your hands in the straps, which emphasises your chest muscles, or your feet, which will work your core. 'TRX promotes a version called the Atomic Press-Up, which involves bringing your feet in after every rep,' says Purdue.

Mountain climber
One benefit of a dedicated suspension trainer over a set of gymnastics rings is that you can hook your feet into them, opening up a swathe of new moves. The classic mountain climber is a great example. This'll also work with the squat thrust or plank.

6

Bench and bar

Why get them?
We've saved them until last for reasons of space and price, but a good quality bar will last you forever, and if it was the only thing you had to work out with, you could still get in phenomenal shape. 'The "big three" moves – squat, bench and deadlift – will get you in incredible shape on their own,' says Zoran Dubaic, owner of Strength And Performance UK. 'Cleans and rows are an added bonus.' If you can afford one, go for an Olympic bar – the 'sleeves' on the end will rotate, which is a necessity for explosive moves such as the power clean.

How to use them
The three classic bench and barbell moves

Bench press
The classic. Everyone knows how to bench press, but even if you haven't got an incline/decline bench, you can still tweak your workout. 'For strength, aim to explode out of the bottom of each rep,' says Purdue. 'If you're going for size, emphasise lowering the weight slowly, over three or four seconds.'

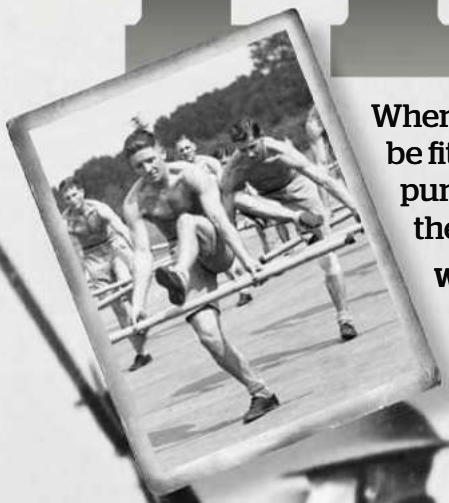
Deadlift
A venerable mass-builder. If you don't have many weight plates to play with, do it with a wide, 'snatch' grip – this increases the distance you'll have to lift the bar, which will pack on muscle. 'Snatch grip is the default with most of my clients,' says Purdue.

Squat
'I tend to start everyone on the back squat,' says Purdue. 'Just make sure you take a nice wide stance and go just below parallel.' If you haven't got a bench that can double as squat uprights, power cleaning the bar into position for front squats is a decent alternative.

MF PICK
The Powertec Workbench shifts from flat to upright easily, and the uprights can be raised to let you use it as a squat rack.

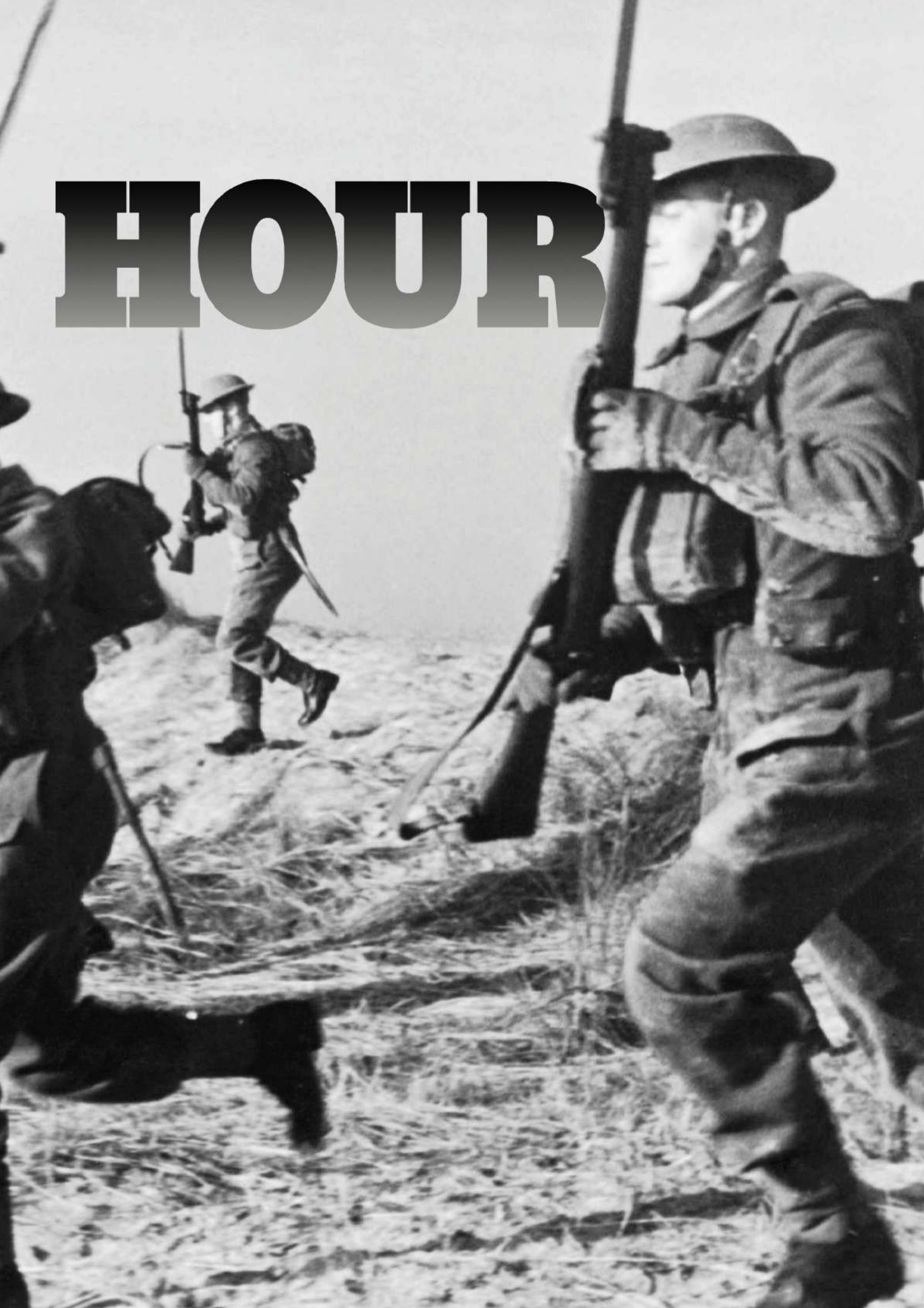
£209 plus Olympic bar £129.99
Both from fitness-superstore.co.uk MF

THEIR FINEST



When war broke out in 1939, every man in Britain needed to be fit to fight. *MF* finds out how a combination of leapfrog, punch-ups and other ungentlemanly conduct turned the British Army into the world's fittest fighting force ›

Words **Gavin Mortimer**


HOUR

New recruits put their fitness to the test during bayonet practice in 1942

Following the outbreak of war in September 1939, three-quarters of a million British men flocked to military recruiting offices in a matter of months. They came in all forms: short and tall, skinny and chubby, powerful and puny. They were ready to fight but lacked the physical and psychological training to take on a German war machine that had been preparing for conflict for years. They needed to be brought up to speed fast.

The job was too big to be carried out by the Army's physical training staff at their Aldershot base. So the Army top brass instructed the trainers to write a handbook that could be sent to regiments up and down the country.

While this was being written, physical training was overseen by regiments' own instructors – enthusiastic, but ignorant of what constituted beneficial fitness training. 'I was sent to the [Guards'] training battalion at Pirbright Camp,' wrote Stephen Hastings, who would later serve as an officer in the SAS and as an MP. 'Much of this was more relevant to the 1914-18 war than to anything that subsequently happened to us. We would spend hours at night sitting in a dug-out at the bottom of a carefully-constructed first war trench... A lot of port was drunk.'

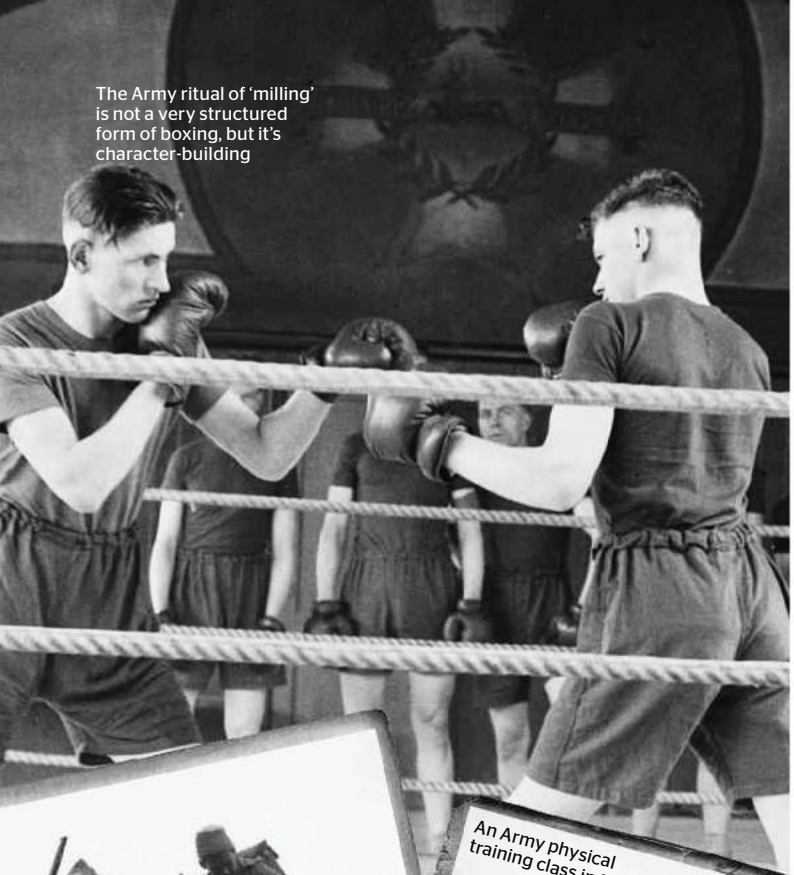
At least Hastings didn't have to dig the trench, which was Bob Lowson's task when in autumn 1939 he joined the Liverpool Scottish regiment at the age of 18. They were sent to the coastal town of Formby, where they spent the mornings marching and the afternoons digging. 'I still don't know why we dug the trenches,' says Lowson. 'None of us thought the Germans were likely to invade Formby. We played the odd game of rugby and football but never did any serious physical training.'

By the book

The handbook written by the PT staff was published in May 1940 and rushed to every infantry regiment in the country to be implemented by instructors. More a pamphlet than a book, it was called simply *Physical And Recreational Training* and its introduction ran: 'The exercises in Physical and Recreational Training must be given reality of purpose in the mind by associating them with the development of those qualities which are essential to the soldiers (eg courage, vigour, strength, endurance, resourcefulness, control, alertness, dash, confidence and team spirit). Without these qualities technical skill is useless.'

The handbook split the physical training programme into three complementary components. Part one was the warm-up, recommended to last between nine and 12 minutes and to include a dozen exercises such as 'running on the spot', 'trunk bending from side to

Combat training with the Royal Marines

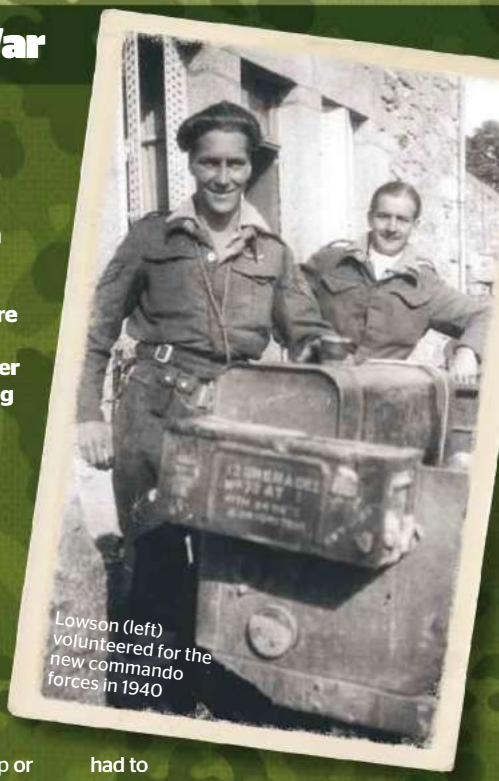


The Army ritual of 'milling' is not a very structured form of boxing, but it's character-building

An Army physical training class in 1941

Commandos take on the Achnacarry assault course in Scotland

One Man's War



Lowson (left) volunteered for the new commando forces in 1940

Bob Lowson still lives in Birkenhead, the town where he was born in 1921. Shortly before the outbreak of war, Lowson enlisted in the Territorial Army (the Liverpool Scottish Regiment) before volunteering for the commandos in 1940. Later he joined the SAS, serving with them until the end of war and winning a military medal in 1944.

'Our training in the Liverpool Scottish in the weeks after war was declared was a joke,' says Lowson. 'Twelve-mile marches in the morning, a break for lunch and a pint, and then an afternoon spent digging trenches. I can't remember ever being told to do a press-up or a sit-up and we certainly never did any form of weight training.'

Once in the SAS, Lowson encountered their rather more rigorous approach to physical training. 'After the end of the north African campaign – and before we invaded Sicily – we went to Palestine to train,' he says. 'The three Troops [of SAS soldiers] had to compete against each other in full kit in a 45-mile march from Lake Tiberias back to our coastal camp.' The course took the men across rough terrain at the height of summer and Lowson remembers it as 'pure hell'. In one troop (not Lowson's) only eight of the 60 men completed the challenge.

side' and 'shoulder rolling'. (Scottish regiments were told it might be fun to replace running on the spot with 'Highland dance steps'.)

The aim of the second part of the programme was 'the progressive development of the body'. It comprised four sections: strengthening games, stick exercises, medicine ball exercises and brain stimulating games. This was to last no more than 17 minutes, so the emphasis was on intensity. Wrestling was the preferred choice of strengthening routine, while the medicine ball exercises of 70 years ago varied little from the ones you'll find in this magazine, all designed to work the legs, core and arms. The exercise that was mainly used to stimulate the brain was Kim's Game, so named because the hero of Rudyard Kipling's 1901 novel played it during his training as a spy, with recruits being given a glimpse of a number of objects and then having to recall as many as possible.

Vim and vigour

Part three of the training programme consisted of 15 minutes of what the handbook described as 'vigorous exercises'. Competitive team games were recommended, everything from football to rugby to basketball, while boxing, leapfrog and skipping were also options. In addition, the handbook stressed the importance of 'running, changing between running slowly, cruising action and sprinting' – now better known as Fartlek or 'speed play', the training method developed in Sweden in the late 1930s.

'The medicine ball exercises of 70 years ago varied little from the ones you'll find in this magazine'

In total the programme in the handbook lasted 45 minutes, and unlike today's British Army there were no minimum requirements to meet: no leg-burning run or arm-shaking press-up test designed to weed out the incapable. Back in 1940, once a recruit had passed the cursory medical, that was it – he was in the Army. But, as Lowson points out, there was a crucial difference between his generation and the current one. 'We grew up without television or computers so we were naturally pretty fit,' he says. 'All our free time was spent outside so the Army expected us to have reasonable levels of fitness.'

Unfortunately for the Army physical training staff, the publication

Recruits train at the Army's physical training centre in Aldershot

In the early days of the war the new recruits dug a lot of trenches

of their handbook coincided with the German invasion of the Low Countries and France. Suddenly there was no time for recruits to be leapfrogging each other or practising their Highland fling; instead they were rushed off to France to try and stem the German advance. They failed, and the British army endured a humiliating withdrawal from Dunkirk in June 1940.

Prime Minister Winston Churchill was dismayed by the ease with which British troops had been swept aside by the German army, and he knew it couldn't be attributed to just the enemy's greater readiness for war. After some analysis Churchill conceded that the average German soldier was a superior physical specimen to his British adversary. So while greater emphasis was placed on the physical training of infantrymen as laid down in the handbook, Churchill decided that the British army also required an elite force of soldiers.

Special ops

In a memo dated 18th June 1940 Churchill instructed his chiefs of staff to establish Britain's first special forces units, saying, 'We have always set our faces against this idea but... there ought to be at least 20,000 storm troops or "leopards" drawn from existing units.' The name 'leopards' was subsequently ditched in favour of 'commandos' – after the irregular Afrikaner units that had caused the British Army such trouble during the Boer War – and within days notices appeared in infantry barracks across Britain calling for volunteers.

Lowson was one of those who put his name down, as was Jeff DuVivier, a Londoner who was fed up with life in the London Scottish regiment. 'I would have done anything to get away from square-bashing,' recalled DuVivier, who was posted to No 11 Scottish Commando in Galashiels, in an interview before his death in May 2010. 'There were 700 of us there but the commanding officer only wanted 500, so the way he sorted us out was to march us from Galashiels to Ayr.' The first 500 to reach Ayr passed the initial stage of commando training; the rest were returned to their units.

Once their training was completed, Lowson, DuVivier and the other successful commando pioneers were dispatched to the Middle East to stop Italy gaining a foothold in north Africa. While they and a select band of others would go on to serve in the SAS – formed in 1941 – those that followed them into the commandos were sent to the unit's training base in Achnacarry, northern Scotland, where they were subjected to a rigorous physical training programme designed to make or break recruits.

Ungentlemanly conduct

Recruits had to pass basic fitness tests (see 'Then And Now', below) and were issued with a small booklet in which were laid down the principles of their training. 'Forget all about the old British slogan of "never kick a man when he is down",' advised the booklet. 'War is not a game. You are up against a ruthless enemy who has been taught and trained to employ every possible means to blot you out.'

Commandos were trained in how to kill a man with their bare hands, how to disarm a knife-wielding Nazi and how to scale rock faces in the dead of night. But underpinning all their training was an emphasis on fearsome physical fitness. Some of

Then And Now | Are conditions much easier in today's Army?

FOOTWEAR

Then Infantrymen wore heavy black leather boots with metal toe-caps and metal heels. Special forces found these impractical for their type of stealth warfare, and introduced a rubber-soled hunting boot.

Now British troops mainly use a stiff-soled wet-weather boot for general operations. In addition, troops serving in Afghanistan wear Meindl and Lowa heavy-duty desert boots, specifically designed for temperatures in excess of 50˚C.

RATIONS

Then Nutrition, taste and calorie intake were not considerations. The British infantryman's rations featured such delicacies as tinned bacon, corned beef and brown bread with raisins.

Now The British Army's 24-hour operational ration pack contains around 4,000 calories. Last year it was updated with 'healthier and more suitable choices' and now has 20 menus, including halal and vegetarian options. Among the most popular dishes are Thai chicken curry and sweet salmon pasta.

FITNESS TARGETS

Then Though there were no specific requirements for infantrymen, the prospective commandos had to complete an 880-yard [804m] run in under 3min 15sec. They also had to climb a 6m rope in 20 seconds and perform six pull-ups.

Now To pass the Basic Fitness Test for the infantry, recruits must run 1.5 miles (2.4km) over level ground in under 14min. Those who want to join the Parachute Regiment have to complete it in under 9min 18sec.

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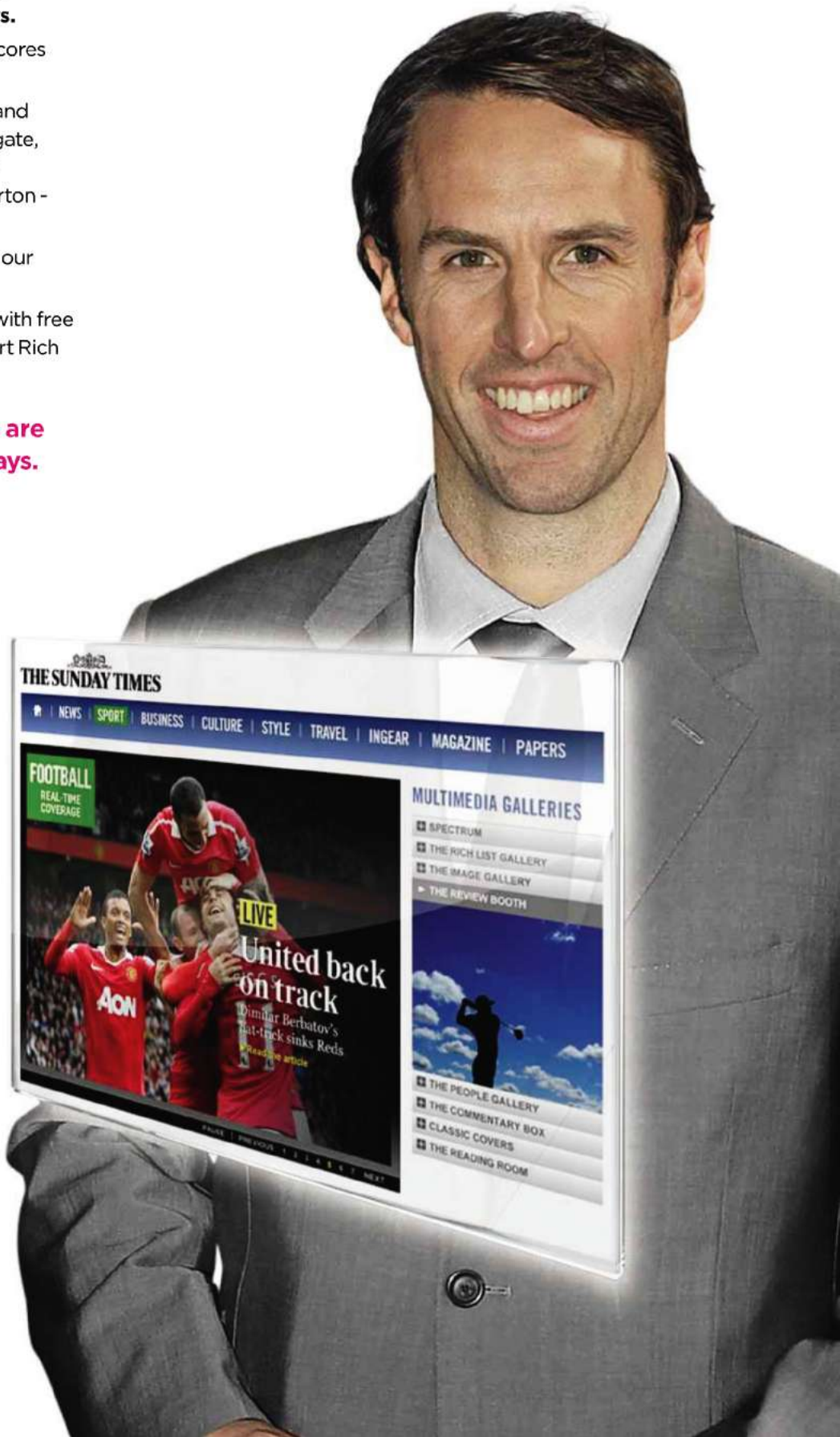

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A soldier of the Parachute Regiment. Montgomery said they were 'toughened by hard physical training'

the exercises included an element of fun, such as 'wrestling on horseback' or variations on British bulldog, but most were unremittingly punishing.

One aspiring commando officer, a young Scotsman called Donald Gilchrist, wrote in his book *Castle Commando* that on arriving at Achnacarry he and his fellow volunteers were transported to the foot of Ben Nevis and ordered to climb it. On arriving back at the truck, they were then told to march the 18 miles (29km) back to Achnacarry. A few hours later they were kicked out of bed and ordered to the assault course: crawling through peat bogs, swinging across gorges on a rope, shinning up trees and leaping over rocks, all while instructors fired live rounds over their heads. Once completed, they did it again, and again and again.

There were 14-mile (22.5km) speed marches to be completed in two hours, a challenge that was accomplished only 'by a lung-tearing mixture of marching and running – complete with rifle and full equipment.'

On the march

Even more feared by commando hopefuls was the 'death ride', a 36-hour route march across the Scottish countryside usually undertaken in appalling weather. All the men had to sustain them was 'a piece of meat and some chocolate', and the exercise always culminated with a mock attack on a local bridge.

The last day of each course at Achnacarry ended with the 'Commando Games', in which soldiers competed in speed marches and over the assault course. The highlight was an event that has since become an institution among British special forces: 'milling'. Gilchrist described this as 'a fistic fantasy... The contestants wore gloves, the bouts took place within the confines of a boxing ring but there any resemblance between milling and boxing ended... It was more like a contest between the gladiators of Ancient Rome.'

Life in the Parachute Regiment, formed in 1942, was equally arduous, as acknowledged by Field-Marshal Bernard Montgomery of El Alamein fame, who said the airborne troops had been 'toughened by hard physical training. As a result they have that infectious optimism and that offensive eagerness which comes from physical wellbeing.'

'The volunteers were transported to Ben Nevis and ordered to climb it. They then had to march 18 miles back to base'

Candidates for the commandos had to be able to complete six pull-ups

By the time of the Allied invasion of France in June 1944, the British infantryman was the physical match of his German counterpart and the British special forces were the best-trained in the world. The commandos and the Parachute Regiment fought magnificently on 6th June 1944 to seize and hold their objectives, and Gilchrist wrote later that the commandos owed their success that day to Colonel Vaughan, the commandant of Achnacarry. 'Everything single thing he'd hammered into the trainees at Achnacarry had been of inestimable value in the heat of battle. He had taught them to carry on whatever the setbacks, and they had done it. He had given them green berets and they had worn them with honour.' MF

Photography Imperial War Museum, Getty

We reveal the fittest special forces units at **mensfitness.co.uk/links/wereinthearamynow**

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The World's Fittest Athletes

Running, lifting, throwing and fighting – these men are the best in the world at their chosen disciplines. But how do they get in such phenomenal shape? And what can you learn from them?

Words **Joel Snape**

Scott Jurek

Ultra-distance legend

Claim to the title
In a field where just finishing a race is considered a gigantic achievement, Jurek runs further and faster than anyone else. He has won the 246km Athens-to-Sparta Spartathlon three times, the Hardrock 100 once and the Western States Endurance Run – a 160km race considered one of the toughest in America – seven times. This year he set the American record for distance running in 24 hours – a sleep-deprived 266km. (The world title holder, Yiannis Kouros, is long retired.)

Most impressive fitness feat
Two weeks after his seventh Western States win, Jurek took on the infamous Badwater Ultramarathon, a 217km race through 49°C temperatures running from the bottom of Death Valley to halfway up Mount Whitney. After nearly collapsing in the first half of the race, he rallied, stormed to the front of the pack and finished in 24hr 36min 8sec, smashing the previous course record by more than 30 minutes.

How he trains
Jurek typically puts in 225km a week in training, although he doesn't plan too far ahead. 'In ultra-distance it's important to listen to your body,' he explains. 'If I'm feeling good one day I might go for a lot longer, and if I feel down I'll go for a quick run and see if I feel better – if I don't, I'll cut the session short.'

Train like him
You might not have the time to emulate Jurek's seven-hour training runs, but even a trot round the local park might be easier if you try out Jurek's diet. He's a vegan, but gets more than 5,000 calories a day from huge salads, sweet potatoes, beans and whole grains. For breakfast he'll neck a 1,000-calorie smoothie made of oil, almonds, bananas and blueberries. 'It isn't weird,' says Jurek. 'Almost every long-distance runner turns into a vegan when they're racing, because you just can't digest fat or protein very well.'

“In a field where just finishing a race is considered a gigantic achievement, Jurek runs further and faster than anyone else”

Fabian Cancellara

Time-trial superstar

Claim to the title

Bagging his fourth time trial title at the 2010 Road World Championships gives Cancellara – also the 2008 Olympic time trial gold medallist – grounds for calling himself one of the best cyclists of all time. In the power-obsessed world of pro cycling, he's been clocked as putting out around 608 watts for around four minutes. If you're a decent cyclist, you might manage similar power for ten seconds.

Most impressive fitness feat

The burst of speed that let Cancellara peel away from the pack in this year's Tour of Flanders was so astonishing that detractors seriously suggested he might have a tiny motor hidden in his bike. Needless to say, race stewards examined his kit and determined that he's simply incredibly fast.

How he trains

Cancellara works diligently on his core and flexibility in the off-season, and it pays off – biomechanical assessments show that he holds a lower, more aerodynamic riding position than similar-sized rivals for longer periods. He weighs 80kg but is said to deadlift 200kg. Perfect for those sprint finishes.

Train like him

When he can, Cancellara rides the route of the races he's competing in. Three months after the 2009 Tour de France, he and the Saxo Bank team rode the 207km stage 15 from Pontarlier to Verbier again – this time periodically having to get off and push their bikes through snow. To arrange a similar experience for yourself, head to marmot-tours.co.uk

Georges St-Pierre

UFC welterweight champion

Claim to the title

'Fittest' is a difficult title to apply to fighters because of the different variables in their training, but Georges St-Pierre combines the cardio to dominate 25-minute title fights with intimidating levels of power. If you fancy trying to replicate his gym feats, he can do chin-ups with 55kg of added weight, bench-press a pair of 50kg dumb-bells and front squat 122kg. Oh, and he's got a one-metre vertical jump – 30cm higher than the average for NBA players.

"St-Pierre can do chin-ups with 55kg of weight, bench press a pair of 50kg dumb-bells and front squat 122kg"

Most impressive fitness feat

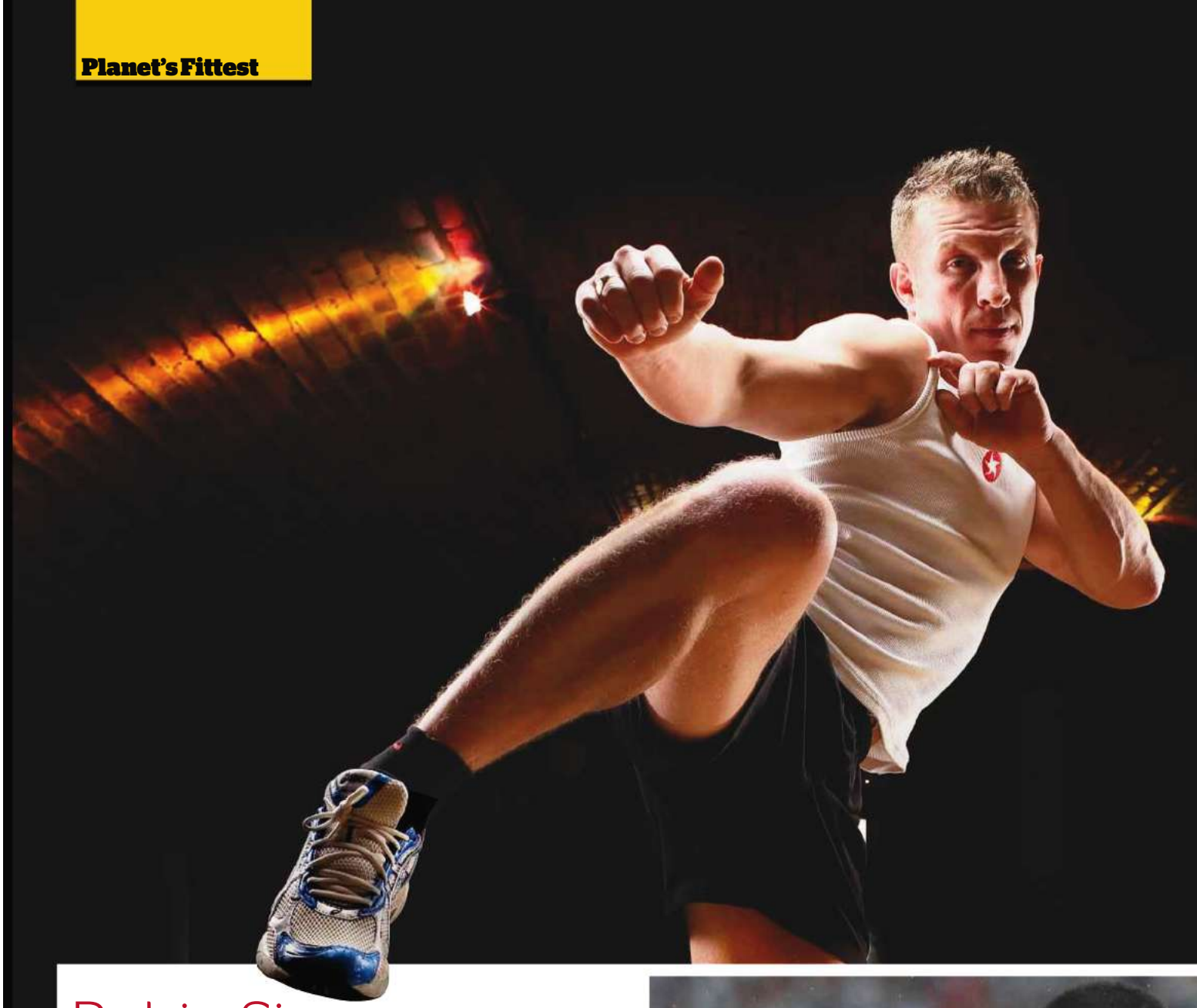
Jon Fitch was undefeated in the UFC and on an eight-fight winning streak – putting him in line for the all-time record – when he ran into St-Pierre. After 25 minutes in which he didn't win a round, he'd been battered to a decision defeat. Even more impressively, St-Pierre took the former NCAA wrestler to the ground at will during their fight, and knocked him down three times.

