

SPARTAN

GRIT. HEART. PERSEVERANCE.



*Honoring 2500
years of Thermopylae*



FROM JOE.

JOE'S GOT A FEW WORDS FOR YOU FUTURE AND PRESENT SPARTANS

Ten years, seven million participants and 45 countries later, Spartan is more than just an OCR company. It is an ethos. A philosophy. A lifestyle. A massive movement off the couch.

Over the last 60 days in an effort to get more of us motivated and fit, we acquired Tough Mudder, launched DEKAFIT and branched into trail running and nutrition. Spartan is becoming a house of the kind of brands that will kick you off the couch and hold you to a fitness goal. We will get 100 million people living like ancient Spartans.

To be a Spartan means to be in control, to embrace hard work and consistency which will change any circumstance. To not sweat the small stuff and to remain full of energy and motivation even when the odds are stacked against you.

To make the right small daily decisions that add up and have massive impact. When you're in the jungle the chances of dying from a tiger or lion are minimal. However, the chances of dying from mosquitoes and small insects are the real worry. Same goes for life. It's the small continual decisions that have the biggest impact in the end.

The decision to have a daily small muffin, sleep in a little, skip the gym, be a jerk, etc. If you consistently make the wrong little choices over and over the results compound. You end up in the wrong place in life wondering how you got there.

Spartan FORCES better small decisions all day every day. We hold you accountable. By signing up for some event somewhere (whether ours or not) you are forcing yourself to do the work- make the right decisions.

Everyone has it wrong. You don't wait until you're in shape to commit to an event, you sign up for an event which forces you to get into shape. That's the Spartan paradox. That's what all our initiatives at Spartan have in common. They all force action. So pick a date. Spartan up and watch your life transform.

Best,

A red handwritten signature, likely of Joe Desena, written in a stylized, cursive script. The signature is composed of a few large, fluid loops.

Joe Desena
Founder/CEO

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SPARTAN
MAGAZINE

Thank you to the entire Spartan
team and extended family of
Spartans around the world.

AROO!

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SPARTAN.COM

>>>>>

DECODE

A GLOSSARY

THE TERMS OF THE TRIBE
GET TO KNOW SPARTAN'S WARRIOR CODES TO THE RIGHT. AROO!

FOR MORE DEFINITIONS GO TO [SPARTAN.COM/EN/MAGAZINE](https://www.spartan.com/en/magazine)

- #> **2X, 3X, 4X... TRIFECTA**
Completing more than one Trifecta in a year.
- A> **AGE GROUPER**
A person who races in the age group category.
- AGE GROUP CATEGORY**
10 age group brackets from 14-60+ in which anyone can race.
- AGOGE™**
A 60-hour extreme endurance event that takes place in the most remote areas on earth.
- AROO!**
The battle cry of Spartans around the world. Aroooooo!
- ATLAS CARRY**
Pick up an X-lb cement ball and walk it over to a flag. Drop the ball, five burpees, then return to its home without dropping on your foot. Ouch.
- B> **SPARTAN BEAST®**
13 miles, 30 obstacles. Spartan obstacle racing meets the half marathon. Eye-wateringly difficult.
- BUCKET BRIGADE**
A 5-gallon bucket is filled with gravel then carried up a hill or through the trail for about 200-400 meters. Not a parade (we wish).
- BURPEE**
Punishment for not completing an obstacle, aka best friend or worst nightmare.
- BURPEE ZONE**
The area where burpee penalties are carried out.
- BURPEE MAKER**
A particularly difficult obstacle.
- C> **CHICKEN WING**
Wrapping one's arm over monkey bars using the elbow instead of hands.
- THE COUCH**
Joe's sworn enemy.
- D> **DEATH RACE™ OR THE SPARTAN DEATH RACE™**
The race to test you mentally and physically. Uniquely brutal and never the same each time. The name should scare you.
- DELTA**
The ultimate Spartan trophy, earned by a select few.
- E> **ELITE HEAT**
Where the best go to race, and win.
- F> **FAILURE**
Never heard of her.
- THE FARM**
Joe's farm in Vermont and the birthplace of Spartan.
- FRAME OF REFERENCE**
It's a Spartan's point of view, as in "change your frame of reference."
- H> **HERC (SHORT FOR HERCULES) HOIST**
Pull a rope that's attached to a heavy object up to the top of the pulley, then slowly lower it down. Slowly, now.
- HURRICANE HEAT®**
4hr, 12hr and 24hr extreme endurance events to find out who you really are.
- L> **LEO**
Joe's kettlebell. No relation to DiCaprio.
- LIMIT**
Doesn't exist in the vocabulary. Shouldn't even be in here.
- LYCURGUS**
Joe's ancient kettlebell.
- M> **MARSHMALLOW TEST**
Stanford University study on delayed gratification, testing to see if children could wait for a larger marshmallow reward vs. one small immediate marshmallow reward... The mallow is the ultimate willpower barometer, naturally.
- MUD RUN**
Not this race.
- O> **OCR**
Obstacle course racing, duh.
- P> **PERFECT RACE**
A burpee-free (penalty-free) race. Kinda like when you meet your soulmate. You just know, and it feels damn right.
- SPARTAN PANCAKE™**
Not the kind your mom cooks for breakfast, a sand-filled pillow to toss over your back and make you work for those post-race carbs.
- PODIUMED**
Finishing 1st, 2nd or 3rd (and so on, and so on).
- R> **RING THE BELL**
Striking the bell to signify the successful completion of an obstacle. Also an obstacle video tutorial series.
- S> **SGX™**
Official training of the Spartan Race
- SPARTAN (NOUN)**
A citizen of Sparta; a person who has completed a Spartan race.
- SPARTAN (ADJ.)**
Rigorously self-disciplined, simple and frugal in nature, courageous in the face of danger, pain and adversity.
- SPARTAN®** - The biggest obstacle course event company on the planet.
- SPARTAN EDGE™, SPARTAN GRIT, SPARTAN RESILIENCE**
What Spartans eat for breakfast.
- SPARTAN FIT™**
When you commit to grit and become the fittest you've ever been. Also a popular book.
- SPARTAN UP™**
What you say to someone when they need to man or woman up. Also a popular book.
- SPARTAN WOMEN**
Some of the most ferocious and gritty Spartans
- SPARTAN SPRINT®**
3 miles, 20 obstacles. Short, flat-out fast, and challenging.
- SPARTAN STADIUM™** - Spartan's new 2019 stadium race format that is a salute to ancient Greece
- STFU**
Spartan the frick [insert your own colorful alternative] up.
- STUCK IT**
Sticking a spear throw (successful completion).
- SPARTAN SUPER®**
8 miles, 25 obstacles. Middle distance requiring a balance of speed and strategy.
- SPARTAN TRAIL™**
An individual Spartan event where the obstacle IS the trail.
- T> **TAHOE**
3 race formats, a bunch of Spartan Elites, all competing for World Championship titles
- SPARTAN TRIFECTA®**
Completing the combination of a Sprint (or Stadion), Super, and Beast (or Ultra) in a year.
- TRUE NORTH**
The first Spartan principle. Believe in your truth. Enough said.
- U> **SPARTAN ULTRA BEAST®**
Complete one of these, and you get bragging rights to claim you're one tough mofo.
- W> **WOD**
Workout of the Day. Kinda like the soup du jour. Mmm, that sounds good, I'll have that.
- Y> **"YOU'LL KNOW AT THE FINISH LINE™"**
The feeling you feel after a near perfect race. Kind of like Christmas morning.
- YOU MAY DIE®**
A trademark Spartan saying from the very first Death Race waiver. Yikes.

WHY I RACE

WHAT GOES THROUGH THE MIND OF THE PINNACLE PARA-SPARTAN ON RACE DAY?



Amy Palmiero-Winters has triumphed as a Spartan, overcoming obstacles quite a bit more intimidating than 10-foot walls. In 2004, she ran the Silver Strand Marathon while five-months pregnant. On a prosthetic leg. Meant only for walking. She placed second. When she got a more specialized

prosthesis she went on to set the world record for best marathon time by any below-knee amputee. Her accomplishments as a Spartan are a legend, including the 67-hour Death Race in Namibia.

This is what goes through her mind at the starting line.

I can't believe you're doing this again.

What the hell is wrong with you.

You are missing your leg.

You are not a professional athlete.

You are a mom.

You work crazy hours.

You haven't even trained for this...

Oh, wait...

Did someone say the "world's hardest?"

Yep, they sure did and it's next week!!

Amy, that's right up your alley, sign us up.

Why do the most difficult adventures lure us in every time?

It's because you're nuts!

You didn't even know where we were going. What's even crazier is you don't even know what you're going to be doing.

Okay, you looked at the gear list yesterday, do you even have everything?

Yep, we've got it all and if we don't, we will figure it out.

It's just like life, we always do.

Yes, Amy, we've heard that before, life. Life or not, do you think you could promise us next time you'll do some research before committing?

Or maybe you're just a glutton for punishment?

Hey, that's not nice!

I'm no glutton for punishment.

I just know we can do anything we set our minds to and besides, we want to change people's lives and how are we going to do that sitting on the couch?

How are you going to be a mom your kids look up to?

Remember you can change the world!

You're fucking nuts, Amy. You and your goals. Next time I'll kick your feet from underneath you or better yet, I'll steal that prosthetic leg so you can't do this to us.

Ok, enough!

Amy, it's go-time.

Woah....hold on a minute.

Don't get too close to the starting area. Let's think about this some more.

Three or four days? Self-supported? No sleep?

Hey, you can just turn right around and leave because we are doing this.

No negative thoughts.

The day that car pulled in front of you could have been your last. Instead, you're here.

Yes, but I lost my leg!

And that's all you lost.

You got a second chance at life and love, you're at the starting line of the "motherfucking Death Race!"

You are a mother.

Remember: "Good luck, Mom, don't die."

You have faced unbelievable adversity throughout your life and you can do this.

Keep smiling.

Superwoman...

Nope, that's not you, you just don't quit.

That's right, I don't quit.

Never give up.

Never give in.

Keep moving.

Believe in you.

You can do this.

You've got this.

Head down and go.

Don't think, just do.

Do it for all those who think they can't.

Do it for your family.

Remember, nothing good in life is easy and you will finish this race a far better person.

Once you're done it will be a blur.

All the pain and doubt will fade.

When you feel weak, tired, hungry, and broken help those who are worse.

Stay strong and remember to do it for those who can't.

If you can change one person's life...

You couldn't ask for more.

Amy Palmiero-Winters has been competing in Spartan and Peak races for over 12 years, losing track of how many somewhere along the way. A World Record holder, ESPY winner, Sullivan's Award winner, and extreme endurance athlete. She inspires other para-athletes and couch potatoes all over the world. When she's not wearing race shoes, you can find her helping others as the Director of Operations for a prosthetic facility, Director of The One Step Ahead Foundation, attending one of her kids' sporting events, or just being a mom—which is a superhero job as is.

OFFICIAL SPARTAN HISTORY

2001 /

THE FARM

After seeing a farm in the green mountains of Pittsfield, VT in an airline magazine, Joe De Sena and his wife Courtney, purchased it and left their New York City lives behind. It is here that De Sena will conceptualize and hold the first Death Race, which led to the creation of Spartan as it's known today.

2005 /

LEGEND OF THE DEATH RACE

De Sena holds the first Death Race, a ruthless challenge of mind and body that can bring even the most well-trained, extreme athletes to their breaking points. It continues to be held annually on the hallowed grounds of The Farm.

2010 /

SPARTAN BEGINS

After years of hosting the Death Race and other adventure events, De Sena creates the concept for his first "mainstream" OCR event and thus, Spartan is born. The inaugural Spartan event was the equivalent of today's 5K Sprint and when more than 700 participants showed up to the event in Burlington, VT, which was promoted with just grass-roots marketing and Facebook, De Sena knew the sport would take-off.

2011 /

SPARTAN GOES INTERNATIONAL

Following the success of the inaugural Spartan event in Burlington, VT, De Sena takes the sport across the border to hold the first international Spartan event in Montreal, Canada. Spartan now holds more than 250 events on 6 continents.

2011 /

SPARTAN TRIFECTA

Hobie Call becomes the first member of the Spartan TRIFECTA Tribe, a community of Spartans who have conquered the Spartan Sprint, Super and Beast in one calendar year.

2012 /

SPARTAN CROWNS WORLD CHAMPIONS

With the sport growing at a rapid pace and an increase in serious athletes competing, Spartan holds its inaugural World Championship at Killington Ski Resort in Vermont, next to where it all began in Pittsfield. American Cody Moat places first in the Men's race while France's Claude Godbout is crowned the first Spartan Women's Champion. While the Championship has moved on from Killington, the Founder's Race held there every year is known to be one of the hardest events on the global race calendar.

2016 /

SPARTAN DELTA

Danielle Rieck becomes the first Spartan in history to achieve the "Spartan Delta" a collection of achievements from Spartan's three core disciplines, representing mastery of Mind, Body and Spirit. These underlying principles, long understood by ancient cultures, are largely lost to the modern world. Each discipline embodies the Spartan pursuit of resilience, positive transformation and constant improvement. Rieck is one of the elite few.

2017 /

JOURNEY TO ANCIENT SPARTA

For the first time in history, Spartan returns to the city where its history began for an epic homecoming TRIFECTA race weekend. This incredible event weekend sparked the Trifecta World Championship, which now brings thousands of Spartans across the world to the ancient ruins, rivers and mountains of the legendary city for the invite-only Trifecta World Championship each November.

2018 /

ULTRA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Aurora Borealis lights up the sky as the "Land of Fire and Ice" pushes competitors to their breaking point at Spartan's inaugural 24-hour ultra-endurance OCR, unleashing all the wonder and fury of Mother Nature over the weekend. The most challenging event in OCR is now held annually, and moved to Åre, Sweden after two years in Iceland.

2019 /

SPARTAN TRAIL

With the growing sport of trail running attracting more than 9.1 million annual participants in the US, Spartan expands with the launch of Spartan Trail. The trail running series combines a classic approach to trail running with the Spartan ethos and is held in more than a dozen countries across the globe.

2020 /

SPARTAN ACQUIRES TOUGH MUDDER

Spartan has acquired the U.S. business and assets of obstacle course racing brand Tough Mudder, working to produce events for the 2020 race season, just shortly after acquiring the Tough Mudder UK.

BY THE NUMBERS

7,000,000
RACERS
REPRESENTING
142 NATIONALITIES

EVENTS HELD IN
43
COUNTRIES

63,000,000,000 STEPS TAKEN
1,050,000
TEAMS COMPETED
MORE THAN 300 TRIFECTAS EARNED
1414
RACES COMPLETED

ANATOMY OF AN OCR ATHLETE

WHAT DOES AN OCR ATHLETE LOOK LIKE, AND HOW DOES ONE GET THERE?

