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BLOG

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# Make Me A Better Runner: Boxing (part 7)

This week we talk about food, glorious food: how to use it for good rather than evil and ensure you don't waste all that sweat and training effort by eating the wrong stuff.

by Kerry McCarthy, RW Commissioning Editor



The biggest mistake that sports people make is in thinking that training is the most important (or only) part of the fitness equation.

But what you put in your body is just as important as how hard you flog yourself when you're out pounding the streets - or in my case during my boxing programme, pounding someone else's head.

Which is why my coach **Cathy Brown** put me on a strict diet for the duration of my eight weeks training. And while diets (especially the super-strict kind) are unsustainable over the long term, the principle is the same, says Cathy.

'Any athlete or sports participant needs fuel, exactly like a car needs oil and gas,' she says. 'That fuel has to come from good sources. After all if you put the wrong fuel in your car, what does it do...?'

'This sounds obvious but sometimes slick marketing can get the better of us. So for the record avoid ANY pills, supplements, drinks and snacks that promote 'low fat', 'low sugar', 'increased energy' and generic 'health'. You'll get the opposite effect to what you desire.'

Some of the laziest eaters, says Cathy, are people who train a lot. It sounds counter-intuitive that we'd give our bodies good stuff (training) with one hand and take it away (with poor diet) with the other, but it's easily done. We get so knackered from working out that we can't be bothered to plan, buy, make and eat what we should.

Cathy says: 'To keep adequately fuelled you need to be eating every two-three hours, making sure you get good sources of protein and dark green vegetables with EVERY meal.' (see Cathy's recommended list of foods at the end of the blog)

'The most important aspect of your diet is variety. I know body-obsessed personal trainers who eat the same meals every day of their lives. Frankly they're idiots. Balance and variety help to make what you eat a lifestyle choice rather than a penance that has to be endured.

'Faddy diets that encourage you to deplete yourself are ridiculous and will not help you perform. Unless you are medically allergic to a food stuff, the only thing you need to be careful of is eating TOO MUCH of ANYTHING and making sure you're not substituting supplements for a natural diet. Supplements are exactly what they say they are: "supplements"; they're an additional aid for when you need it: training - and life in general - can be hard so we need a little help sometimes.

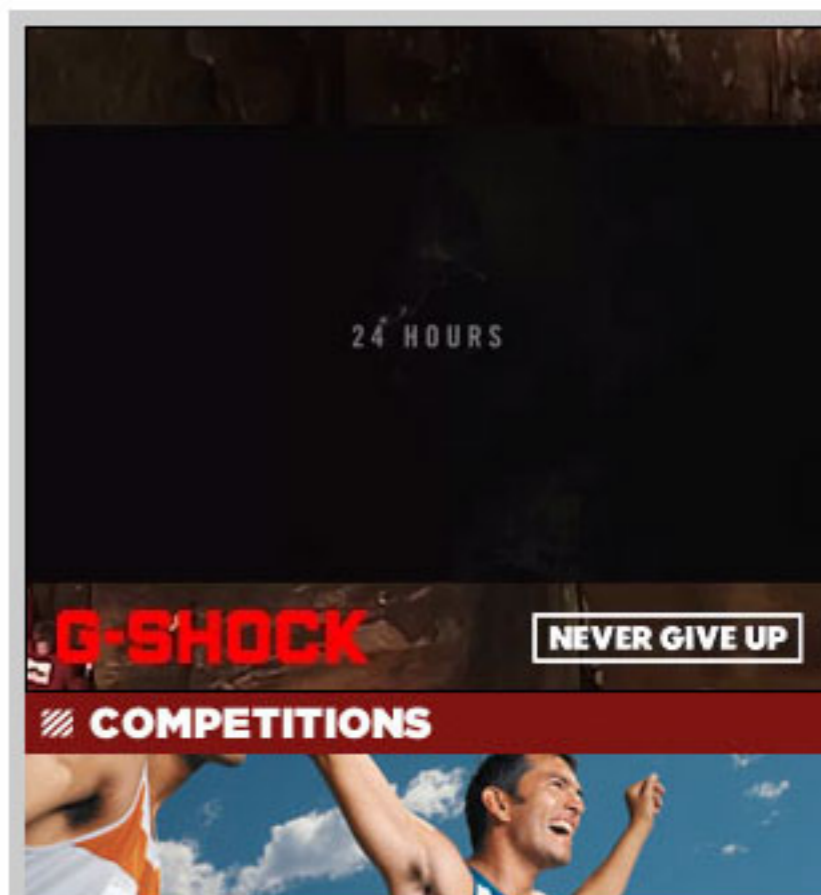
'The good news is it's also important to build in some indulgence. Life is for living after all. I love eating healthily but I allow myself treats such as dark chocolate with sea salt and caramel (If you've never tried it GO BUY SOME FROM PRET IMMEDIATELY!) or if I've been working really hard and need some mental relaxation (and have been good the rest of the time) then I'll have a 'down day' and eat what I want. The trick is not having the down days too often...

'I asked Kerry to eat 5-6 meals a day as he was training extra hard and needed to keep his energy up. I wasn't concerned about his weight - just that he was eating well - but as a side benefit to him becoming fitter his body fat dropped from 21% to 13% in just eight weeks: WIN WIN!!'

Cathy's fridge, freezer and larder staples:

- eggs,
- chicken
- turkey
- fish (salmon, mackerel, haddock, sea bass),
- beef
- lean meat cuts (veal, ostrich, buffalo, venison)
- fresh green vegetables
- butter
- oat and almond milk
- omega 3/6/9 capsules
- brown rice
- sweet potatoes
- quinoa
- spices
- olive oil
- coconut oil
- mixed nuts
- seeds (linseed, chia, pumpkin)

Kerry trained with Cathy at [The Third Space gym](#)



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