How he trains

'I don't really believe in fight-specific conditioning,' says St-Pierre's strength coach Jonathan Chaimberg. 'He'll get that through sparring. We do two or three sessions a week, during which we'll train strictly for strength or explosiveness, depending on how close he is to a fight.'

Train like him

'We'll do a lot of heavy moves in a complex with explosive, powerful movements,' says Chaimberg. 'So we might do a weighted chin-up followed by a medicine ball slam, or a heavy squat followed by a jump squat. The heavy move primes your muscles for the follow-up.'



Robin Simpson

Record breaker

Claim to the title

UK athlete Simpson is perhaps the only athlete in these pages to be actively chasing the title of 'world's fittest man'. Although the title has actually been trademarked by his rival, American Joe Decker, Simpson has broken enough records to be considered among the top rank of the global fitness elite.

Most impressive fitness feat

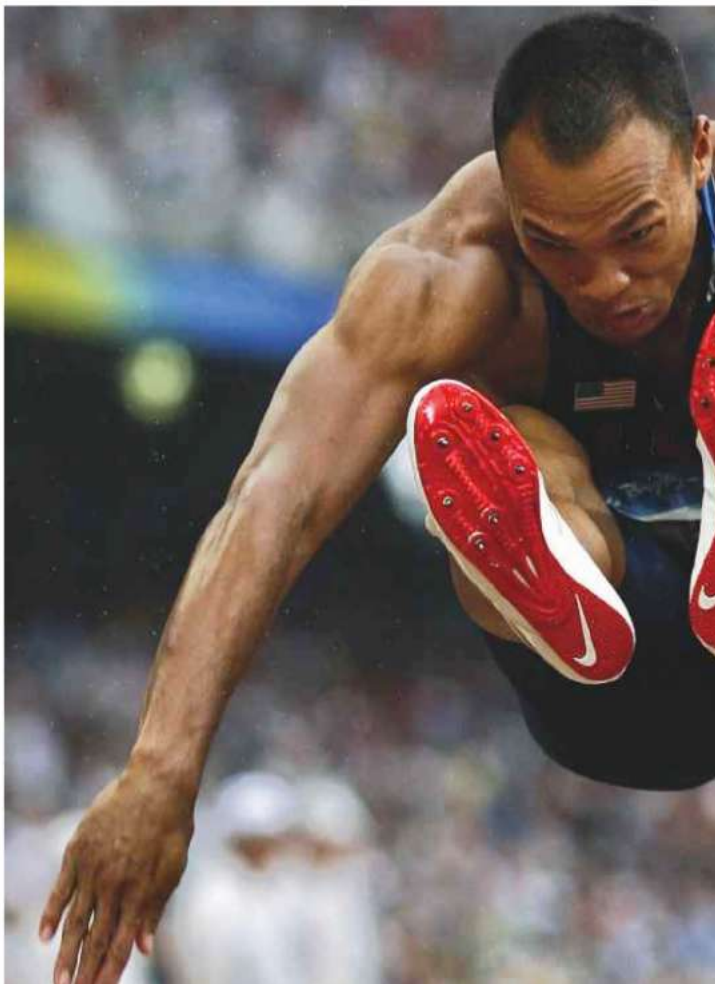
Smashing the record for the World's Fittest Athlete Physical Fitness Challenge, which includes 1,250 press-ups, 1,250 star jumps, 32km on a cross-trainer, 1,250 standing hip flexors, a 32km row, a 19km speed march, a 3.2km swim, a 19km run, 136,000kg of weightlifting, 3,250 crunches and a 285km bike ride. His time? 18hr 56min. His biggest worry? 'Falling asleep during the swim.'

How he trains

Simpson does only one heavy weights session a week. The rest is bodyweight exercises – and mind-numbing amounts of rowing, running and swimming. He also fits in a fair bit of Thai boxing – he has won eight fights so far.

Train like him

'Try my Sunday workout,' suggests Simpson. 'That's 20 burpees, 150 star jumps, 40 press-ups, 50 squats and 50 lunges.' Then do it another four times.



Graham Holmberg

CrossFit Games champion 2010

Claim to the title

CrossFit claims to represent the best form of all-round fitness in the world. 'The definition of fitness is "increased work capacity across broad time and modal domains",' says Tony Budding, games director. 'The fittest man alive should be competent in gymnastics, running, weightlifting, throwing and moving his own bodyweight.'

The CrossFit Games 2010 tested all of these in nine events over the course of three days, with the competitors having no idea what they'd be doing in advance.

Most impressive fitness feat

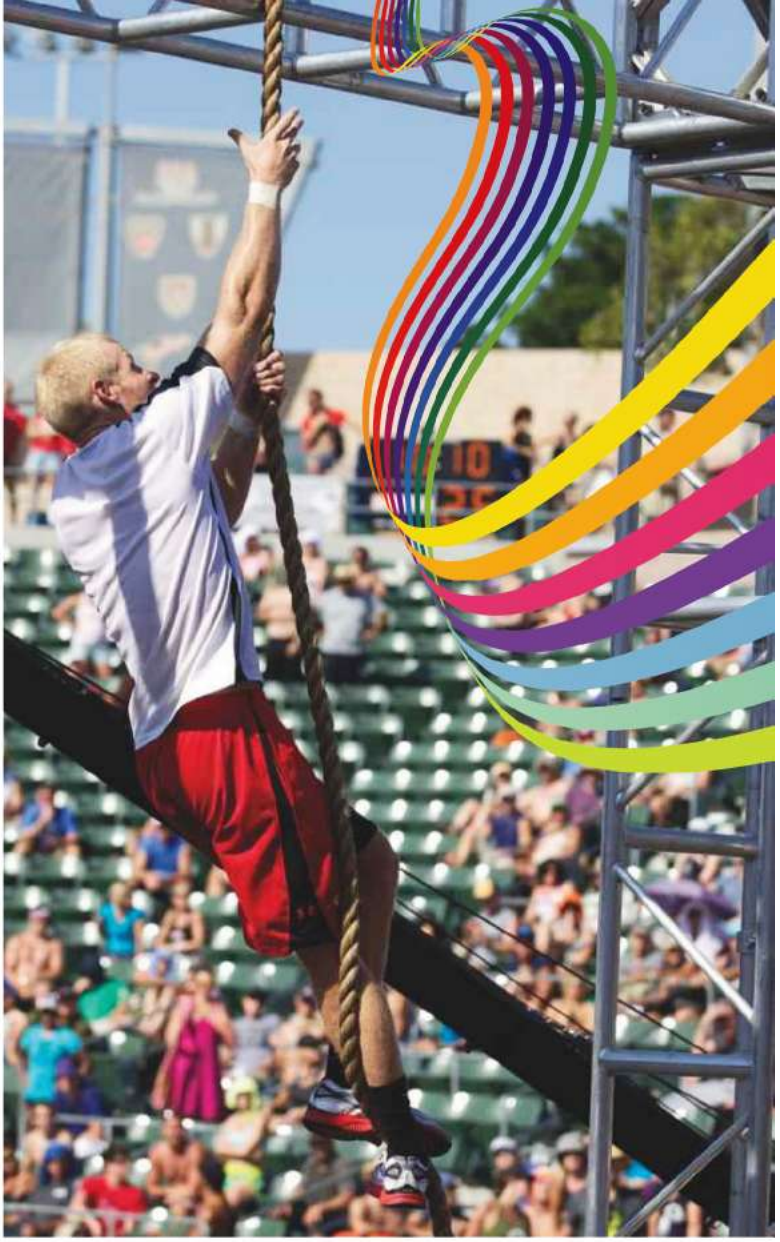
Holmberg finished first in two events. One, a combination of handstand press-ups on gymnastic rings and heavy power cleans, showed his blend of gymnastic and weightlifting prowess. But the other, consisting of 126 swings of a 24kg kettlebell, 72 pull-ups and 2,400m of running, would seem like sheer insanity if it was the only thing you had to do all day. Holmberg did it in 16min 59sec – and went on to push-jerk 130kg overhead less than two minutes later, in the next event.

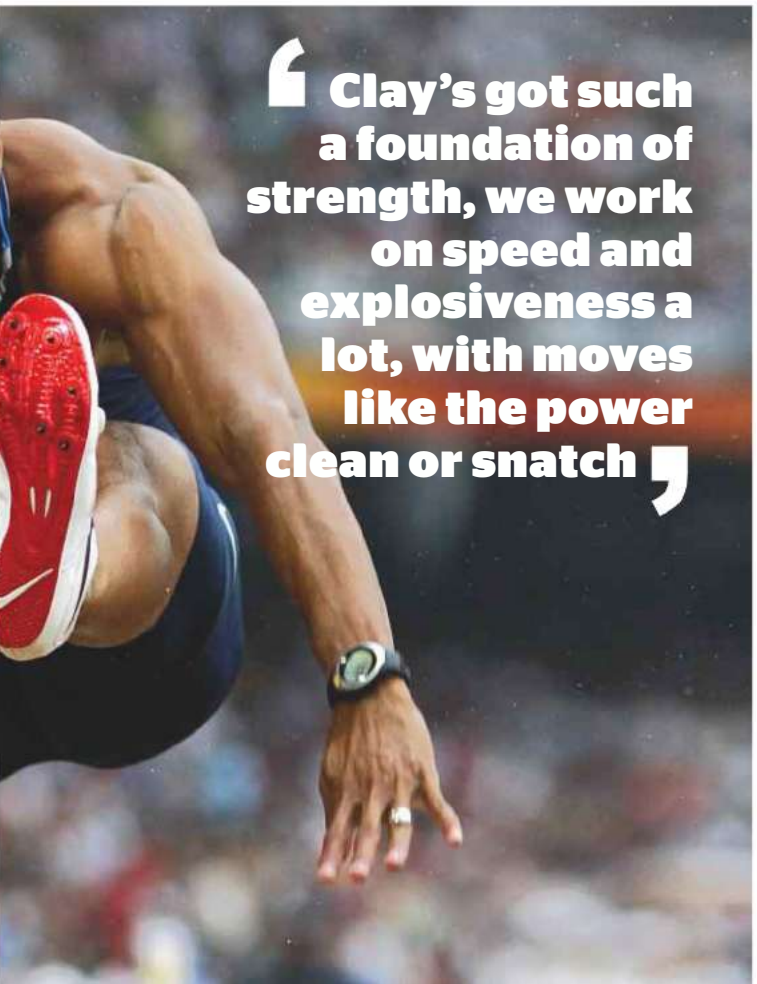
How he trains

CrossFit prides itself on getting you ready for anything, so there's no such thing as 'typical' for Holmberg. 'Sometimes I'll train for ten days straight with no rest days, or sometimes I'll do three or four workouts a day,' he says. 'But I'll always try to include one strength workout – a heavy squat or deadlift session, say – and one short metabolic conditioning circuit.'

Train like him

Try "Helen",' suggests Holmberg. 'It's a scaled-down version of the hardest workout from the games. Do three rounds of a 400m sprint, 21 swings with a 32kg kettlebell, and 12 pull-ups. Anything under 15 minutes is a great time.'





Bryan Clay

Olympic decathlon gold medallist 2008

Claim to the title

Clay isn't shy about calling himself 'the world's greatest athlete', but since he led the 2008 Olympic decathlon from start and won by the largest points margin since 1972, it's justified. He won the 100m, long jump and discus, and came second in the shot.

Most impressive fitness feat

Before his Olympic gold, Clay took on the SPARQ challenge, which tests sport-specific athleticism. In the American football test he scored 130.40, the highest ever. NFL star Reggie Bush scored 93.38.

How he trains

'He's a freak in that he's got a unique combination of speed, power and endurance,' says Clay's coach Kevin Reid. 'For his weight [72kg] he's incredibly powerful in the throws. We'll still do a lot of squats and deadlifts, but because he's got such a foundation of strength we work on speed and explosiveness a lot, with moves like the power clean or snatch.'

Train like him

'Resting is as important as training,' says Reid. 'We'll work on four- to six-week cycles with a week of rest built in, but also have mini-cycles of work and rest within that. I've worked with Bryan for long enough that I can tell when he needs to back off. The fittest guys won't have a problem pushing themselves to the limit. The problem is reining them in.'

Craig Alexander

Ironman world champion

Claim to the title

In some sports, 37 would be considered past it. In Ironman, Alexander's just hitting his peak. He's one of only four men to win the Ironman World Championships in Hawaii twice in a row, in 2008 and 2009. He'll be tackling the 3.9km swim, 180km bike ride and 42km run again later this year.

Most impressive fitness feat

Although he's strong on the swim and bike, Alexander hit the running leg of the 2009 race 12 minutes behind the leader, Chris Lieto. He needed to run a strong marathon to win – and he did, blasting out the 42km in 2hr 48min.

How he trains

Alexander trains for endurance rather than speed, although he'll typically mix in some race pace efforts during his five-hour training sessions. This year, though, he's focusing on rest. 'I always focus on one or two areas, and this year it's sleep and recovery,' he says. 'I've been reading up on how to improve my quality of sleep.'

Train like him

Head for the park. Alexander's a big believer in off-road running to strengthen his core, legs and feet. He also places considerable faith in visualisation techniques. 'It's good mental practice to visualise racing while you're training,' he says. 'You know, picturing different race scenarios. Particularly if you're on a long run, you don't want to be clock-watching. You really just want to think about things like hydrating and fuelling.' MF

"Alexander trains for endurance rather than speed, although he'll mix in race-pace efforts to his five-hour training sessions"

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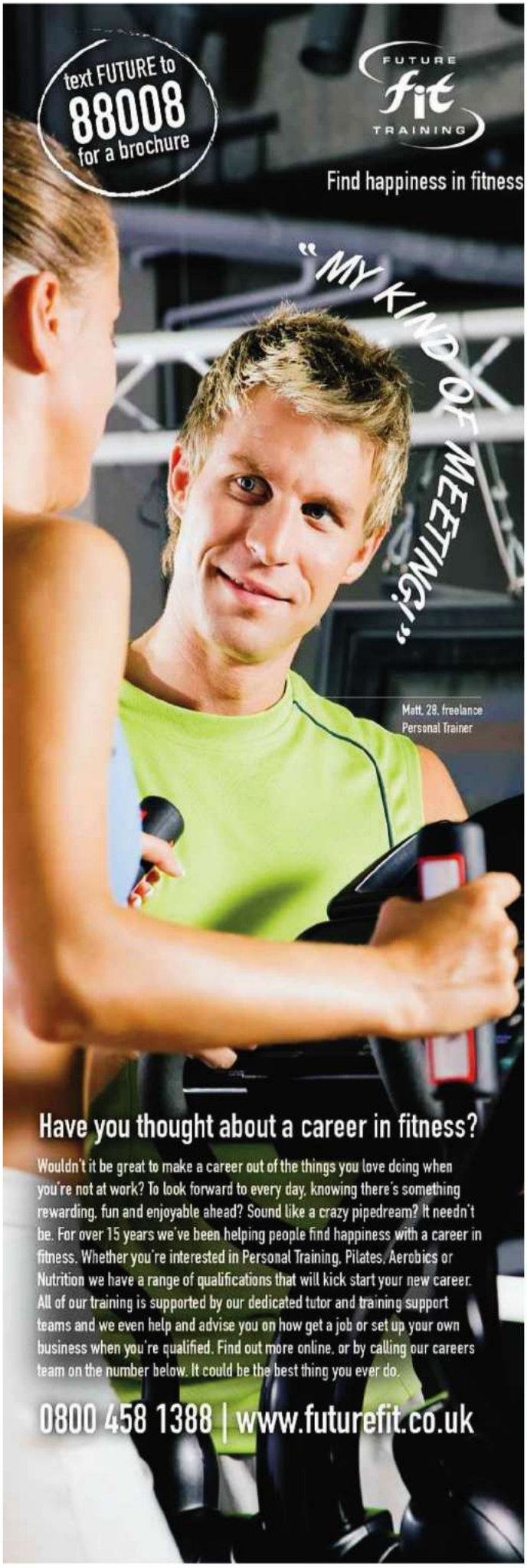
Photography Getty, Shutterstock



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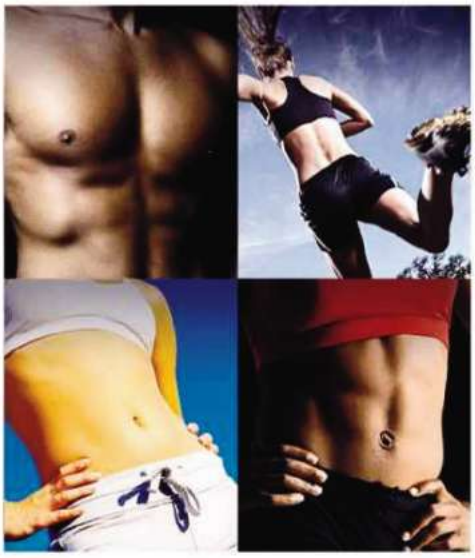

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HOME SWEAT HOME

Got a spare room? A garage? A space under the stairs? Then take inspiration from these *MF* readers' innovative and effective home gyms and get fitter than ever ›

Words **Joel Snape** Photography **Duncan Nicholls**
Illustrations **Oliver Burston**

THE GARAGE

THE SPARE ROOM

THE SHED

THE GARAGE

Built by Andy McKenzie, Newport

McKenzie might have the most imposing-looking of our readers' gyms, but he started out with the most basic bit of kit he could find: himself. 'I started out with a mat and my own bodyweight,' says the former soldier. 'You can keep improving like that for years, but eventually I got a barbell set, and then just kept adding kit on a monthly basis.' McKenzie currently works as a strength and conditioning expert for athletes and a consultant to the military, but his gym is his own space – and using it took him to victory at a recent strongman competition run by funckey.co.uk. 'This is where I train in my downtime,' he says. 'Not everyone wants to train the way I do.' You can find one of McKenzie's garage-based workouts at mensfitness.co.uk/links/andymac.

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LIFTING PLATFORM £575
An essential for practising the Olympic lifts and a nice perk if you don't fancy gently lowering your deadlifts to the floor.
beaverfit.com

STRONGMAN LOG £348
Sixty kilos of grip-testing metal, and ideal for a full-body workout. Deceptively different from power-cleaning a barbell.
pullum-sports.co.uk

Essentials

POWER WHEEL £51
Like an abs wheel, except you can strap your feet. 'I'll strap it on and walk on my hands,' says McKenzie. 'It's a killer core workout.'
thestrengthcompany.co.uk

ROPES AND CHAINS FREE
The ropes test your grip during chin-ups and chains add resistance to bodyweight moves. Best of all, both were cheap: 'I scavenged the ropes from my tug-of-war team.'

PLATES FROM £30 A PAIR
Rubber plates can be dropped – handy for overhead squats or cleans. 'I made the wooden ones,' says McKenzie, 'for practising technique.'
wolverson-fitness.co.uk

FAT BARS FREE
For grip strength and Popeye-sized forearms, says McKenzie. And there's a fringe benefit: 'Deadlifting heavy weights feels easier when you've warmed up with a thick bar.'

PULL-UP RIG
PRICE ON REQUEST
Beaverfit will custom-build you one of these in a variety of sizes and heights. McKenzie's cost £300.
beaverfit.com

GYMNASTIC RINGS £56
Make everything from press-ups to inverted rows tougher. They also let you tackle the dreaded muscle-up.
strengthpower speed.co.uk

PLYO BOXES £200
McKenzie's newest additions – he used to jump over his ironing board. 'My wife wasn't too happy.'
beaverfit.com

BACK TO BASICS

Nothing fancy in these gyms but they do the job

Davie Easton Glasgow

'My Hobo Gym is two sheds joined together, so it leaks when it rains,' says Easton. 'It's hot in the summer, cold in the winter, and has a Concept2 rower, a power cage, and enough bars, plates and kettlebells to do any workout I want. I'll never set foot in a normal gym again.'

Jonathan Spiers West London

'Most of the kit that looks awesome is from my grandad, who used to work out,' says Spiers. 'I've even got a home-made set of medicine balls.' We're not sure what he does with all the dumb-bells, or indeed what he does when it rains, but it's a nice set-up.

Owen Bird Bristol

'I wrote out a list of all the kit I wanted, and then got it as cheap as I could,' says Bird. 'The squat stands were free and the power bar was £20, although the bumper plates were fairly expensive. I also have to share the facility with a couple of bats and some birds' nests.'

›

THE SPARE ROOM

Built by Ben Evans, Bournemouth

Evans originally planned to use his surplus space as a games room, then it filled with unwanted boxes. When he cleared it out and started adding fitness kit, it didn't take long before the rest of his family chipped in. 'My dad, who can't really run because he's got bad knees, got a bike, and I got a treadmill for free,' says Evans. Now friends and family all use the gym.

SKIPPING ROPE £2
If you've got the space to swing it, a sturdy rope is one of the best investments you can make.
argos.co.uk

BIKE £199
Fine for intervals, although Evans is planning to get a Concept2 rower as soon as possible for a full-body workout.
fitness-superstore.co.uk

DUMB-BELL RACK £99
The heaviest at the moment is 9kg – getting a bigger set is going to be Evans's next investment.
fitness-superstore.co.uk

MATS £120 EACH
Surprisingly, these were one of the most expensive bits of kit in the gym. Yoga mats don't cut it on a stone floor – the extra thickness is essential.
martialartsmats.co.uk

Essentials

BENCH £209
The Powertec has uprights that work as a squat rack, and can be angled for incline benching and seated shoulder presses.
fitness-superstore.co.uk

ABMAT £26
Supports your back during sit-ups and makes you use your abs, not your hip flexors. 'People who've used it have bought one,' says Evans.
physique.co.uk

RESISTANCE BANDS £15
Ones with handles let you emulate any dumb-bell move. 'They're great for everyone,' says Evans. 'I use them for warming up and prehab.'
argos.co.uk

PLATES FROM £32
Thanks to the spiralling cost of metal, plates will be one of the most expensive bits. But they should last forever. Go for a known brand.
fitness-superstore.co.uk

PUNCHBAG £39
Even if you've got no interest in punching faces, intervals on the bag are a solid alternative to steady-state cardio.
amazon.co.uk

GYM BALL £5
Works for everything from a jackknife to a plank or a weighted crunch. An essential bit of core-building kit.
argos.co.uk

STYLE AND SUBSTANCE

Gyms nice enough to invite friends to

Roger Brown Bexley

Brown's converted his garage into a fully functioning MMA facility, with wall-to-wall mats and a section of cage wall from cagesolutions.com. The mood-setting graffiti is an especially nice touch.

Dave Whedon Essex

Sharing his garage with DIY kit, plastering equipment and bikes hasn't stopped Whedon from putting together an ultra-functional setup. It has a wide variety of handles – a good way to get bang from your buck with one big item of kit.

Craig Kennedy Tyne and Wear

'I set this gym up with my MMA training partners,' says Kennedy. 'Our pull-up and dip machine is a couple of ropes with drain-pipe handles, and our agility ladder is some silver tape on the floor. Most MMA gyms have an animal in the title – think Wolfslair – so ours is called the Badger's Hole.'

THE SHED

Built by Joe Harvey, Bristol

'It was like playing Tetris,' says Harvey, when questioned on how he put together his ultra-efficient, only-slightly-claustrophobic setup. 'We were scratching our heads trying to work out how to fit the bench in so we weren't banging the bar against it. In the end, my female flatmate helped us out.' Despite that, he's got everything he needs for a serious workout programme in a tiny space. And he did it on the cheap – because he picked up all the kit second hand, the whole thing was less than £200.

PULL-UP STATION £149
A pull-up bar on one side, dip bars on the other, and a captain's chair cushion for doing knee raises. If you only had this and a barbell, you'd be able to put together a scorching full-body workout. **milletsports.co.uk**

SQUAT RACK £139
A Marcy SR50. It's not the highest-end bit of kit, but will happily take a 160kg bar and is very stable. **powerhouse-fitness.co.uk**

BENCH £105
The York is a pretty basic brand, but good enough to take a bit of a battering. Unless you're going for a one-rep max it'll probably hold as much weight as you can handle. **fitness-superstore.co.uk**

FLOORING FREE
'It's cardboard right now, which is easy to brush clean,' says Harvey. 'We'll probably get some carpet eventually.'

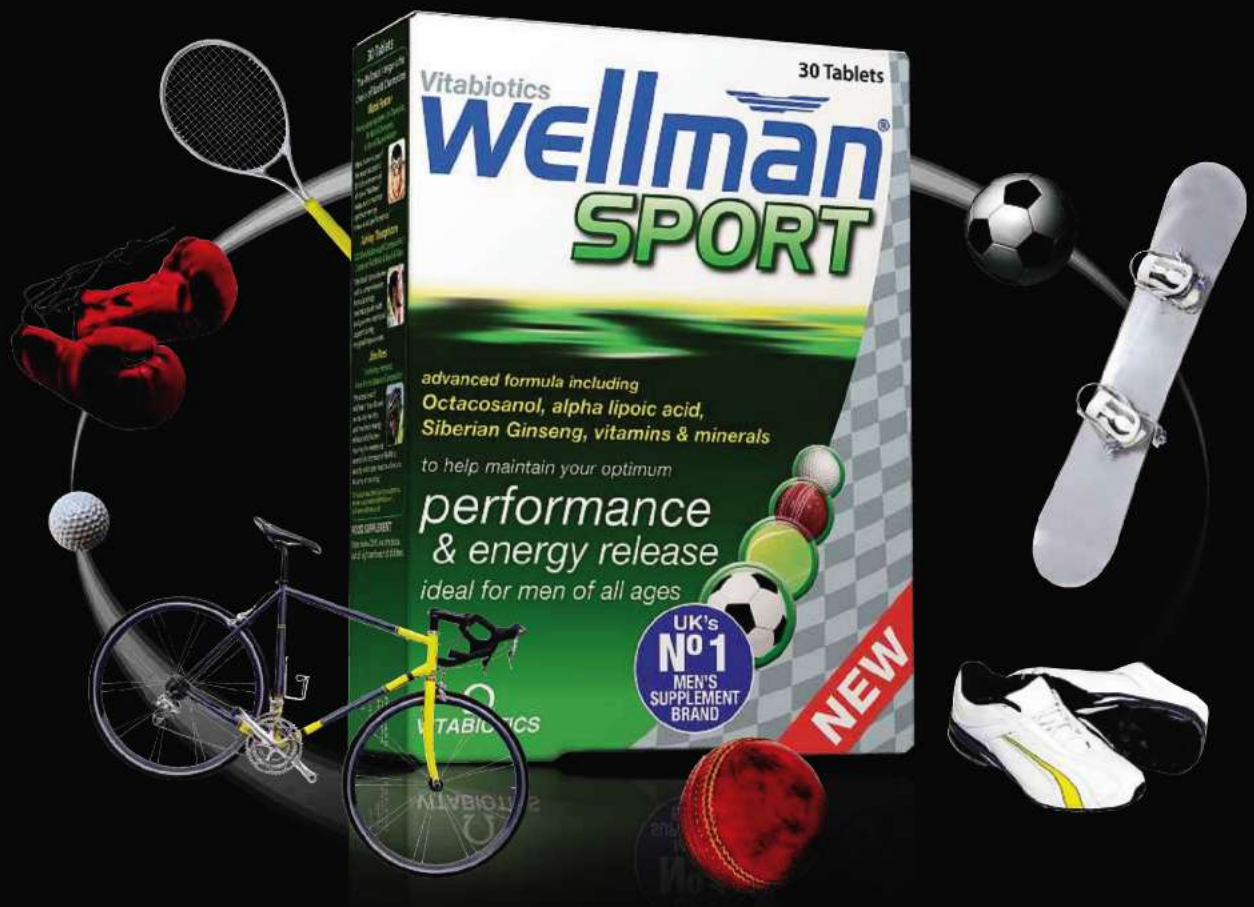
Essentials

DUMB-BELLS £30
Dumb-bells hit your muscles from different angles than a bar. Harvey has two sets to allow three people to work out in his shed at once. **argos.co.uk**

E-Z BAR £30
Doing curls with this is slightly easier on the wrists and elbows than a traditional barbell. Harvey got his for free with the squat rack. **argos.co.uk**

NEW

the best sportsmen



use the best equipment

Wellman® Sport is designed to help support the most important piece of sporting equipment there is – you. Its comprehensive formula safeguards your nutritional requirement to help sustain the body whilst training. The advanced one-a-day tablet replaces your usual multivitamin and includes natural plant isolate Octacosanol, Alpha Lipoic Acid for advanced antioxidant protection and B-complex vitamins to help support energy release. For further information, visit Wellman.co.uk.

***Wellman® Sport* is new from Wellman®, the UK's leading supplement range for men.**

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Ashley Theophane – GBC World Welterweight Champion No.1 Contender For British & English Titles
"Wellman® provides me with a comprehensive formula and gives me nutritional support during my gruelling workouts."

Jim Rees – Triathlete, Ironman, Race Across America elite athlete
"Wellman® has allowed me to stay healthy and maintain energy release when training for extreme endurance events like Ironman or RAAM."

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CARL SANDBURG - (1878 - 1967)

Gear Hound

Gear edited by **Ben Ince**
Grooming edited by **Hayley Thatcher**

Tracking down the best kit for active men

Picture perfect

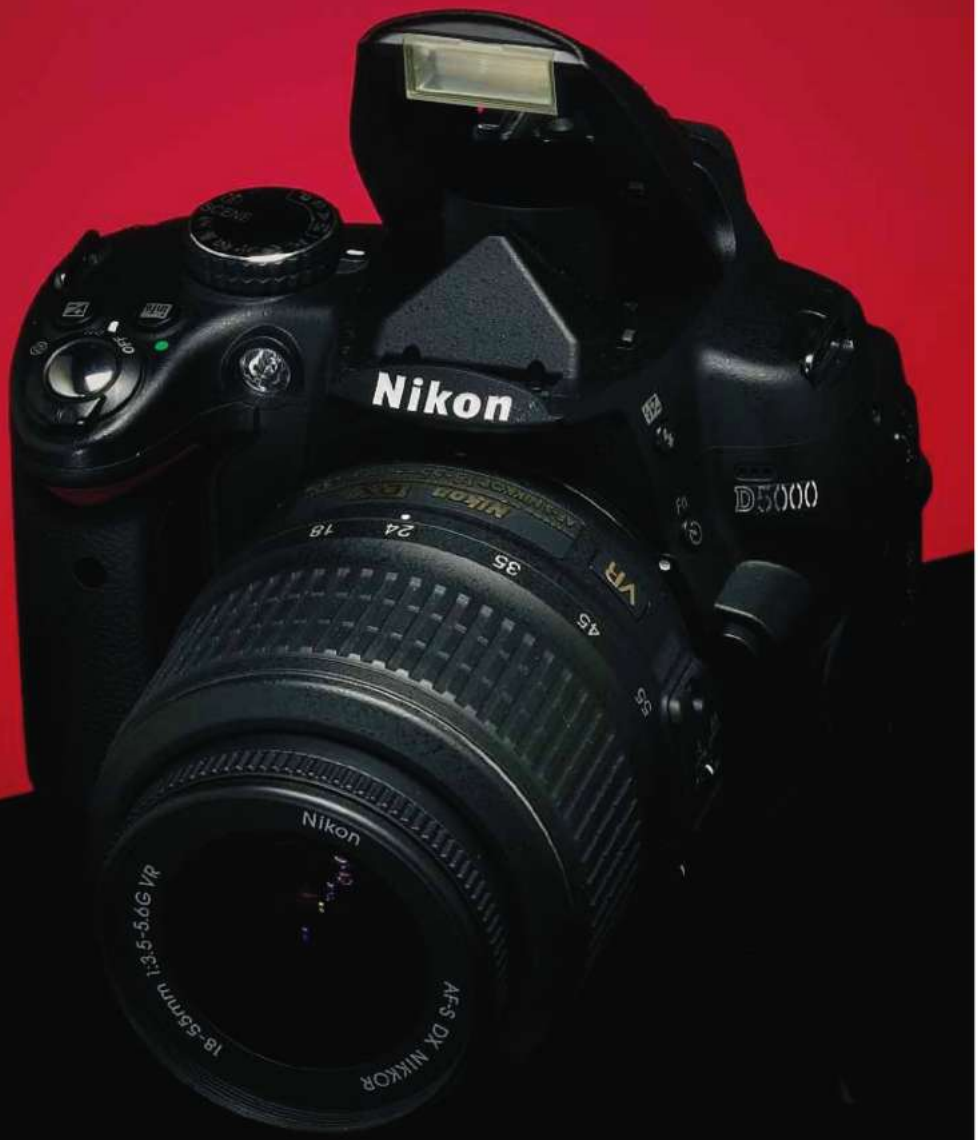
Digital SLR cameras take great photographs and are easy to use. We show you what to look for when buying one and test the latest models

Image quality
'The resolution, usually stated in megapixels, determines how big you can print your photo,' says Daniel Lezano, editor of *Digital SLR Photography* magazine (digitalslrphoto.com). 'Anything from ten megapixels upwards is good enough for A4 prints, but don't assume that more megapixels means better photos – other factors such as the lens quality can affect image sharpness, too.'

Handling and ease of use
'Every brand of camera has its own shape and feel, and the set-up of buttons and dials is different from model to model, so shortlist a few options within your price range and try them out in the shop before you buy. You'll take better pictures with a camera if you're comfortable using it.'

Range of features
'Most cameras offer a similar range of features, but it's worth checking the specification of each for additional functions you may find useful. High-definition (HD) video for instance is found on some models but not others, and while Live View – which displays what you're shooting on an LCD monitor – is becoming standard, some digital SLRs have LCD monitors on swivel-mounts to make it easier to shoot using Live View.'