Tall, dark and handsome...well, not quite. A Spartan athlete comes in all shapes, sizes, makes and models. There is no singular build that can describe a Spartan, but there are certain attributes that make racing a whole lot easier. We asked some of our top athletes just what they think makes up an ideal Spartan. A sport that's so much more than brawn, you might be surprised to read what made their lists.



NICOLE MERICLE

2019 Spartan Race World Champion, Three-Time 3k OCR World Champion, Van-Lifer And Candy Connoisseur

"To me, the OCR athlete is somewhat of a mutant. We're muscly for a distance runner, but puny for a strength-focused athlete. Someone took a Mr. Potato Head and put a rock climber's upper body onto the legs of a marathoner. We run long distances. We can do pull-ups for days and hang from our fingertips. We flip giant tires and carry 80 pounds of sandbags around for fun. We're a jack of all trades, master of none. To be an OCR athlete you don't have to be the best at any one thing, but you'll have to work hard at a lot of things."



ALBERT SOLEY

3rd Trifecta World Champion, 4th OCR World Champs, and just Albert, not Al

"An OCR athlete must be a strong and explosive person, perhaps it is not so important to be a very fast athlete, here there are many factors of strength and agility. I think a very important factor to be a great OCR athlete is to have good mental concentration and know-how to manage these races until the end. From a physical standpoint, my opinion would be a person with power, strength and explosiveness."



CHARLIE ENGLE

Ultra-Endurance Athlete, Trail Running Podcaster for Spartan, Author of Running Man and is Regularly Ranked on the Top 1,000 Badminton Players in North Carolina

"The perfect Spartan is mostly unrecognizable physically. They may be big or small, thick or thin, old or young. They might win the race or come in dead last. Lightning speed or brute force are fleeting and unreliable; more important by far is the ability to adapt to ever-changing circumstances. The perfect Spartan is built upon the intangible qualities hidden deep in the heart and spirit, qualities that are only revealed through hard work and perseverance."



LINDSAY WEBSTER

Two-Time Spartan Race World Champion, Four-Time Consecutive 15K OCR World Champion and Peanut Butter Ice Cream Addict

“To me, the Spartan athlete isn’t so much about what you can see in someone’s physical appearance, but what you can’t. Mental strength and grit, I think, is one of the biggest factors of what makes a good OCR racer. Athletes and experts speculate how much the mind holds us back from our physical limitations. I’ve seen Spartans battle through an Ultra-Beast for sixteen hours in sub-zero temperatures, I’ve seen OCR racers with physical disabilities or a missing arm complete a rig, and I’ve met people who want to conquer obesity complete their first-ever race. I’ve also run with professional athletes from other sports who are afraid to get their shoes wet in a run...maybe they’re great athletes, but I don’t think they would do well when handed a bucket of rocks or when faced with a dunk wall!”



KEVIN DONOGHUE

Spartan’s All-Time Podium Leader, Official Spartan Broadcaster and Host of the Daily Burn Spartan Workout Video Series, Yet Still Has to Show His ID When Walking Up to Register for Races

“If you asked me what an OCR athlete looked like I would say, balanced. People come in all shapes and sizes. They come from different personal and athletic backgrounds. They also have varying degrees of mental and emotional toughness. All with their own strengths and weaknesses. The dedicated OCR athlete has made a commitment to analyzing all of these variable personal components—the strengths and weaknesses. Then executed a plan to bring it all into a greater degree of balance.”



RYAN ATKINS

Spartan Ultra World Champ and Recovering Chocolate Addict

“A Spartan is an athlete who doesn’t bow to conformism in the health and fitness industry. Instead of posing in front of mirrors and endless selfies, a Spartan is out in the woods, breathing hard and carrying chunks of wood up steep mountainsides. A Spartan’s fitness is forged not to look a certain way, but to be useful, practical and high performing. He strips away what is unnecessary from his life and pursues greatness with fervor. A Spartan might be slightly slower than a skinny anemic track runner, or not as strong as a bulky Crossfitter, but instead, he is the perfect balance of speed, endurance and strength.”



RYAN WOODS

2019 Spartan North American Champ, ‘18 Spartan US National Series Champion, Carnivore and Wineo

“On the outside, your typical OCR athlete looks like a Greek Adonis. Born of Sparta with chiseled abs, hulky pecs, a delicate golden tan and not a hair surviving regular waxings. Not to be outdone, on the inside, you’ll find fire. Fire surrounded by gun powder, gasoline and centaurs. The only way to achieve this level of greatness is through suffering and self-punishment. Days are filled by passing miles at lightning speed and evenings spent lifting small European cars... ever ready for the day a child might need saving or parking next to an asshole taking up two spots. To be a great Spartan you must combine the physical with the metaphysical and harness the unbridled chaos within.”



RYAN KENT

Spartan Elite Pro and Man Bun Connoisseur

“I think an OCR athlete can, from a physical standpoint, be made up of many different body types. This sport doesn’t care what you look like, just as long as you have that grit and mental toughness about you. It’s what makes this sport so unique. As far as what it takes to get to the level of winning races? Well, that is a complicated question to answer. In short, this has become a real sport with real pro athletes and the reality of the situation is that you’re going to have to work your ass off for a very, very, VERY long time with a lot of setbacks, failures and adversity along the way. Some try and give up prematurely, but don’t get me wrong, anyone can be a Spartan, yet winning takes a certain mindset, dedication and sacrifice.”



MYRIAM GUILLOT-BOISSET

Spartan Euro Champ 2019, Spartan Elite, and Raw Diet Aficionado

“In my mind, a Spartan athlete should look like what all humans should be. They should have the strength, endurance, flexibility, resilience and tenacity to survive by themselves in this world. Be a warrior but not a fighter! They don’t need to be a top athlete but just to reintroduce natural things that our ancestors were used to doing every day and forget all the wrong assistances that modern society offers us...such as elevators. Try walking or biking instead of driving, carrying your bag instead of using a trolley, etc.”

“WITHOUT COMMITMENT,

THERE IS NO SUCCESS.”

Joe De Sena

THE WORLD'S NO. 1 EXERCISE

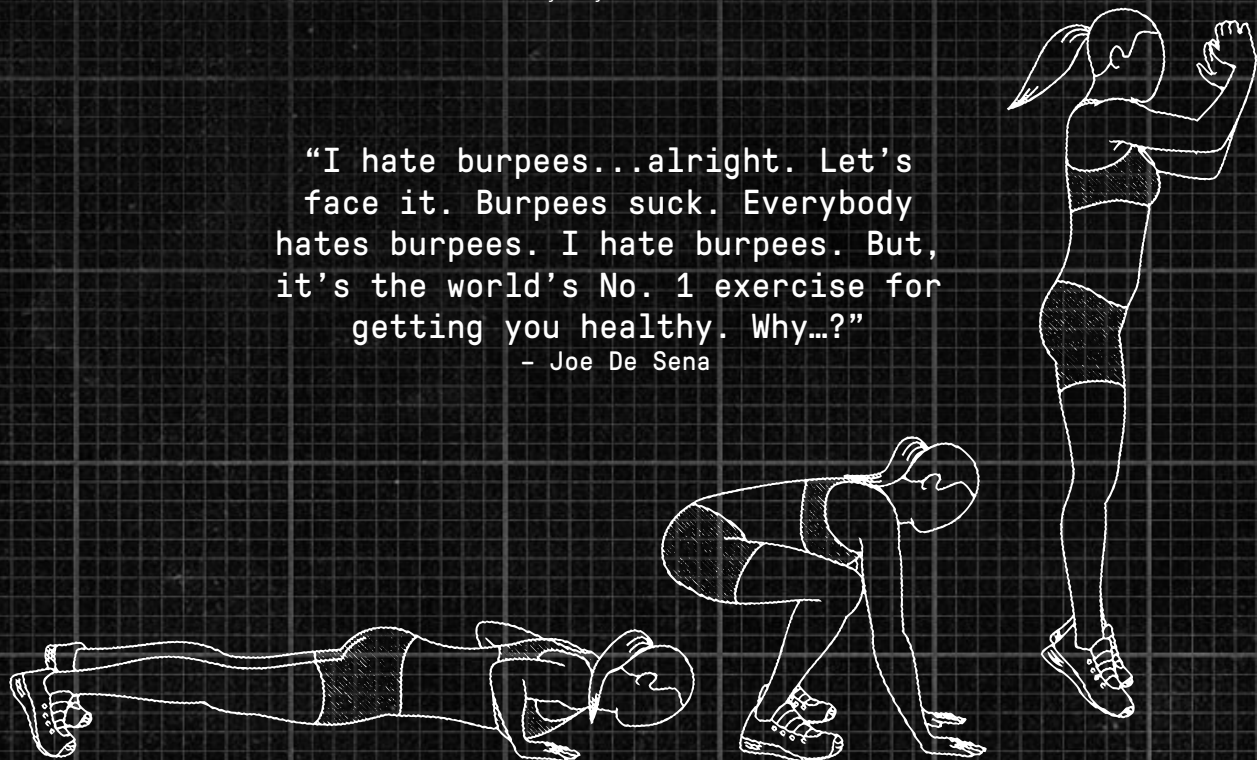
FOR GETTING HEALTHY

THE HISTORY AND BENEFITS OF DOING BURPEES

By Katy Nastro

"I hate burpees...alright. Let's face it. Burpees suck. Everybody hates burpees. I hate burpees. But, it's the world's No. 1 exercise for getting you healthy. Why...?"

- Joe De Sena



YEAH, JOE, WHY?

The legend of the burpee all starts with a guy named Royal Huddleston Burpee, a physiologist from New York City. The original exercise was created as part of a fitness test back in the 1930s. The OG exercise didn't include a pushup, nor a jump at the end, and certainly was not intended for high volume usage.

According to sources, Royal was a fitness fanatic (probably a Spartan Racer at heart) and was not interested in studying the physiology of extremely fit people such as his colleagues, but more so the everyday person. During his time as a Ph.D. candidate in applied physiology at Columbia University, Royal invented the four-part exercise to evaluate baseline fitness. Royal would measure the subject's heart rates before and after four burpees. A few math equations later and he was able to determine pretty accurately how well the heart pumped blood, providing subjects some general insight into their overall health. Go, Royal.

Though the original version of the burpee was mild compared to the demon of routine we've come to know and love to hate today, its basic movements have always been recognized as difficult. The armed services thought so much so that they incorporated it into their fitness tests around World War II. Royal was less than pleased to hear the military started requiring high volumes of the movement to be done within a certain time, stressing caution that those without established core strength can become injured.

Well, today Royal would be considerably irked to see his coveted burpee has exploded into a vehicle for painful pleasure and physical satisfaction. A workout all on its own, the burpee can be your friend and your enemy all at the same time.

But according to our in-house Director of Training-extraordinaire, Sam Stauffer, it really is an all-around champion of an exercise.

"What makes this exercise so interesting is that it literally hits it all. While it requires optimal mobility and flexibility to be done correctly, it's a great way to hit cardio, strength and power all at the same time. For lack of better words, it's an all-in-one exercise."

Sam's right. The benefits of this torturous activity outweigh its pain (well, theoretically). Fitness experts keep relying on the burpee due to its dual nature of strength conditioning and cardio conditioning all rolled into one. The pushup and squat combo hit two classic moves, while the jump and quick repetition over time can help strengthen your body's endurance. And, because it requires quick repetitions, it kickstarts your body's anaerobic ability (aka, your body's superpower of producing energy without oxygen's assistance).

A triple whammy. "It's innovative and an all-around ass-kicker," according to SGX coach Jason Jaksetic. Don't be caught without the proper form during your next race. Luckily, Jason was able to give us the best break in his piece for spartan.com titled, "The Art of a Perfect (and Powerful) Burpee."

Visit [Spartan.com/Burpees](https://spartan.com/Burpees) for 24-7 burpee support

1. YOU DROP DOWN AND TOUCH YOUR CHEST TO THE GROUND.

2. PUSH YOURSELF OFF THE GROUND, LAND IN A SQUAT AND PROCEED TO STAND TO THE UPRIGHT POSITION WITH A FULLY EXTENDED HIP.

3. YOU MUST JUMP OFF THE GROUND, MAKING SURE BOTH FEET ARE IN THE AIR.

4. YOUR HANDS MUST CLEAR YOUR EARS.

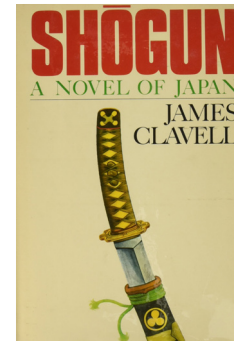
Joe's

REQUIRED READING

THE UNOFFICIAL SPARTAN SYLLABUS

By Joe De Sena

Spartan's version of Captain Ahab, Joe De Sena, is a big fan of books. He often gets asked what he's reading or what's on his hit list. We asked Joe to share some of his favorites. Below we've compiled said favorites and even included a brief synopsis so you can decide for yourself which piece of literature is going to get those creative juices flowing and give your brain an honest workout. Your whole body needs a rest day, too, ya know (and no, leg day does not count).



SHOGUN

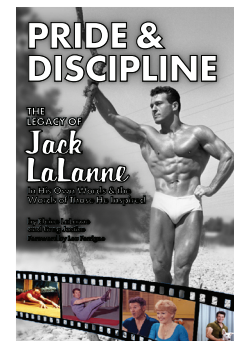
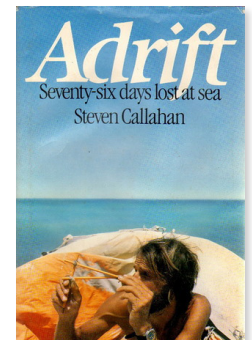
James Clavell

Clavell's novel depicts brash English pilot John Blackthorne's encounters with two people that will change his life forever: a power-driven warlord and a beautiful interpreter. Set in the year 1600, Blackthorne's ship washes ashore mainland Japan only to meet Toranaga, the most powerful feudal lord in the land who ends up tearing his way to become the Shogun – the Supreme Military Dictator. He also meets Lady Mariko, a newly devout Catholic who falls for old Blackthorne, testing her religious and country devotions. There's danger, love, suspense and action. An interesting and violent time in Japanese history brought to light through the eyes of a westerner's first meeting. *Shogun* will consume your mind, but you won't mind at all.

ADRIFT: SEVENTY SIX DAYS LOST AT SEA

Steven Callahan

Before Hollywood adapted this seafaring tale, Callahan's *Adrift* stayed on the New York Times bestseller list for over thirty-six weeks. His first-hand account of being alone at sea for seventy-six days after his small sailboat, Rubber Ducky III, took a final swim during a Mini-Transat race from Spain to Antigua. With an emergency duffel bag and just a yellow life raft, he managed to survive squalls, sharks and the inevitable dehydration. Perseverance and a bit of ingenuity were Callahan's only chances of survival. Good thing he packed both.