System back-up
'A digital SLR is only as good as the hardware that backs it. When choosing your camera, it's worth comparing the prices and availability of any lenses, flashguns (detachable automated flash systems) or other accessories that you may need in the future.'



Camera pictured Nikon D5000

Words Ben Ince **Photography** PSC Photography

Turn over
For our digital SLR camera reviews

Sharp shooters

We pick six top digital SLRs to test

Sigma SD15

£899.99 (lens not included)

The SD15 is significantly larger and heavier than most of its entry-level rivals. While this has upsides – its robust design leaves plenty of space for an uncluttered button layout, a 76mm LCD monitor and a large, comfortable handgrip – the bulk makes it unwieldy, which could put off many first-time photographers. You can't knock its image quality though; the Foveon X3 sensor gives sharper resolution, pixel for pixel, than any other conventional sensor, but the lack of Live View is a letdown, especially considering the price tag.

THE GOOD The unrivalled pixel resolution provided by the Foveon X3

THE BAD Its size and weight, plus the glaring lack of Live View

sigma-sd.com

Nikon D5000

£639.99

This powerful and versatile camera from Nikon allows you to capture superb stills and HD videos from virtually any angle, thanks to its vari-angle 69mm LCD monitor, which can be flipped, tilted or turned to shoot from above, below or from the side. You can even reverse it to produce effortless, perfectly framed self-portraits. An array of automatic scene modes make it simple to capture clear images in a variety of conditions, while well positioned buttons and easy-to-use menu screens mean that you don't have to be an expert photographer to get to grips with it.

THE GOOD Manoeuvrable monitor provides Live View from all angles

THE BAD Not a lot, in all honesty

nikon.co.uk

Sony A390

£629.99

Boasting a compact, stylish body, a spacious button layout and an extremely comfortable handgrip, the A390 is incredibly easy to use, whether you're a first-time photographer or a seasoned snapper. Its 14.2-megapixel resolution guarantees high-quality images, while the 69mm LCD monitor can be tilted by up to 45˚ for improved shooting from tricky angles. An intuitive graphic display, a quick auto-focus Live View and a reasonable price tag make this an excellent option for anyone looking to purchase their first digital SLR.

THE GOOD A solid all-rounder

THE BAD Lacks the HD video capabilities of some of its rivals

sony.co.uk

Want a professional-level camera? Then check out the top-end DSLRs at **mensfitness.co.uk/links/poshcams**

Words Ben Ince **Photography** PSC Photography

Olympus E-620

£491.80 (lens not included)

Designed to stimulate creativity, the E-620 comes packed with editing features that can be used without a computer or any specialist software, including six different effects filters and a multi-exposure Live View option that allows you to overlay up to three images simultaneously. Built-in image stabilisation enables you to take steady shots without the use of a tripod, while the 69mm LCD monitor (although fairly plasticky) can be adjusted by up to 176˚ to help you take quality photos from the most unlikely angles.

THE GOOD The multi-angle LCD monitor and wealth of editing options

THE BAD The slightly cheap-feeling build quality

amazon.co.uk

Canon EOS 550D

£899.99

An 18-megapixel sensor and the ability to record 1080p HD videos make the 550D one of the highest spec entry-level digital SLRs on the market. It handles well, too, with rubber-coated hand and thumbgrips giving superb traction on its lightweight but durable body. Additional features include a quick-control screen that provides easy access to commonly used functions, an HDMI connection that allows high-definition playback of footage and images on any HDTV, and a 3.5mm stereo jack socket that enables you to plug in an external microphone.

THE GOOD High-quality features across the board

THE BAD Expensive price tag

canon.co.uk

Pentax K-X

£529.99

Considering its very reasonable price tag, the K-X does an excellent job of combining solid performance with a range of advanced features, including Live View and high-quality (but not HD) video recording. Its 12.4-megapixel resolution ensures respectable image quality, while its compact, lightweight body handles well. It also features a number of useful editing functions, including an updated digital filter to accommodate more sophisticated image processing, and a cross-process mode that lets you produce eye-catching finishing touches.

THE GOOD Excellent range of features and great value for money

THE BAD At this price, very little

pentax.co.uk

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Cold comfort

Stay warm, dry and safe in extreme conditions with these seasonal sports jackets

Best for running

Salomon XT Wings £100

The clever thing about this jacket is its Smart Skin ventilation system, which uses windproof fabric on the front and breathable stretch fabric on the back to keep you warm without overheating in cold, windy weather. Both sides also have reflective branding for added visibility, keeping you safe on the roads in the dark depths of winter.
salomonrunning.com

Best for cycling

Gore COSMO £219.99

Versatility is the name of the game with this reversible cycling jacket. On the outside, strategically placed high-visibility panels and reflective piping provide 360˚ visibility for maximum safety when riding in the dark. But turn it inside out and you'll find a seam-sealed grey fabric design that gives the appearance of a smart waterproof jacket, making it ideal for commuters.
gorebikewear.co.uk

Best for skiing

Helly Hansen Atlas £400

The four-way stretch fabric of the Atlas gives you enough freedom of movement to take on the twistiest mogul fields, while its Thinsulate Flex layer will keep you warm during the coldest back-country hikes. Underarm vents and a removable hood and powder skirt make it suitable for all but the sunniest conditions, and it's got cavernous utility pockets for all your stuff, too.
hellyhansen.com

Words Ben Ince **Photography** PSC Photography, Shutterstock

Best for mountaineering

Columbia Carabineer II Parka £260

Combining the warmth of a down jacket with the waterproof breathability of a shell, the Carabineer – with its goose feather-insulated liner and seam-sealed, omni-shield top layer – is built to handle whatever the elements can throw at it. It's also surprisingly packable for such a substantial jacket: you can roll it up into a pint-sized bundle for easy backpack storage after a hard day on the trails.

columbiasportswear.co.uk

Best for climbing

Berghaus Dru £200

Innovative stretch panels on the underarm and side flanks of the Dru provide the increased freedom of movement you need to conquer the most testing climbs, while its ergonomic Gore-Tex shell is both waterproof and extremely breathable. Other useful features include pit zips for improved ventilation, a helmet-compatible, fixed-rim hood and two external chest pockets.

berghaus.com

Best for snowboarding

Burton Revolver System £220

The Revolver's fully waterproof shell has a micro-cell mesh around the core to keep you cosy in frigid conditions. The body and arms are slightly longer than those on most snowboard jackets, meaning you're less likely to get powder down your pants. It also features a quick-drying removable cotton hoodie liner that you can zip into the jacket for extra warmth or use as a lightweight top for sunny spring sessions.

burtonstore.eu

For more winter sports jackets, look at **mensfitness.co.uk/links/brrrr**

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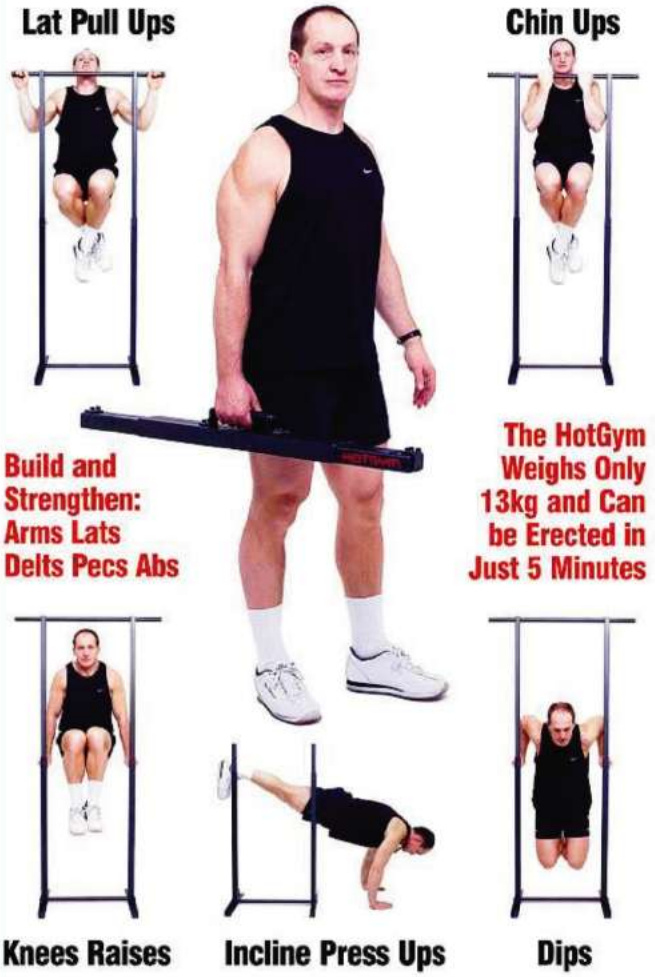

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Day and night fragrances

Unless you're trying to seduce your boss, you'll need different fragrances for day and night. These are the best new offerings

Day

Night

1 **Tom Ford Private Blend Azure Lime**
Fashion designer Tom Ford's latest is inspired by the Caribbean island of Mustique, and is a classically masculine scent that would have filled 1950s boardrooms. An intense waft of lime is warmed by neroli, tonka bean and sandalwood – fresh and vibrant with staying power.
£115 for 50ml
harrods.com

2 **Dolce & Gabbana The One Gentleman**
This spicy scent is a follow-up to the popular D&G The One from 2008, with notes of pepper, grapefruit and patchouli. The substantial bottle and gun-metal cap are as masculine as the fragrance, making it a great choice for when you mean business.
£49 for 100ml
Available nationwide

4 **Tommy Hilfiger Loud For Him**
If you love a bit of air guitar and fancy yourself as a rocker, Loud could be for you. Inspired by distorted guitar riffs, this is raw, masculine and fiery, thanks to patchouli and spicy tobacco. It's a dirty option – in a good way. Groupies not included.
£39 for 75ml
Available nationwide

5 **Boss Bottled Night**
This is designed to make you feel irresistible, incorporating a masculine mix of green, woody and musky scents that are a grown-up type of sexy. The bottle shape remains the same as the iconic Boss Bottled, although the midnight blue colour makes it feel modern.
£29 for 50ml
Available nationwide

3 **Paul Smith Man 2**
Granny Smith apple, lavender and white musk might sound a bit girly, but they combine well in this scent from the quirky British designer. It manages to be smart and playful at the same time – perfect for guys who work hard without taking themselves too seriously. The matte, concrete-like bottle is cool, too.
£49 for 100ml
Available nationwide

6 **Midnight in Paris Van Cleef & Arpels Pour Homme**
Jewellery house Van Cleef & Arpels might not be the obvious creator of fragrance for men, but Midnight is a gem. Inspired by a watch of the same name, it's an affordable luxury, thanks to citrus fruits, leather, black lily of the valley and incense.
£69 for 125ml
harrods.com

We review four of the best sports antiperspirant deodorants at **mensfitness.co.uk/links/yousmellfit**

FRAGRANCE OF THE MONTH

Aveda Men Pure-Formance shaving products

After the success of the Pure-Formance hair range for men, Aveda has turned its hand to shaving products. The Shave Cream moisturises and conditions skin while shaving, and the Dual-Action Aftershave soothes skin and minimises the occurrence of ingrown hairs. The ingredients are ethically sourced, and many are organic and plant-derived, including argan, spearmint, and lavender oils, so they aire ideal for sensitive skin.
Shave cream **£14 for 150ml**
Aftershave **£23 for 75ml**
aveda.co.uk

WHAT'S NEW

Wilkinson Sword Hydro range

Shaving brands have in recent years been fixated on how many blades you can fit on a razor. Wilkinson Sword don't back down from that challenge, putting three on the new Hydro 3 and five on the Hydro 5. But it's the tweaks elsewhere that are most notable – the blades feature an intensely hydrating gel reservoir that promises to last twice as long as other lubricating strips, as well as Ultra Glide blades with skin guards to prevent dragging and burn. Hydro 5 has a clever flip trimmer to edge and trim hard-to-reach areas without needing to turn the razor over.
Hydro 3 **£5.99** Hydro 5 **£7.99**
Nationwide

ON TEST

Frequent use shampoo

Which post-workout shampoo leaves your hair nice?

Clean Fish De-Gunk Shampoo

£3.99 for 250ml
Squeeze the brightly coloured bottle and you'll get a dollop of thick, clear shampoo that lathers well and smells like muesli and honey. It's designed to get rid of hair product build-up.
boots.com

Wash & Go Sport

£1.99 for 300ml
This has a peachy smell and a very silky feel for something aimed at the post-sport market. It also, as you well know, does the cleaning and conditioning job in one.
Nationwide

Philip Kingsley Moisture Balancing Shampoo

£11.84 for 250ml
This looks like something you'd find in the world's most stylish shed. The colour resembles weak green tea and it smells of herbs and earthiness.
escentual.com

Malin+Goetz Peppermint Shampoo

£15 for 236ml
They haven't held back on the peppermint in this deliciously gooey shampoo – it smells good enough to eat, although we don't recommend it.
liberty.co.uk

men-ü Ultra Concentrate Daily Refresh Shampoo

£7.45 for 100ml
The neat pump-action design controls how much you use – and you don't need much of this translucent green, zesty-smelling goo.
carterandbond.com

Words Hayley Thatcher **Photography** PSC Photography

revolutionary hair growth treatment with @home laser

no drugs, no expensive lotions, no hassle

just thicker hair

@home personal lasers are the hottest new breakthrough in hair restoration and regrowth at a fraction of the cost of clinic treatments.

The revolutionary Wellay @home hair laser uses 21 low power multi-wavelength lasers for maximum effect which penetrate deeply into your scalp, activating blood circulation around your hair follicles, halting hair loss and stimulating new hair growth.

Daily treatment should give you noticeable hair growth and healthier hair in just 12 weeks.

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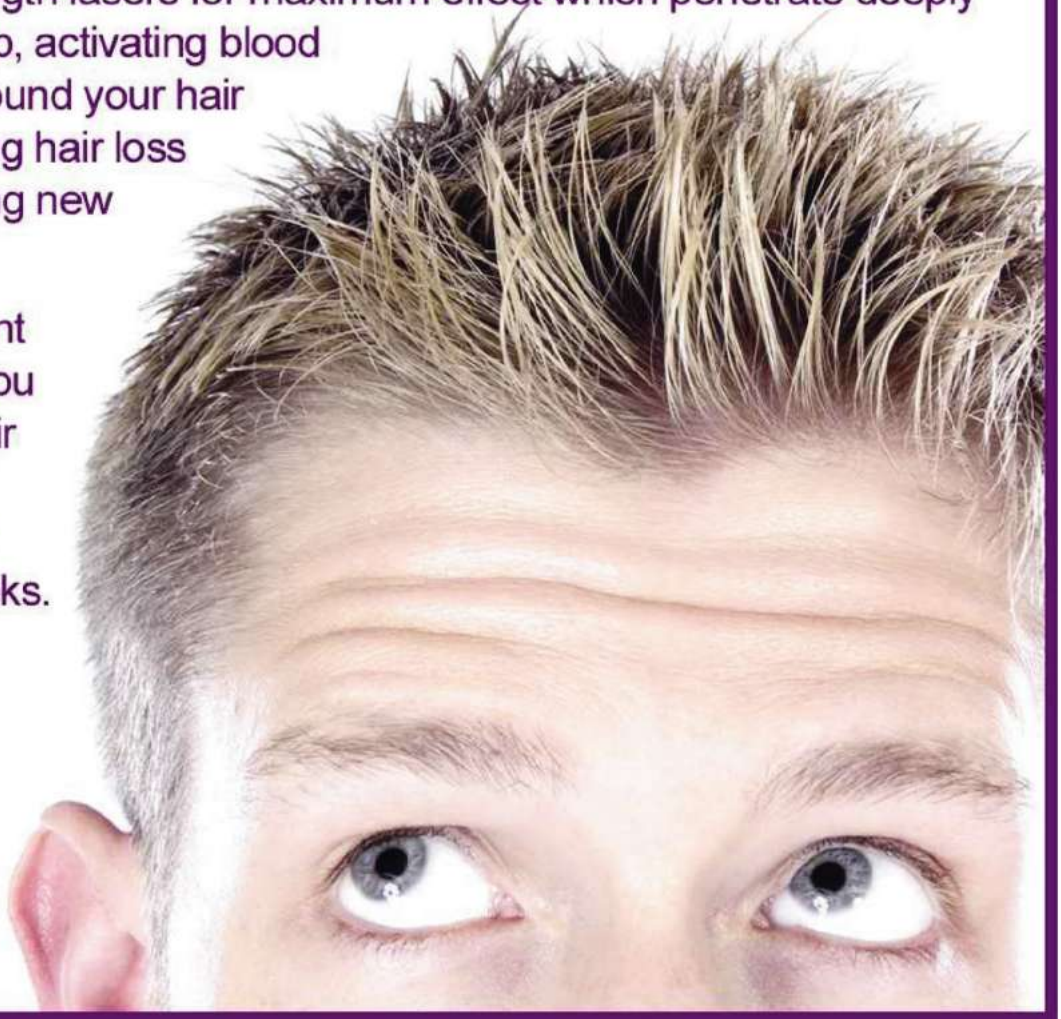

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or buy securely online

www.beauty-lasers.com

Name: Echo Supplements

Occupation: Helping you build lean muscle

Echo Supplements's best-sellers Boditronics Mass Attack Evo and Sci-MX GRS-5 Protein System offer any hard training athlete everything they could need to meet their goals!

Boditronics Mass Attack Evo is ideal for anyone looking to gain muscle mass while not getting fat. This is because of the revolutionary UltraCarb Complex, which is a blend of ground whole oats, barley malt, whole durum wheat and waxy maize starch – low-GI carbs and 40g protein for great lean gains!

Sci-MX GRS-5 Protein System is a premium blend of whey isolates, whey concentrates, milk solids, egg and soya and provides a sustained protein release. This high-protein, low-carb product is great for low-carbohydrate dieting and as a high-protein snack between meals.

Boditronics Mass Attack Evo is available from £33.87 per 4kg tub and Sci-MX GRS-5 Protein System from £34.99 at Echo Supplements.

ECHO SUPPLEMENTS

■ **More info: See the entire range of Sci-MX and Boditronics as well as many more at www.EchoSupplements.com.**

Name: Bodylean

Occupation: Fast fat loss and more muscle tone

BODY BEAUTIFUL
Bodylean® CLA Plus to help your workout work well.

Bodylean® CLA Plus can help reduce body fat and in turn increase muscle tone.

Conjugated Linoleic Acid is added to manipulate the way the body stores fat and helps you utilise it as energy, regulating and lowering body fat percentages and increasing muscle tone. Other ingredients include L-Carnitine, L-Ornithine and CoQ10 for enhanced metabolism, together with Chromium and Gymnaema Sylvestre to regulate sugar cravings and blood sugar levels. Maximum benefit is achieved if it is taken in conjunction with a healthy balanced diet and regular exercise.

HealthAid

■ **More info: Bodylean CLA Plus dual pack retails at £15.99 for 60 capsules and tablets. Contact HealthAid Ltd on 020 8426 3400 for purchase and stockist information or visit www.healthaid.co.uk.**

Name: AsdruMark

Occupation: Stylish and comfortable underwear for men

The Mundo Unico Summer Underwear Collection is packed with great designs that offer excellent support, comfort and style that you would expect from Mundo Unico. Amazing fit, quality fabrics and unstructured patterns make Mundo Unico underwear the foundation of a fashionable wardrobe. Styles available include briefs, athletic long leg boxers, shorts and tanga.
The benefits are:

Genital Care: The innovative 'suspensor' helps maintain the anatomical position of the genitals and keeps them cool by separating them from the body.

Aesthetic: The suspensor supports the genitals thus enhancing body definition and the man's anatomy.

Unstructured Patterns: The unstructured patterns of Mundo Unico do not follow regular male underwear patterns – they aid movement and become a second skin, offer excellent support and are ideal for both sport and everyday wear.

■ **More info: To obtain a mail order catalogue call 0844 561 7970 or sign up for our e-newsletter online at www.asdrumark.co.uk.**

Photography XXXXXXX XXXX Source XXXXXXX XXXX Words XXXXXXX XXXX

Name: EAS 100% Myopro Whey Protein

Occupation: Pure and effective whey protein

EAS 100% Myopro Whey Protein is a pure whey protein processed through low-temperature micro and ultra-filtration steps, producing one of the cleanest, most intact forms of whey protein. This careful processing delivers an efficient protein source with a very high biological value, which means it is absorbed quickly so that muscles can use it faster.

Cold processing also ensures that the greatest possible concentration of bioactive microfractions are preserved. These key components include lactoferrin, bovine serum albumin, alpha-lactalbumin, immunoglobulins, beta-lactoglobulin, lactoperoxidase, lysozyme, glycomacropeptides and various growth factors (IGF-1, IGF-2, TGF-ß). These are important for immune support, antioxidant protection, muscle growth, protein digestion and protein absorption.

Protein synthesis (muscle growth) can be enhanced by as much as 68 per cent (1) by using a pure, clean intact form of whey.

EAS 100% Myopro Whey Protein also contains the highest naturally occurring levels of branched-chain amino acids (22 per cent BCAAs; Valine, Isoleucine, leucine). A third of human muscle is made up of these three components so they are very important for building lean mass, as research shows muscles recover more quickly after strenuous exercise when these BCAA levels are ingested (2).

A good guide to building muscle is to consume around 1.5g-2g of protein per kilo of bodyweight per day. Each serving of 100% Myopro Whey delivers 23g of the highest-quality fast-acting protein.

EAS
POWER TO THE PEOPLE

■ **More info: For more on EAS 100% Myopro Whey visit shopeas.co.uk.**

1. Boirie, Y et al., Slow and fast releasing dietary proteins differently modulate postprandial protein accretion. *Proc Natl Acad Sci* USA 94 (1997): 14930-14935. 2. Blomstrand, E and Saltin, B., BCAA intake affects protein metabolism in muscle after but not during exercise in humans. *Am J Physiol Endocrinol Metab* 2001 Aug; 281(2): E365-74.

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RUN 10k or 15k
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Soft sand trails, water obstacles, slow hills and stony tracks.
A sapping, hard-core race.

HANKLEY, SURREY
Saturday, 20th November 2010

MUDMAN

Get down and dirty

RUN 10k
DUATHLON 7.5k Run, 15k Bike, 7.5k Run
(individual and relay)

The infamous MudMan is back! Described as 'evil' by last year's competitors.

ARMY TESTING GROUND, CAMBERLEY, SURREY
Saturday, 4th December 2010

ICEMAN

Conquer the cold

RUN 12k
DUATHLON 10k Run, 18k Bike, 5k Run
(individual and relay)

Go where no mere mortals can go. This is army terrain. It's rough, tough, dirty and painful.

FRIMLEY, SURREY
Saturday, 22nd January 2011

TUFFMAN

Man, it's tough

RUN 8k Run
DUATHLON 8k Run, 13k Bike, 4k Run
(individual and relay)

The TuffMan is breathtaking in every way. Stunning scenery. Tough terrain.

PIPPINGFORD PARK, E. SUSSEX
Saturday, 5th February 2011

Enter online at www.humanrace.co.uk as an individual or as part of a team.

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Race Report **Tough Tracks**

Tough ride

Off-road thrills and spills aplenty as readers take to the forest in *MF*'s new multisport event

The steep and winding forest trails of Pippingford Park in Ashdown Forest, East Sussex, were the setting for the inaugural *Men's Fitness* Tough Tracks series of off-road races.

Under clear blue skies, entrants tackled one of the toughest off-road courses in the UK. There was an 8km run and duathlons of varying distances for both individuals and teams. Here's how some of the racers got on.

TOUGH TRACKS with Men's Fitness

What *Men's Fitness* Tough Tracks
Events **Run** 8km
Sprint duathlon 4km run/8km bike/4km run
Duathlon 4km run/ 8km bike/8km run
Advanced duathlon 4km run/11km bike/8km run
When 18th September 2010
Where Pippingford Park in Ashdown Forest, East Sussex
Fitness level Intermediate to advanced
Details humanrace.co.uk

Words Joe Warner **Photography** Tom Miles

Neal Saunders
Advanced duathlon

'I've only recently started getting into duathlons and fancied a different type of challenge. I certainly had one today. It's one of the toughest races I've done but I still really enjoyed it. It was a great race.'

'It's one of the toughest races I've done but I really enjoyed it'

David Chapman
8km run

'That was hard – particularly the long uphill finish. There were plenty of ups and downs and some nice singletrack running through the trees. I thought I was in with a shout of winning today. My main race focus is Ironman-distance triathlons and I fancied starting the cross-country season early with this race. My advice for other runners is to be as consistent as possible with their training.'

Winner 30min 38sec

Chris Young
8km run

'There were a lot more hills than I thought and had to walk for a bit, which is really against my beliefs, but I had to. The steep climbs and unsteady descents made it really hard to establish a rhythm but it was great fun. I can't wait until next year.'

Joe Warner, *MF* deputy editor
8km run

'Having run a lot of road races, from 10km up to a marathon, I thought this 8km run wouldn't be too much of a problem. I was wrong. There was a long incline right near the start that I attacked too hard. It went on for ages and took a lot out of me, and then it was hard to use the straights or downhill trails to recover because the terrain was so uneven – I had to watch every step. And then there was another huge hill at the end. It was the closest I've ever come to having to stop in a race and walk. It nearly broke me.'

Warren Lloyd
Duathlon

'What a beautiful course on a beautiful day. The downhill mountain biking was the highlight; some of the descents were insane. The hardest part was the last hill. It was steep and went on for so long. It was a real killer. I had no idea I would win – I only started running last year after too many rugby injuries. I have been training really hard. I do sprint sessions on the treadmill, then go into a spinning class, before hitting the treadmill again. It's great for getting your muscles used to duathlons. I plan to do my first triathlon next year then an Ironman race in 2012 when I'm 30. Races are great for motivating you to train.'

Winner 1hr 25min 56sec

'That's a proper trail race – through thick woodland on a narrow path'

Winner 1hr 2min 54sec

David Shilland
Sprint duathlon

'That was a proper trail race: most of it was through thick woodland on a very narrow path, which is what an off-road race should be. It's really scenic too. I'm delighted with my performance and the event as a whole. I'd thoroughly recommend it.'

Paul Hayman
Advanced duathlon

'That was brutal. I didn't realise just how technical the course would be, and so was the only idiot not to use a mountain bike. It was hair-raising in places. My top tip for the hills would be to get your head down and keep your stride length short. Just get on with it, really.'

Winner 1hr 23min 7sec

Graham Wadsworth
Advanced duathlon

'I'm the top Brit on the European X-Terra circuit right now and have been racing across Europe all summer. This course is up there with some of the best the continent has to offer. The downhill tracks were very loose underfoot, which made it hard to stay upright at times. The first leg really took it out of me because there was a long climb that just kept going. I was waiting for ages for it to peak and get on the flat again. I was neck and neck with Cedric [Lassonde, who finished second in 1hr 23min 30sec], who was breathing down my neck, but I made a break at start of the bike leg and managed to hang on.' MF

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Tough Tracks results

8km run

1	**David Chapman**	30min 38sec
2	**Alex Bump**	32min 24sec
3	**Ross Whitehead**	33min 7sec
4	**Daniel Hall**	34min 4sec
5	**Stefan Wysocki**	34min 53sec
6	**Jenny Brown**	35min 17sec
7	**Mark Young**	35min 44sec
8	**Stephan Louw**	37min 15sec
9	**Gregor Wight**	37min 21sec
10	**Joe Warner**	37min 24sec

Duathlon

1	**Warren Lloyd**	1hr 25min 56sec
2	**Derek Hynes**	1hr 37min 19sec
3	**Daniel Bryant**	1hr 38min 14sec
4	**Stephen Westgate**	1hr 38min 42sec
5	**Robert Elliott**	1hr 39min 3sec
6	**Richard Hooley**	1hr 39min 45sec
7	**Lee McRae**	1hr 42min 27sec
8	**Vicky Bruce**	1hr 43min 9sec
9	**Peter Allen**	1hr 44min 2sec
10	**Heath Barlow**	1hr 44min 9sec

Sprint duathlon

1	**David Shilland**	1hr 2min 54sec
2	**Steve Ferguson**	1hr 5min 16sec
3	**Lloyd Bridger**	1hr 5min 53sec
4	**Stuart Bradley**	1hr 12min 20sec
5	**Andy Waymont**	1hr 12min 20sec
6	**Damian Saunders**	1hr 15min 16sec
7	**Matthew Turton**	1hr 17min 6sec
8	**Jane England**	1hr 17min 33sec
9	**Andrew Goodson**	1hr 17min 53sec
10	**Robert Woods**	1hr 19min 0sec

Advanced duathlon

1	**Graham Wadsworth**	1hr 23min 7sec
2	**Cedric Lassonde**	1hr 23min 30sec
3	**Colin Dixon**	1hr 31min 15sec
4	**Mat Clarkson**	1hr 36min 14sec
5	**Marcus Shields**	1hr 40min 42sec
6	**Richard Palmer**	1hr 53min 58sec
7	**Babs Bukunola**	1hr 56min 34sec
8	**Damon Walmsley**	1hr 57min 31sec
9	**Gareth Rees**	1hr 58min 12sec
10	**Malcolm Burden**	1hr 58min 15sec

Duathletes stream away from the start line

The advanced duathlon podium: (L-R) Lassonde, Wadsworth, Dixon

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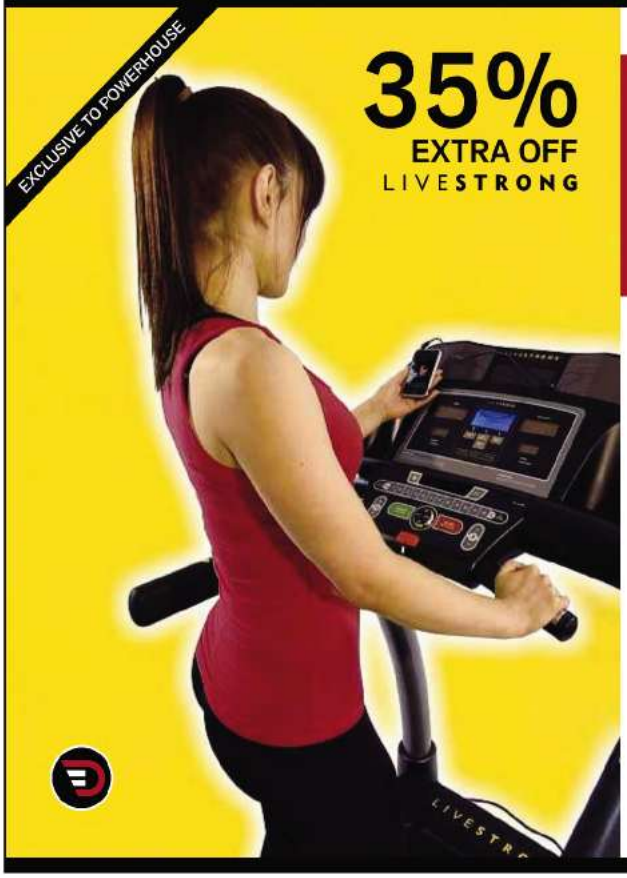

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6 Wildest marathons

Give city marathons a miss and instead try these adventure-laden races

1 North Pole Marathon

Where **Arctic**
When **7th April 2011**

Completing any marathon will have you feeling on top of the world, but with this race you're literally there. Running in sub-zero temperatures requires serious training, but all those hours will be repaid with interest when you become one of an elite group that has completed the most northerly race on the planet.
npmarathon.com

2 The Dead Sea Marathon

Where **Jordan**
When **8th April 2011**

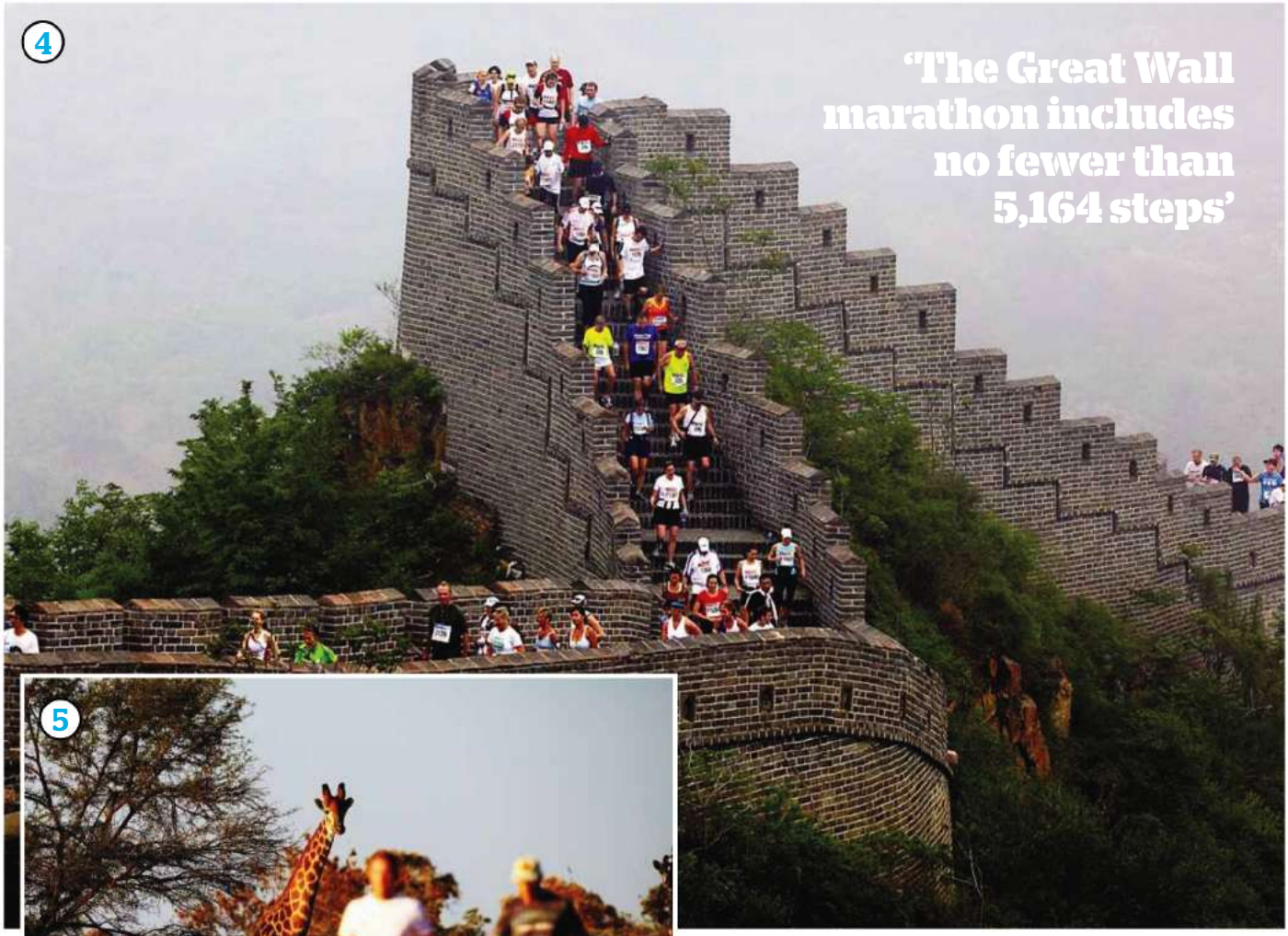
Starting on the high lands of Amman, this marathon course may be hot but it's almost entirely downhill, dropping 1,300m over the course. The finish by the Dead Sea is near the lowest point on the planet.
deadseamarathon.com

3 Australian Outback Marathon

Where **Central Australia**
When **31st July 2011**

If you're after a remote race, then look no further than this one over the scorching red earth of the Australian outback. You'll get a unique glimpse of the bush, hundreds of kilometres from civilisation, on a course that loops around Uluru and the sandstone rock formations of Kata Tjuta.
australianoutback marathon.com

Words Paul McNally, Joe Warner **Photography** Getty



'The Great Wall marathon includes no fewer than 5,164 steps'

4 Great Wall Marathon
Where **China**
When **21st May 2011**
The tough but inspiring race along the Great Wall includes no fewer than 5,164 steps over the course. Luckily the amazing sights of this incredible feat of construction are more than enough to distract you from the inevitable pain along the way.
great-wall-marathon.com

5 Big Five Marathon
Where **South Africa**
When **25th June 2011**
One for wildlife fans, this marathon takes place in the South African savannah that is home to the 'big five' animals – elephants, rhinos, buffalo, lions and leopards. The route goes right through their natural habitat and there are no fences or other barriers to keep man and beast apart, which could help you post a new personal best.
big-five-marathon.com

6 Honolulu Marathon
Where **Hawaii, USA**
When **12th December 2010**
This race starts on Ala Moana Boulevard, which in Hawaiian means 'path by the ocean' – an appropriate description of the entire course because it takes in some of island's top beaches, parks and surf spots. There are also a couple of big climbs thrown in just so you don't have too much of a good time.
honolulumarathon.org MF

You'll find more about unusual races like these at **mensfitness.co.uk/links/offthebeatentrack**

ICE KING

Find out how British ice hockey star David Phillips has fuelled his impressive success

David Phillips is an undoubted star of British ice hockey. One of the youngest players ever to represent Great Britain, his performances for his country and for Belfast Giants have earned him a move to the US – and with PhD's help he's hoping to become the first British player to play in the world's top league, the NHL.

After a trial with Chicago Blackhawks in 2009, Phillips signed for AHL team Rockford IceHogs and made a big impact, winning their end of season award for Most Improved Player. Great Britain national coach Paul Thompson is a huge admirer of the 23-year-old, and believes that "the future is so bright for him it's unbelievable".

Phillips understands the key role that nutrition has played in the success he's achieved in his career so far. The products shown here all help him to cope with the rigorous demands of training and competing in a tough sport at the highest level.

Powered by PhD

PhD Nutrition has a huge range of products to help you meet your strength, speed and power goals

Recovery 2:1

What it does Helps Phillips to replenish his muscle cells after every game and workout.

Recovery 2:1 provides fast- and slow-release carbs to replenish energy. Each serving provides 24g of high-quality whey protein to build strength, while creatine monohydrate and L-Glutamine aid muscle recovery.

Pharma Whey

What it does Provides enough protein daily to build lean muscle mass.

With 20g of the highest-quality protein per serving to promote muscle tissue repair and growth, Pharma Whey provides added BCAAs and L-Glutamine, the essential amino acids needed to build new muscle.

L-Glutamine

What it does Helps him to maintain muscle and not lose weight during the hard season.

L-Glutamine is the most abundant amino acid in the body and is found in all proteins. When used with a restricted-calorie diet it can limit muscle loss and help to maintain strength levels.

V-Max Pump

What it does Boosts his concentration and staying power during games.

Each serving of V-Max Pump provides your muscles with everything they need for even the toughest sessions, thanks to its potent blend of creatine, glutamine and BCAAs that create the perfect conditions for building size, strength and power.

Catalyst

What it does Ensures that he stays healthy and free from illness.

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Great Britain Gymnast

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Merrell WildMan

Tackle some of England's most challenging forest trails in this off-road duathlon

The details

What Merrell WildMan
When 20th November 2010
Where Hankley Common, Surrey
Fitness level Intermediate
Disciplines Running, cycling
Details humanrace.co.uk

What to expect

The Merrell WildMan takes place in leafiest Surrey but it's far from genteel. It opens with a 10km run on gruelling soft sand, over a course that includes five hills and a variety of boggy trails. Next comes an 18km cycle course that features climbs and descents with fast, stony tracks, before you push your legs and lungs to the limits with a 5km run.

'The Merrell WildMan takes place in leafiest Surrey but it's far from genteel'

Expert tips

'WildMan is an endurance race so it's important that you pace yourself so that you have the energy you need for the tougher parts of the course,' says Alan Spelling, operations and logistics director for race organiser Human Race. 'Lean into the inclines to make them easier, and don't go too fast on the declines. Better to watch your step than take a costly tumble. Finally, accept that you are going to get muddy and take a change of clothes.'

'Better to watch your step than take a costly tumble'

Essential kit

Salomon XT Wings 2 GTX £115
The course's mixed terrain means you need a versatile shoe. This XT Wings 2 is lithe enough to let you take advantage of fast sections, while Salomon's Contagrip feature will keep you upright on loose ground.
salomonrunning.com

Staying the course
'Along most of the course there will be two options: solid ground or a path that will take you knee-deep in water,' says Spelling. 'Try to stay on the more stable route. The course is very technical so familiarise yourself with it beforehand. Pick the lines that you are going to run or cycle as early as possible: following the person in front can be advantageous but keep an eye on your feet.'

Turn over for our four-week WildMan training plan

Four-week WildMan training plan

Get ready for the forbidding hills and treacherous terrain of the WildMan with this training plan from coach Elizabeth Scott

Elizabeth Scott
is a director of thetrilife.com and a level 3 triathlon coach

'WildMan requires both endurance and strength. This programme has been designed for an athlete with between four and six hours per week to train,' says Scott, 'and who already has a reasonable level of aerobic conditioning and technical mountain biking skills.

'The first couple of weeks introduce race-specific sessions, hilly rides and runs, and brick sessions that get you used to running straight after a tough bike ride. This stage also develops power on the bike.

'The third week of the plan keeps you focused, with more brick sessions, and the final week scales back the effort to prepare you for the big day.'

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
1	Rest	Bike at level 6 for 60 mins, with recovery mins at level 1-2 when needed. Include alternating 20-sec single-leg bursts.	Run at level 7 for 3 x 10 mins with 2 mins at level 4 in between.	Bike at level 7 for 2 x 20 mins, with 5 mins at level 4 in between. Then do level 10 for 3 x 20 secs, with recovery at level 2 for 2 mins in between.	Rest	2 hrs 15 mins brick session: do a hilly off-road ride including 4 x 3-min climbs, then run 15 mins (8 mins out, 7 mins back), going through all levels.	Run for 55 mins on an off-road course that includes hills. Attack these hills at level 9 and stay at levels 5-6 the rest of the time.
2	Rest	Bike at levels 5-7 for 60 mins, including 5 x 3 mins at level 9.	Run at level 5 for 30 mins, including 3 x 7 mins at level 7.	Bike at level 7 for 75 mins, with level 4 recovery spells every 15 mins.	Rest	Bike at levels 2-6 for 75 mins, keeping cadence high and effort low to improve recovery.	Run for 60 mins on a rolling off-road course. Keep below level 4.
3	Rest	Bike at level 6 for 60 mins, including 6 x 3 mins at level 9.	Run at level 7 for 45 mins, with 5 mins at level 4 every 15 mins.	Brick session: run at level 6 for 20 mins then bike at level 7 for 70 mins, taking 2 mins recovery breaks at level 4 when needed.	Rest	Brick session: bike for 120 mins on a hilly, off-road course that includes climbs, then run for 20 minutes, going through all effort levels.	Run for 50 mins on a hilly, off-road course that includes climbs. Maintain effort levels 5-6 rising to level 9 up hills.
4	Rest	Bike at level 4 for 45 mins, with 5 x 2 mins at level 7.	Run at level 4 for 30 mins, with 3 x 1 min at level 7.	Bike at level 4 for 30 mins, with 3 x 2 mins at level 7.	Rest	RACE DAY	Bask in post-race glory

Fitness level Before you start this plan you should be able to mountain-bike and run for up to 60 minutes each. If you can't, consider entering next year's event to give you time to build base fitness.

Brick training A brick session is one in which you go straight from one discipline into another, preparing you for the challenge of multisport events such as duathlons.

Effort levels
1-3 Easy up to a gentle pace
4-5 Able to have a conversation
6-7 Getting out of breath
8-9 Can't talk, uncomfortable
10 Flat-out sprint

Go wild and get muddy Five more top winter endurance events

Triandrun Winter BallBuster
6th November 2010
Box Hill, Surrey
Five laps of this 13km course around one of southeast England's highest points – one running, then three on the bike, then another run to finish – would be tough in mild weather. In the November chill, it's downright intimidating.
humanrace.co.uk

Big Adventure Store Chilly Duathlon Race 3
21st November 2010
Castle Combe, Wiltshire
This classic sprint duathlon features wide, smooth, Tarmac roads to cycle on and a flat, predominantly on-road run route that's suitable for beginners and experienced competitors alike.
dbmax.co.uk

The Winter Duathlon Series – Dorney Lake Race
23rd January 2011
Dorney Lake, Berkshire
The beauty of this duathlon is that, with two laps of out-and-back run course and five laps of out-and-back bike course, you can see exactly who is behind and who is in front. It's also 100 per cent traffic-free.
f3events.co.uk

Dunmow Duathlon 2011
5th March 2011
Hatfield Forest, Essex
This event has a great mix of on- and off-road action, with two 5km runs through the forest to get round on either side of a single-lap 21km cycle around its perimeter, all in the scenic Essex countryside.
entrycentral.com

Mud and Mayhem Off-Road Duathlon
20th March 2011
Brandon, Suffolk
Living up to its name, this entirely off-road event comprises two 5km runs and a 20km bike through Thetford Forest, making the most of its fantastic woodland trails and the infamous pits.
gobeyondultra.co.uk

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With its relentless gradient, punishing climate and tragic history, Mont Ventoux is the climb that even the pro cyclists fear. *MF* tackles a Tour de France legend

Words **Pete Muir** Photography **Tom Miles**

Just around the next corner the road will level out and I'll get a moment's respite from the pain in my legs and lungs. At least, that's what my body hopes. It's willing it to be so, begging for it. But my brain knows better. I've studied the maps and I've read the blogs of those who've been here before, and I know the road won't flatten. It will keep going up. Inexorably, unremittingly, the road will keep climbing without a break for 22km.

And so it proves. I round the corner and see the Tarmac rise ahead of me at a ten per cent gradient towards the next bend. There will be no respite. There will be no rest. Understanding this fact is the first step to conquering the most notorious mountain on the Tour de France circuit: Mont Ventoux.

Height of infamy

The mountain, nicknamed 'the Giant of Provence', sits in the south-east corner of France and towers over the flat, green plains that surround it. As you cycle towards it Mont Ventoux dominates the landscape, giving you plenty of time to contemplate its sheer size and to ruminate on the reputation it has garnered over 60 years of appearances in the Tour de France. Lance Armstrong described it as 'the hardest climb in the Tour, bar none', and its inclusion in the annual three-week bike race always raises the expectation of an epic battle or a dramatic incident. It is a place for heroics and, on occasion, for tragedy.

In 1967, Britain's most celebrated cyclist, Tom Simpson, died on the upper slopes of Ventoux from exhaustion and dehydration, as the combination of scorching heat, amphetamines and the ceaseless gradient took its toll on his body (see 'The Death Of Mr Tom', p100). Ever since, Ventoux has been become infamous as a mountain that can kill. It doesn't care if you are a pro or a first-timer. The climb will punish anyone who doesn't respect it or is not fully prepared.

'The vertical gain to the summit of Mont Ventoux is 1,610 metres. That's exactly a mile, straight up'

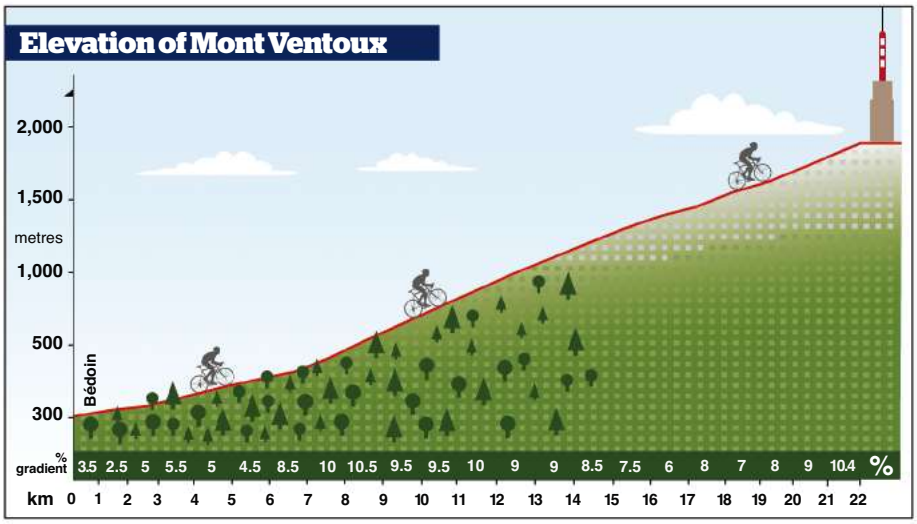
So why is it so popular?

Despite its reputation – or more likely because of it – Ventoux has become a magnet for cyclists. On the day that I make the climb, there are Lycra-clad riders from France, Germany, Britain and even America who have made the pilgrimage. They are all here for the same reasons – to grab their own little piece of sporting history and to test themselves against the hardest part of the world's hardest race. Everyone has the same thought: 'Can I do it?'

As a result, tour companies have been quick to include it in their itineraries for cycling holidays. *MF* is in the hands of Greenrock, a company that specialises in fairly grand-scale bike tours and races. Its annual schedule includes a 25-day complete tour of France, a 24-hour dash from London to Paris, and in June 2011 the inaugural Race Across Europe, which will see entrants tackle the near 4,000km from London to Istanbul. Greenrock directors Joe Mears and Laura Stone are well used to coaxing wannabe cycling heroes up the sides of giant hills, and they provide my support vehicle for the day.

'Just cycle within yourself,' advises Mears before I set off on the 25km warm-up ride that will take me to the foot of the mountain, 'and aim to start the climb in fairly big gear. That way you'll know you've got some smaller gears to drop into when the climbing gets tough.' He also mentions that the day before he saw a man with one leg cycling up Ventoux. 'It was a very a big leg,' he adds. I'm not sure if this makes me feel any better or not.

I take his advice and cruise through the countryside at a leisurely pace. Stone is waiting at



The first 6km seemed so easy... *MF*'s Pete starts to labour

the junctions to point me in the right direction, saving me the effort of route-finding. The knowledge that I have a support car with water and spare inner tubes makes the challenge more accessible. The thought of lugging supplies and equipment on my bike up the mountain is almost as daunting as the thought of getting stuck on the side of the hill with a puncture and an empty water bottle. The support means I can concentrate on the only thing that matters: turning the pedals.

Going up in the world

From the town of Bédoin – the traditional and toughest route up Mont Ventoux – the vertical gain to reach the summit is 1,610m. That's exactly a mile, straight up.

I approach the first few kilometres of the climb with caution, and I'm pleasantly surprised at how easy it is. The gradient is a gentle three or four per cent and I'm feeling strong. Perhaps all the talk of killer mountains is overblown and it will be a cruise to the summit.

At kilometre six I quickly regret my bravado. The road kicks up to around nine per cent and I'm out of the saddle and puffing hard within a minute. I drop down through the gears until there are no sprockets left. Now it's just a case of gripping the handlebars, putting my head down and pushing the pedals. There is still 15km to go.

This part of the climb is through a forest, and the trees provide some shelter from the sun and wind, but it's here that the gradient is at its most savage. It averages ten per cent and every metre is an effort. At each corner I slap at my levers in a futile attempt to find an easier gear, but I'm out of options.

I have to resist the urge to rush for the summit. If this were a British hill I'd attack it hard in the knowledge that it would level out after a short distance. But Britain doesn't have any hills like Ventoux. The height gain from base to summit is more than Ben Nevis, Britain's highest mountain, which stands at a mere 1,344m.

I keep reminding myself to cycle within my limits and not try to fight the mountain. Even the fittest man in world came a cropper when he tried to take on 'The Giant'. In 1970 Eddy Merckx, renowned as the greatest cyclist who ever lived, tore away from the peloton on an epic solo ride up

Mont Ventoux. He won the stage but collapsed unconscious at the finish line on the summit and required an oxygen mask to help him recover.

As I crawl up the mountainside, the names of more recent Tour riders slip past, painted on to the road. There's Cavendish and Schleck and Sastre and, of course, Lance. At one point I cycle over a giant Union flag inscribed with 'Go Brad!'. This gives me a small boost, until a little further up the road when I pass a giant picture of a snail, which seems depressingly apt.

By now, sweat and sun cream are dripping into my eyes and stinging badly, while the sweat on my hands makes gripping the handlebars difficult. I get shouts of encouragement from Mears and Stone at the roadside, but my only response is a breathless grunt.

The speed monitor on my handlebars makes disheartening reading. At best I'm averaging 10km/h, while at times it slips to as little as 5km/h when the gradient gets really severe. But I'm also catching up with other riders on the road. It's the perfect motivation – seeing a rider ahead and slowly reeling them in and passing them as we both gasp for breath.

I manage a cheery hello to everyone I pass. The Americans and Germans all smile and say hi, but some riders ignore me and keep a steely gaze on the road ahead. They're the French.

Man on the moon

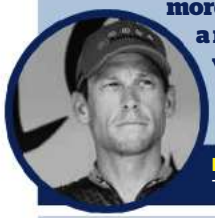
At kilometre 15, past the Chalet Reynard café, everything changes. The trees disappear and I emerge into a barren, lunar landscape. There is no greenery, just rocks and an unobstructed view of the summit ahead of me. Up here the air is a bit thinner and the sun glares off the stones. Ventoux is notorious for its strong gales that can lift a cyclist from his bike, but thankfully the winds are quite light today.

The gradient eases slightly for a kilometre or two, but then steepens again to around eight or nine per cent for the final grind to the top. I've been going upwards for over an hour and a half now (the record time for climbing Ventoux from Bédoin is 55min 51sec, set by Spaniard Ibán Mayo in 2004) and I can clearly see the summit building, but it doesn't seem to be getting any closer. Again I resist the

Ventoux venting

Mont Ventoux has tested far more celebrated cyclists than *MF*. Here's what they think of it

'Nineteen hundred metres up there is completely different from 1,900 any place else. There's no air, there's no oxygen. There's no vegetation, there's no life. There's no life. Rocks. Any other climb, there's vegetation, grass and trees. Not there on Ventoux. It's more like the moon than a mountain... It's just a very weird place. It's the hardest climb in the Tour, bar none.'



Lance Armstrong Seven-time Tour de France winner, 2000

'Ventoux is a god of evil, to which sacrifices must be made. It never forgives weakness and extracts an unfair tribute of suffering.'

Roland Barthes French philosopher and cycling enthusiast

'It's like another world up there among the bare rocks and the glaring sun... I had to wring out my socks because the sweat was running into my shoes.'

Tom Simpson British pro cyclist, describes an ascent in 1965

'Ferdi has killed himself on the Ventoux.'

Ferdi Kübler The Swiss pro and Tour winner announced his retirement in 1955 after a brutal day on the mountain

Dyed in the wool

The bike world has gone all misty-eyed and nostalgic of late, and gear fans are trading in their gaudy polyester tops for vintage-style wool jerseys that reflect the 1950s and 1960s heyday of cycling. Here are three of the best

De Marchi Vintage Wool Jersey £74.99
De Marchi was making jerseys for world champions back in the day, so when the trend for wool jerseys returned it simply revived its old patterns and materials to make a range of national jerseys that are a little slice of cycling history.
evanscycles.com or email info@2pure.co.uk

Rapha Country Jersey £100
Made from super-fine merino wool, this jersey is as technical as it is traditional. The material is high wicking for temperature regulation, while the understated motif on the sleeve hints at the country each jersey represents (this is the Great Britain one).
rapha.cc

Vintage Velos Woolistic Team Jersey US$138 (£88)
Vintage Velos has scoured the cycling history books to find the most stylish, eye-catching and memorable jerseys to replicate. Classics include a Molteni jersey worn by Eddy Merckx in the 1970s and this one from Belgian team Wiel's Beer from the 1960s.
vintagevelos.com

Perfect storm of cycling

It's not the biggest or the steepest mountain, but a combination of factors makes Ventoux the toughest

WIND
The name is derived from the Latin for 'windy' and wind speeds have been recorded at 320km/h on the Giant of Provence. It can be a struggle just to stay upright.

CLIMATE
In summer the sun bounces off the white rocks, making the upper slopes like an oven, while in winter the temperature plummets in the mistral winds.

ALTITUDE
From the town of Bédoin you climb 1,610m to the top at 1,909m, a height at which acute mountain sickness (AMS) can kick in.

GRADIENT
It's not that Mont Ventoux is especially steep – 11 per cent at most – but it's relentless. For 22km the mountain doesn't give you a moment's break.

As the weather station at the peak comes into view, Pete resists the urge to sprint

For video footage of *MF*'s breakneck descent of Mont Ventoux, go to mensfitness.co.uk/links/ventoux

temptation to put in a final sprint, knowing that the last 3km could still break me if I stretch my limits, so I keep my head down and maintain a steady rhythm.

By now my legs feel shot and the lining of my helmet is soaked in sweat. But I feel great. I know I'm going to make the summit, the view is incredible and I'm really enjoying myself on this amazing hill. I'm still grinning to myself when I look up and see the stone memorial sitting by the roadside just in front of me. I've arrived at the spot where Simpson died from exhaustion 43 years earlier.

'One last steep twist in the road brings me to the summit'

I climb off my bike, thankful for the break even this close to the summit, and pay my respects. Like thousands before me, I pull an empty water bottle from its holder and lay it on the memorial for Tom. I only pause there for a moment; I've got my own battle with the mountain still to complete.

Join the club

The final kilometre is steep and slow. I puff and grind at the pedals, clawing my way up the summit slopes while my mind keeps wandering to video footage of the 2000 Tour de France, when Lance Armstrong and Marco Pantani did battle on this stretch of road.

It was the speed that was amazing. They would glare at each other, then one of them would accelerate away like a bullet, chased by the other, all the way to the line – darting around as though they were on a flat track instead of a ten per cent gradient at the top of a 22km climb.

I may be on the same route as them but I'm no closer to understanding what it takes to compete at that level. Not that it matters, because one last steep twist in the road brings me to the summit, where a gaggle of excited cyclists are taking photos of each other against the magnificent backdrop of the Ventoux vista.

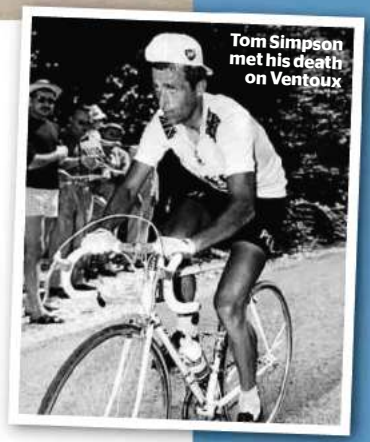
I stop and pull myself stiffly from my bike and take in the view. I know I'm not any nearer to the world of the elite cyclist than when I started, but at least now I can add my name to an exclusive club of riders – those who have conquered Ventoux.

The feeling is special, but it's outweighed by an even more pleasant thought. Now I get to ride the slopes of Ventoux all over again, only this time it's downhill all the way. MF

Greenrock is running three-day cycle trips to Mont Ventoux from 29th October and 5th November 2010, and *Men's Fitness* readers are eligible for a £50 discount off the price. For details of this and other Greenrock trips go to greenrock.co.uk or call 020 8133 1134. For information about next year's Race Across Europe, go to theraceacrosseurope.com

The Death of Mr Tom

In 1967, Tom Simpson, a 29-year-old from Durham, had a genuine chance of winning the Tour de France. In 1962 he'd become the first Briton to wear the yellow jersey during the Tour, and he'd gained acceptance within the close-knit Continental cycling community, who dubbed him 'Mr Tom'. He was respected by his peers for his ability to push himself to the limits of endurance. It was a talent that was to prove fatal.



Tom Simpson met his death on Ventoux

On 13th July 1967, the temperature on the slopes of Mont Ventoux hit 45°C. Simpson was already dehydrated owing to a race regulation that limited the amount of water riders could take, and he compounded the problem by drinking brandy in an attempt to settle an upset stomach. As was common among cyclists back then, Simpson had also taken amphetamines to boost his performance.

As he approached the final few kilometres of the climb, Simpson began to swerve around the road. Spectators held him up and egged him on until eventually he fell. He was lifted back onto his bike and managed a few more metres before collapsing.

While race organisers struggled to save him, Simpson is alleged to have begged them to 'put me back on my bike'. He was taken to hospital by helicopter and pronounced dead on arrival. Today cyclists pay tribute to Mr Tom, who remains for many the greatest cyclist Britain ever produced, at the spot where he fell.

Photography Getty, PA

YOUR RACE FUEL EXPERTS

How USN is taking race nutrition, and your performance, to a new level

Wouldn't it be great if when you turned up to a race you got the same sort of nutritional support as a professional athlete? Well, with USN's new mobile tasting and educational unit you can get access to expert advice that will help improve your performance. This year the unit has been stationed at endurance races around the country, including last month's *Men's Fitness* Tough Tracks event.

At every event USN's staff have been on hand to advise racers about the best pre-race, mid-race and post-race products they should be using to beat their personal bests. USN has an impressive muscle-building product heritage and now it has an equally effective range of supplements aimed at endurance athletes.

USN has also made samples available and offered generous discounts on the same products that have powered long-distance triathletes Lisa Picton, Kent Horner and Burry Stander, all of whom use the USN products in the panel below – where you'll find plenty of information on optimum race fuel strategy.

Graham Wadsworth Tough Tracks advanced duathlon winner

Perfect race fuel

Use these products at the right time to help bag yourself a personal best

USN ULTIMATE SPORTS NUTRITION

PRE-RACE

Endurosport

If you want to perform at your best it's vital to carb-load before the event so you have a ready supply of energy from the start. Created with the latest nutrition research in mind, Endurosport has the optimum blend of complex carbohydrates to give your body easily accessible fuel.

MID-RACE

Vooma Gel

For races that last less than three hours, using Vooma Gel is the ideal way of making sure your energy levels don't drop. The great-tasting gel provides and easy to digest top-up for when the body's natural energy levels have been depleted.

Cyto Gel

For races that last more than three hours, Cyto Gel will make sure you have the energy to get through the toughest of endurance challenges. It replenishes electrolytes and minerals as well as helping to prevent the onset and discomfort of muscle breakdown.

POST-RACE

Recover Xcell

Recovering quickly after a race means you can enjoy your achievement and get back to training as soon as possible. Recover Xcell contains a perfectly balanced combination of carbohydrates, amino acids and electrolytes for a fast recharge.

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EatFit

Quick tip
If you're in a hurry, use rolled oats – they're quicker to cook than chopped ones

Power porridge

Get your oats and you'll get a mighty fitness meal – and it's even better with these easy improvements

When you're trying to get out of the door in the morning, breakfast might seem like something you can do without – but the the morning meal is vital for fuelling your daily activities and even more helpful if you're trying to lose fat.

Porridge is an ideal breakfast, combining protein and fibre with low-GI carbs, which are released into your bloodstream slowly and will sustain your energy levels throughout the morning. The fibre will fill you up, enabling you to resist the temptations of the biscuit tin.

Blueberries
How much? A handful
Skip the sugar and sweeten your porridge with fresh blueberries. These are high in vitamin C and antioxidants that can help lower cortisol, the stress hormone produced by intense training sessions that can cause you to store fat.

Walnuts
How much? A handful
Add flavour and a crunchy texture with walnuts – they're high in protein, low GI and a good source of monounsaturated fats, which increase energy levels and reduce muscle inflammation.

Agave nectar
How much? A drizzle
Produced from the agave cactus, this syrup is sweeter than sugar but has a lower GI value. It provides vitality and flavour, without the sudden spike and subsequent crash in energy levels.

Low-fat yoghurt
How much? A dollop
Yoghurt delivers muscle-friendly protein as well as vitamin B12, which helps your body absorb energy from food. Its calcium content will help build strong bones.

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The baguette that builds solid muscle

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Chocolate milk is an ideal post-workout drink. We find the best

108 Fat Loss
Why drinking green tea can help shrink your waistline

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Soups that boost your health and help you burn fat

Muscle-building baguette

This tasty French stick will refuel a weary body and help you pack on serious muscle

To build muscle, you must not only eat the right foods, but you must also eat them at the right times. After a workout, you need to refuel your body with plenty of protein and creatine, which are both found in this sandwich.

What you will need

12cm of **white baguette**
2 slices of **thick pork**
1 sliced **tomato**
1tsp **mustard**
Handful of **spinach**

What you will get

White baguette
Immediately after exercise, your body is crying out for nutrients to fuel muscle recovery. One of the quickest sources is white bread. This is high in fast-digesting carbs, which will replenish your muscle and glycogen stores quickly.

Pork
Rich in protein and creatine, pork is an excellent post-workout choice. It's leaner than beef and provides essential nutrients such as niacin, which helps release energy from digested food. It will also help you maintain consistent blood glucose levels, so you feel fuller for longer.

Mustard
Mustard doesn't just make your food taste better – it improves digestion by increasing the flow of digestive juices to the stomach, too. It will also increase blood circulation to tired muscles.

Spinach
Spinach helps convert the calories from carbs and protein into energy thanks to a healthy dose of the B vitamin riboflavin. It is also full of iron, which maintains energy levels.

Tomato
The vitamin C in tomatoes aids absorption of the iron from the spinach. It's also an antioxidant that protects muscle cells from free radical damage, enhancing growth.