PRIDE & DISCIPLINE: THE LEGACY OF JACK LALANNE

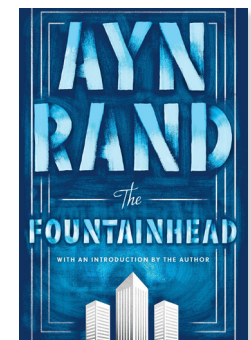
Elaine Lalanne & Greg Justice

Dubbed "The Godfather of Fitness," Jack Lalanne has been recognized for leading the charge on the fitness industry since 1936 when he opened the first modern health club. Anyone familiar with LaLanne noted his sincere belief in the health benefits of a positive mindset, regular exercise, and proper nutrition. Years following the health club, he would be responsible for the developments of fitness instruction for women, elderly, disabled, and many more. We owe a few notable gym equipment pieces to the Godfather himself, and his fitness legacy lives on within this new book. *Pride & Discipline* is an insider's peak into a man's dedication to health, with a heavy dash of humor from a man who was often quoted saying, "I can't die because it would be bad for my image."

THE FOUNTAINHEAD

Ayn Rand

The first major literary success for the Russian-American novelist. Another thought-provoking piece, Rand examines the life of a young architect, Howard Roark. Roark is a free-thinking innovator, yearning to create modernist building designs despite the stagnant architectural establishment, which does not invite innovation. Roark is believed to be Rand's ideal image of man born onto the page. A man who struggles over individual desire versus a collective group desire. Multi-faceted characters and a bit of self-examination. Are you with the group, or for yourself? Hmmm, tricky one.





ONE

Sarah Crossan

Sisters, Grace and Tippi, are two individuals that share the same body. Conjoined at the waist, the twin girls have defied the odds of survival. They have shared their whole lives together and couldn't imagine separating, but as they get older, they know they are changing, leading to different and bigger challenges. A super interesting novel for those physiology buffs out there. And, it's in free verse form, so it sounds just as good as it reads.

OUTLIERS

Malcolm Gladwell

Gladwell sets himself apart with this bestseller all about outliers. The individuals that go above and beyond. The best, brightest and most successful. Gladwell takes a look at how background, culture and the moment in time one is born can play a role in extreme success. Throughout this engaging little piece of insight, he debunks most of our well-known elitist groups, allowing readers to take a peek behind the curtain of successful individuals and groups. For example, ever been curious as to what made The Beatles the most kick-a\$% rock & roll band in their time and beyond? Or how many hours it takes to achieve world-class expertise in a skill? No? You'll get curious, Gladwell knows you will.

THE TIPPING POINT

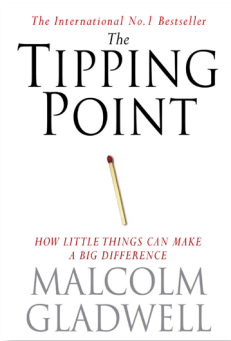
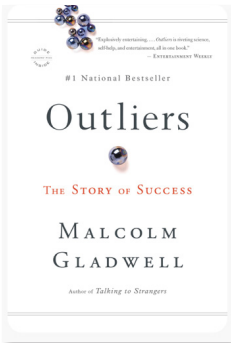
Malcolm Gladwell

Another notable Gladwell book that Joe recommends over and over again. Gladwell takes a look at unexpected major shifts in society, which encompasses things like an uptick in teenage smoking, a downtick in crime during the mid-'90s and even illness epidemics like the flu. From the moment they start to the gradual incline, then the top of the peak, in which Gladwell calls the tipping point, the whole book examines those who are prone to igniting these trends and new ideas. A journey through the positives and negatives of these phenomena with a hopeful look into how the natural idea makers can lead to big things. Right on.

A MESSAGE FROM GARCÍA

Elbert Hubbard

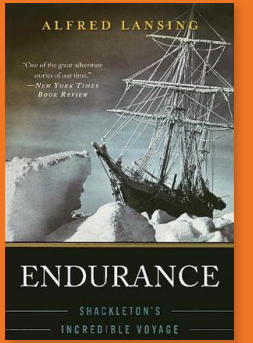
Written in 1899, it's an essay that still has people talking around the world. Hubbard was an American writer, poet, artist and founder of the Roycroft artisan community in New York. His essay presents the story of an American soldier, Andrew S. Rowan, just before the Spanish-American War. Rowan is requested to deliver a message from President William McKinley to Gen. Calixto García, a Cuban official. With García in Cuba and little known about his whereabouts, Rowan asks no questions and heads off to accomplish the challenging task at hand. His ambition, perseverance and commitment proved that an average man can accomplish greatness with the right mindset and commitment. The phrase "to carry a message to García" became a common phrase for years to come, indicating the importance of taking initiative when carrying out a difficult assignment.



ENDURANCE

Albert Lansing

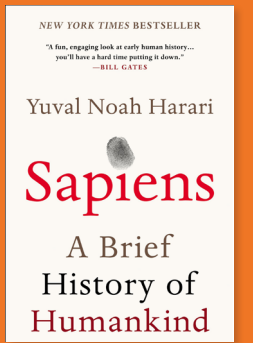
Sir Ernest Shackleton was a British explorer who spent much of his career heading South...to the South Pole that is. Well, at least trying to. *Endurance* is a retelling of the Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition of 1914, led by Ernest Shackleton. Shackleton aimed to be the first party to cross the Antarctic via the South Pole, but due to pack-ice, their ship was crushed. The crew was able to escape onto sea ice, drifting around for just over a year before relaunching lifeboats. All members of the expedition then made it to ice covered Elephant Island before only five set sail and landed on South Georgia Island, 650 nautical miles away. Three months after landing on South Georgia, the five were able to return to Elephant Island and rescue the remaining crew members. A story of survival, and of course, endurance (the ship's namesake and what the crew ate daily).



SAPIENS: A BRIEF HISTORY OF HUMANKIND

Yuval Noah Harari

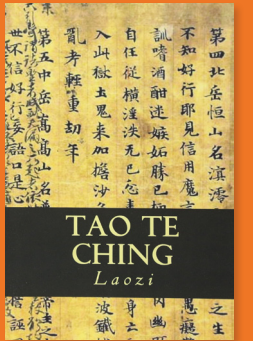
Dr. Yuval Noah Harari answers the questions of human history. Out of six human species inhabiting Earth 100,000 years ago, why did the Homo Sapien win out? Yuval takes readers into the history of humans spanning a variety of topics including religious beliefs, timetables, nations, human rights and even modern day ideals. He explores how outside factors such as agriculture have shaped who our species is today, internal factors such as personalities and even looks at what factors might play a role in our development as a species moving forward. An interesting look back to discover what's in store in the future for those who stand upright.



THE BOOK OF TAO: TAO TE CHING

Lao-Tzu

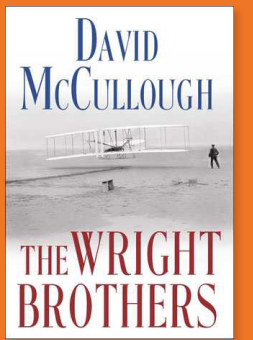
Tao Te Ching is a classic Chinese text, from around the 6th century BC. While the authorship is debated it's believed that most of it is written by Lao-Tzu translating to "Old Master," a court record keeper during the Zhou Dynasty. Considered a key element of Taoist philosophy with possible influences on Chinese religions, its purpose is said to lead people through life with serenity, peace and compassion for others. The Tao translates to "The Way," which is believed to mean the way to harmony with the life force of the universe. Just a little light reading for ya.



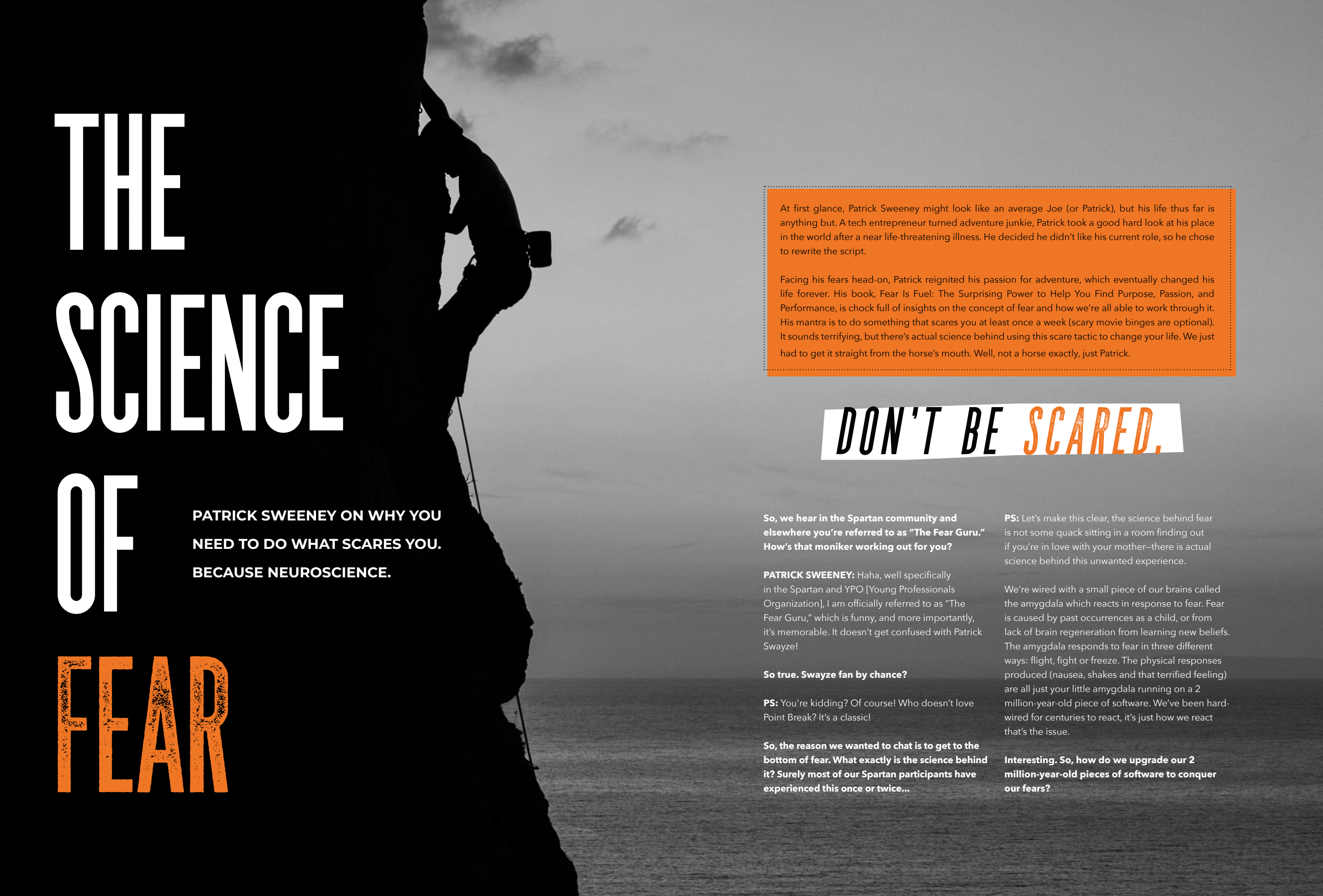
WRIGHT BROTHERS

David McCullough

A New York Times #1 bestseller and Pulitzer Prize winner, this piece of non-fiction retells the story of Wilbur and Orville Wright. Those guys who taught everyone how to fly, essentially. Two brothers in North Carolina, both bike mechanics with a drive to succeed, they took flight on a cold winter day in 1903. With only a public high school education and insurmountable curiosity, the story of the Wright brothers really is an amazing example of human ingenuity and the drive necessary to accomplish just about anything, regardless of the risks.



Sign up for *Spartan LIFE*, our newsletter where we offer more fuel for your mind, at life.spartan.com



THE SCIENCE OF FEAR

**PATRICK SWEENEY ON WHY YOU
NEED TO DO WHAT SCARES YOU.
BECAUSE NEUROSCIENCE.**

At first glance, Patrick Sweeney might look like an average Joe (or Patrick), but his life thus far is anything but. A tech entrepreneur turned adventure junkie, Patrick took a good hard look at his place in the world after a near life-threatening illness. He decided he didn't like his current role, so he chose to rewrite the script.

Facing his fears head-on, Patrick reignited his passion for adventure, which eventually changed his life forever. His book, *Fear Is Fuel: The Surprising Power to Help You Find Purpose, Passion, and Performance*, is chock full of insights on the concept of fear and how we're all able to work through it. His mantra is to do something that scares you at least once a week (scary movie binges are optional). It sounds terrifying, but there's actual science behind using this scare tactic to change your life. We just had to get it straight from the horse's mouth. Well, not a horse exactly, just Patrick.

DON'T BE SCARED.

So, we hear in the Spartan community and elsewhere you're referred to as "The Fear Guru." How's that moniker working out for you?

PATRICK SWEENEY: Haha, well specifically in the Spartan and YPO [Young Professionals Organization], I am officially referred to as "The Fear Guru," which is funny, and more importantly, it's memorable. It doesn't get confused with Patrick Swayze!

So true. Swayze fan by chance?

PS: You're kidding? Of course! Who doesn't love Point Break? It's a classic!

So, the reason we wanted to chat is to get to the bottom of fear. What exactly is the science behind it? Surely most of our Spartan participants have experienced this once or twice...

PS: Let's make this clear, the science behind fear is not some quack sitting in a room finding out if you're in love with your mother—there is actual science behind this unwanted experience.

We're wired with a small piece of our brains called the amygdala which reacts in response to fear. Fear is caused by past occurrences as a child, or from lack of brain regeneration from learning new beliefs. The amygdala responds to fear in three different ways: flight, fight or freeze. The physical responses produced (nausea, shakes and that terrified feeling) are all just your little amygdala running on a 2 million-year-old piece of software. We've been hard-wired for centuries to react, it's just how we react that's the issue.

Interesting. So, how do we upgrade our 2 million-year-old pieces of software to conquer our fears?

PS: Fear is just a physical response, right? So, if you are able to look internally, explore what’s your “Fear Frontier” and acknowledge the feelings associated with said fears, then we can get comfortable with those physical responses. That’s why it’s important to scare yourself every day! If we get more comfortable with those uneasy feelings and responses, we can change our mindsets from fear to excitement, or threat to challenge.

Looking at the Spartan races specifically, you’ll find about 25 percent of people who do Spartan races have found some sort of life change from them: meeting a spouse, losing a goal weight, channeling the same energy and discipline into a business, etc. Some people knock out these goals from luck, but it’s really fear that’s the catalyst for these changes.