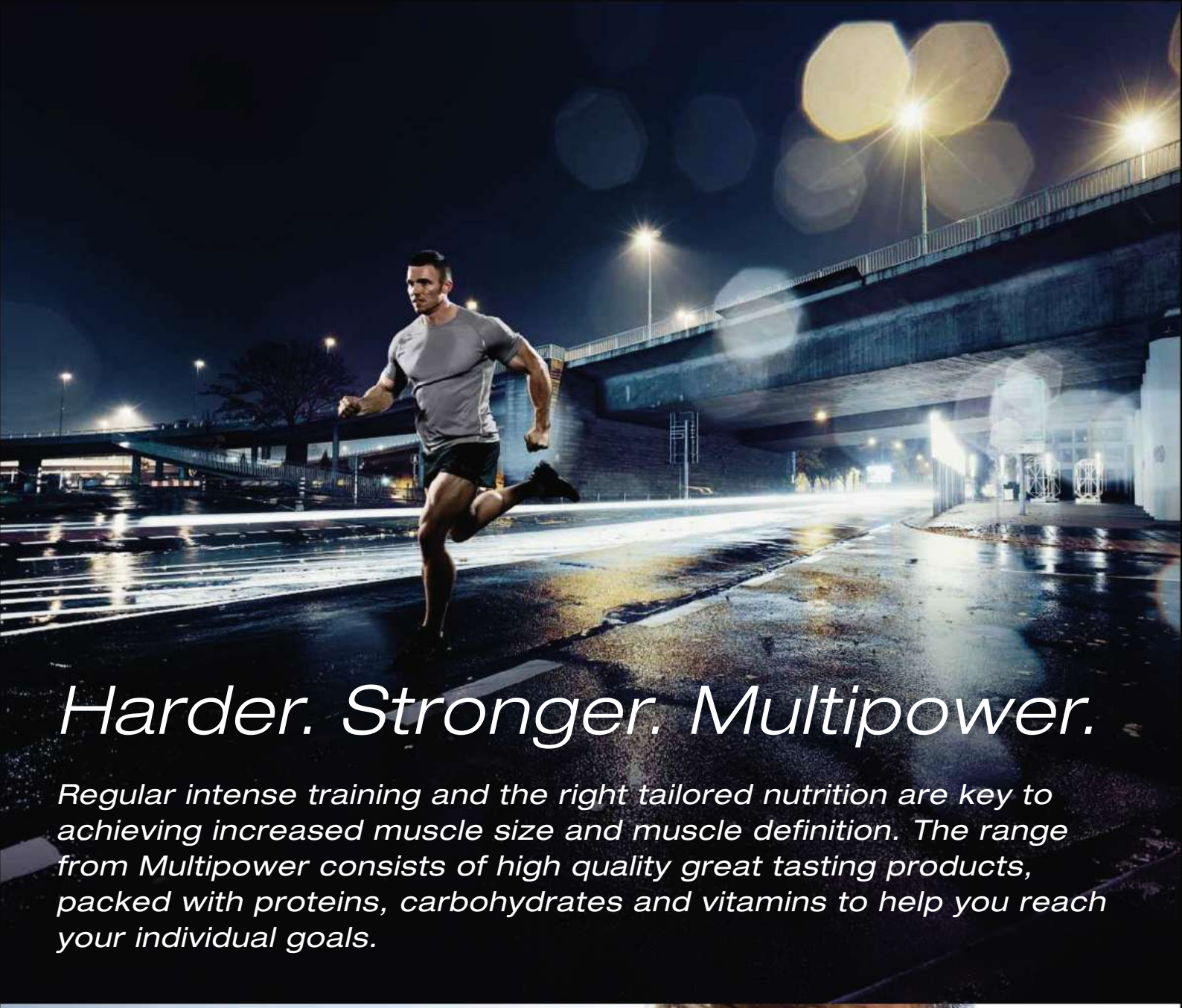
What supp? Your sports supplement questions answered

Q What's the difference between whey protein and casein protein?

A Almost everyone who's ever lifted a weight knows that protein is important for muscle repair and growth, but there are various types available so it's just as important to know the difference, which you should take and when. The two most common kinds are whey protein and casein protein. 'Whey is called a "fast-release" protein because it is rapidly absorbed into the bloodstream,' says nutritionist and personal trainer Anna Marsh (goodfoodtherapy.com). 'Casein, on the other hand, is a "slow-release" protein because it releases its nutrients more steadily. It provides a steady trickle of protein into the bloodstream, which makes it an excellent night-time supplement. Whey is best taken before and after workouts for a quick delivery of fuel to your muscles and to encourage recovery and growth.'

For more muscle-building sandwiches go to **mensfitness.co.uk/links/breadybuilders**

Words Lucy Miller **Photography** packshotsolutions.com, Danny Bird



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Milky whey

Chocolate milk is a great post-gym recovery drink. We put the market leaders to a taste test

If you're in need of a quick post-workout recovery snack, look no further than chocolate milk. Drinking the tea-time classic after a gym session can speed up muscle recovery thanks to its combination of whey and casein protein, according to a study from James Madison University in the US. Whey is fast-acting, allowing amino acids to get right into the muscle tissue, while casein is digested more slowly, providing a steady stream of amino acids over time. Its 4:1 carbohydrate to protein ratio is also ideal for promoting muscle glycogen synthesis.

Which chocolate milk tastes the best?

Alpro

This soya shake from Alpro has a slightly bitter aftertaste.
3.3g protein per 100ml
9.1g sugar per 100ml

£1.52 for 1L
alprosoya.co.uk

Frijj

Protein-packed and tasty, but too thick to be an ideal post-gym drink.
3.9g protein per 100ml
11.4g sugar per 100ml

£1.18 for 500ml
frijj.co.uk

Best in test

Yazoo

A great-tasting milkshake from Yazoo with no serious drawbacks.
3.3g protein per 100ml
9.4g sugar per 100ml

56p for 500ml
yazoo.co.uk

So Good

Made with soya milk, this tasty shake is low in both sugar and protein.
2.5g protein per 100ml
9.0g sugar per 100ml

99p for 1L
sogood.co.uk

Mars Refuel

High sugar levels give this milkshake a sweet, slightly sickly flavour.
Protein **3.1 per 100ml**
Sugar **13.7 per 100ml**

£1 for 388ml
marsrefuel.com

Fit kitchen

Cuisinart Soup Maker

This device has an internal heater that blends, pulses and cooks fresh hot soup in 20 minutes. All you need to do is chuck in the ingredients and flick the switch. Brilliant for making our healthy soups on p110, it can also be used as a regular blender for protein shakes, dressings and dips.
£138.99 lakeland.co.uk

Cupboard essential

Quinoa

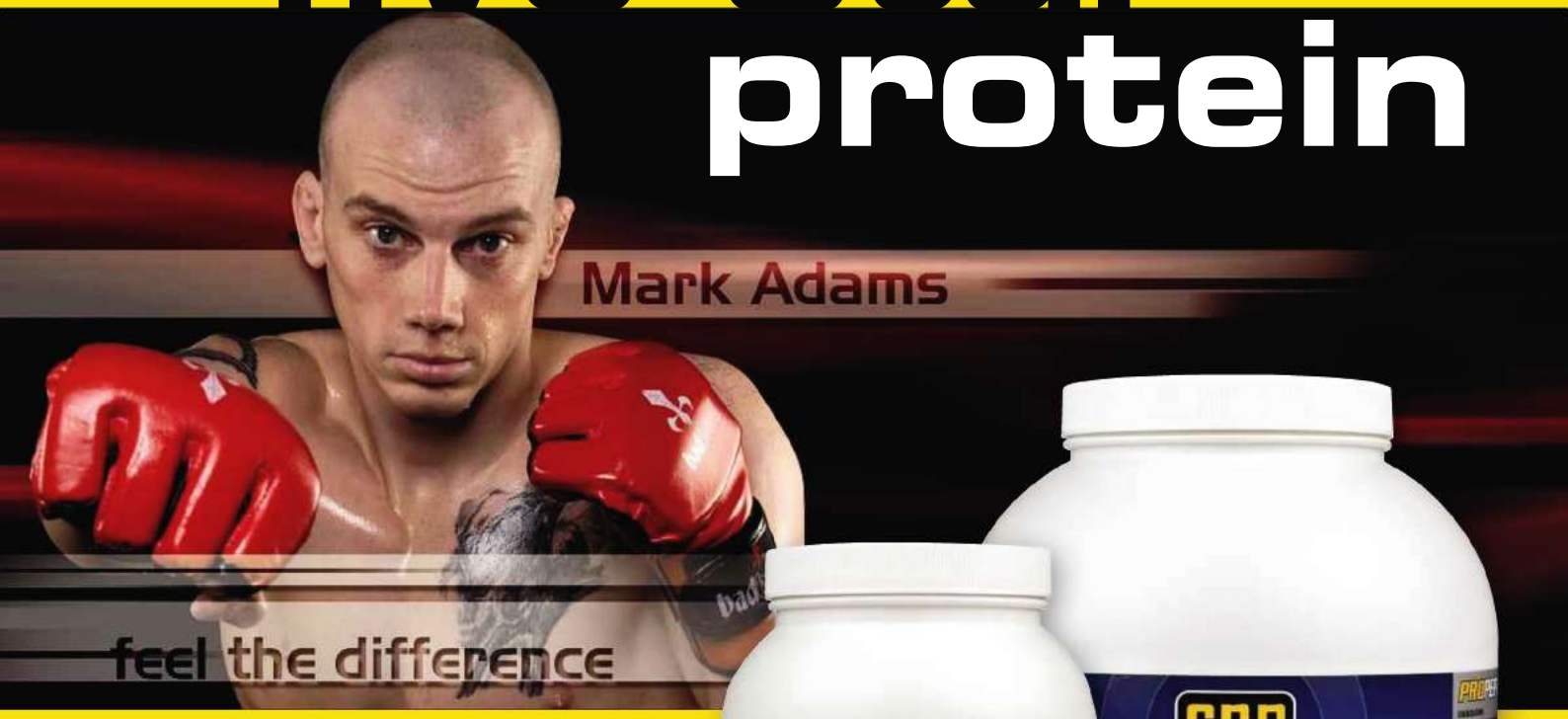
This flavourful seed is high in protein, fibre and B vitamins

Quinoa may not be as common in kitchen cupboards as basmati rice but it should be. The cereal-like South American seed has a nutty flavour and is highly versatile: you can use it instead of rice or pasta in hot or cold dishes, add it to soup to make it healthy and hearty, stick it in muesli or even make a nutritious crust for salmon. It has about twice the protein of other cereal grains such as oats and barley, plus some healthy fats. It's a 'complete' protein, which means it contains all the amino acids your body needs to build muscle.

Quick tip Cook a big batch – it only takes 20 minutes – and store it in Tupperware in your fridge. You'll have a ready-to-eat side dish that goes with just about anything.

Words Lucy Miller, Ben Ince **Photography** Danny Bird, PSC Photography

five star protein



Pro-Peptide

advanced protein supplement

Pro Peptide is a protein powder containing a blend of bioactive fast and slow undenatured proteins, creating a steady release of amino acids into the blood stream that could aid muscle growth and repair whilst you train. Just mix with water and three scoops will provide 45g of our high quality protein blend.

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Top tip

Drink green tea, burn more fat

Simply drinking green tea can help you maximise the fat-burning benefit of your exercise. Research at the University of Birmingham found that men who took a green tea extract 24 hours before hitting the gym increased their fat-burning rates by 17 per cent. This is because **the tea is rich in catechins and caffeine and produces a thermogenic effect** which plays a vital role in the control of body composition. Previous studies have also credited the green stuff with the ability to reduce appetite as well as lower bad cholesterol levels, so it's a must for anyone who is trying to shed fat.

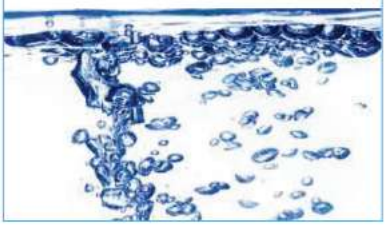
Nutrition Q&A

Dr Sarah Schenker is a nutritionist at the British Nutrition Foundation and an accredited sports dietician.

Q I've heard that drinking plenty of water is good for fat loss. Why is that?

A Water helps you regulate your appetite. Staying well hydrated means you are less likely to reach for high-calorie snacks when all you needed was a drink. Also, downing a glass of water before a main meal can control how much you subsequently eat because it promotes the feeling of fullness so you don't automatically reach for seconds.

Finally, staying well-hydrated means you can perform better physically when exercising, so you can get more out of your fat loss sessions. Remember that what we think of as hunger pangs – the stomach rumbles – aren't always a signal that you need food; they often mean that you are thirsty.



Creamy banana smoothie

A satisfying snack that boosts your fat burning

What you will need

- ½ a frozen **banana** (freeze slices of peeled banana)
- 1tbsp **flaxseeds**
- 2tbsp organic **peanut butter**
- 300ml **almond milk**
- 1 scoop of chocolate **protein powder**

Why you should drink it

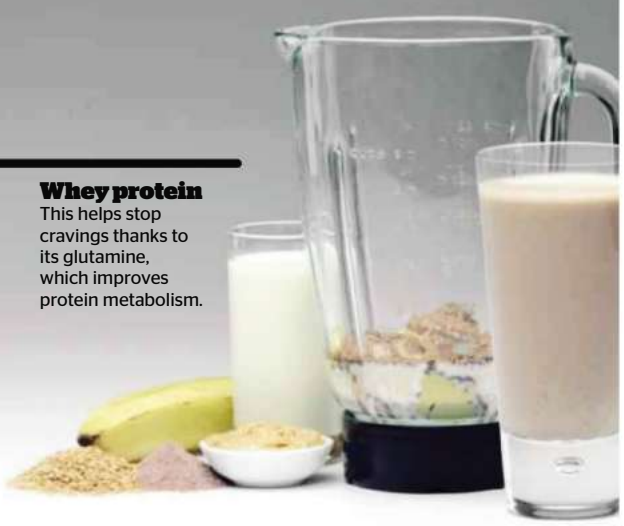
Banana
As well as making the smoothie deliciously creamy, the banana is full of vitamin B6, which lessens sugar and carb cravings.

Flaxseeds
A great source of alpha-linolenic acid, which helps the body process carbs rather than store them as fat. They're also rich in gut-filling fibre.

Peanut butter
With lots of healthy fats and protein, peanut butter can help you feel full and reduce your overall calorie intake.

Almond milk
As well as joint-friendly monounsaturated fat, almond milk falls low on the glycaemic index, which makes it easily digestible and satisfying.

Whey protein
This helps stop cravings thanks to its glutamine, which improves protein metabolism.



Try the other tasty fat loss smoothies you'll find at **mensfitness.co.uk/links/smoothieoperator**

Words Lucy Miller **Photography** Tom Miles, foodanddrinkphotography.com **Model** Peter Sheath@MOT

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Souped up

Simple, hearty and bursting with health benefits, these tasty soups are almost as easy to make as they are to eat

Immunity-boosting soup

Cress and chorizo

Ingredients

- 10g unsalted **butter**
- 150g **chorizo sausage**, finely sliced
- 1 **onion**, finely sliced
- 1 large **garlic** clove, crushed and finely chopped
- 1 heaped tbsp **flour**
- 1l **vegetable stock**
- 1 large bunch of **watercress**, thick stems removed
- 350ml **crème fraîche**

To make

Melt the butter in a saucepan and gently fry the sausage for around ten minutes, then set aside. Add the onion and garlic and sauté, stirring, until soft and golden. Add the flour, stir and cook for two minutes, still stirring. Pour in the stock and bring to boil. Add the cress and crème fraîche, stir and simmer for two minutes.

Blend in a food processor or using a hand blender until smooth. Stir in the sausage, leave off the heat for two minutes, then serve.

Onions
contain quercetin, which works with vitamin C to help kill harmful bacteria, allowing you to fight off colds and flu.

Watercress
contains lots of phytochemicals, which are known for their anti-cancer and immunity-boosting properties.

Garlic
is rich in a variety of sulphur-containing compounds that have powerful antibacterial and antiviral properties.

Photography packshotfactory.co.uk **Food styling** Georgie Besterman
Recipes taken from *Super Duper Soups* by Michael van Straten

There's a tasty post-workout recovery soup at **mensfitness.co.uk/links/souper**

Good mood soup

Spiced lettuce with goat's cheese

Ingredients

- 25g unsalted **butter**
- 1 **onion,** finely chopped
- 1 **garlic clove**, crushed and finely chopped
- 1tsp ground **cumin**
- 1 small **green pepper**, deseeded and very finely chopped
- 1 large **lettuce**, roughly shredded
- 1.5l **vegetable stock**
- 150g soft **goat's cheese**, finely diced

To make

Melt the butter in a large saucepan and sauté the onions and garlic for five minutes. Sprinkle in the cumin, stir thoroughly and cook for two more minutes. Add the pepper, lettuce and stock and simmer for five minutes.

Blend in a food processor or using a hand blender until smooth, then return to the saucepan to heat through. Scatter the cheese on top and serve hot.

Lettuce
provides chemicals that help you to relax, as well as immune system-boosting vitamin C and betacarotene.

Goat's cheese
is rich in protein and is also a good source of tryptophan, a key good mood nutrient.

Cumin
stimulates the secretion of pancreatic enzymes, which are necessary for proper digestion and nutrient assimilation.

Weight loss soup

Bulgarian chicken and yoghurt

Ingredients

- 50g unsalted **butter**
- 1 **onion**, finely chopped
- 1 **leek**, finely chopped
- 3 **new potatoes**, finely cubed
- 2 **celery sticks**, finely diced
- 1 **carrot**, trimmed, peeled and finely cubed
- 2 skinless **chicken breasts**, cut into strips
- 1.5l **chicken stock**
- Handful of flat-leaf **parsley**, chopped
- 4tbsp **fat-free Greek yoghurt**

To make

Heat the butter in a large saucepan and sauté the onions and leeks until soft. Add the rest of the vegetables and the chicken strips and continue cooking, stirring constantly for around five minutes until the chicken is browned on all sides.

Add the stock and parsley and simmer for about 20 minutes or until the vegetables and chicken are cooked through and tender. Serve with a spoonful of yoghurt in each bowl.

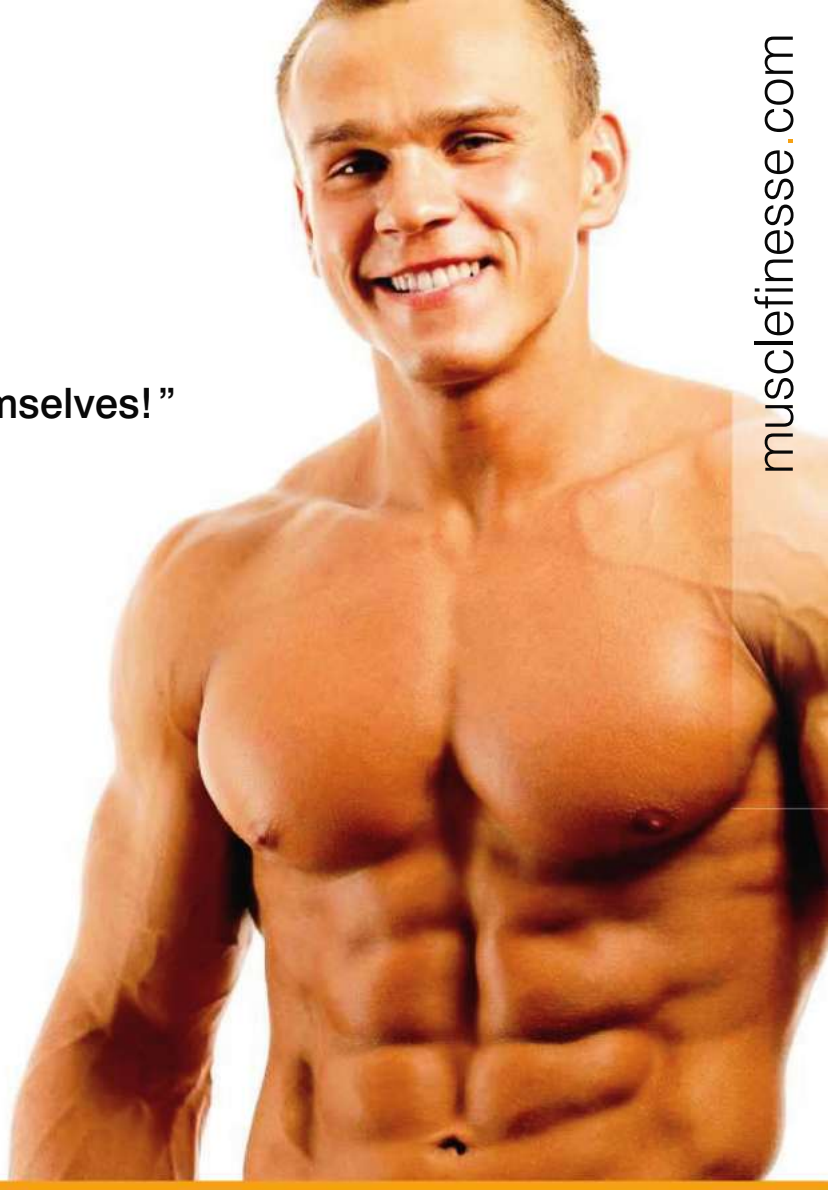
Chicken
is a rich source of protein which is slow-digesting and will help you feel full for longer and resist the urge to snack.

Greek yoghurt
is low-GI, which helps to keep blood sugar levels steady, maintaining energy and putting an end to sugar cravings.

Celery
lowers cholesterol by increasing bile acid secretion, which helps to lower the risk of strokes and heart attacks.

musclefinesse.com

"I look after my body and
thanks to Muscle Finesse
the pounds look after themselves!"



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Trainer

Edited by Lucy Miller

Making your best even better

Tip of the month

Explosive warm-ups build more strength

Your standard warm-up might be five minutes on the treadmill, but **performing an explosive exercise is the best way to achieve a new one-rep max** according to research from the University of Massachusetts.

Study subjects who warmed up with depth jumps – jumping down from a 43cm platform and then jumping up forwards onto a similar platform – squatted an average of 4.9kg more than those who warmed up with stretches and an exercise bike ride.

This is because explosive movements fire up the nervous system and recruit high-threshold muscle fibres, so when you do a static squat your body is geared up for a huge workload and able to lift more weight.

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Photography Duncan Nicholls **Model** Richard Scriver@WAthletic **Illustration** Oliver Burston

ACE OF CLUBS

Power Clubs are set to be the next big training tool. Use these moves from the UK's leading clubs expert to harness their huge strength-building potential

After being ignored as serious fitness equipment for the past few decades, clubs (as in weighted bats, not nightspots) are making a comeback. That's good news for anyone who wants to build a body that both looks strong and actually is strong, because clubs are excellent for building powerful shoulders and a functional physique.

To help you look like you're leading the revival we've enlisted the UK's top clubs expert, Ben McDonald from Premier Training International, to outline the basic moves. 'Clubs are great for improving wrist, elbow and shoulder girdle strength and mobility,' says McDonald. 'The increase in grip strength is also phenomenal. That's important because whenever you lift anything you're only as strong as your weakest link, which is often your grip.'

Doing the workouts

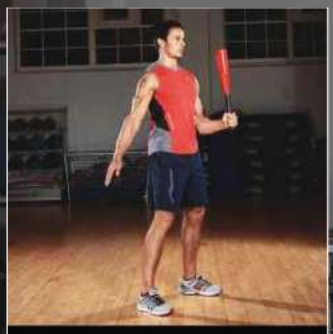
There are three workouts in this plan, starting with Level 1, which is designed to get you used to using clubs. Level 2 moves up a stage in difficulty while Level 3 is a demanding set of exercises that get you moving in circular, flowing patterns. Each set of exercises in Level 3 works a different plane of movement (frontal, sagittal and transverse), so you get a complete training effect. You can also slot moves into your usual workouts to improve joint mobility.

This month's trainer
Ben McDonald

Ben McDonald is a lecturer with top fitness industry training body Premier Training International – he wrote the manual for Premier's Power Club course. He has been a personal trainer for six years, as well as competing in aikido, board diving, fencing and boxing events, and coaching mixed martial artists and track and field athletes.

Basic club positions

Shoulder park position
Rest the club on your traps with your hands below shoulder level.



Order position
Hold the club vertically with your elbow bent at 90° and tucked in to your side.

Flag position
Hold the club vertically with your arm outstretched.

Leverage position
Hold the club angled towards you with arms outstretched and raised slightly.

Torch position
Hold the club vertically with your arm raised vertically.

Choosing a club

Because the clubs are weighted at the end and turn your arm into a long lever, you need to use a lighter weight than normal. Here's a realistic guide that will allow you to perform the moves with good form.

Your strength	Weight
Average	4-6kg
Strong	6-8kg
Super-strong	10kg+

Power Clubs are available from Wolverson Fitness **wolverson-fitness.co.uk**

Turn over for your Power Club workouts

Power Clubs Level 1

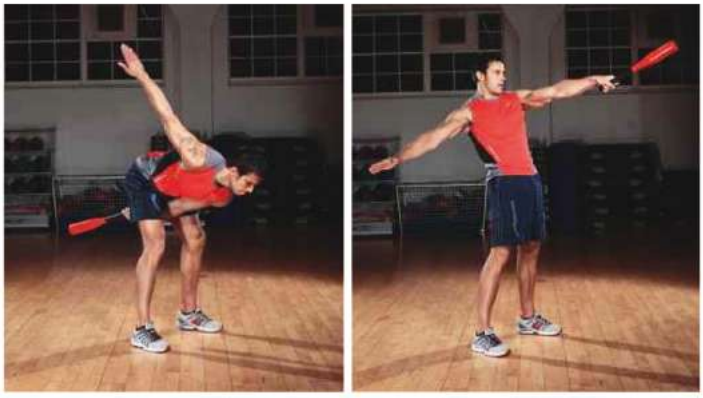
Do these moves so you get used to the clubs

Sets 2 (one each side for one-sided moves) Reps 20 Rest 60 seconds

1 Shoulder park squat

Target **Quads, hamstring, glutes**

Start with the clubs in the shoulder park position, then lower into a squat until your thighs are parallel to the floor, making sure your knees stay in line with your toes. Push back up powerfully through your heels.



2 Inside leg swing

Target **Hamstrings, glutes, lower back, shoulders**

Start in the order position, then let the club fall and swing between your legs. Bend at the hips as the club swings behind you, then drive through your heels and snap your hips forward. Use momentum to swing the club up to just above shoulder height.

3 Frontal shoulder park lunge

Target **Quads, hamstring, glutes**

Start with the club in the shoulder park position, then lunge to the opposite side, making sure your trailing leg is straight and your bent knee tracks over your toes. Drive back up to the start, keeping your torso upright throughout the move.

4 Sagittal arm cast

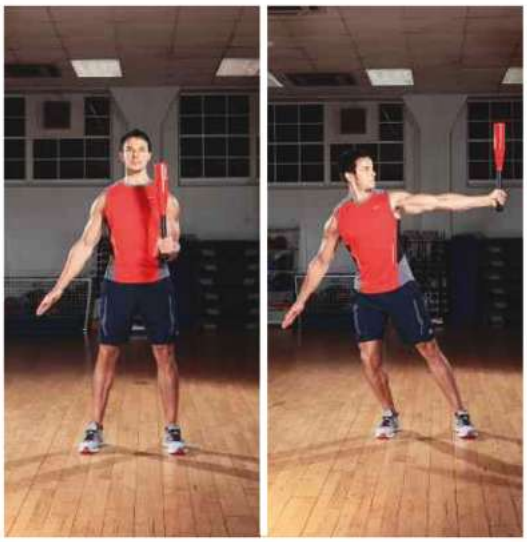
Target **Shoulders, lats, biceps, triceps**

Start in the order position, then send the club over your shoulder and behind your back until your upper arm is parallel to the floor. Draw your arm forwards to reverse the movement back to the start.

5 Torch press

Target **Shoulders, traps, triceps**

Start in the order position, then press the club directly upwards so both your arm and the club are vertical.



6 Frontal flag press

Target **Shoulders, triceps, quads**

Start in the order position, then press the club out to the side. As you move the club, counterbalance the weight by shifting your weight to your opposite leg while slightly bending your knee.

Turn over for your Level 2 workout

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Power Clubs Level 2

Do these moves in order for a whole-body workout

Rest for 45 seconds between sets and 45 seconds between exercises

1 Double outside leg swing

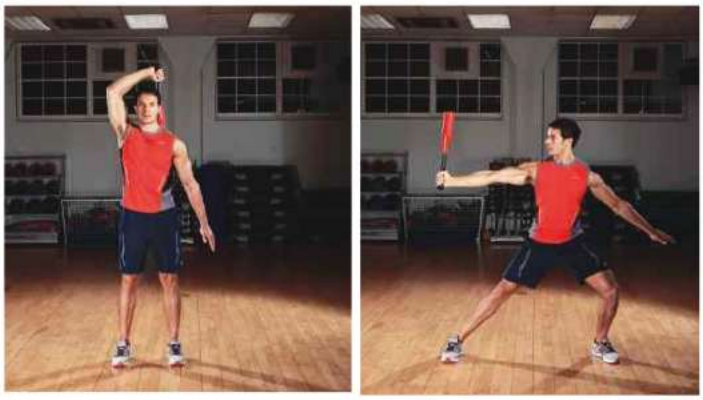
Sets 3 Reps 15
Target Quads, hamstrings, glutes, lower back, shoulders

Start in the order position with your feet close together, then let the clubs fall and swing outside your legs. Bend at the hips as the clubs swing, then drive through your heels and snap your hips forwards. Use momentum to swing the clubs up to just above shoulder height.

2 Double shoulder park squat to leverage press

Sets 3 Reps 15
Target Quads, hamstrings, glutes, shoulders, forearms

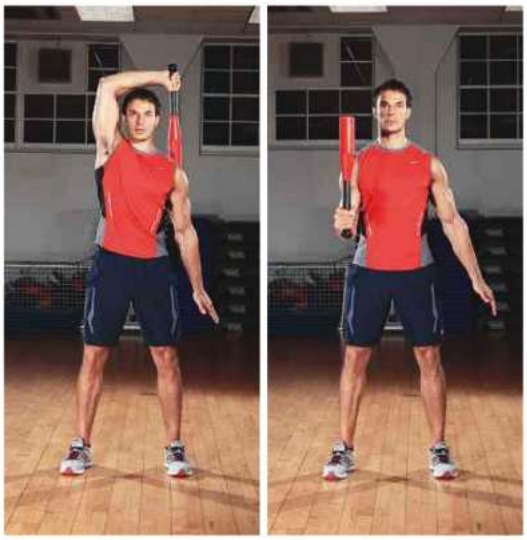
Start in the shoulder park position, then squat down until your thighs are parallel to the floor and your knees are in line with your toes. Straighten your legs and simultaneously extend your arms into the leverage position.



3 Frontal lunge with opposite frontal arm cast

Sets 2 each side Reps 15
Target Quads, hamstrings, glutes, lats, triceps

Start in the order position then send the club behind your back. Lunge to one side then simultaneously extend your arm out to the opposite side until the club is vertical.



4 Transverse arm cast

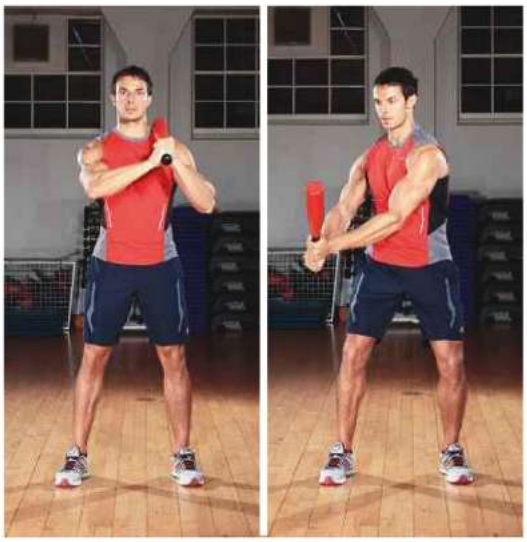
Sets 2 each side
Reps 15
Target Shoulders, lats, biceps, triceps

Start in the order position, then send the club over your opposite shoulder and down your back. Rotate your shoulder to bring the club behind the same shoulder, before drawing it forwards and back to the order position.

5 Sword cast

Sets 2 Reps 15
Target Shoulders, lats, biceps, triceps, abs

Start in a flag position, gripping the club with both hands, then send the club over your head and down your back. Quickly drive the arms forwards to bring the club back to the starting position.



6 Shoulder park to club woodchop

Sets 2 each side
Reps 15
Target Shoulders, lats, triceps, obliques

Start in a two-hand shoulder park position with feet shoulder-width apart. Extend your elbows to draw the club down in an arc until it is outside your opposite leg.