Interesting. Now, what about the Alanis Morrisette scenario, where everything’s ironic (you know the song, “He waited his whole damn life to take that flight and as the plane crashed down, he thought, ‘Well isn’t this nice…’”)? What if someone experiences the absolute worst-case scenario, how would they ever get back out there?

PS: If the absolute worst-case scenario happened (death of a spouse, severe injury, etc.) and they are still alive? You hear tons of stories like this, but those who took it as a growth opportunity instead of a sentence did the most amazing things. It’s a mental

game, really. So much hinges on how you can maintain a level of curiosity—curious to do more, see how far you can push. The less judgmental they become, and the more courageous. We too can learn how to flip the script without the Alanis scenario.

Do you still have fears, even as the guru?

PS: Sure, I still have fears. I can have fears every time I invest in companies, change a part of a well-practiced speech, host a show, you name it. But, I have the ability to act consciously and curiously. We shouldn’t lose that ability to feel fear—we need the release to heighten senses. Pilots, Olympic and world-class athletes all know the superpower [of fear] when it kicks in. They are able to just focus on the task at hand by using the change in their bodies. They know these reactionary feelings of fear in their bodies and have a good understanding of the brain behind it, even when they’re scared shitless.

We’re going to have to get Michael Phelps on the phone and do a debrief to compare notes. Last question: What’s the last scary thing you’ve done where you’ve conquered fear?

PS: Well, recently I went climbing in Yosemite, out on the edge of a slab, no protection. I was about 600 feet up going from one anchor to the next with about 40-45 feet in between. If I fell, it would’ve been about 50 feet. Definitely scary.



TOP 10

REASONS PEOPLE DON'T DO SPARTAN RACES

EXCUSE	ANSWER
Overall Fear.	Spartan has a Fear Guru and his name is Patrick Sweeney. He'll teach you how to have courage on demand.
They don't want to do it alone.	They don't want to do it alone. (Spartans, despite their hard warrior exterior, are big softies—say, “Hi,” make a friend and stick together.
Scared to run further than from the couch to the fridge.	There is life beyond the couch.
Worried they have a dad-bod and will give up before the finish.	Your buddy and your Guru will get you through! And, aren't dad-bods in?
Intimidated competing against the rock-hard Spartan athletes who look like Greek statues come to life.	Perspective: 20,000 people run the Boston Marathon every year but only a handful are knocking out 5-minute miles.
Scared of getting hurt.	We've got ambulances and medical staff for that. Pain is temporary, respect lasts forever.
Afraid someone will think they are a loser for drinking the Spartan Kool-Aid.	You can have friends who are Spartans and/or friends for happy hour—your choice.
Who's going to watch the kids??	You know Spartan has a race for them, too.
Fear the cost is out of their budget.	You can't put a price on accomplishment. AROO!
Think they're too old and have got diverticulitis...a trick knee, and lumbago.	The two things with the biggest impact on longevity and health are calorie restriction and exercise. Now you've got a reason to do both.

You can now take Patrick’s online class **FEAR AS FUEL** for **FREE**.
Use the code **mag-2020** at learn.spartan.com and get our guru to coach you.

the GEAR LAB

007 Wasn't the Only One with Toys

BY M.T. (MERCHANDISING TEAM)

Buried deep in the Spartan headquarters are the men and women who equip Spartan competitors and everyday athletes alike with the gear necessary to take on their goals.

AGENT SPARTAN: M.T.

M.T.: Agent Spartan

AGENT SPARTAN: So, what do you have for us today, M.T.?

M.T.: Well, some exciting new recommendations from our team. They've been quite busy crafting these gadgets for your competitors, you know.

AGENT SPARTAN: I see. Shall we get on with it then?

M.T.: We shall indeed. Let's start over here with your nutrition. We've partnered with some incredible scientists on a collection of items that promote wellness developed to help you perform, recover, and optimize your body's potential everyday. Why not start with some free-radical fighting antioxidant supplements such as **MitoQ⁰⁰¹**, along with **USANA CellSentials™⁰⁰²** packed with everything you need to keep your busy Spartan self fully equipped on the health front.

AGENT SPARTAN: Good to hear, but have you got anything for energy? I'm feeling a bit peaked from the two Beasts I've just completed in record time...

M.T.: Of course! Here, try this **Liquid I.V.⁰⁰³** drink mix to fully restore all those electrolytes you've lost. While you're at it, try these delightful honey-based **energy waffles and chews by Honey Stinger⁰⁰⁴** we've acquired. You'll see what all the buzz is about on them, ahem.

AGENT SPARTAN: Hilarious.

M.T.: Righto, moving on. You'll need a new outfit by the looks of it. We've got you covered there. All of our pieces are developed with a focus on functionality and flexibility. They're made of advanced lightweight materials—so comfortable, yet

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durable, and in the case of an obstacle course race, can provide needed protection in all the right places. Our **Delta Compression top and tights⁰⁰⁵** might just be a second skin once you put them on. Made with super-strong and exceptionally lightweight **Dyneema reinforcements** on the shoulders for extra protection when you're carrying logs, bodies, etc. Maybe you're after something a bit more breathable for those sunny days in Oahu during the Hawaii Trifecta Weekend. Toss on the **Craft Pro Series Breakaway tee and boardshorts**, both lightweight and breathable yet durable for course wear.

AGENT SPARTAN: And, quite stylish, too.

M.T.: Quite so! And, don't forget any lady agents you might encounter during the year, they need protection just as much as you do. In case of warmer climates, give them the **Craft Pro Series tank⁰⁰⁶ and Hot Short**. These items might be extremely featherweight, but their durability and flexibility provide free ease of movement all over. If they need something with a bit more coverage, our **Craft Delta tights and bra** offer super-strong and exceptionally lightweight **Dyneema**, which is tougher than Kevlar. Incredibly strong and high performing, just like our female agents.

AGENT SPARTAN: Fierce competitors they are, positively fierce.

M.T.: And remember, Agent Spartan, all of our performance gear includes attributes such as functionality, flexibility, is lightweight and comfortable yet durable and, in the case of an obstacle course race, can provide needed protection in all the right places.

AGENT SPARTAN: Right, good to know. Got any shoes for me?

M.T.: Have we got shoes? Really, Spartan, you must be kidding. Of course we have shoes. Only the top-of-the-line **RD Pro footwear⁰⁰⁷**, built for the most extreme trails or obstacles put in your path. The shoes are unmatched for durability, include superior drainage and a lug system for extraordinary traction. Lightweight and built for speed. Whether it's the trail in your path or an extreme obstacle, these shoes will get you through any challenge, such as rope climb, inverted wall climb, A-frame cargo net, you know—all the fun stuff. And they will last longer than any shoe you've ever worn.

Oh, almost forgot! You'll need these: **Darn Tough's line** exclusively for our agents which includes 1/4 Cushion Sock or the OTC Beast Sock. Both made with sturdy merino wool and come with a lifetime warranty. And, just in case you're in need of something a bit more ergonomic, try the **Craft Compression Knee Socks⁰⁰⁸** to keep you steady.

AGENT SPARTAN: Looks like you've really got my feet covered, there M.T.

M.T.: You just wait until you see the accessories. Now those are the fun part. Start with the Franklin OCR premium glove. This will help you with monkey bars, multi-rig, ape hanger, Spartan ladder, rope climb, and bucket carries. They leave room for a watch, and not just any, but the Lumix 1000, the Official Watch of Spartan. Water resistant, CARBONOX and stainless steel, this watch just might be tougher than you, Spartan!

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AGENT SPARTAN: Doubt it. But, nice watch. Okay, what else?

M.T.: Craft Camouflage neck tube and hydration belt. The first can be converted to a **headband⁰¹⁰** or face protector, whilst the **hydration belt** features comfortable ripstop mesh fabric to hold you precious H2O, an agent's best friend.

AGENT SPARTAN: Cannot argue with that. Come on, what else?

M.T.: Well, I did forget one gadget during our little nutrition powwow. The **Vejo blender** has become surprisingly useful to our agents, ensuring their supplements and smoothies are blended to perfection.

AGENT SPARTAN: Which is key. No one likes a lumpy smoothie. What are those? One looks a bit, er, heavy...

M.T.: 5.11 Tactical weight belts and the **BFF massager**. You're quite right, the **5.11 belts** are heavy and made for training (and perhaps some events in 2020), while the massager helps to alleviate any muscle aches and pains the aforementioned belt might incur.

AGENT SPARTAN: Sounds splendid.

M.T.: What is even more splendid is the plethora of toys you have to train with! We've become rather stocked with all the tools of the trade. No more running on unforgiving treadmills, I present to you the **TrueForm Runner**—top of the line treadmill with a slightly curved design and the quietest mechanics, you'll be running on a cloud. Once you've warmed up on the treadmill, you'll want to get right into the **Slam Balls** specifically designed not to bounce or roll during high impact training. Take those balls to new heights

with our dependable **vinyl Foam Plyboxes⁰¹²**. Various heights for varying workouts. Variety is key, as you know, Agent Spartan.

AGENT SPARTAN: Is it now?

M.T.: Quiet you, more to get through. I know you're often on the road, so we've also crafted some extra durable covered **resistance tubes** and a **bucket training kit**, which should keep your body busy whilst away. If those aren't enough, pack the **50lb Pancake** or the **three-strand 1"-diameter climbing rope**. Either of those should put you to the test. But, if none of the above is really giving you the Spartan edge you so desire, toss in a pair of **chalkless wooden rings** and call me when you've given those a try. All will help with atlas carries, sled drags, high hurdles, and more.

AGENT SPARTAN: Alright, alright, M.T., anything else—you've really cut into my training time.

M.T.: For good reason. These tools will take your training and competing to the next level, Agent, so keep focus just one second longer. Finally, to cap off our meeting, I give you these: **Junk Big Bang Life headband** and the **Groove Life silicone ring**. Both can be worn during competition without worry of harming them, and not to mention you will look fantastic. I believe 90 percent of it is looking good, right, Agent Spartan?

AGENT SPARTAN: Exactly right, M.T. Thanks for all this, old chap.

M.T.: My pleasure.

Get after it and gear up at shop.spartan.com



TRANSFORMATIONAL SPARTANS

The Spartan community is filled with inspirational, get-your-ass-off-the-couch types who come in all shapes and sizes. But, what a lot of people outside of Spartan don't know is that the community is filled with so much more than just Gerard Butler body doubles. So many incredibly uplifting stories come from those who made the decision to put in the work and just go for it. These individuals all embody what Spartan stands for: Grit, Determination and Perseverance. If you think you "can't," well, you'll probably be thinking you can once you hear their stories.

<< TIMMIE BRANN

AGE: 40

HOMETOWN: Tiburon, California

Timmie joined the Spartan community as an amateur in 2016. Fast forward just a bit and this mother and business owner is now a Spartan Elite, competing against other females at the highest level of OCR racing and is even a coach leading race prep classes. She didn't set out to become one of Spartan's faces for the LGBTQ community, but her presence and personality drew people to her. Brann connects with mothers and LGBTQ women alike who are eager to take on the challenge of Spartan racing for one personal goal or another. It was never Brann's intention to become a role model for inclusion, but she has, and continues stressing the importance of how everyone is a Spartan. A message that goes well beyond the starting line.

MY WORDS FOR THE SPARTAN COMMUNITY: You Can Sit With Us—You Can OCR With Us



SAMANTHA CORNELISON ^

AGE: 36

HOMETOWN: Monterey, California

Samantha's struggles with depression, weight gain, and alcohol came after serious family traumas. But at the lowest point in her life, Samantha refused to accept the path she was heading down. On June 14, 2017, Samantha got sober and hit the gym. Through obstacle training classes and diet, Samantha lost weight and crossed the finish line of her first Spartan race in June 2018. Her next challenge was the Spartan World Championships in which she would take on the Beast—Spartan's hardest course outside of endurance races. Scared she wouldn't finish, Samantha took Joe De Sena's words, "Enjoy the view, enjoy the moment, and do your best," to heart. And, just like that, two years after becoming sober, Samantha finished a Beast in memory of her beloved friend Andy.

MY FAVORITE QUOTE: I didn't come this far to only come this far. I came this far so that I would be strong enough to go further.



LISABETH CUPPOLETTI

AGE: 40

HOMETOWN: Roseville, California

Lisabeth was diagnosed with breast cancer just five days after her 40th birthday. The diagnosis showed that the cancer had metastasized to her lymph nodes, a particularly challenging condition. During her five months of chemotherapy, her fellow Spartans helped lift Lisabeth with unwavering amounts of love and support. She even ran a half-marathon while undergoing treatment. Nine days after her double mastectomy on September 17, with a port still embedded in her chest, she was at the Nationals in Lake Tahoe, not to compete, but to cheer on teammates and her husband, Tony Cuppoletti. People admire Lisabeth for her ability to find the silver lining, her mental toughness, and her drive to help others.

MY ADVICE: Every challenge is about visualizing the finish line while you're still in the race. Never stop moving forward. Strength grows in the moments when you think you can't go on but you keep going anyway.

SLAVA KULAKOVSKYI >>>>>

AGE: 32
HOMETOWN: Dnipro, Ukraine

Slava lost his arm just below the shoulder in an industrial pressing machine on February 24, 2014, at age 27. He almost died twice, once from blood loss and later from an infection. But just five years later, Slava's debut performance in Spartan's Trifecta Weekend in Lipno, Czech Republic, in September 2019, was a testament to human willpower. A natural sportsman and fitness lover, Slava's first goal after his accident was to get back to training. Slava's perseverance and resilience were due in part to watching his father struggle with his own loss of his hand while Slava was an adolescent. A friend introduced him to OCR after the accident, which at first seemed impossible, but then appeared to be the challenge Slava wanted to tackle the most. Since finishing Lipno, Slava has taken on any race he can find with that same perseverance.

MY MANTRA: Everyone is drawn to adventures. In the most impassable route. Who says I'm not afraid? I am afraid but fighting and walking. Go for the dream. Never doubt yourself! 9 times fell, 10 times stand up.

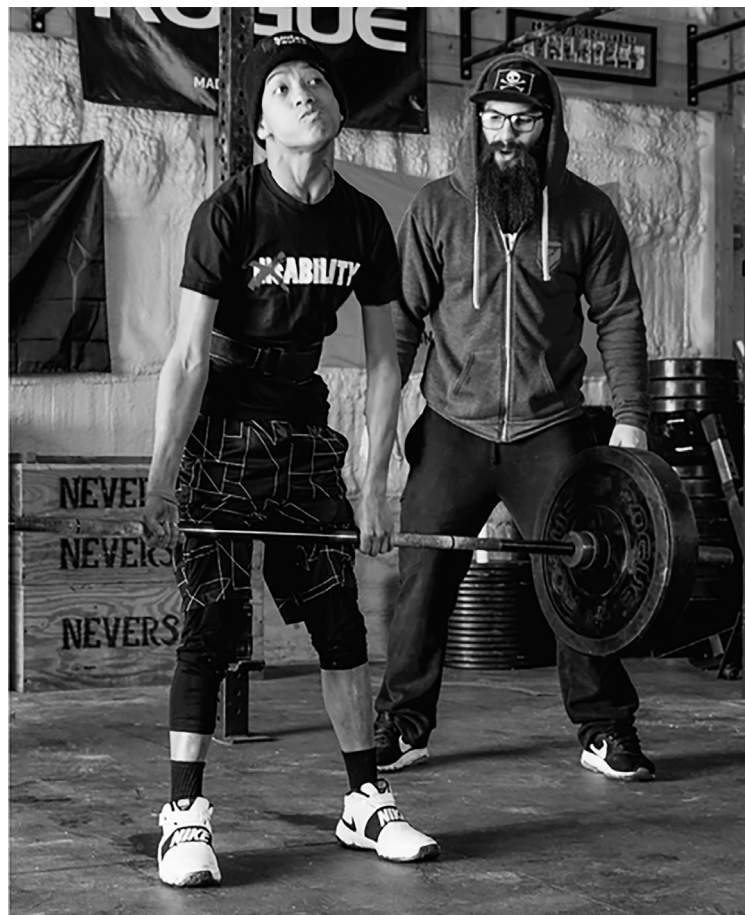


FRAN MARTINEZ ^

AGE: 38
HOMETOWN: Barcelona, Spain

At just 18 months old, Fran Martinez's son, Daniel, passed away from a rare genetic disease. With the loss of a child weighing on his shoulders, Fran struggled to stay afloat. He secluded himself in the mountains to grieve, but after two friends came to encourage him to participate in a Spartan race, he ultimately found strength in this community. Through Spartan, Fran has connected with over 3,000 parents who are also grieving the unimaginable pain of losing a child. Fran organized the Heroes Heat for parents to compete in as a tribute to their lost loved ones. The powerful community that Fran has met, and continues to meet, fuels him onward. He attributes Spartan racing and its community as a way for him to find happiness, knowing he has their love and support.

MY REALIZATION: Passion for something can unite people from different places, customs, beliefs and cultures. In reality we are all one—a Spartan never leaves another behind. Life is an obstacle course and Spartan teaches you to overcome them and make your mind stronger, with camaraderie and friendship. Together we are stronger.



MILES TAYLOR

AGE: 25

HOMETOWN: Westminster, Maryland

Miles Taylor rose to fame when he lifted twice his own weight in a competition just outside Maryland. For a 25-year-old with cerebral palsy, it was definitely noteworthy. Since his dead-lift debut, Miles has been actively training and campaigning for people living with disabilities. He is constantly in pursuit of taking on difficult endeavours and sees opportunity in breaking down barriers. Miles was invited to participate in his first Spartan race in Washington D.C. this past June. With the help of his longtime friend and coach Nicolai Myers, Miles faced the obstacles with true determination, inspiring everyone on the course that day. Miles continues to push limits and inspire others with or without disabilities.

PERSONAL QUOTE: I know that with my CP it's going to be harder for me because I have less stability. But, I don't want to shy away from challenges. I want to embrace the challenge and go head-on.



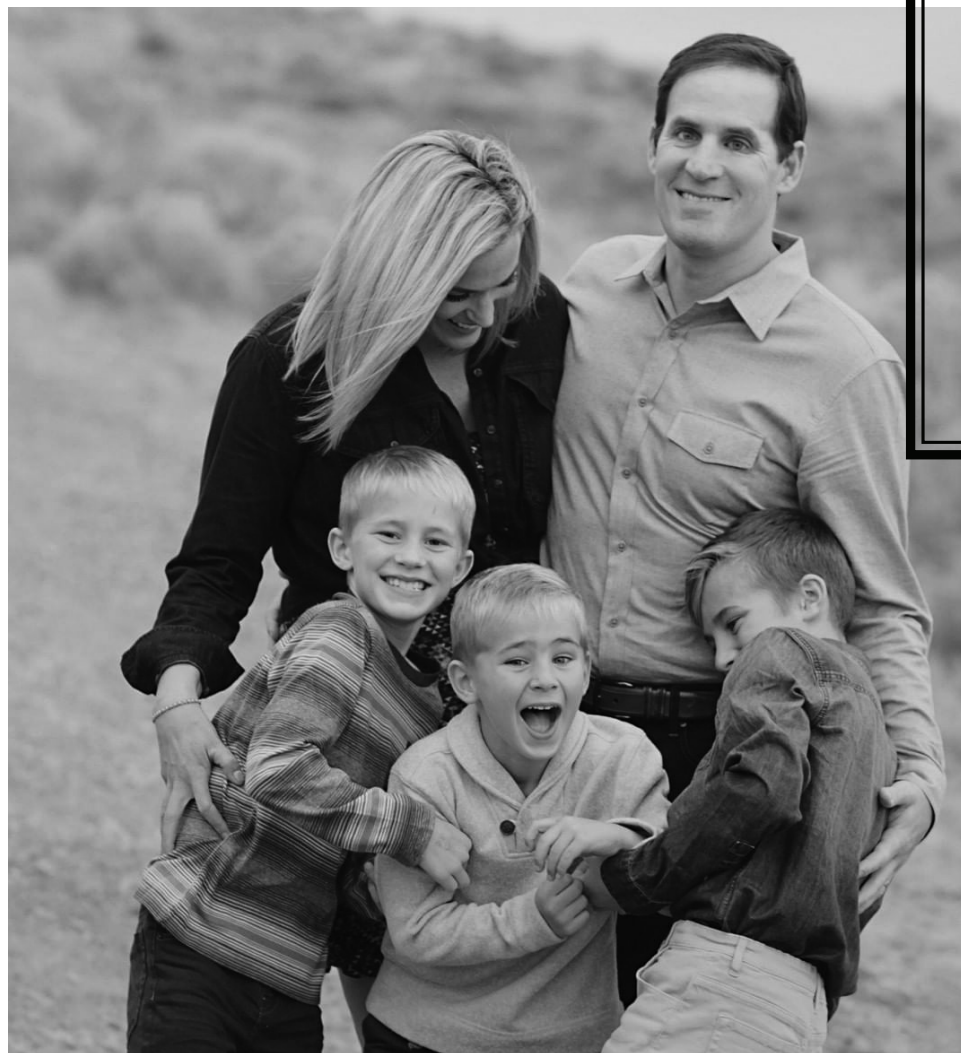
SCOTTY SMILEY

AGE: 38

HOMETOWN: Pasco, WA

In 2005, Scotty Smiley was on active duty in Mosul, Iraq as a platoon leader. In a matter of seconds, Scotty's life changed when shrapnel from a suicide car bomber blinded him in both eyes. Scotty only learned the extent of his injury when he awoke back in the U.S. from a medically induced coma. Anger and frustration flooded him, but a brief encounter with a former Sunday school student helped Scotty realize he still had purpose. He ended up staying in the Army as an instructor, crushing Ironman events and touring to tell others his story (as well as in a book and movie). Scotty and his wife Tiffany live each day with resilience, demonstrating to their three boys that no matter what obstacles life may throw at you, they can live life to the fullest when they give it their all.

MY REMINDER: In my life I have had to overcome fear on so many different levels, personally, professionally and physically. I have learned that fear is always present and it is just what you choose to do with it. Something I always remind myself of is that "perfect" doesn't exist but excellence does. Perfectionism is rooted in fear and confidence is rooted in excellence. Be confident in who you are and strive for excellence everyday.



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A SPARTAN KID?

5:30 a.m. wake-up calls aren't just for big Spartans. Joe De Sena's daughters, Catherine, 10, and Alex, 7, tell us what it takes to be mini-endurance athletes.



CATHERINE



ALEX

You have been waking up at 5:30 a.m. with your dad for as long as you can remember—do you like to get up early?

CATHERINE: NO...but I do like being fast and strong! I also like eating pancakes after the workouts!!

You have both done Spartan Races from the time you were 5—what was your favorite part?

CATHERINE: I love the medal and the rings. I love seeing all the people.

ALEX: I love the announcer announcing my name before the start and getting to stand on the podium with the elites and the spear.

What does it mean to be a Spartan Kid?

CATHERINE: Means you are tough, awesome, and great!

What do high performing kids like yourself eat to stay in great shape?

CATHERINE: Mostly pancakes and salad and pasta and peanut butter sandwiches. Watermelon, vegetables and black olives.

What's your favorite saying to tell Spartans?

BOTH: "Suck it up, buttercups"

What do you think of burpees?

CATHERINE: Hate them.

ALEX: Hate them.

Did you actually push a van once?

CATHERINE: Yes, we both did.

Your brothers ran marathons at 7-8 years old. Where are you guys on the trajectory?

CATHERINE: I did a BEAST at 6!

ALEX: I skied a black diamond and starred in a play!

Who is your favorite pet? Your dog or parrot?

ALEX: Our dog because she is fluffy and runs with us in the morning.

SPARTAN EDGE

Face New Challenges this Year with Spartan Edge, Spartan's online performance lab dedicated to keeping you informed and accountable anywhere in the world.

1

RACE PREP WITH TIMMIE BRANN

Everything you wanted to know about race prep from pro Timmie Brann. Eating, training, gear, and secrets about terrain. Timmie shares her wins and fails, helping you to make a plan on how to be the best racer you can be- veteran or newbie racer.

2

BOOTCAMP SERIES-3 PART CLASS

A three part series aimed at providing the groundwork for being a well-rounded Spartan. Increasing endurance, basics of masterful running, training in the gym and even stretching routines are all supplied. Help support your total body health with these three modules: Running + Endurance, Injury Prevention, and Strength + Agility.

3

PLANT-BASED PERFORMANCE

Hear from leading experts in the field of plant-based performance and diet, like Scott Jurek of the film Game Changers. The class offers a behavioral modification program to help support making a dietary change and phenomenal lifestyle alteration to become healthier, happier and more energetic than you ever thought possible.

Learn more about the programs offered at learn.spartan.com and find your edge today.

The first 1,000 people to use the code **mag-2020** will receive a **FREE YEAR MEMBERSHIP** to EDGE

FOCUS, STRENGTH, DETERMINATION, ENDURANCE

Presented by
 **USANA**

These professional athletes know the meaning of hard work. They know how to keep their bodies operating at peak performance, with a little help from USANA—the Official Nutritional Partner of Spartan U.S. and thousands of professional and Olympic athletes around the world.

But, they also know the value of each of these four Spartan principles: focus, strength, determination, and endurance. See how they define what each means to them on their road to success in the Octagon, Tokyo Games and beyond.



ALEX FERREIRA *Focus*

*Olympic Silver Medalist, X Games Gold Medalist,
3x Dew Tour Champion Freeskier*

There is a famous story about the two most “successful” people in the world; Bill Gates and Warren Buffet. The two had never met before and they decided to meet at Bill’s house with Bill’s father. Bill’s father took out a couple of note cards and asked them both to write down one word that allowed them to be in the position they are now. Without looking at each other’s cards they wrote down a word and handed the cards back to Bill’s father. Bill’s father then flipped both of the cards over and they each had the word FOCUS written on them. Focus to me means putting on my ski goggles and not viewing anything outside the frame. Staying within the box and attacking whatever is directly in front of me, which is usually a ski run. Nothing will break me when I am in a hyper-focus state. Currently, my focus is on the goal of defending my X Games Gold medal title and becoming a three-time Dew Tour Champion.



ALEX KOPACZ *Strength*

Olympic Gold Medalist in the 2-Man Bobsleigh, Canada

Bobsleigh is a sport that demands the extremes of both strength and speed. The sled weighs between 395 and 475 lbs. The brakeman (me), and pilot accelerate this heavy weight up to 60 km/h over more than 150 feet of ice. Once we are in the sled, we fight the violent bucking of the uneven ice surface, and gravitational forces (Gs) pushing on the sled as we rocket down the ice canal reaching top speeds of over 90 mph. When the sled goes from 0 to 6Gs in a turn, it feels as though someone just landed on your shoulders. Often this constant movement causes us to get covered in cuts and bruises. We fight all offseason to improve our starts by margins of just 0.01 seconds—often the difference between Gold and Bronze. These fractions of time are lost by any minor mistake. Are my shoes tied to the same tightness? Have I gone through the correct warm-up procedure? The variables seem endless, but we must be strong enough to know exactly what we can control and even stronger to deal with variables that we cannot control.



SARAH WELLS *Determination*

Canadian Olympic Hurdler, Pan Am Silver Medalist, 4X National Champion

During my pursuit of the Olympic Games, I faced many challenges. One of these was a stress fracture in my femur (translation: I had a crack in my thigh bone). Originally, I was sidelined for three months, which slowly turned into nine months. As each month went by, I crawled deeper into a dark hole as I felt my dream slip away. Everyone around me reminded me to be realistic. I had never touched the Olympic standard before, and I knew it was a near-impossible goal. This pressure made my recovery even more challenging. While I wasn’t able to train my body, I was strengthening a muscle people couldn’t see, and that was my determination muscle. After completing my first workout back upon being cleared to run, I immediately left the track and went to the tattoo parlor. I got the word “believe” tattooed on my wrist. Six months later I made the Olympic Games, and finished as an Olympic semi-finalist and one of the youngest competitors in the field.



SARA MCMANN *Endurance*

*Current UFC Fighter, Former Olympic Wrestler,
First U.S. Woman to Win a Silver Medal in Olympic Wrestling*

Many people will set goals and desired results, but the real test is what hardships you can endure and still press forward. Starting in wrestling, I was the only girl in my entire state competing against high school boys. Being outmatched physically was a huge obstacle and I had to endure this disadvantage. I chose to be creative in finding ways to enhance all of the skills I could control, such as technical skill and conditioning. There was no way to change the biological advantages, I just had to believe in myself and endure that aspect. I believe this attitude ultimately led me to become an Olympic Silver Medalist. Later when I began MMA, I once again trained with predominantly men. I had to endure being an absolute beginner at a sport while training with the same disadvantages I had previously faced. When I think of endurance, I think of the injuries I have worked through, the endless repetitions to acquire skills, losing weight, and all of the hard-learned lessons of competing for 25 years.



THE COMPANY YOU KEEP.

**"I THINK THE
BIGGEST THING
IS YOU ARE AN
AVERAGE OF THE
FIVE PEOPLE YOU
HANG OUT WITH."**

—Joe De Sena

Not too long ago, Joe De Sena was working on Wall Street, doing deals with various business people over plates of pasta at Rao's. Almost a decade later, the founder of Spartan now forges relationships with incredibly famous and influential individuals worldwide.