Turn over for your Level 3 workout

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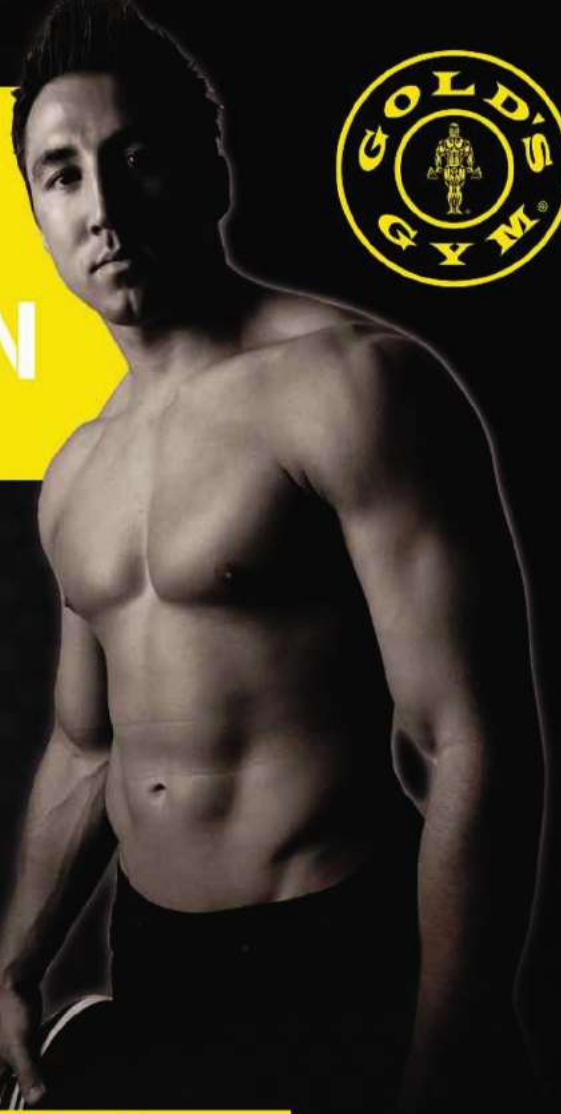

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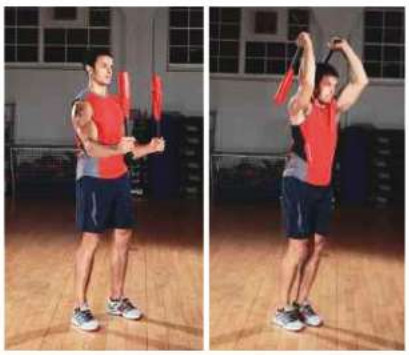
Power Clubs Level 3

Do each hybrid as a circuit, completing all your circuits before going on to the next hybrid

Hybrid 1 **Sagittal plane**
Circuits **4** Reps **12**

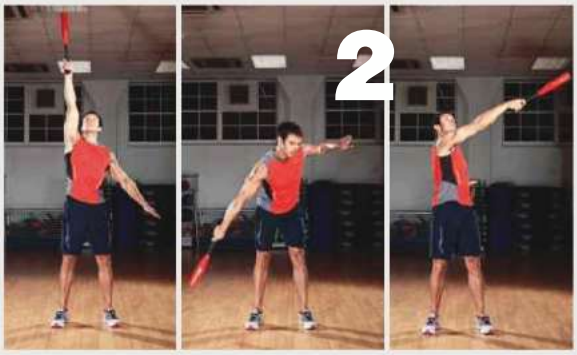
1a Shoulder park squat to torch press
Start with the clubs in the shoulder park position, then lower into a squat until your thighs are parallel to the floor, keeping your knees in line with your toes. Push back up powerfully through your heels as you press the clubs directly upwards so both arms and clubs are vertical.

1b Double outside leg swing
Start in the order position with your feet close together, then let the clubs fall and swing outside your legs. Bend at the hips as the clubs swing back, then drive through your heels and snap your hips forwards. Use the momentum to swing the clubs up to just above shoulder height.

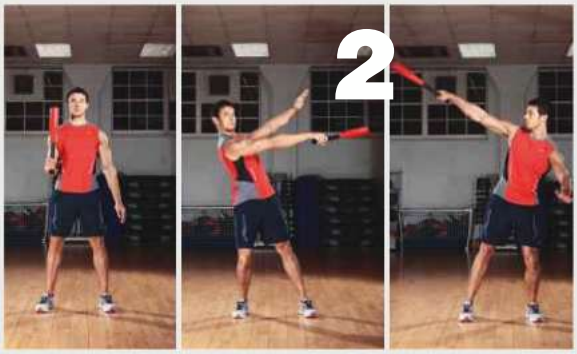


1c Double sagittal swipe
Start in the order position, then send the clubs behind your back. Bring the clubs forwards to the start position in a swift, powerful motion.

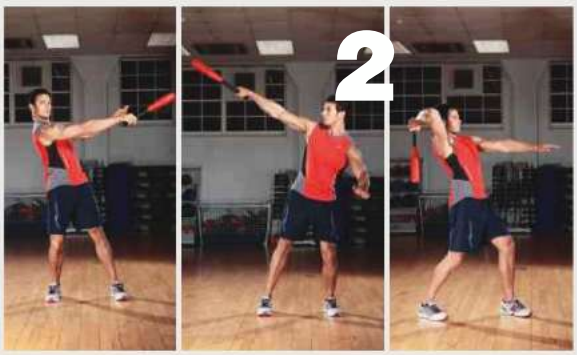
Hybrid 2 **Frontal plane**
Circuits **2** Reps **12**



2a Frontal circle
Start in a torch press position, then let the club fall down to the side with your arm straight. Swing the club round in a circle and start to decelerate when the club rises to shoulder height so you pause briefly at the top before repeating the move.

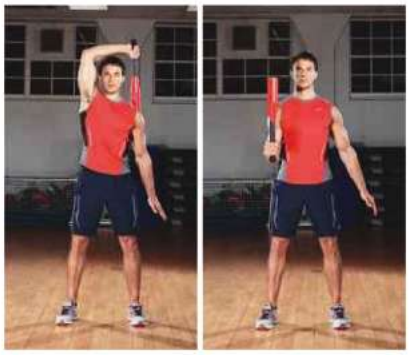


2b Inside frontal pendulum
Start in the order position and push the club out to the side across your body. Let the club fall and swing in an arc, using hip drive to aid momentum so that the club swings out to the side up above your shoulder.



2c Mill
Start in the order position and push the club out to the side across your body. Let it fall and swing in an arc, using hip drive to aid momentum so that the club swings out above your shoulder. When it reaches shoulder height, twist your body so it goes down behind your back, then quickly drive that arm forwards and return to the start.

Hybrid 3 **Transverse plane**
Circuits **2** Reps **12**



3a Transverse arm cast
Start in the order position, then send the club over your opposite shoulder and down your back. Rotate your shoulder to bring the club behind the same shoulder before drawing it forwards and back to the order position.

3b Inside transverse swing
Start in the order position and allow the club to swing outside your opposite leg. Use hip drive to swing the club up and across your chest with a straight arm until it's above your shoulder.

3c Single club baseball swing
Start with a double-handed grip with the club over your shoulder. Keeping your elbows high, swing the club across your chest and behind your opposite shoulder. Swing backwards and forwards in a powerful but controlled motion. MF

For extra moves to add to your Power Clubs workouts go to **mensfitness.co.uk/links/swingthesethings**

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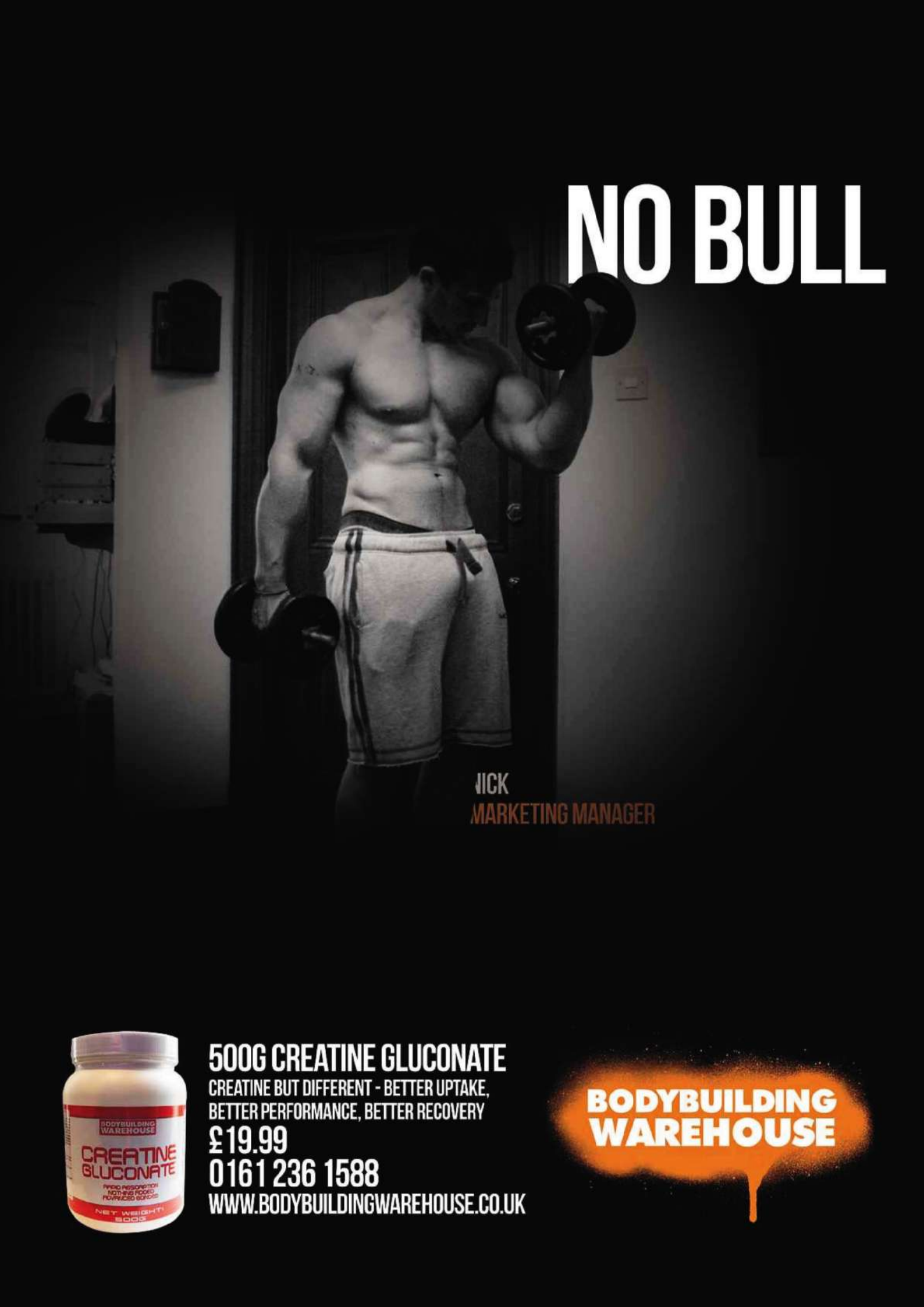

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TARGETS

Core, abs, lower back, glutes, hip flexors, quads, hamstrings

START

1 Split Romanian deadlift to rear flye
Reps **10** (alternating feet with each rep)

2 Dorsal raise with shoulder rotation
Reps **10** (hold the raised position for two seconds)

3 Side lunge woodchop
Reps **5** each side

4 Side bridge
Reps **5** each side

5 Lunge with rotation
Reps **10** (alternate sides)

FINISH

6 Glute bridge
Reps **10**

DO THIS

Level Beginner

Kit None (but a mat to lie on will help)

- Warm up with three minutes of press-ups, sprints and running on the spot
- Do exercises 1 to 6 in order, without resting, for one circuit
- Rest for one minute between circuits. Do three circuits.

Fit Note
To engage your core, tense your stomach as if you were about to take a punch

PERFECT FORM

1 Split Romanian deadlift to rear flye
Step forwards and lean over at the hips, letting your hands slide down your leg. At the lowest point, raise your arms out to the sides and squeeze your shoulder blades together.

2 Dorsal raise with shoulder rotation
Lie on the floor with your arms out to the sides, palms facing down. Lift your shoulders off the floor and twist your palms so your thumbs point to the ceiling.

3 Side lunge woodchop
Hold your hands together over one shoulder. Take a big step sideways, with both feet facing forwards, and lower on to your leading knee. At the same time, bring your arms down across your body.

4 Side bridge
Lie on your side with your elbow beneath your shoulder. Raise your hips until your body forms a straight line. Hold for a count of three then lower slowly.

5 Lunge with rotation
Step forwards into a lunge with your arms out in front of you. At the lowest point of the lunge, when both knees are at 90°, rotate your body to the same side as your leading leg.

6 Glute bridge
Lie on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat. Raise your hips until your body is straight from shoulders to knees. Hold for a count of three before lowering.

Words Pete Muir **Photography** Tom Miles **Model** Mark Hughes@WAthletic

For another 12-minute workout visit **mensfitness.co.uk/links/teabreaktraining**

Trainer tips

Pull-up

Raise your game with this upper-body muscle sculptor

'The pull-up is one of the hardest lifts because **you have to move your full bodyweight entirely and lift against gravity, which means the load on your muscles is very high**,' says Neil Odell, personal trainer and founder of Fit For My Day (fit4myday.com). 'The advantage of this multi-tasking move is that it will balance the pushing work you're doing, so you don't get that hunched look. But if you don't already have the shoulder girdle, grip, forearm and lat [back] strength, you may struggle to do enough reps to get maximum strength gains. Doing the exercises on the opposite page will give you the strength to perform enough pull-ups to build real muscle.'

TARGETS

Biceps, traps, rhomboids, lats

How to do it

- Grab the bar with an overhand grip and your hands slightly wider than shoulder-width apart, and start from a dead hang with your arms straight.
- Retract your shoulder blades, then pull your chin up to the bar. Pause at the top, then slowly lower your body back to the dead hang.

Chin-up or pull-up?
They're very similar moves, but the difference is that for a pull-up you use an overhand grip, while for a chin-up you use an underhand grip. The latter makes the move easier because the underhand grip recruits the biceps, providing more muscle power to pull yourself up.

Three moves to boost your pull-up

Bottoms-up kettlebell curl

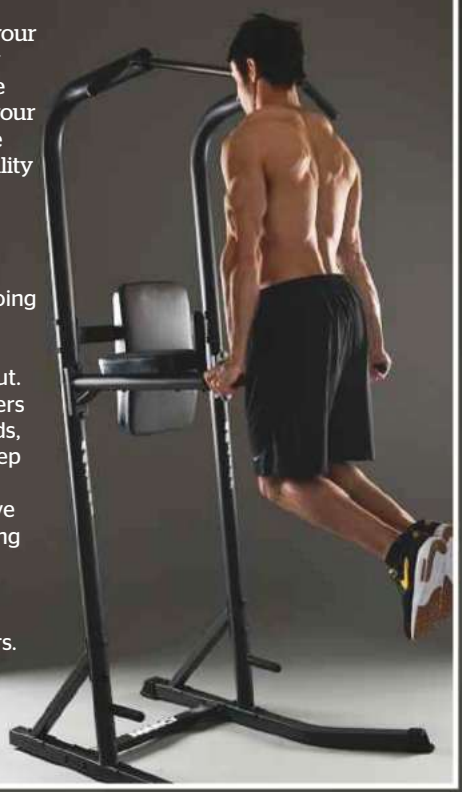
This exercise strengthens your grip because a kettlebell is harder to hold than a dumb-bell. The increased difficulty will strengthen your biceps and forearms so they don't tire before your back muscles do, which means your back can get the workout you're trying to give it.

How to do it

- Grip the kettlebell tightly and draw the weight up the centre of your body with your elbow bent and close to your body. Keep the kettlebell in line with your forearm.
- Squeeze the handle tightly, engage your core muscles and slowly lower the bell back down to your thigh.
- Once the bell is lowered, pause before curling it back to the start.

Trap depression

This increases your range of motion in your joints and flexibility in your large muscle groups. This helps your lower traps because compromised mobility from tight muscles impedes growth.



How to do it

- Start like you're doing a dip, with straight arms, upper body upright and chest out.
- Push your shoulders and arms downwards, making sure you keep the arms straight throughout the move and focusing on using the lower traps.
- Slowly shrug your shoulders and arms upwards to your ears.

Bent-over row

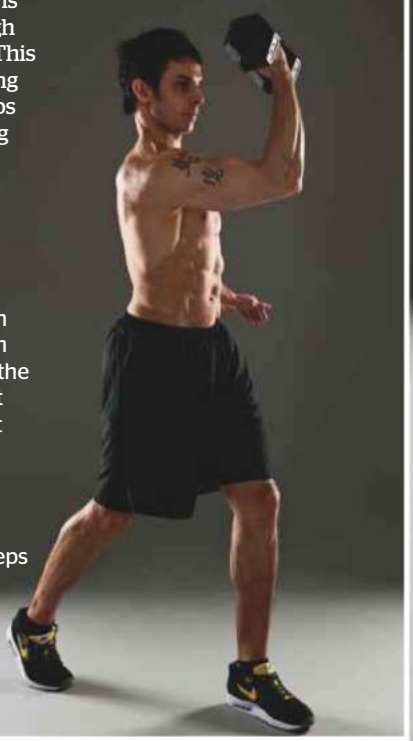
An overdeveloped chest will pull you forward and knock you off balance when lifting. The pulling motion of the bent-over row strengthens your upper back and lats, which evens out your posture and puts you in a better position for a stronger lift, especially in the mid-shin phase when the bar wants to pull away from the body.

How to do it

- Start with your core braced, back straight and shoulders retracted. Lean forward from the hips and bend your knees.
- Grip the bar just wider than shoulder-width apart, letting the bar hang at knee level.
- Pull the bar up to your sternum, squeezing your shoulder blades at the top, then lower slowly.

Full-range dumb-bell biceps curl uppercut

The point of this exercise is to work the biceps through a larger range of motion. This will develop strength along the full length of the biceps muscles, ultimately giving greater strength gains.



How to do it

- Holding a dumb-bell, begin a biceps curl.
- When your elbow gets to 90˚, start to perform an uppercut-style action with the knuckles going up to the ceiling and arm lifting. Let your body rotate and foot swivel as if you were uppercut punching.
- Pause at the top and reverse the move under control, still using the biceps to control the weight.

Words Lucy Miller **Photography** Tom Miles **Model** Richard Scrivener@WAthletic
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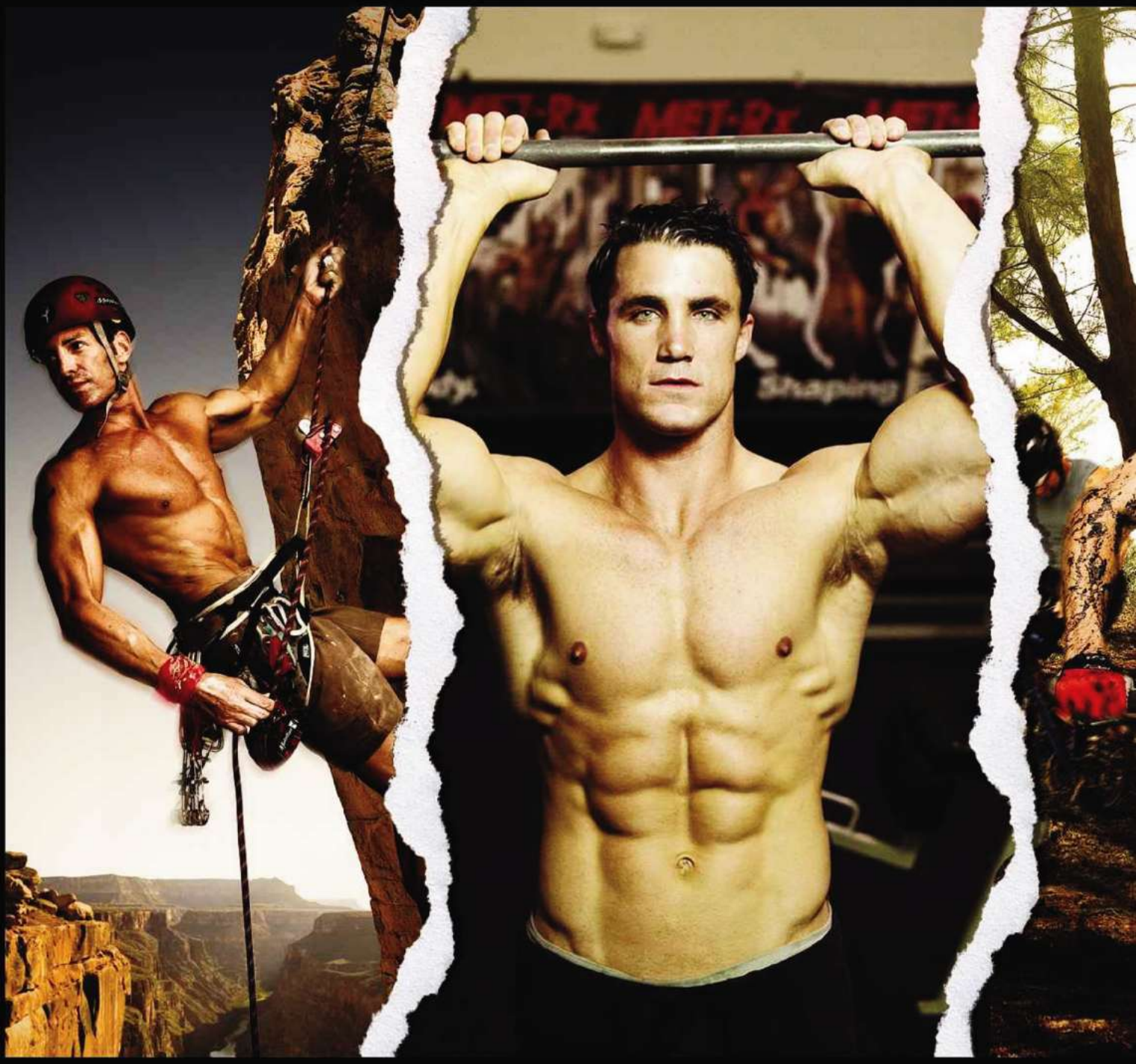

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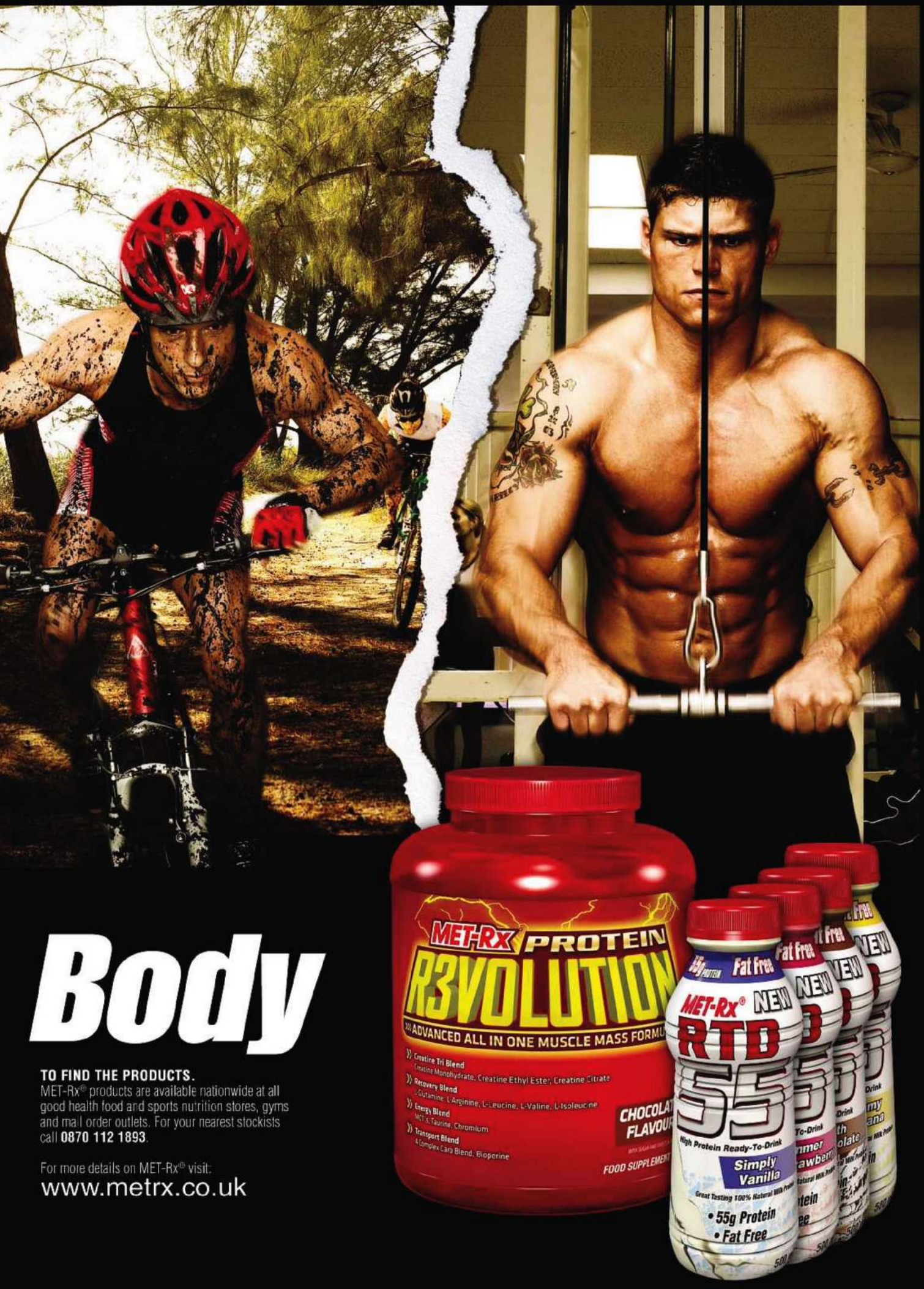

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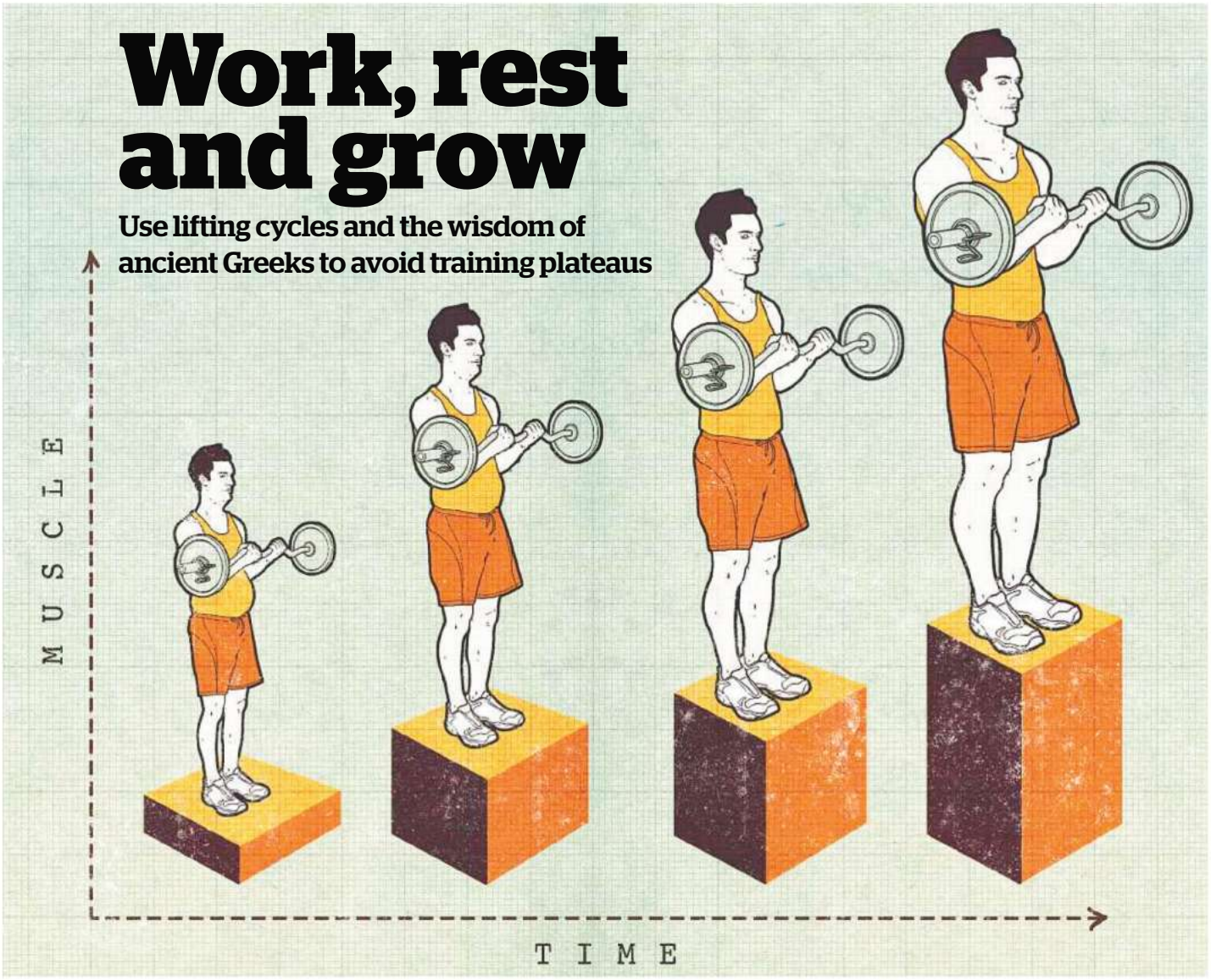
Work, rest and grow

Use lifting cycles and the wisdom of ancient Greeks to avoid training plateaus



Here at *Men's Fitness* we like to bring you the latest in training theory. We pore over strength and conditioning journals and question the world's leading experts so you can get cutting-edge fitness thinking. This month, however, we're looking at a subject that has been around for some time. About 2,000 years, in fact.

Varying the intensity of training over a series of cycles to avoid a plateau – or 'periodisation' – became popular in the 20th century, but it was the ancient Greeks who first realised the benefits. Legend says the strongman Milo of Croton used a baby cow as his training tool of choice. As the calf grew, so too did the weight he had to lift.

Fellow Greek Galen of Pergamum (AD129-c.216), a writer, philosopher and physician to gladiators, also advocated planned training variation. 'He believed various types of exercise needed to be blended in order to enhance performance,' writes Owen Anderson in the journal *Peak Performance*. 'He classified exercises into those which exercise the muscles without violent movement (digging and weightlifting, for example), quick exertions which promoted activity (ball play and gymnastics) and "violent" exercises, which might be called "plyometrics".'

Repetitive strain

Periodisation may be well established but that doesn't mean it's common knowledge in every weights room. 'The mistake I see most is people doing the same thing for too long,' says James Marshall, owner of Excelsior Sports Consultancy (excelsiorgroup.co.uk). 'If you do the same thing, eventually you'll stop improving. But if you increase the load you're lifting you'll get a new adaptation and gain strength.'

This phenomenon, known as general adaptation syndrome, is something periodisation seeks to exploit and sports scientists have explored. In a recent study at Texas A&M University, 92 weight-trained males divided into four groups. The first group lifted sets of 79 per cent of their one-rep max, group two lifted 83 per cent and group three started at 79 per cent, but rose gradually to 92 per cent. Group four played badminton. After 16 weeks the members of group three, the only group that used periodisation, were stronger in both the bench press and squat than any of the other groups.

The scientific, and indeed mythical, evidence seems to support using periodisation, but you're still left with

Jargon buster

Periodisation Structuring training into progressively more challenging phases to improve strength and gain muscle.

'If you do the same thing you'll stop improving. Increase the load you lift to gain strength'

Words Jon Lipsey **Illustration** Son Of Alan

the question of how, specifically, you should apply it to your workouts. 'Just embarking on a periodisation programme because it seems like the thing to do is not the correct rationale,' says Dr Darryn Willoughby, leader of the Texas A&M study. Put simply, this means taking a random approach won't work. Instead, decide what you want to achieve and use the training variables at your disposal to meet that goal.

'If your goal is strength, for example, use the correct reps and sets to achieve it,' says Richard Scrivener from Premier Training International (premierglobal.co.uk). 'This might be four sets of five reps, so you progress on one variable, such as how much weight you lift. Aim to increase upper-body lifts by up to 2.5 per cent each week and lower-body lifts by up to five per cent.'

'Use the same workouts for four to six weeks, but after that you need to take a week off'

Scrivener also advises keeping a training log to track your progress. 'If you don't record what you do you have no way of knowing whether you're increasing the stress you're placing on your body or whether you're improving.'

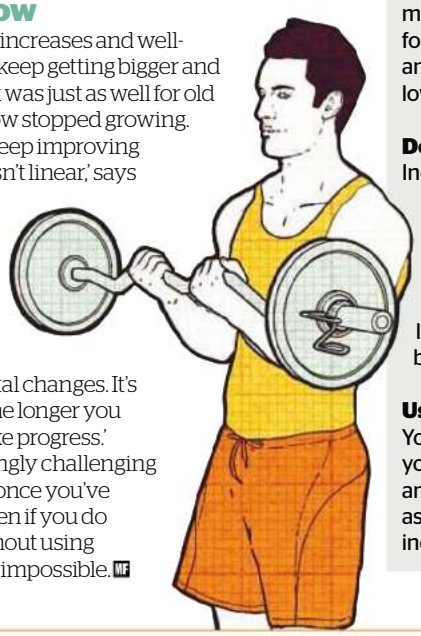
Another important aspect of periodisation is taking rest or recovery weeks. 'You can use the same workouts for four to six weeks, improving week on week, but after that you may find you're not able to push on,' says Scrivener. 'You need to take a week off or a week of active recovery by doing half the volume you would usually do.'

A block of training that involves several weeks of improvement followed by a planned recovery is also known as a mesocycle, and can last anywhere between two and 12 weeks. When you return from your recovery week you should be refreshed and ready to enter a new mesocycle and make a new set of improvements.

You can introduce a second cycle within the bigger one called a microcycle, which may only last a few days. 'You can change the load within the week,' says Marshall. 'You can lift heavy on Monday, reduce the weight on Wednesday then go back to lifting heavy on Friday. Do that for a few weeks then change your exercises.'

Remember the cow

So, if you use realistic load increases and well-timed rest weeks you can keep getting bigger and stronger, right? Not quite. It was just as well for old Milo that eventually his cow stopped growing. That's because you can't keep improving indefinitely. 'Progression isn't linear,' says Marshall. 'You can't keep adding 2.5kg every week indefinitely. There's only so much your body can do. You'll experience a steep improvement curve to start off with and that will slow to incremental changes. It's important to realise that the longer you train the harder it is to make progress.'



It may become increasingly challenging to get bigger and stronger once you've been training for years, even if you do use periodisation. But without using periodisation, it's virtually impossible. MF

Periodisation cheat sheet

Keep your goal in mind
Structure your periodisation programme according to your goal. If you want strength and hypertrophy, keep your sets and reps the same but increase the weight.