"I used to hang out and learn from mob bosses in Queens, mathematical quants on Wall Street and now thanks to Spartan, I get to broaden my worldview by meeting, competing with and interviewing unbelievably famous athletes, military personnel and just plain, cool,

interesting, smart people," notes Joe. "I'm pretty fortunate."

Joe De Sena is a man driven by an intense passion for getting people to push their boundaries, to get out of their comfort zone and live healthy lifestyles. His curiosity for how others achieve goals has led to a lot of pretty interesting conversations along the Spartan journey.

Life lessons, words of wisdom, personal experiences, all just little pieces of conversations Joe's had with the exceptional people he's lucky enough to surround himself with.



RICHARD BRANSON

Entrepreneur responsible for the Virgin empire
Owner of a little place called Necker Island, and quite fond of it.

Joe met Richard while raising money for Spartan in the early days. They instantly bonded over a passion for adventure. Richard invited Joe to do the Spartan Up podcast on Richard's island, but made Joe swim 10 miles to get to his beach. Richard's got a great sense of humor.

While chatting to Richard, Joe wanted to know:

JOE: If you could pick one secret to success that will help people—with their job, their business, with their life—what would it be?

RICHARD: I think looking for the best in other people. I find that throughout my life, never thinking ill of other people. By looking for the best, you know, praising other people—even people that have been written off by other people—there is always something special you can find in other people. Life is short and the world is much smaller than one realizes, and you're going to come across people time and time again in the most surprising places.

JOE: So avoid holding a grudge, don't burn any bridges, etc.?

RICHARD: If you do fall out with somebody in life, and even if you think it's their fault, just give them a ring and go out to lunch with them (could be your ex-partner, ex-wife, or whatever), and befriend them. You'll just find if you put a bad moment behind you, you'll be that much happier for it.

JOE: It could be one of the rarest qualities out there. Not too many people can drop their egos and do that. I've got a few things going on in my life at the moment, and I'm pretty competitive, which I'm sure you're competitive too, so that's probably my biggest challenge but listening to you, it obviously works. If you can get past the past—life's short, you're right.



JIMMY CHIN

Climber and Documentarian

You might know Jimmy from his work on a little Oscar-winning film called Free Solo.

Joe met Jimmy while in New York City's Central Park, as a mutual friend thought they would hit it off. Joe invited Jimmy on the Spartan Up podcast. Joe asked him if anyone ever called him Jimmy "The Chin" growing up. Apparently Jimmy's name reminds him of an old wise guy from growing up in New York, which made Jimmy laugh. Joe was pretty shocked to hear that Jimmy is actually afraid of heights. Joe asked Jimmy:

JOE: So, you have a fear of heights?

JIMMY: Yeah, I mean, I've never been able to overcome it. It's just been this thing...

JOE: We can see it from a lot of the movies and stuff I've seen on you, you can see like the fear on your face... How do you deal with that?

JIMMY: [Laughing] Yeah, well honestly, heights is probably the one thing that I'm not that worried about. I've been habituated to a vertical high-angle life. And actually, that's probably my safe space.

Joe also heard Jimmy has the occasional hand-rolled cigarette while climbing, but maybe more surprisingly (or less, depending on your point of view) he also likes to pull out skis after summiting Everest...

JOE: There's this other thing I heard about. That you're on top of Everest, you pull out a pair of skis and decide to ski down. How did the people around you react, like with the oxygen masks and everything? Were you just like, "I wanna get to basecamp quicker," or what?

JIMMY: Well, you know the thing about skiing Everest is I made two attempts to ski it. One successful—I've also climbed it without skis, too—but really we pick seasons when there are no other people on the mountain. So, the two times I went to try to ski it, we went during the monsoon season and the first time I tried, and we were literally the only team on the mountain doing alpine style, as we call it. And, kind of in the strange moral universe of climbing, style matters—like how you do something is just as important as what you do...So alpine is the highest commitment to a style of climbing that you can do, and we were the only team on the mountain as I said, and we failed spectacularly, which is as you know failures are actually pretty good, where you learn the most. I went back in 2004, climbed it during the regular season and basically looked at the whole mountain and realized it was definitely skiable and so went back in 2006, post-monsoon, nobody there, just me and my team, and an incredible sherpa team, who were the only ones who were like "Don't do it!" but it was a life goal, and I was prepared.

COLIN O'BRADY

Endurance Athlete and Adventurer

Likes to take long walks across a little place called Antarctica.

Joe met Colin through a mutual adventurer friend. Joe asked Colin:

JOE: Consistency is key. Can you walk me through something that you work to make constant in your daily routine?

COLIN: There are two things that I have made constant in my life that have helped me to become better. One is that I believe in constantly challenging myself to go outside of my comfort zone every day. Whether it's taking on a new goal that forces me to adopt a "beginner's mind" or continuing to push my limits in things I already do, it's something I'm always striving for. Secondly, a consistent meditation practice. It's something that has affected me profoundly in a positive way since I adopted it. In my new book The Impossible First, I chronicle my solo crossing of Antarctica, as well as the moments in my life that have affected me most. I speak at great length about how radically bringing daily meditation practice into my life has increased my mental fortitude, patience and my ability to go deep into my mind to find calm and strength in the face of some of the most extreme environments in the world.





CHRISTY TURLINGTON

Supermodel

Modeling is a little side gig for the founder of the Every Mother Counts nonprofit.

When Christy and Joe connected recently Joe learned about her dedication to fitness which includes having a treadmill in the office for midday cardio. Joe also loved hearing about her charity Every Mother Counts, a non-profit dedicated to the health and well-being of mothers during pregnancy and birth. Christy shared her own experiences with complicated childbirth and came to find out many women around the world die due to not having adequate access to maternity care. Christy's goal since the debut of developing this non-profit has been to raise awareness and funding to keep spreading the awareness and resources to all corners of the globe in a fight to make these complications and unnecessary deaths a thing of the past. Being a father himself, Joe admired Christy for taking on this issue and thinks this kind of dedication to a cause can translate into other facets of life. Perhaps training for a Spartan Race..."We'll get her out there, for sure," he says.



NOVAK DJOKOVIC

Professional Tennis Player

With \$139 million in career purses, one of the winningest players in professional tennis history.

Novak and Joe connected over dinner in New York City. They instantly bonded over Novak's rigorous training regime. Joe's a guy who gets along with anyone who wakes up early and attacks the day just like he does. Joe was also amazed at how focused Novak is overall, training aside. "This guy's dialed in, he's got his training, diet, charity, and just an overall command of his mindset," remarked Joe. Joe also found Novak's charity to be another inspiring facet of the tennis star. Growing up in Serbia, Novak was nurtured and supported by friends and family to follow his dreams, to which Novak accredits a lot of his success. Unfortunately, Serbia today has some of the lowest enrollment rates for preschool, an issue Novak hopes his foundation in conjunction with UNICEF and others can help combat, affording all children in Serbia the support they need to follow their own dreams. Joe applauds Novak for his compassion and drives to help others. He also applauded when he found out Novak flipped for his kettlebell, and even said he's "considering picking it up as a training methodology."

SERENA WILLIAMS

Professional Tennis Player

Ranked No. 1 in the world more times than we can count on both fingers and toes.

Joe heard Serena was competing in her first Spartan race with a friend and was thrilled to learn the tennis phenom was attempting a new physical challenge beyond the court. He was also pumped to hear Serena felt her first race was difficult and was glad to hear her say that she was "able to get through one," meaning Spartan's courses can definitely push anyone to the test (even a pro-tennis star like Serena).

Joe learned she tried her hand at another race and wondered how that one went:

JOE: Did it get any easier the second time through?

SERENA: The next one I did was a great memory of mine because I was training for Australia [the Open], and it was like coming back from the baby. Well, both of them were coming back from the baby, but this one was really cool because I did it in a respectable time [laughs]. And, I was just so excited because apart from the challenge, it was so fun.

JOE: Would you do more Spartan Races?

SERENA: I would most definitely run another Spartan race. I would do one every month if I could, but I have this other job. But, if I could do one every month, I absolutely would.



GERARD BUTLER

Actor and Filmmaker

He starred in a little film called 300, in which he may or may not have played the king of Sparta.

Joe and Gerard met at a restaurant when Joe walked in with his kettlebell and placed it on Gerard's table. Joe wanted to mess with Gerard a little bit, so he started telling everyone Gerard walks around with a kettlebell.

"So literally people started texting me for the next week or two with Gerard, saying, 'Hey Gerard, why do you, like, in all seriousness, why do you carry a kettlebell?' And, and it became a really funny thing," laughs Joe.

The two united over the fact they are both Spartans, in one way or another. Gerard even jokes that he's "The new CEO of Spartan." But apart from their similar senses of humor, it's Gerard's ability to command a room that Joe really admires. "No matter where we are together the guy gets all the attention, plus, he's hilarious. He sent me a video the other day from the drive-in of an In-and-Out Burger and told me he was starving because he was vegan all weekend. Cracks me up."



**FAIL.
ADJUST.
SUCCEED.**

Joe De Sena

THE MOST *elite* ARMY OF COACHES IN THE WORLD

THE PEOPLE WHO BUILD BETTER HUMANS

Spartan's resident Head of Fitness Education, Jeff Godin, Ph.D., CSCS, SGX, has been here from the start and built some of the foundations of Spartan training as we know it. Jeff was kind enough to take some time away from instructing future Spartan trainers to lend us some insight into how it all began. All meaning SGX training, not life itself. That would take awhile and this magazine doesn't have enough pages, and not nearly enough pictures of dinosaurs.

To start, let's hear about the evolution of Spartan SGX from Dr. J himself.

It seems like just yesterday that we started Spartan SGX. I look back to where we started and what we have evolved into and I cannot help but get a little warm and fuzzy. It has been and continues to be an excellent adventure. Since starting this program in 2012, we have had more than 4,000 people attend our workshop and now have 2,500 certified SGX coaches helping us "Build Better Humans."

It all started when Joe De Sena brought it to my attention that a lot of trainers and coaches wanted to partner with Spartan and prepare people for his races. He wanted to come up with a way to systematically evaluate the coaches to measure their coaching ability and knowledge of fitness and he wanted to make sure that they were truly Spartan.

De Sena's idea was simple: "I only want the best of the best trainers and coaches representing the Spartan brand." I knew we were on to something incredibly special and that I was going to need a team of pros to get this program off the ground. Two people came immediately to mind, my wife Tammy and my former student Joe DiStefano. Besides their incredible knowledge and experience, I knew that if I found myself in the middle of a zombie apocalypse, I could count on them to have my back, no matter how scary it became.

Over the next four months, we worked on the program, setting high standards for entry and developing the certification exam. Along the way we picked up a few other fitness experts and endurance athletes to contribute with the content and process, we also assembled a roundtable that included badasses like Mark Divine—ex-Navy Seal and creator of SealFit, Jeff Funicello—world-class wrestler and Pankration expert, Johnny Waite—life coach, 2x DR finisher, and Liz Cotter—a Bikram yoga expert.

After reviewing 50 applications we invited 20 top trainers and coaches from across the country to participate.

Our candidates arrived on Friday night at the Trailside Inn in Pittsfield, VT and were greeted with a two-hour, 300-question exam that covered everything from exercise science to sport psychology to fitness management. Only half of them were even able to finish the exam in the time allotted. The next morning at the break of dawn we jogged down (a short 6 miles away) to the yoga studio for a full 90-minute Bikram yoga session, heated with a woodstove to way over 100 degrees F. A quick jog back to trailside and we were ready for some breakfast and part two of the exam that included four hours of essay questions, movement analysis of Spartan obstacles, and case studies.

After eight hours of boot camp workouts we cooled down with a four-hour hike up to Shrek's Cabin on top of Joe's mountain, a hike that should take 45 minutes, but we intentionally got lost to instill frustration, fear, anxiety, and discomfort. When we arrived it was 11:00 p.m. and cold so we huddled around a fire and, because the Spartans were intelligent and well educated in history, we grilled the coaches with Trivial Pursuit questions until 1:00 a.m. Anyone who fell asleep automatically failed. Finally, we decided it was a full day, so we pulled out our sleeping bags for a quick nap under the stars. After an hour of blistering cold,

restless sleep we were awoken to the soothing sounds of De Sena, Devine, and Funicello screaming at us to wake up. Half-awake, we zombie-marched down the mountain just in time for a 4 a.m. Bikram yoga session.

The final stage of the certification process was to conduct interviews on our candidates to find out if in fact they were Spartan and lived Spartan. You can find out a lot about a person by interviewing them in a sleep-deprived and fatigued state. One of the most memorable responses from the interviews came from our Round Table member Jeff Funicello. The question was, "If you were trapped on an island with a group of people and you were the leader of the group, how would you handle dissension in a group member?" Jeff wasn't the one being interviewed but he quickly spoke up and without hesitation, he replied: "I would eat them." For a second I burst out laughing, but when I saw the look in his eye I quickly stopped. He wasn't joking.

After six hours of testing, eight hours of practical exams, a months' worth of exercise in one weekend, and six hours of interviews, no one ended up earning the certification. Two people passed the written exam, one had a Master's degree in Exercise Science, and the other was Joe Di (which is what we all call DiStefano), who took it just for fun.

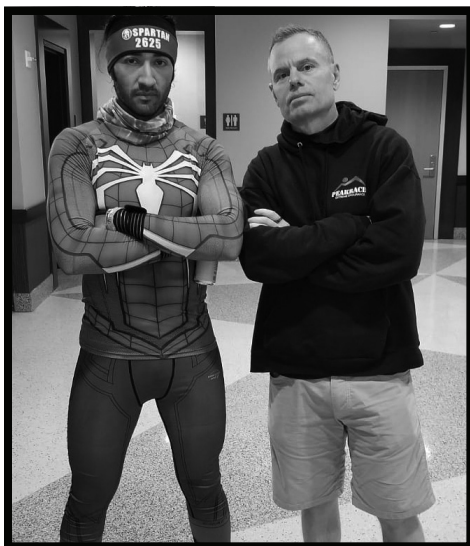
That weekend and all the work that it took us to get there was a labor of love. There was no revenue coming in, no one was getting paid. In fact, De Sena paid the workshop expenses entirely out of his own pocket including housing and food for the candidates. Tammy, Joe Di, and I still had the fire burning in our bellies, and we continued to explore other models to make Spartan Coaching successful.