Make increases realistic
Don't increase the load you lift each week by more than 2.5 per cent for upper-body moves and five per cent for lower-body exercises.

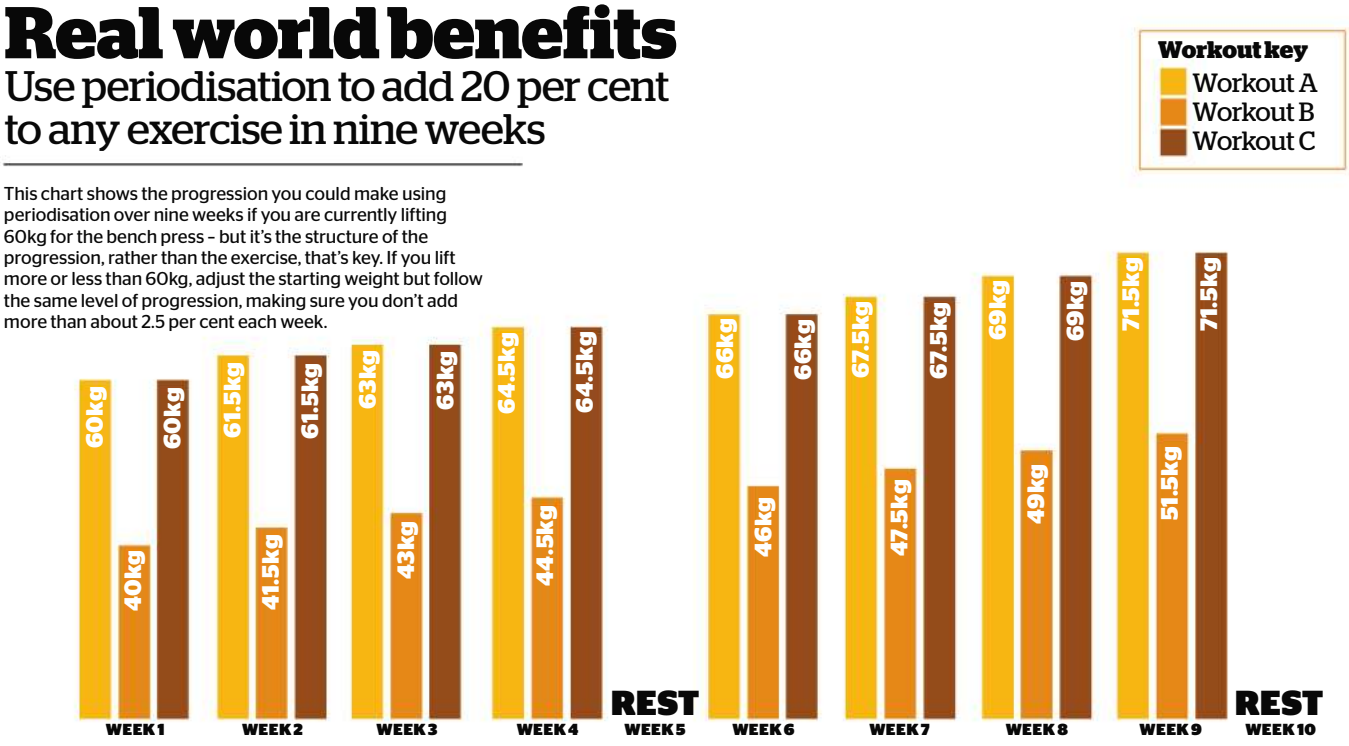
Don't forget to rest
Include a rest week at the end of each cycle of weekly load increases. Cycles can last between two and 12 weeks, but four to six is likely to give you the best results.

Use microcycles
You can vary the load you lift within a short amount of time. Known as a microcycle, this will increase your chances

Real world benefits

Use periodisation to add 20 per cent to any exercise in nine weeks

This chart shows the progression you could make using periodisation over nine weeks if you are currently lifting 60kg for the bench press – but it's the structure of the progression, rather than the exercise, that's key. If you lift more or less than 60kg, adjust the starting weight but follow the same level of progression, making sure you don't add more than about 2.5 per cent each week.



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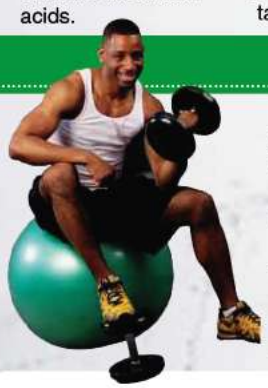

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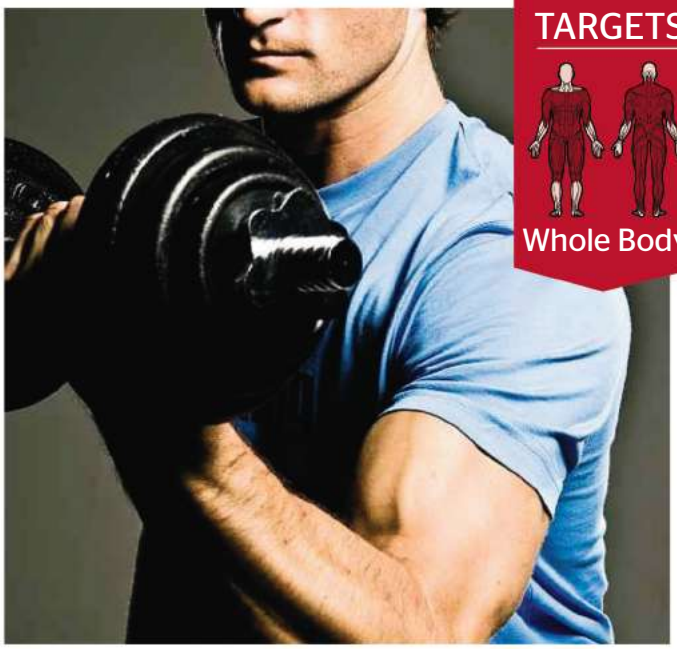

TARGETS

Whole Body

Strong all over

Do this total-body workout to get bigger and stronger without setting foot in the gym

The gym isn't always the best place to work out. Maybe your nearest one's a 40-minute drive away, or you can't manage the membership fees, or you're just not keen on exercising in front of dozens of other people. Fortunately, you don't need to go to the gym to get fitter and stronger. This half-hour workout doesn't involve any complicated kit, but its compound moves hit every body part. Alternating between the upper and lower body allows you to keep rest times short, getting your heart rate up and keeping your session time down. After four weeks of this you'll see serious muscle gains without having to go anywhere near a gym.

How to do it

Days Do this workout three times a week for four weeks. For a new four-week home workout, get the next issue of *Men's Fitness*.

Timing It should take about 30 minutes, including the warm-up.

Warm-up Spend five minutes doing bodyweight moves such as press-ups, squats and lunges.

Sets and reps Follow the set and rep counts indicated for each exercise.

Weight Choose a weight that allows you to complete all your reps but no more.

Tempo Take one second to lift the weight, pause, then take three seconds to lower.

Rest Rest for 30-45 seconds between sets and for one minute between exercises.

What you need

20kg dumb-bell set
From £34.99
Gym ball
From £6.99
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START

1 Dumb-bell bent-over row

Sets 2 Reps 12

Pull the dumb-bells up to your chest, keeping your elbows high and allowing your wrists to rotate naturally.

6 Gym ball hamstring curl

Sets 2 Reps 12

Rest your calves on the ball, then draw it in to your backside, keeping a straight line from knees to shoulders.

7 Dumb-bell uppercut

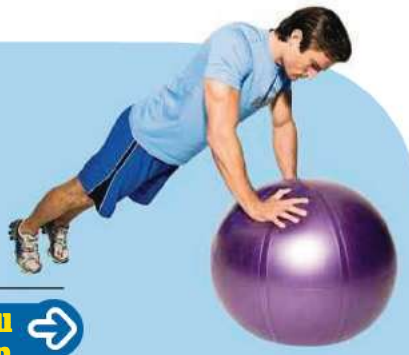
Sets 2 Reps 8 each side

Using a split stance, punch the weights up.

Words Jon Lipsey **Photography** Tom Miles
Model Peter Sheath@MOT

2 Dumb-bell lunge
Sets 2 Reps 8 each side

Step forward and, keeping your back upright, lower until your knees are bent at 90°.



3 Gym ball press-up
Sets 2 Reps 10

With your body straight, lower your chest to the ball, then push back up.

4 Squat jump
Sets 3 Reps 8

Sink into a squat then jump up explosively so your feet leave the floor.

5 Gym ball dumb-bell reverse flye
Sets 2 Reps 12

Keep your body straight and feet on the floor for balance. Raise the weights slowly out to the sides.

8 Dumb-bell woodchop
Sets 2 Reps 8 each side

Draw the dumb-bell down and across your body.

9 Gym ball plank
Sets 2 Time 30-45sec

Rest your forearms on the gym ball and keep your body in a straight line from head to heels.

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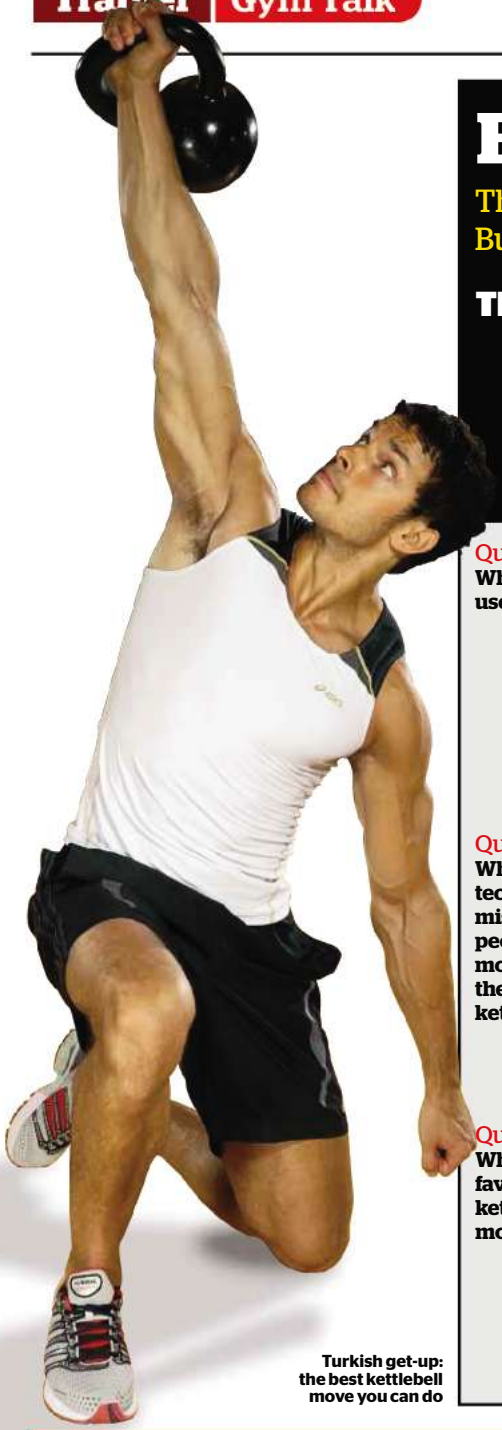

Turkish get-up: the best kettlebell move you can do

How useful are kettlebells?

The cast-iron cannonball-shaped weights are everywhere. But why should you use them? Our experts give their opinions

The Panel

Christian Vila
Brighton Kettlebells

Rob Beauchamp
UK Kettlebell Association

Andrew Stemler
CrossFit London

Sean Keefe
Strength & Performance gym

	Christian Vila	Rob Beauchamp	Andrew Stemler	Sean Keefe
Question 1 **Why should I use kettlebells?**	**They improve strength and cardio fitness** They allow you to work against resistance with high intensity and speed, which develops power and sends your cardio through the roof.	**They allow you to do safe, high-rep workouts** Because kettlebell exercises are relatively simple, they allow the body to gain maximum leverage and can be used safely for very high repetitions.	**They give you an all-round workout** Kettlebells work all the major muscle groups and help you to build a rock-hard core. They're great for your glutes, too.	**They're versatile** You should use them because they're very versatile tools that can help improve your strength, cardio, grip, technique and a whole lot more.
Question 2 **What technique mistakes do people make most when they use kettlebells?**	**Over-use of back muscles** People commonly over-use the back muscles when performing simple swing exercises, instead of using their hamstrings, quads and core for an explosive and effective swing.	**Using arms too much** The aim is to squat and explode, 'jumping' the leg, hip and back muscles to power the kettlebell into upward freefall, rather than using your arms to power the moves.	**Poor snatch technique** I often see people failing to punch through on the snatch. There's nothing worse than over-pulling and waiting for it to crash down on to your wrist.	**Lack of control during cleans and snatches** You have to control the kettlebell around your wrist when doing snatches or cleans. If you use too much force you end up slapping the back of your wrists.
Question 3 **What's your favourite kettlebell move?**	**Turkish get-up** This move uses every muscle in the body to stand up from a lying position on the floor, building functional strength for everyday movements and sports.	**Swing** This remains, in my opinion, the simplest and best kettlebell conditioning exercise, and the technique doesn't degrade with fatigue.	**Turkish get-up** This is great for improving your balance, agility, core stability and mental focus.	**Swing** It's my favourite move because it teaches you to sit back and drive through with your hips, which is crucial for performing big lifts in the gym.

New fitness gear

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What is it?
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What's it good for?
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They've been a staple of rugby and MMA training for a couple of years now, but they're just starting to make their way into regular gyms. A 12kg one will get you started, a 17kg one will finish you off.

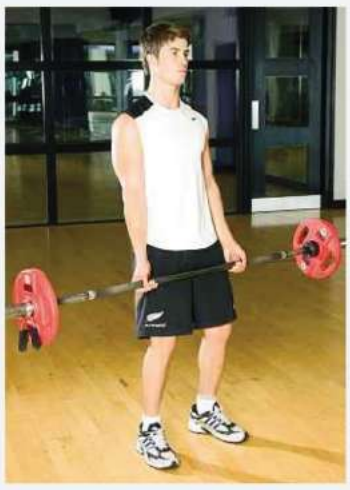
Lifting lingo Key gym terms explained

Eccentric

Pronounced 'ee-centric' and not 'eck-centric', this has nothing to do with lifting weights while wearing a badger on your head.

The eccentric portion of a lift is when the muscle lengthens under tension, such as when you lower a dumb-bell during biceps curls.

Also known as the 'negative', the eccentric part of an exercise does more damage to muscle fibres than the concentric (lifting) part, leading to greater muscle growth. Which is why it's important to lower a weight slowly and not just let it drop.



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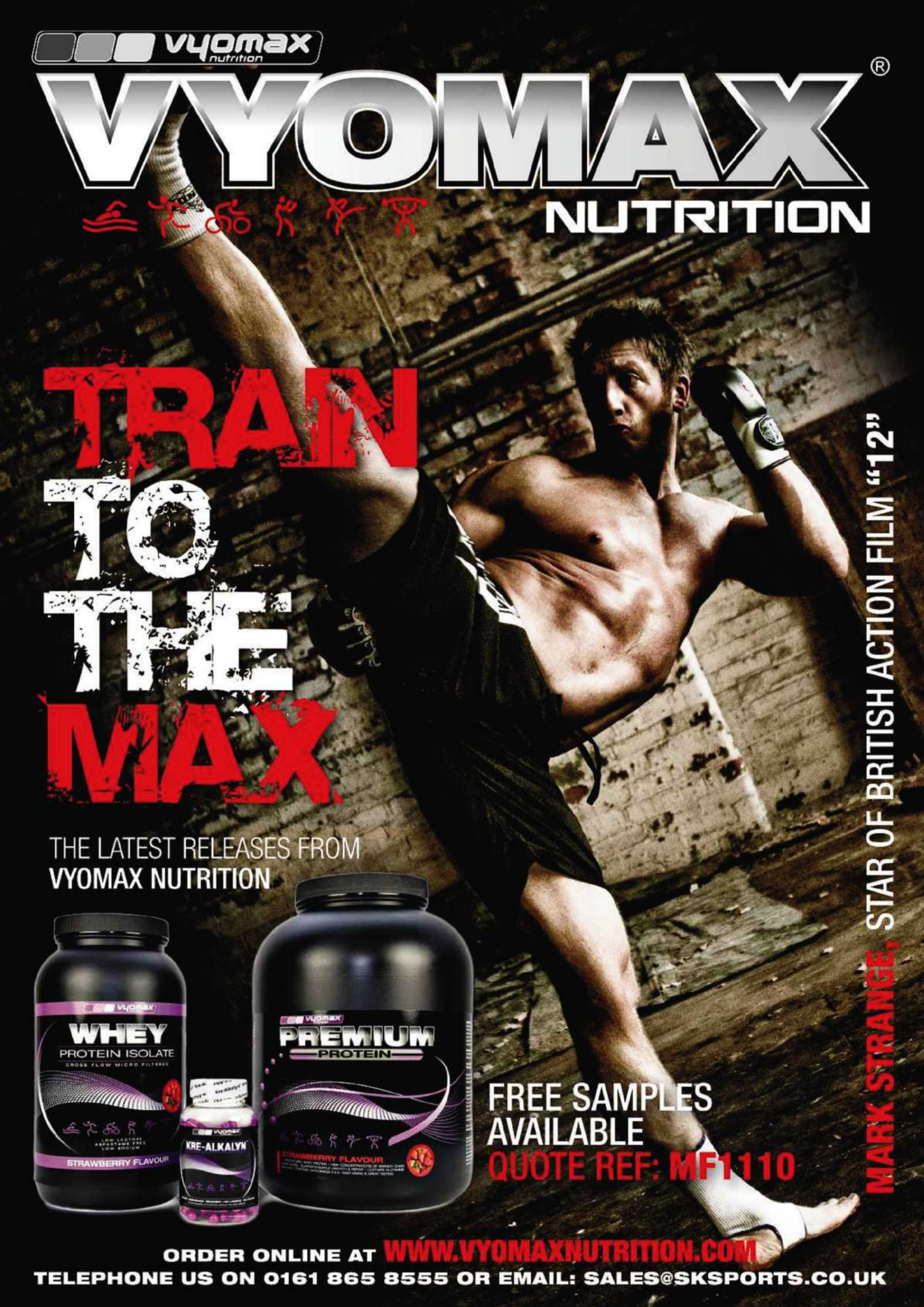
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Gentleman of League

New rugby league star Kyle Eastmond uses big moves to get Super League strength

Since breaking into the St Helens first team in 2007, Kyle Eastmond has been tipped to be rugby league's next big star. His attacking instinct and ability to storm through defences has made him a crowd favourite, and last year these qualities earned him an international call-up. *MF* joined the exciting scrum half for a training session at the Strength & Performance gym in Stockport.

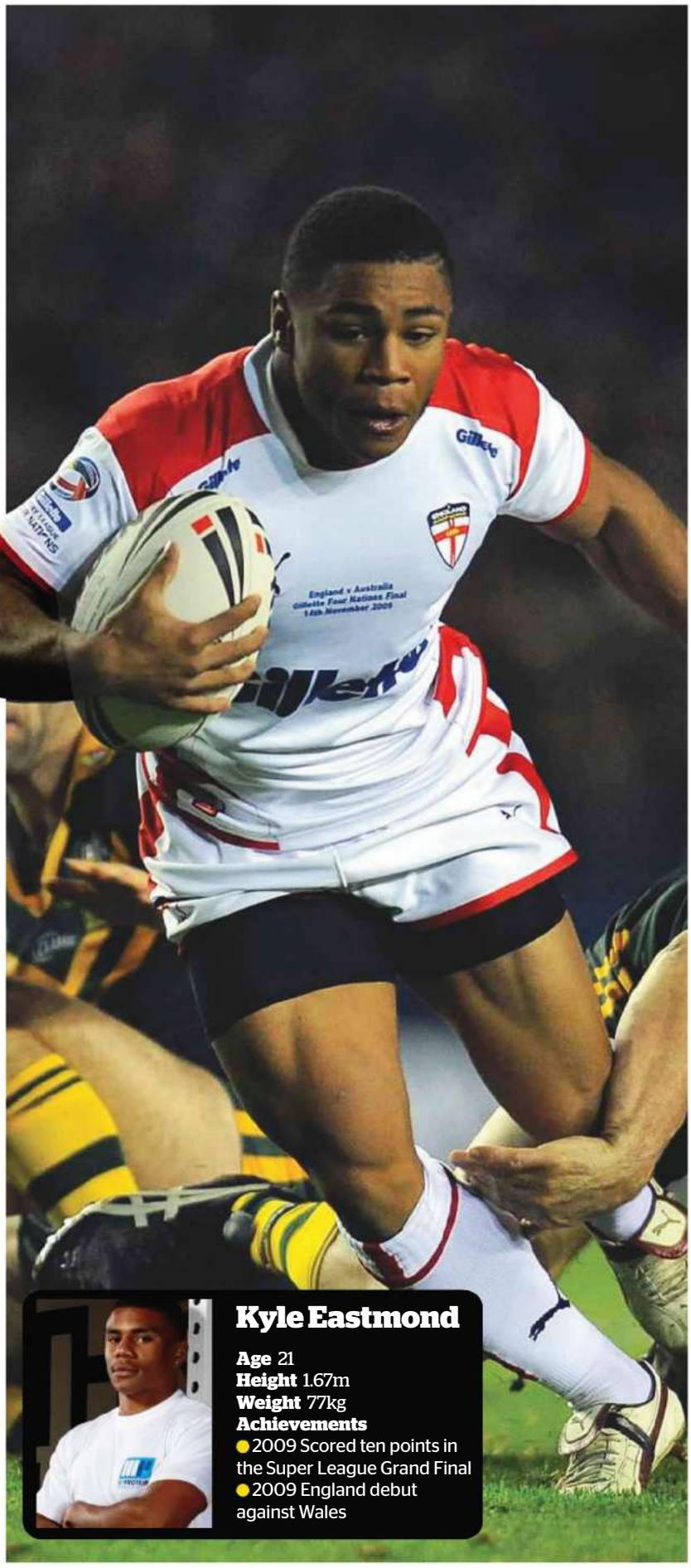
When did you first realise you had the talent to make it as a professional?
I was signed on a scholarship by St Helens when I was about 14 or 15. I used to watch the pros train and I'd look up to them, but I also thought, 'I can do that.' I feel like I've settled into the team now. It would be easy for me to be star-struck, but that's not me. I love the fact that I have the opportunity to play with these players.

How would you rate your performances this season?
I'd say this season has been the best I've ever played. I was confident coming off the back of last season and I feel like I had a great off-season because I worked on my fitness more than ever.

Did you expect to get your international call-up last year?
It was a total surprise. I'd just lost the Grand Final [to Leeds Rhinos] on the Saturday night, then on the Sunday morning I got the call from Tony Smith [the England head coach]. I was still trying to get over losing such an important match, but at the same time I couldn't wait to get to the training camp with the boys.

What are your career ambitions?
I want to win everything at club level and have a good international career. And I want to beat the Aussies. People think that the Aussies are arrogant, but they're just confident. Their mentality is that ›

'I feel like I had a great off-season because I worked on my fitness more than ever'



Kyle Eastmond

Age 21
Height 1.67m
Weight 77kg
Achievements
- 2009 Scored ten points in the Super League Grand Final
- 2009 England debut against Wales

Words Jon Lipsey **Photography** Duncan Nicholls, Getty

they're not going to lose. The sooner we get that, the better.

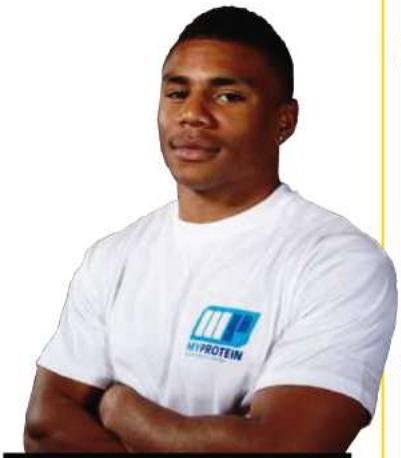
How does it feel to play in a central position?
The responsibility is there but we all chip in. My position is a main position and that's something I thrive on. I've played in wide positions where I don't have as much of a say, but I naturally want to contribute. Not being able to control a game isn't for me.

What's the atmosphere like in training?
The banter is unbelievable. Team morale is important so we have a good laugh and we train hard. It's like a family or your best mates. Players take turns to put on their iPods in the gym and some people's [music taste] isn't the best. Worst is Bryn Hargreaves. He loves his music but he gets stick for it. You can see him boiling in the corner.

What do you make of Strength & Performance?
It's awesome. It's real. There aren't loads of machines. It's a proper gym and you can work hard. The two blokes who run it will help you train well.

Which player in the squad do you look up to most?
Kieron Cunningham. He's a god – in rugby league and in St Helens. I can't think of anyone I'd rather play with or be captained by.

Do the older guys give advice?
Everybody chips in. Experienced players always pass on advice. But the most important thing anyone every said to me came from my old coach, Daniel Anderson. He said, 'You'll be a great player but you've got to be patient.' I was only 18 at the time and it meant a lot for him to have faith in me.



Kyle Eastmond is a MyProtein ambassador. Visit myprotein.co.uk.

Kyle Eastmond's rugby league workout

Part 1 Explosive power

'Explosive power is the main thing we work on in the gym,' says Eastmond. 'That's because you might only have a small opportunity to get through a gap or to score a try so it's important to have explosiveness when you need it. If you can combine speed and strength, you're going to be effective.'

1 Back squat with chains

Sets 3 Reps 8/6/6

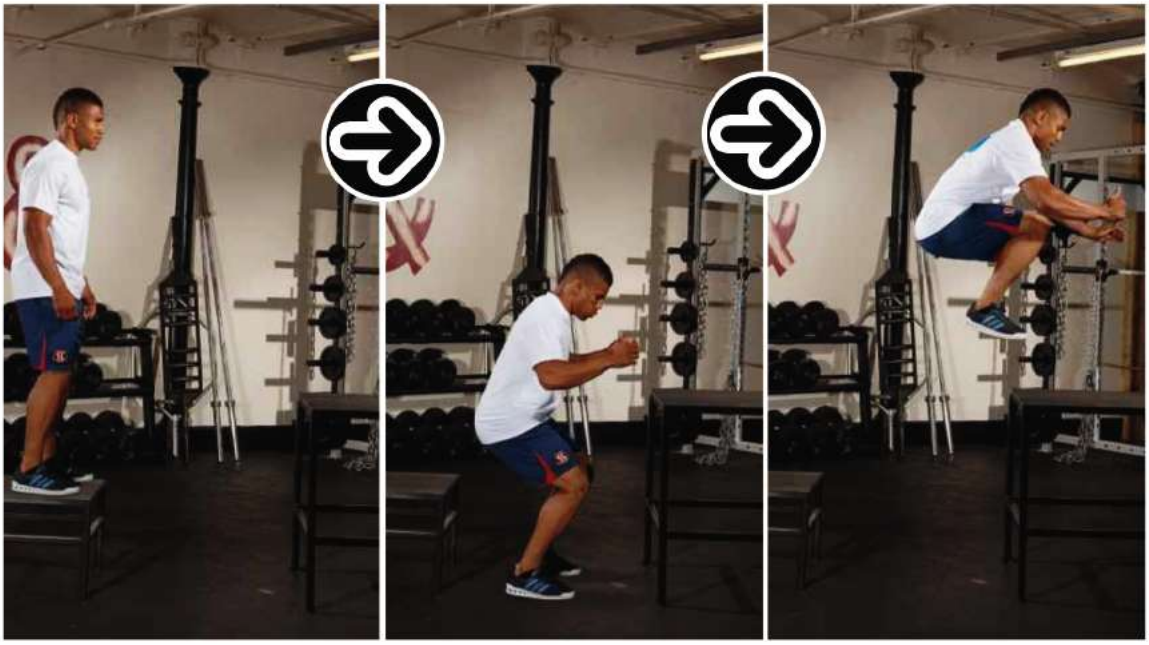
- With the bar across your shoulders, sink down until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Keep a slight arch in your back and your knees over your toes.
- Push back up powerfully through your heels.

Eastmond says 'Power comes from the quads and glutes so squats are key. When you tackle or break the line the power comes from your legs. The chains mean you need to work harder at the top of the move.'

2 Lumberjack squat Sets 3 Reps 8/6/6

- Load a bar at one end and hold it at your chest. Sink down into a squat then explode upwards, extending your arms as you push through your heels.

Eastmond says 'This is the same movement you make when you tackle. You need to get that triple extension through ankles, knees and hips. It's a great power exercise.'



3 Depth jumps

Sets 3 Reps 4

- Stand on a low platform then drop down to the floor.
- Explode up as quickly as possible so you jump on to the higher platform.

Eastmond says 'As I come off the low box I try to generate as much power as possible. I usually do this once a week, a couple of days before a game, to keep myself moving quickly. It's an explosive move so I only do low reps.'

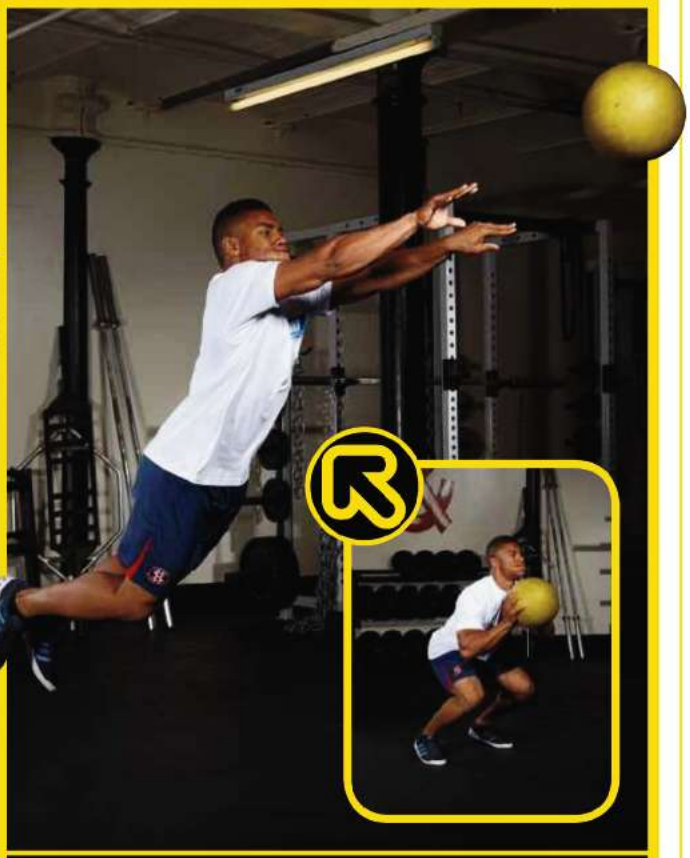
Chest power superset Do 4a followed immediately by 4b. Rest and repeat

4a Bench press with chains

Sets 3 Reps 8/6/6

- Grip the bar with your hands wider than shoulder-width apart.
- Lower the bar slowly to your chest then press back up powerfully.

Eastmond says 'In rugby you do a lot of pushing – the hand-off is massive when you're trying to break through and beat a man. In my position I have to break the line, but I'm not as big as some of the other lads so I need to be as powerful as possible.'



4b Medicine ball throw

Sets 3 Reps 10

- Hold a medicine ball to your chest then drop into a half squat.
- Explode up and throw the ball out in front of you as far as you can.

Eastmond says 'You do this straight after the strength exercise. There are no restrictions – you throw it as far as you can so it's a good measure of how powerful you are.'

Kyle Eastmond's rugby league workout

Part 2
Core and ankle stability

'Having a strong core is important when you're playing at high speed and getting tackled,' says Eastmond. 'If your core isn't strong and you get tackled, you'll get injured. You see them coming and even if you are strong you feel it. But it's an enjoyable feeling because it's great to know the opposition are up for it. And you can tackle them back.'

1 Ladder hops
Sets 3 Reps 12 each side

- Place a speed ladder on the floor or mark out 30cm intervals.
- Hop through the steps as quickly as possible.

Eastmond says 'This is great for ankle stability. I change direction every time I touch the ball so I need to be stable in my ankles to avoid injury.'

2 Side plank
Sets 3 Time 30-45 seconds

- Position your hand below your shoulder and make sure your body is in a straight line from head to heels. Doing it like this makes it harder than resting on your forearm.

Eastmond says 'Core stability is important because of the impact you get around your stomach. You get that 20 times a game. If you're not strong you'll get injured.'

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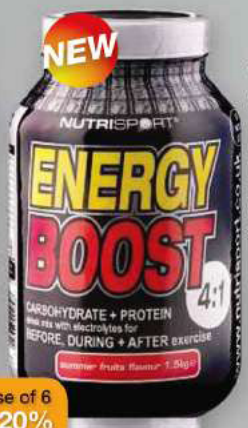

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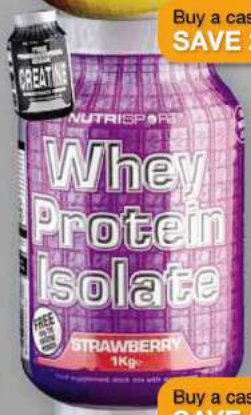

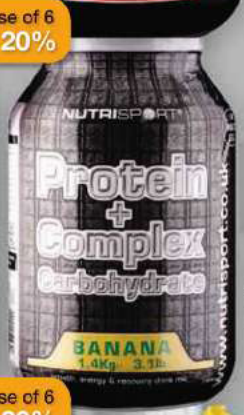

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Abs move of the month

Resistance band sit-up

Work your core and chest with a Bosu ball and resistance band

Sets **3**
Reps
12-15

Why you should do it

Adding the press will work your chest as well as your abs.