We had a revelation: If we truly want to rip 75 million people off the couch, we will need an army of coaches who share Spartan values in order to be able to do it. Spartan SGX was born. We put our energy into developing content that was relevant to training and coaching participants for Spartan races in a way that was inspirational and embedded with Spartan principles. We saw the program not just for race preparation but as a fitness and health program that helps people discover true fitness by challenging themselves physically and mentally every day. In the end, we developed a specialty certification that was Spartan at its core and unlike any other certification in existence. We hosted our first SGX workshop in Westford, MA in 2012.

Since then we have hosted over 100 workshops globally including in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Great Britain, Australia, Spain, France, and Italy. We have coaches from the US, Canada, Spain, Switzerland, Italy, France, South Korea, Slovakia, Belgium, Hungary, Australia, Serbia, Poland, Puerto Rico, Russia, Poland, Luxembourg, Sweden, Mexico, China, Japan, Singapore, and the Dominican Republic. As Spartan grows globally, so does SGX. With our humble beginnings, we are now positioned to lead the charge and rip 75 million people off the couch and start living Spartan. And of course, none of this would be possible without the support of 4,000 workshop attendees who share our mission and vision of Building Better Humans.

10 Trainers YOU SHOULD KNOW.

A COLLECTION OF SPARTAN'S DEDICATED TRAINERS IN THEIR OWN WORDS



JONATHAN AROGON

@Aragonfitness | Fort Lee, NJ

SGX LEVEL I & SPARTAN STRONG CERT.

Loves Cosplay (popularly known within cosplay community as Wolverine)

On a nice cool morning in 2011 at the Staten Island Spartan Super, my Spartan journey began, when Spartan was still in its infancy. I didn't know what to expect—I just knew it consisted of 8+ miles with 20+ obstacles. The race destroyed me, and I was surprised by the amount of athleticism needed to get through it. There was a 10-foot-wall, which, I approached and thought to myself, "What do I do here?" So I ran toward this wall and with my fingertips grabbed the top and leaped over. That was the very moment I realized what it meant to be a Spartan.

Over the last seven years, I have had the honor of coaching thousands of students toward earning obstacle immunity, and inspiring thousands so that they too can feel how I felt that very moment I jumped that 10-foot wall and to push beyond what they once thought was impossible. AROO!



RICH BORGATTI

@richborgatti | Winchester, MA

SGX LEVEL II

Black belt in Budo Taijutsu

I first became aware of Spartan in 2010 when I was asked by my clients to help train them for a Spartan Race. I heard about the first (public) Spartan SGX certification in 2012. I was determined to attend a certification so I emailed Dr. J every month to see when the next one was taking place and was able to host and attend certification in October of 2013. Since receiving my SGX Certification I have worked with experienced athletes looking to break into the competitive side, as well as working with a handful of Elite Spartan podium finishers.

In 2018 I had the pleasure of working alongside Spartan's founder, Joe De Sena, training the largest team to ever attend the Fenway Spartan Sprint in Boston. I am currently putting all of my knowledge down into a book on training for Spartan Races which I hope will inspire more people to run a Spartan Race. It was the coaches and people I met through my SGX cert that helped make all this possible. I am grateful for all the Spartan Coaches that I call friends.



TODD CAMBIO

@the_red_gorilla | Exeter, NH

MASTER SPARTAN SGX INSTRUCTOR, SGX LEVEL II, OS

Taps trees and keeps bees

Coach Cambio has been with Spartan since the onset of the Spartan SGX Certification in 2012. He has certified hundreds of coaches at the live SGX Courses all over the globe. He has a unique history with Spartan, or more accurately, many firsts with Spartan. He was in the first class of SGX Coaches (that actually passed), his first Spartan Race was Fenway which was the first Stadion Race ever, he was the first person to do the official Spartan SGX Fitness Test (The Five Minute Burpee Test) and he taught the first-ever Obstacle Specialist Course. Along the way, he earned his Trifecta, his SGX Level II and was eventually promoted to Master SGX Instructor.

Being an SGX Coach is an absolute blast. I get to travel to phenomenal locations where I get to teach, to race and to make an impact in my coaches' lives. It is a responsibility I do not take lightly. It is way more than just teaching the X's and O's of personal training. It is passing on an attitude to create positive change. Literally, my goal is to pass on the ability to build better humans...mentally as well as physically.



JOHN HAYLEY

@johnhayleysunbreakablefitness | River Forest, IL

SGX LEVEL II & SPARTAN OBSTACLE SPECIALIST

Terrified of geese

I began my Spartan journey several years ago with pain: participating in a race that I was not able to complete. Spartan has helped me to turn that pain into purpose.

Initially, I became affiliated with Spartan to learn new techniques in coaching, becoming a Spartan SGX Coach in November of 2014. As a fitness coach, I wanted to distinguish my service to truly help people achieve their preferred fitness and health goals.

The experience provided by Spartan changed my life, both personally and professionally. I realized immediately that we had a lot in common. The Spartan community helped me to help others to live healthier and physically fit lifestyles. I am proud of the community that we are building. Living the Spartan Code has given me and those with whom we partner the courage to break through our perceived barriers.



MARK D. NOLAN

@mark.d.nolan | Macedonia, Ohio

SGX LEVEL I

Amateur aerial drone photographer

My journey as a Spartan SGX Coach began with class #001 in Boston in 2012 and I've been running full speed ahead ever since. The physical aspect of the Spartan SGX lifestyle and the vision Spartan and Joe De Sena had to get people off their couches and moving was what hooked me. It was like dropping a rock into the ocean—the seemingly small impact on one life at a time rippling out from that original action. These lives are like small ripples that continually grew into a tidal wave of change. I embraced the vision of impacting hundreds of thousands of people and changing their health and wellness for the better.

As a veteran and someone who enjoys personal growth and physical challenges, my family and I have embraced the Spartan way and we endeavor to exemplify the Spartan code.



ERIC PAQUET

Jonquiere, Quebec, Canada

SGX COACH LEVEL I & II, SOS, EDGE AND SPARTAN FIT

Will kill for brownies

I am just thankful for having found such an amazing program that teaches and promotes physiological and psychological fundamentals toward becoming better humans. I always thought that humans were the only living species that do not evolve to their fullest potential.

My whole journey started in summer of 2012. I was looking for a new challenge in my life. My first race was a Spartan Super, Montreal. Been hooked since!!! Being a little bit overweight at that time, I really wanted to perform better so I went on and lost a little over 45 pounds in 3 months. Next, Spartan Beast, Ottawa. Finished mentally strong but physically broken—body wasn't prepared for such a long distance. Spartan Sprint, Fenway. Kept on training to get prepared. I was part of the first heat that went on, only ten runners at the time. Getting ready under Mr. De Sena's direction, my first burpees at the starting line is probably my favorite souvenir!



TRACY READ

@readinessfitness | @tracynread | Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada

SPARTAN SGX LEVEL II

Loves all things Wonder Woman

I have coached hundreds of clients in my six years as a Spartan Coach. The majority of these people were literally getting off the couch and into my program. Some of them then went on to achieve things they never thought possible. My favorites have been entire families that have come in to train together and then race together. I know that the Spartan SGX program has helped me to change lives and inspire people to achieve great things on and off the racecourse.

Spartan changed my life six years ago. I have lived my life by the Spartan Code daily and it has helped me to change the lives of so many people (not just my Spartan athletes). I am proud to be a Spartan and am grateful for all of the opportunities that have come my way because of Spartan! Aroo!



CASEY ROTONDI

@coachcasey_ocr_ninja | Ft Lauderdale, FL

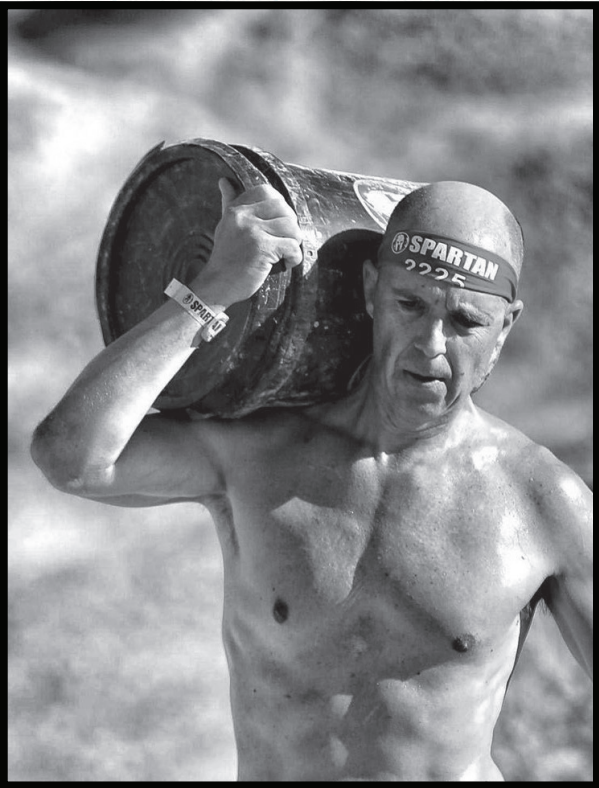
SGX LEVEL I & II, MASTERCOACH

Born on Christmas Day

Since becoming one of the first SpartanSGX certified coaches six years ago, my career took on a whole new direction. I had always been a sports performance coach but taking that course transformed me and I knew that I wanted to share that feeling with as many people as possible.

I've since had the opportunity to lead Spartan Workout Tours and Hurricane Heats, teach on the first (and only) Spartan Cruise, host different segments on their social media, write for their online magazine, and teach Obstacle Specialist Workshops, I have been able to coach thousands of athletes and help further that mission.

From the dozens of seasoned Spartans who grind it out to rise to podium status to the countless novice athletes that I am able to introduce to the sport, I am so grateful for this brand for making my career possible and to my Spartan mentors who helped introduce it to me all those years ago.



CHRISTOPHER RUTZ

@ToughTraining | Scottsdale, Arizona

SGX LEVEL I & II

Allergic to shirts

I ran my first Spartan Race, the Arizona Super, in February of 2011. Since then, I've completed 137 races, completing all available Beasts in 2012 and earning 7 Trifectas. A small number compared to some of today's Trifecta chasers, but that was early days. It was an honor helping to develop the Spartan Pro Team.

But I wanted to help others get into and triumph at this sport and in 2014 I became a Spartan SGX coach, focusing on Spartan racers looking to improve their running and obstacle skills. It's rewarding coaching all levels of Spartans, including those getting ready for their first race up to seasoned racers who are looking for another podium finish.



DOUG SKLAR

@coachdoug_cpt | New York, NY

SGX LEVEL I

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Blue Belt

I did my first Spartan Race in 2012 and was hooked. A year later I became a certified Spartan SGX Coach. I began coaching teams for Spartan Races in March of 2014. Since then I've had the privilege of coaching almost 200 Spartan athletes through one or more races. Along the way, I've coached people on weight-loss journeys, competitive athletes, mother-daughter teams, a two-time breast cancer survivor, and so many more. Each has provided inspiration and fuel for my passion to continue introducing people to this amazing sport.

There is something wonderful about seeing the look on the face of a person who swore they could never do something like a Spartan Race when they actually cross the finish line and realize that they just did.

Chief Endurance Officer

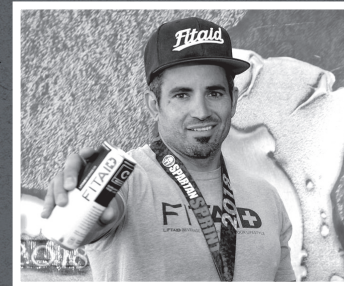
A FEW SPARTAN PARTNER CEOS DISH ON DETERMINATION

Spartans face major obstacles and overcome them with a tremendous amount of determination. Just like the athletes themselves, the brands Spartan trusts to partner with also face challenges in their day-to-day businesses with the same attitude. Lucky enough for us their CEOs offered some advice on how they approach those obstacles and overcome them (Aroo! call optional, once completed).



"The biggest obstacle that I have ever faced was almost going out of business in the early 2000s. Manufacturing was rapidly going offshore and hosiery was no exception. With that (huge) obstacle, I saw (huge) opportunity and that is when I created the brand Darn Tough, which is now the fastest growing American manufacturer of premium performance outdoor and lifestyle socks. When you are put against a wall you learn what you're made of. You learn what you're capable of. If you really have a vision and you really have a good idea and you believe in it and you believe in yourself just don't give up. You can't be afraid to make mistakes. You learn from your mistakes. Eyes wide open."

—RIC CABOT CEO Darn Tough, Official Sock supplier for Spartan U.S. and recognized leader in the outdoor & lifestyle sock markets



"New York Times bestselling author Ryan Holiday writes, 'The obstacle is the way.' We agree. The presence of obstacles in business is a daily occurrence and trying to avoid them is futile. Having the mindset that each obstacle is there for a reason—that it's exactly what we need to get to the next level of growth—is the same mindset that is required to overcome that obstacle, big or small, and allow us to keep growing as individuals and as an organization."

—AARON HINDE President, & Orion Melehan, CEO Co-Founders of LIFE AID Beverage Co., FITAID's parent company, which is a long-standing Official Sponsor of U.S. Spartan Races as well as the No. 1 post-workout recovery drink in America.



"As a company, the biggest obstacle we have faced and still face is staying relevant to consumers in our fast-paced, ever-changing world. Iconic, seemingly unshakeable brands like Blockbuster, Sears, and Kmart have become obsolete, almost overnight. Even whole industries have been completely disrupted by start-ups using technology to connect with customers in new and convenient ways. These failed companies and industries all suffered from one fatal flaw: they didn't listen to their customers and didn't evolve fast enough to meet their demands and expectations."

When your company is doing well, it's easy to become complacent and take your success for granted. There are always people who want to continue with the status quo; people who say, 'It's worked for this long, why change something that's not broken?' In order to continue growing, you have to be willing to be uncomfortable and hear, support, and try new concepts and ideas. And you have to put yourself out there and be willing to fail for the opportunity to succeed. USANA relies on teaching a growth mindset—believing that change is possible and that with hard work and dedication, any obstacle can be overcome."

—KEVIN GUEST, CEO of USANA, the Official Nutritional Partner of Spartan U.S. and thousands of professional and Olympic athletes worldwide.



"TrueForm doesn't sell shortcuts to health, or other B.S. An easy solution for unhealthy, overweight people looking for a quick fix is what is marketable; we know this. New shortcuts, new features, new things that make fitness easy, sell space in the ad columns. A message of hard work, diligence, staying the course isn't sexy. And when we brought TrueForm Runner—a treadmill that makes you work harder and challenges you to be the best version of yourself, without a crutch, gimmicks, entertainment, or high margin for the dealers—to market, we were blocked in every way. Lawsuits, copycats, disingenuous partners...all looking to profit from our innovation and hard work. Staying the course, resilience, persistence, and sticking to the grind is our way. TrueForm will turn the fitness and health industry on its head in the end, and we are staying the course no matter what obstacles come our way."