How you should do it

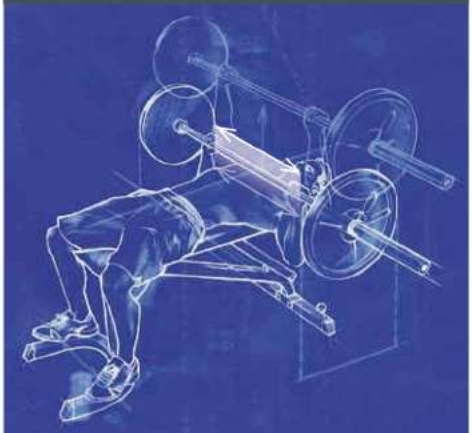
- Sit on a Bosu ball with a resistance band secured behind you, your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor.
- Hold the handle slightly above your chest, palms facing forward, and raise your head and shoulders.
- Sit up as you straighten your arms, pushing the handle away from you. Pause, then lower to the starting position and repeat.

Stage 1

Stage 2

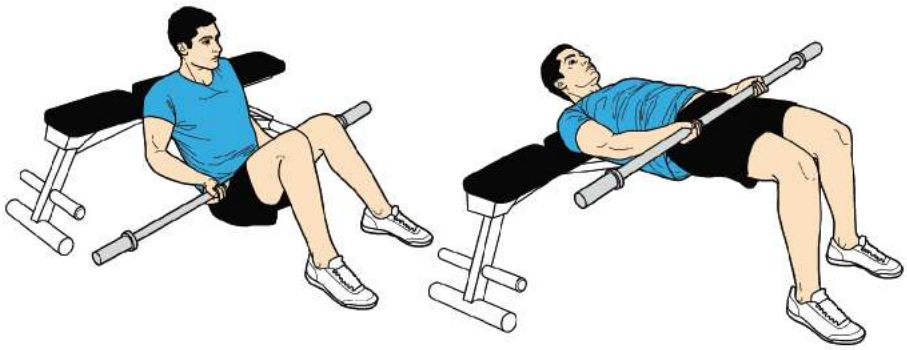
You can do this at home by tying a resistance band around a low object and lying on a pillow, facing away from the band.

Intelligent muscle



Keep your grip width to no more than 1½ times your shoulder width when doing a bench press. 'Any wider and you will place a lot of stress on the ligaments in your shoulders, which increases the risk of injury,' says Sol Gilbert, a personal trainer at ZT Fitness in Brighton.

Test yourself **Barbell hip thrust**



What it tests

'This tests strength and power in the hamstrings and glutes and works the posterior chain,' says coach Vanessa Bird. 'Strength in these muscles improves your sprint speed and deadlift lockout.'

How to do it

'Sit on the floor, with your knees bent and your upper back resting on a bench. Hold a 20kg barbell across your hips. Rise up, leading with your hips until fully extended, keeping the lower back flat as you squeeze your glutes. Make the last third of the move explosive. Lower your hips to the floor and repeat for 15 reps. Rest 30 seconds between sets.'

Can't do it?

'Reduce the weight, or even try it without the weight.'

How you rate

Sets	Level
4	Excellent
3	Good
2	Average
1	Poor

VANESSA BIRD is a REPS level 3 personal trainer based in northwest England. Visit **elitephysique.co.uk**

You'll find more abs moves at **mensfitness.co.uk/links/abssomeofthis**

Words Lucy Miller **Illustration** Sudden Impact **Photography** Danny Bird **Model** James Farmer@Model Management

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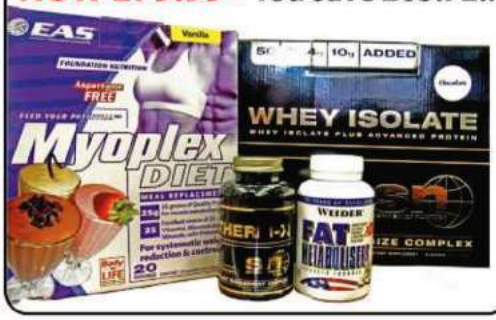

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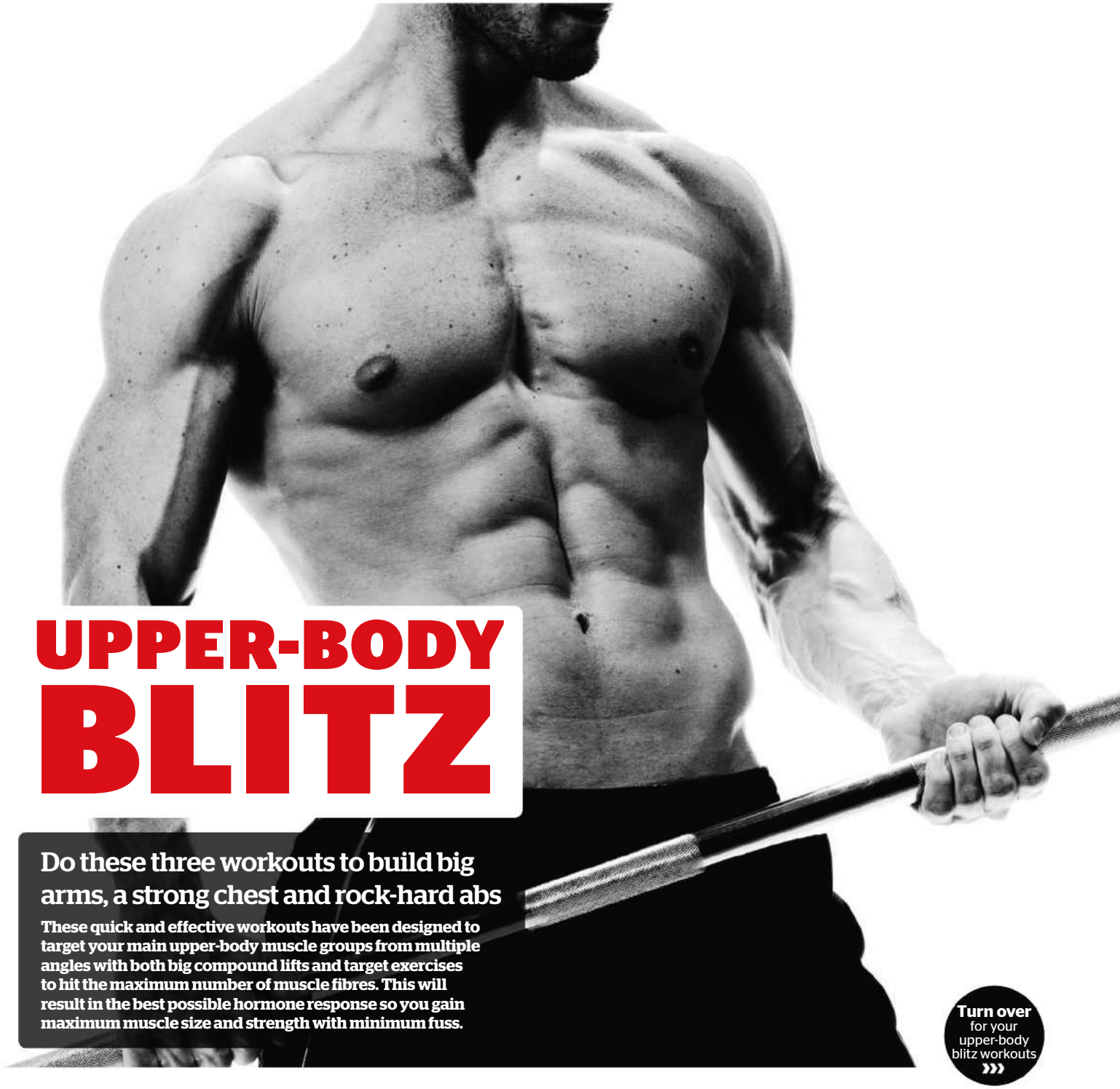


UPPER-BODY BLITZ

Do these three workouts to build big arms, a strong chest and rock-hard abs

These quick and effective workouts have been designed to target your main upper-body muscle groups from multiple angles with both big compound lifts and target exercises to hit the maximum number of muscle fibres. This will result in the best possible hormone response so you gain maximum muscle size and strength with minimum fuss.

Turn over for your upper-body blitz workouts »»»

What you do

Monday Chest p148

Wednesday Abs p150

Friday Arms p152

How to do it

Timing Workouts should take about 30 minutes, including the warm-up.

Warm-up Spend five minutes doing bodyweight moves such as press-ups, squats and lunges.

Weight Choose a weight that allows you to complete all your reps but no more.

Tempo Take one second to lift the weight, pause, then take three seconds to lower.

Rest Rest for 30-45 seconds between sets and for one minute between exercises.

Words Joe Warner **Photography** Duncan Nicholls
Model Toby Rowland@WAthletic

MONDAY Chest

1 T press-up
Sets 4 Reps 8

Target Chest, triceps, shoulders and core

The T press-up is a powerful muscle-building exercise that targets the chest, shoulders, arms and core in a single move. It also helps prime these major upper-body muscles for the heavy, compound move that's next.

Start in a press-up position with hands underneath your shoulders, elbows close to your body, core braced and feet shoulder-width apart. Lower your chest to the floor slowly before pushing back up powerfully and twisting to one side, raising your free arm upwards in a straight line. Lower slowly before repeating on the other side.

2 Incline bench press
Sets 4 Reps 8

Target Upper chest, triceps, front shoulders
Hits your chest from a different angle, recruiting the tops of the pecs and the front shoulders. A stable base also means you can go heavy.

Set a bench on a 30-45° incline, grip the bar wider than shoulder width (to place emphasis on the chest rather than the triceps), brace your core and keep your feet flat on the floor. Without arching your back, slowly lower the bar to your chest, before pressing back up powerfully.

3 Gym ball Smith machine bar press-up
Sets 3 Reps 10

Target Chest, triceps, core
With your chest muscles now firing, this move works them even harder, bringing in your core and recruiting the stabilising muscles of your shoulders. Having your hands on the bar lets you go deeper.

Set the bar on the Smith machine to the height of the gym ball. With your shins on the ball, grip the bar wider than shoulder width. Once stable, roll the ball back until your toes are the only point of contact. Lower your upper body to touch the bar then press up powerfully.

4 Cable pullover
Sets 3 Reps 10

Target Lats, chest, triceps
This move works both your back and chest at the same time.

Attach a straight bar to the cable and position the bench so that there is tension in the cable. Keeping your elbows slightly bent, pull the bar up and over your torso in a smooth arc. Return to the start.

5 Gym ball cable flye
Sets 3 Reps 10

Target Chest, core
You finish by blitzing the pecs and working your core. You will be tired, so perform each rep under control.

With head and shoulders supported, body horizontal and knees bent at 90°, hold a cable handle in each hand and brace your core. Keeping a slight bend in your elbows, squeeze your pecs to bring the handles up in a smooth arc over your chest. Lower back slowly.

Turn over for your Wednesday workout »»»

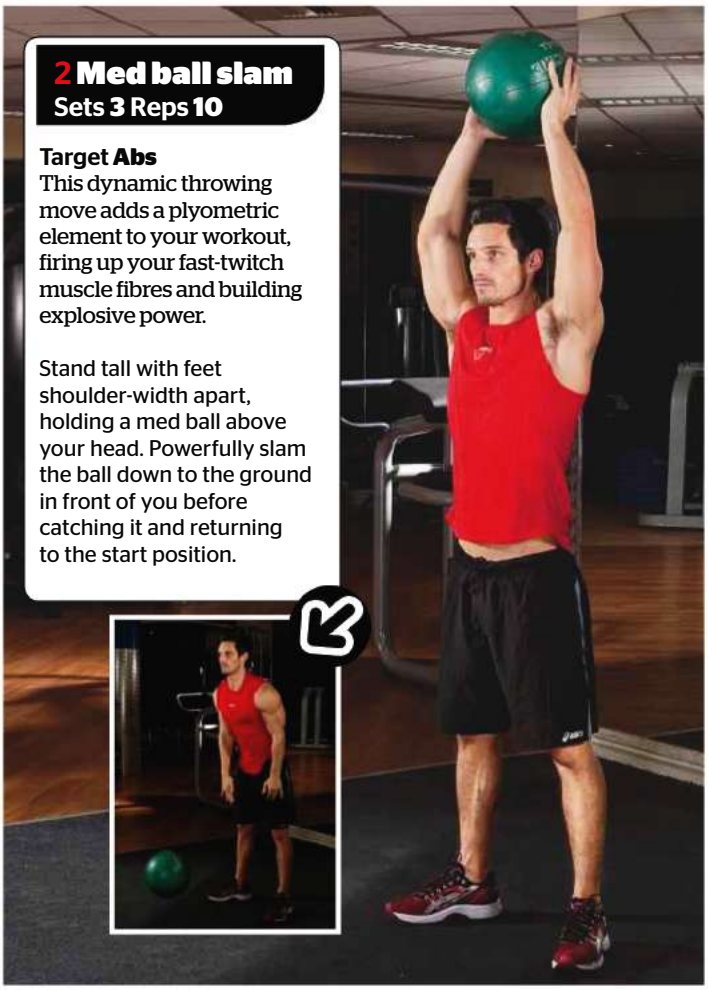
WEDNESDAY Abs

1 Cable woodchop
Sets **3** Reps **10** each side

Target Abs, obliques
This is not only a great move to activate your entire core region, it's also a move regularly used in most sports and athletic activities. It builds strength and stability across your core which translates into greater power transfer between your upper and lower body.

Secure an attachment to the top of a cable stack. Standing next to it with a slight bend in your knees, back neutral and core braced, hold the cable with both hands above one shoulder before sweeping it down and across your body by rotating your torso to that side.

2 Med ball slam
Sets 3 Reps 10



Target Abs
This dynamic throwing move adds a plyometric element to your workout, firing up your fast-twitch muscle fibres and building explosive power.

Stand tall with feet shoulder-width apart, holding a med ball above your head. Powerfully slam the ball down to the ground in front of you before catching it and returning to the start position.

3 Hanging leg raise
Sets 3 Reps 10

Target Lower abs
Specifically targeting those hard-to-hit lower abs, this is the first of two back-to-back moves that really blitz your core to create the foundations of a solid six-pack.

Hang from a chin-up bar. Keeping your legs straight and without swinging, use your abs to raise your legs in front of you until they are parallel to the floor, before lowering slowly.

4 Lower body Russian twist
Sets 3 Reps 10 each side

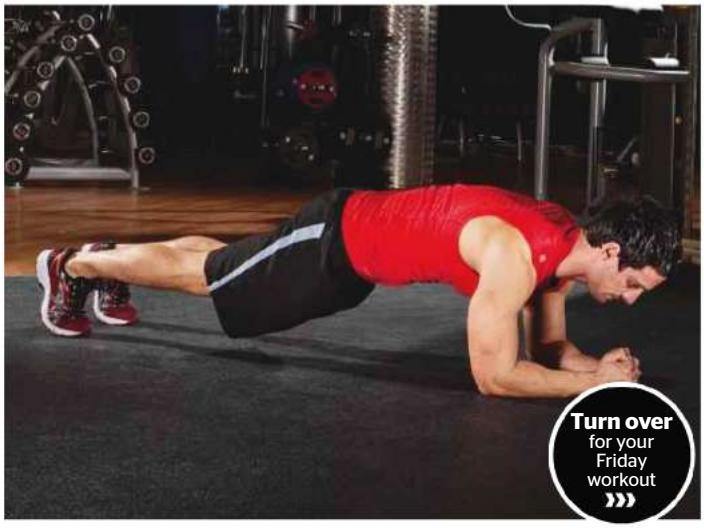
Target Lower abs, obliques
As well as again targeting your lower abs, this works your obliques.

Lie flat on your back with arms out to the sides for balance and legs straight up in the air. Keeping your shoulders on the floor, twist your legs over to one side, keeping them straight and not letting them touch the floor. Return to the top and lower to the other side.

5 Plank
Sets 3 Time 60 seconds

Target Core
Holding the plank position allows you to fully fatigue your core muscles – especially those deep-lying muscles that are hard to hit – at the end of the session, when it's safe to do so.

Start with your elbows beneath your shoulders, feet together and head down. Raise your hips off the ground to form a straight line from head to heels and aim to hold this position for 60 seconds.



Turn over for your Friday workout »»»

FRIDAY Arms

1 Chin-up
Sets 4 Reps 6

Target Biceps, back

Doing a big compound movement at the start of your session will allow you to put in maximum effort because you'll be fresh. The pay-off is that it'll fire up your central nervous system and provoke a greater release of muscle-building growth hormones.

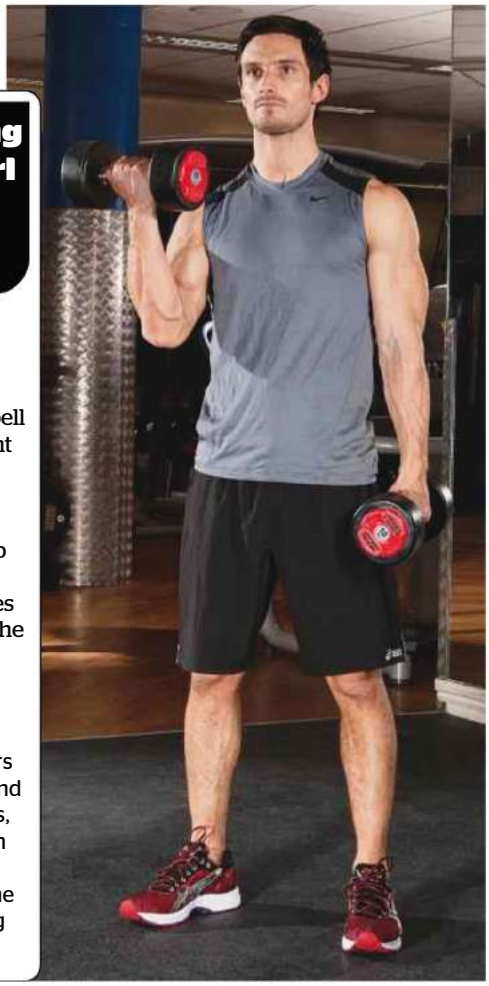
Grab a chin-up bar with an underhand grip. Without swinging, pull yourself up by squeezing your lats together until your chin is above the bar. Hold this position briefly before slowly lowering back to the start so that your arms are fully extended.

2 Close-grip bench press
Sets 3 Reps 10

Target Triceps, chest
After taxing your biceps in the first move, the next exercise hits your triceps to craft big and strong arms. Placing your hands closer together places greater emphasis on your triceps rather than your chest, so you won't be able to lift as much weight. But don't worry: it'll chisel your triceps in next to no time.

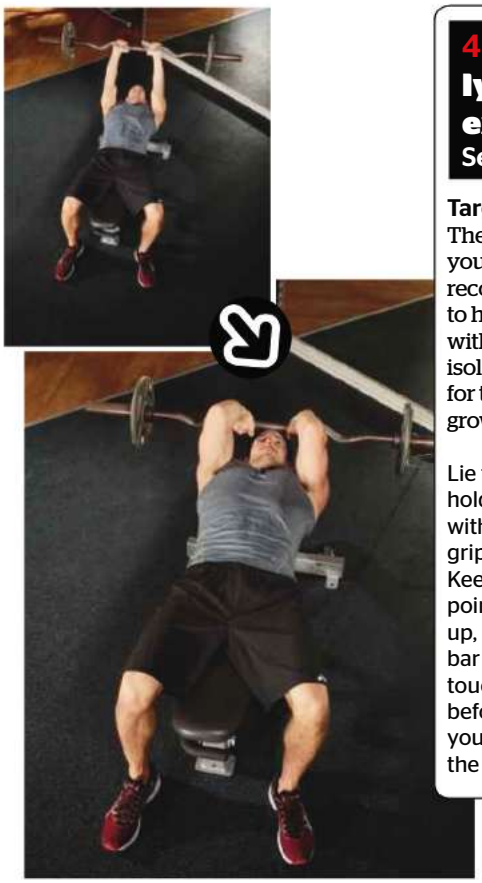
Lie on a bench and grip a barbell with hands close together. Slowly lower the bar towards your sternum, keeping your elbows tucked in to emphasise your triceps, before pushing back up powerfully.

3 Alternating hammer curl with twist
Sets 3 Reps 12 each side



Target Biceps
This move isolates your biceps – and curling one dumb-bell at a time will prevent you from leaning back to help initiate the move. Twisting the weight at the top of the move means you hit your muscles from two angles at the same time.

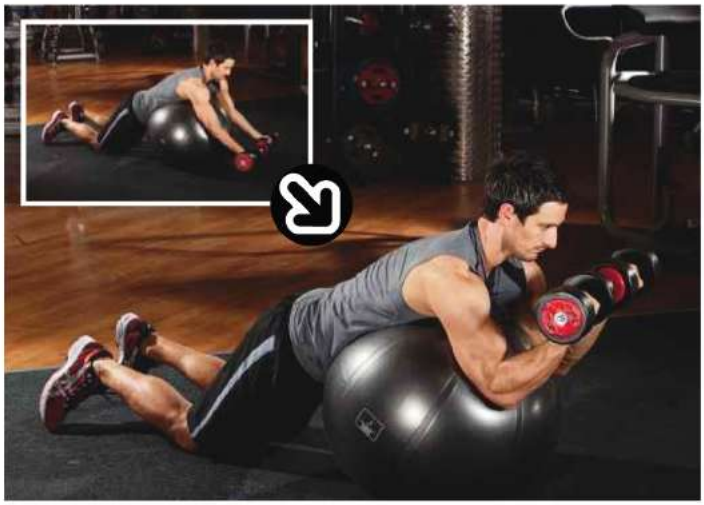
Stand tall, holding a dumb-bell in each hand. With shoulders back, core braced and elbows at your sides, alternately curl each dumb-bell, twisting your wrists out at the top before reversing to the start.



4 EZ-bar lying triceps extension
Sets 3 Reps 10

Target Triceps
The last move gave your triceps time to recover, so we're going to hit them hard again with this exercise that isolates the muscle for the maximum growth response.

Lie flat on a bench holding an EZ-bar with an underhand grip above your chest. Keeping your elbows pointing straight up, slowly lower the bar until it is almost touching your face before straightening your arms to return to the start position.



5 Gym ball dumb-bell preacher curl
Sets 3 Reps 10

Target Biceps
The workout concludes with this instability move that requires perfect form to prevent you wobbling. Use lighter weights here so that you can keep each rep smooth and controlled to really tax your muscles throughout their entire range of movement.

Rest your upper arms on the gym ball. Keeping your body in the same position throughout, slowly curl the weight up before lowering slowly back until your arms are fully extended. MF

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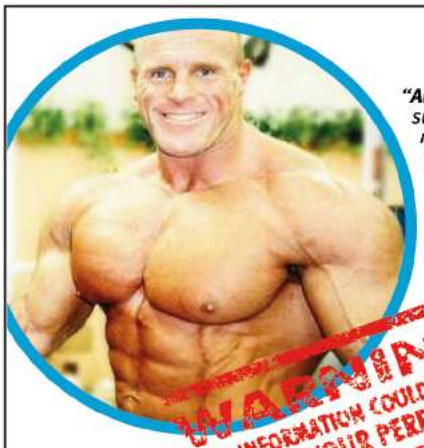

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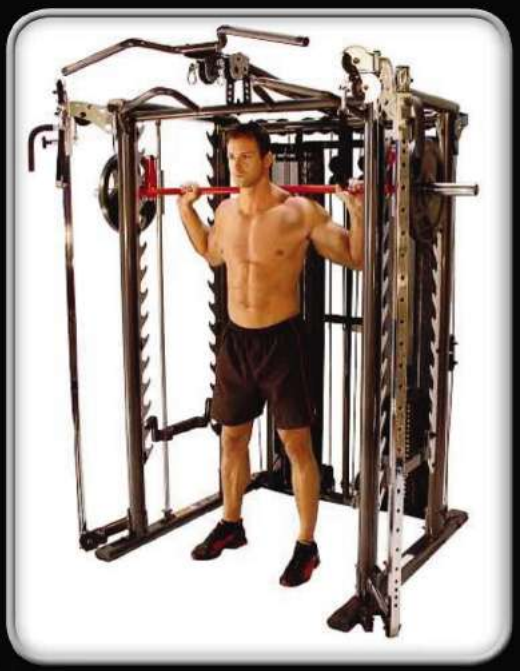
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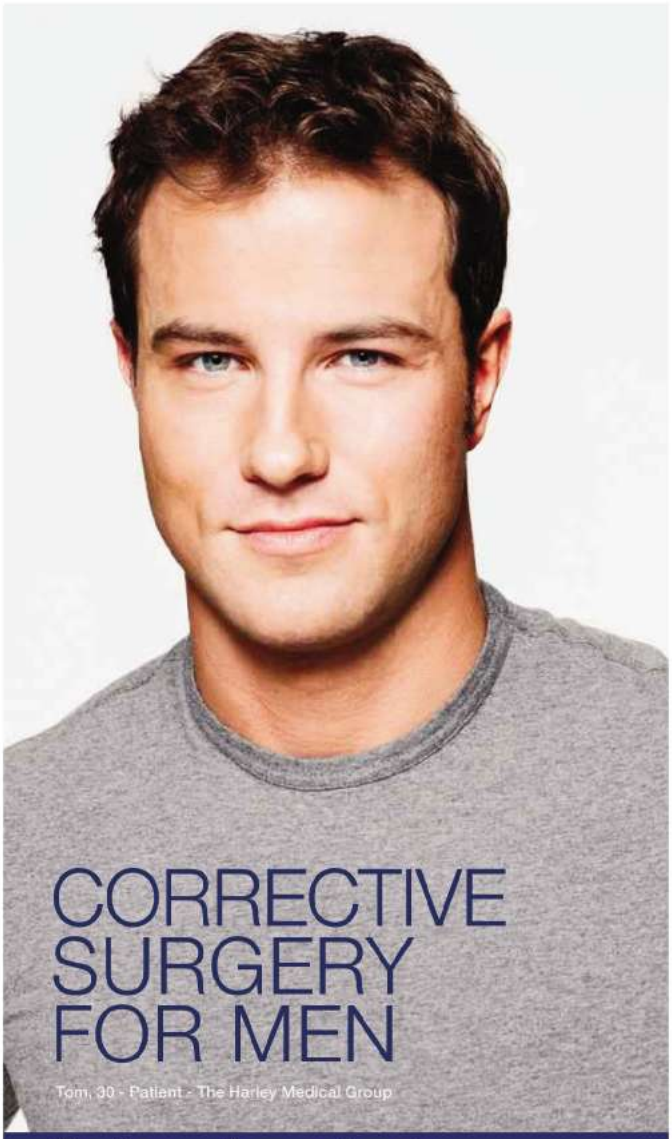

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DANNY TREJO

The convict turned actor on prison workouts, being a punchbag and getting a Hollywood break by accident

How often do you train?
I try to get to the gym three times a week, but when you're always on the move sometimes you have to do a little prison workout – press-ups, dips on the toilet and press-ups on the sink.

What was your typical prison workout?
We'd get to go to the yard and work with the weights – but my workout was mostly callisthenic because I was a boxer.

Where did you learn to box?
I had an uncle who used to fight in [amateur boxing contest] Golden Gloves. When I was eight years old, he was about 13. By then he was already a pretty good boxer. I want to say I was his sparring partner, but I was really his punching bag.

'I either had to learn to defend myself or get my brains beat in'

So I either had to learn to defend myself or get my brains beat in.

Did that prove useful when you were in prison?
Oh yeah. Boxing in jail literally made me a celebrity. When you get in there and everyone knows you're a fighter they'll match you up with all the best fighters around. I was the lightweight and welterweight champion of every institution I was in back in the day.

How many was that?
Oh, there was San Quentin, Folsom, Soledad – those were the three major prisons. I was also in Sierra.

How did you get out of that life?
It was almost mathematical. I thought, every time I've been arrested there was alcohol and drugs involved. Every time. It was black and white. So it was clear to me what I needed to do. I got out of the pen in 1969 and cleaned up my act.

So how did you get into films?
I was a drug counsellor and one of the kids I was working with called me at 11 one night and asked if I could come down to his job because he said there was a lot of blow around. The kid was working as a PA on a movie set. So I'm there and this guy comes up to me and asks if I'd like to be an extra and I was, like, 'An extra what?' And he said, 'Can you act like a convict?' I thought it was a joke.

You've played a lot of convicts...
For the first few years of my acting career I never had a name [laughs]. I was always, 'Prisoner Number One' or 'Bad Guy'. The first name I ever got was in the movie *Death Wish 4* and I was 'Art Sanella'. I loved it.

Do you find that people in the street tend to give you a lot of space when they pass you?
Yeah. But I don't look like a normal person walking down the street. I look like I just got out of prison. I have to remember that. On Sundays, when it's warm outside, I'll train at Muscle Beach with my buddy Craig Munson, who's a former Mr World, just so kids can meet me and I can sign autographs. I don't want the kids to be scared of me.

Which is tougher: San Quentin or Hollywood?
Well, the difference is, if somebody disrespects you in San Quentin, you stab 'em. In Hollywood, if somebody disrespects you, you move on to the next movie. MF

Machete, starring Danny Trejo, is in cinemas from 26th November

Words Shawn Perine **Photography** Corbis

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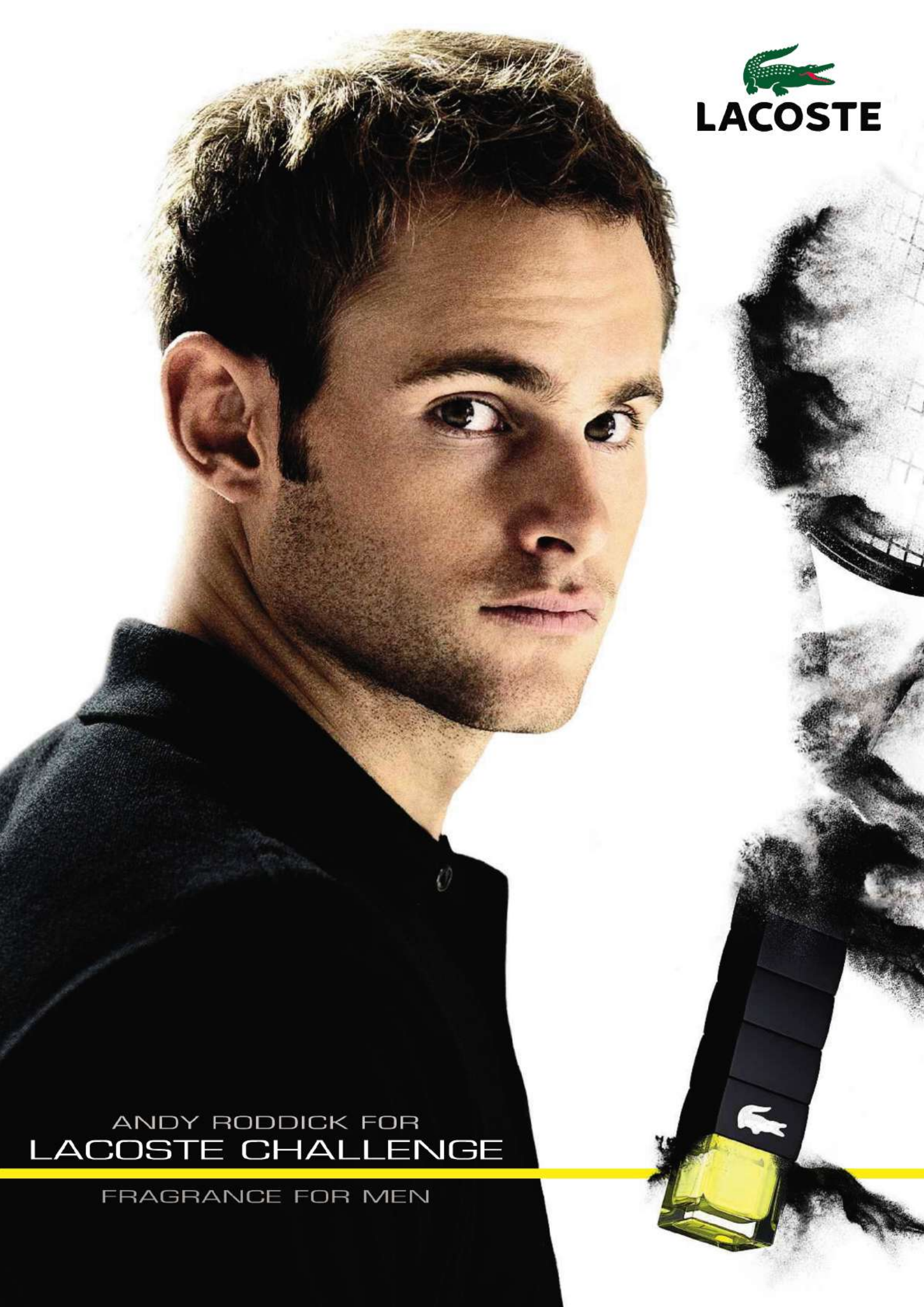
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