—JEFF VERNON A founding partner of TrueForm Runner, the Official Running Partner for Spartan, and maker of one of Joe De Sena's favorite toys.

THE OPTIMISM ADVANTAGE



**SPARTAN'S DR. LARA PENCE SHARES HOW
OPTIMISM CAN BE FOR EVERYONE, EVEN THE
MOST PESSIMISTIC, GLASS-HALF-EMPTY TYPES.**

By Dr. Lara C.C. Pence, PsyD, MBA

The way we view the world is undoubtedly shaped by our experiences—and vice versa. We interpret that which we encounter through a lens of our own thoughts and feelings, and then make conclusions about what to do next based on this filter. It's quite extraordinary, actually, to be guided by an internal compass that is finely tuned to our experience. Extraordinary if it guides you in the right direction but problematic if it veers you off course.

Which is why learning the skill of optimism is so important? "Learning," you say? Yes. Learning. Of course, we've all met those people who just seem optimistic from day one—babies that never seem to cry or always have a smile smeared across their tiny faces, adults who can turn any situation, no matter how muddy or messy, into a delightful one, and youth who just seem to always see the best in others. You might believe that optimism is only for the select few who were born with a halo atop their head and seem to very easily see the halo that exists on those around them.

But the truth is, optimism can be learned. It's not necessarily something that you are either born with or without—or have a genetic predisposition for—or mark off at the doctor's office as something you have or not. It's not only a critical element that can affect your mental and physical health, it is also one of Spartan's primary principles and the meaning behind Rakuten.

Optimism lives among the land of Spartan principles because of the important role that it plays in developing mental resilience, fortitude, and grit. To have and practice optimism means that your attitude and beliefs about the future or the outcome of an experience are primarily positive and hopeful.

Research shows us that optimism is correlated with better physical well-being than pessimism and that

optimism is associated with more adaptive coping strategies when it comes to stress. Bottom line: A little optimism goes a long way when we are talking about physical and mental health. Stemming from the word optimum in Latin, at its core, optimism is about believing in the greater good. And the good news is, we can all learn to think this way and see the world from a more hopeful position—optimism is not just saved for the Pollyannas of the world. Even the nervous Nancys and the Eeyores of today can learn to be optimistic.

How? It's simple but not necessarily easy. Typical Spartan credo, right? Nothing good ever comes easy. Commitment, practice, and implementation will be required because we aren't always wired for optimism. Sometimes it's hard to tell your brain that things will work out when all evidence points to the contrary. Or that you can actually crawl through the mud at mile 13 when your body says, "I'd like to shut down now." So, you have to commit to shifting your thoughts into a more hopeful arena, practice using more positive and motivating language, and implement an internal coach to help get you there.

You must remember that painful things that come your way are not permanent, pervasive, or personal. As Martin Seligman, the leading scholar on optimism, says, "Life inflicts the same setbacks and tragedies on the optimist as on the pessimist, but the optimist weathers them better."

Nowadays, we need optimism more than ever. The future feels dark for some. Between increasing rates of mental illness, research showing how lonely we are, and environmental issues like climate change, we are primed to struggle. And yet, in the struggle we can still rise. Because we are Spartans. And if optimism isn't in our DNA, we can sure work to get it there.

POWERED BY **Rakuten**



< HOBIE CALL

I was there in 2011 at Spartan Race Temecula when it happened. When Hobie Call hit the Spartan Race scene. Not only was I there, but I raced him (or, I started with him).

Try to imagine living in the epitome of a multisports mecca like SoCal and knowing pretty much who every player in the region is from running to cycling to duathlon and triathlon, and having some unknown (to us) athlete show up and commence to throttle everyone. And we are talking about some real proven local talent. Then imagine this guy with no shirt on, a watch cap, jumping around at the start like a freakin mad man in unseasonably cold conditions, and no one knows who the fu@% this guy is. But we found out.

I'm not going to go in-depth about all of Hobie's accomplishments within Spartan (and OCR) – that's easily googleable. But I will tell you that he changed the game on several noticeable fronts.

First, he showed us all that we COULD do this as a career. Second, he evolved the idea of becoming technically proficient at obstacles so as to be efficient and fast. Not just struggle through, but how to move through. Ever seen the bell kick on a rope climb (the good old days) inverted so as to save two extra pulls up in height? That's just one example of the mindset and skill Hobie brought to our sport. Last, beyond all of his OCR accomplishments, he set the stage for thinking outside the box. Showing how exciting the sport can be and is. Legitimizing the sport and showing there is a skill level needed. And that skills can be improved, that this sport is just as technical, legit and needing of dedication as much as any other sport.

So yeah... I was there and saw it happen. You simply cannot write the story of OCR—any brand or location, 10 years later—without including Hobie. Even if you don't know him or what he did for OCR, I can assure you, wherever you are in the world reading this, you are benefitting from his influence.

Hobie might, or might not, have recently told me he is in the early stages of planning a 2020 run for the Spartan WC title. If so, people should be nervous.

BRAKKEN KRAKER

If you consider yourself a true aficionado of OCR and its history, and you paid attention over the years to who the players were and are, you've probably heard the name Brakken Kraker (yes, it's a weird name, I think of Clash Of The Titans everytime I say it).

You may not really know Brakken, because he is very low-key and comes with no drama, he is not out in the media much, but he's proven over the years to

know what he's doing and having the results and history (53 total Spartan podiums since '11) to back it up—still to this day. In fact, back in '12, Joe De Sena asked me to create a page on the original SpartanRace.com website with the top three males and females of each race and I would be routinely posting Brakken's headshot (right there with Hobie).

Relative to racing, Brakken strikes me as a man of science with a plan. He pays attention to the finer nuances of gear (we've had extensive gear talks that would make most people's heads spin) and the nuances of athletic performance. When you talk to him, he comes across as methodical and asks the types of questions of someone who is not only a legit racer, but one who is trying to fully understand all aspects of the sport of OCR on a deeper level. You can tell the mental wheels are spinning and calculating.

And he is still at it today. According to him, he is presently focused on and digging the Stadion series as it fits more into his athletic background (All-Conference honors in four sports, AA in track and field in college, a preference for 800m and 1500m speed distances). He has had 2x Stadion Series Championships and was sixth at the end of the series this year.

It's only in the last few years that I've gotten to know him better personally and I always enjoy talking to him—he knows what he is talking about. Brakken is a class act, a Midwestern values family man who has always been cool to me and treated me with respect. If you see him at a race, say hello. Brakken is one of those OCR OGs and worth getting to know.

HUNTER MCINTYRE

There would have been no reason for Hunter to know who I was back in the early days. Other than the fact that we started in the same Elite waves, I was just part of the herd standing behind him looking at his prison tattoos.

I even remember when my buddy Jon pointed this 200lb guy out at one of our races and proceeded to tell me the guy "was legit." I looked at Jon like he was fucking crazy, because the guy is way too big to be a legit runner (critical in OCR). So yeah, his info turned out to be correct.

There's no denying, whether you like Hunter's "humorous" antics or preferred character schtick, or his athletic acumen. For his size, he breaks all conventional wisdom for the body type of a fast runner. In that respect, he is a sheer anomaly. He's a take-no-prisoners, to-the-death, die-hard, committed-to-the-lifestyle competitor who puts a lot of fear into a lot of people simply given his imposing stature (for an OCR racer that is). But also, because he's willing to race completely out of control to win. And you need to respect that level of willingness.

Yes, Hunter has a penchant for stirring the pot, talking shit, calling the other top dogs out, but the reality is...he can bring the heat in OCR. And one of the most interesting things about Hunter is—you never really know what he's got up his sleeve

when he shows up on the start line. But you'd be a fool to not consider him a threat. I've watched him perform many times, I see that he's willing to go to deep depths...just to win.

ISIAH VIDAL

How many of you can say you have done the Spartan Death Race? Twice. Ridden a bike from Texas to Vermont (2,000+ miles) for Spartan WC and made it into the top 10 on 3 hours sleep—on a bet? Ran 24 hours in a cargo container with less than 30 minutes notice in Tahoe—on a challenge? I can't and neither can you. But Isiah Vidal can.

Isiah is a unique individual. A quiet man of few words and many athletic talents (endurance, speed, explosive power, strength). He generally has a mischievous grin on his face that always makes me feel like he knows something I don't. As a fellow athlete, on race day, he is hard to read—which is unnerving as a competitor. He has a known and obvious deep love for Christ, but is willing to bump, jostle, grind and get physical on the course in search of that W. Don't let his chill appearance and relaxed external demeanor fool you (hell, I consider it a win when I can make him laugh out loud). When the gun goes off, he has that fighting spirit and flips a switch.

Just recently, Isiah capped off the '19 Elite Spartan Stadion series with the overall series win. Not easy to do for a guy of his bulk in an Elite field of mostly skinny runners built for speed. He is built low to the ground, like a scaled-down Hulk, but in certain disciplines like the Stadions and Crossfit, this gives him an interesting advantage. Especially when you factor in his endurance background.

Isiah has been on the Spartan scene since 2011. He has been there. He has seen it. He has done it (to the tune of 120 or so Spartan races alone). Though he will be focusing more on crossfit in 2020 than Spartans, as he's announced, he is going to have Spartan fans for years to come.

Kevin Gillotti is a longtime Spartan Pro Team Athlete who has inspired many. Follow his story at [kevingillotti.com](https://www.kevingillotti.com) and find him at [@kevingillotti](https://twitter.com/kevingillotti).

ORIGINAL GANGSTERS

SOME OF THE SPARTANS WHO WERE THERE AT THE VERY FIRST STARTING LINES.

By Kevin Gillotti

Back in the day when OCR first hit the scene, a few crazy individuals signed up for a new event known as a Spartan Race. Those who participated in the early days (circa 2011-2012) are now considered legends. And in the words of Babe Ruth, "Heroes get remembered, but legends never die." We asked longtime Spartan Pro Team Athlete Kevin Gillotti to put pen to paper and recall some of what he remembers from the good old days about a few of the—now legendary—Spartan OGs.

10 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD TRY TRAIL RUNNING NOW

DITCH THE PAVEMENT AND HIT THE TRAIL

By Spartan Trail Team

Countless miles have been logged on the streets of neighbourhoods, cities, and even some foreign countries our Spartans have travelled to. While we love the accessibility running allows Spartans, we can't forget to mention our new favourite racing style: Trail Running. Yes, we know Trail Running has been around since even before our fellow Sparta ancestors, but only now is Trail really coming in vogue.

With the growing sport of trail running attracting more than 9.1 million annual participants in the US, Spartans of course have hit the trail, so to speak. We usually set trends, not follow them, but heck, we've hopped on board of this fitness movement and think you fellow Spartans out there should too. We've rounded up our favorite reasons why you should consider ditching the pavement...just for a little while at least ;)

- 1 BE ONE WITH NATURE:** Not only should you get off the couch, but get outside while you're at it. Benefits go beyond just admiring the flora and fauna of your backyard. Studies show spending time outside can improve your mental and emotional wellbeing, not just your physical.
- 2 EASIER ON THE JOINTS:** The trail gives back in more ways than one, and the first thing to be thankful for will be your joints!
- 3 IMPROVED OVERALL ENDURANCE:** Similar to running on sand, trail provides a sampling of different terrain around every bend, challenging muscle groups you may not have felt in awhile.
- 4 GREEN YOUR RESPIRATORY SYSTEM:** Trail courses are set outside of the hustle and bustle of city life, which not only provides solace but also helps give your respiratory system a break from all the carbon monoxide emissions.
- 5 VACATION FRIENDLY:** Why not let your trail running research be twofold - you get to run a beautifully scenic trail, while also utilizing that much needed PTO to explore a few days from a tourist's point of view post run.
- 6. UNDERGROUND COOL FACTOR:** Trail is having its moment, but it's in the slow growth phase, for now. Before it completely takes over, get in while it's still on the fringe. Less crowds = more happy run time for you!
- 7 IMPROVED BALANCE:** With that winding trail comes nature's own obstacles of plants, roots, rocks, and more. Navigating your way around these will help to improve overall balance in the long run...on the trail that is
- 8 ENDLESS OPTIONS:** Trails are found on every continent, country, and state. You can choose to travel far, or keep it local. Either way, your options are pretty endless making boring runs a thing of the past.
- 9 RUNNING TECHNIQUE:** Due to the unknown terrain awaiting you on the path, you'll be forced to take shorter strides. Shorter strides mean you'll be striking midfoot rather than your heel. Midfoot strikes are faster and better for overall running performance.
- 10 CONCENTRATION STATION:** You can typically get lost in your thoughts on a track or street you've run a dozen plus times. While trail running though, the varying terrain, stunning surroundings and more will keep you alert increasing overall focus in other areas of life.

Learn more

about all things Trail at
www.spartan.com/en/trail

THREE SPARTAN TRAIL AMBASSADORS YOU SHOULD KNOW

MARIA SOLAS

Founder of Latinos and Latinas Run, an international organization that promotes running as a way to improve physical and mental health within the Latino community. For Maria, trial running is all about epic scenery, altitude, slopes, peaks, pleasure, nature and adventure.

CAMILLE HERRON

Newly minted trail ambassador, Camille is the first ultramarathon runner to win all three of the IAU's 50K, 100K, and 24 Hour World Championships. She's fast and funny; most famous for being the Guinness World Record holder for fastest marathon in a superhero costume.

JOE GRAY

First Black American to make the Team USA World Mountain Running Team, but also the first Black American to win the USA National Mountain Running Championships and the World Mountain Running Championships. Joe's just slightly obsessed with running uphill.

EXTREME WELLNESS

All Spartans know the basics of what we should and should not be doing to stay healthy. Being part of a group that is obsessed (in a good way) with pushing physical and mental limits means you understand the value of keeping the human-machine operating at peak performance. So, why wouldn't we be constantly testing the latest and greatest the wellness world has to offer? We like to think we've seen and tried it all at this point, so what was once new wave is just par for the course these days.

Whether it's floating in isolation tanks, getting in freezers, eating only during certain times of day, or hacking the body with macro-nutrients, we've been going to ever further lengths to achieve the best we can be physically. Medical science, kinesiology and nutrition conspire to tempt us with new possibilities. Your eyes just magically wander to any and every article or social post that begins with "New studies show..." #guilty

We took a look at some of the most notable practices out there to dig into how some people go the extra mile (or 20) when it comes to optimizing their bodies.

EXTREME MEDITATION

It is said that the Buddha himself developed and used the practice of vipassana, or "insight," meditation. In Buddha's eyes, it is a cleansing of the mind aimed to rid it of suffering, both mental and physical. In layman's terms, it's a practice designed to get you really in touch with your body and its pleasant and unpleasant reactions to situations. A self-exploration of the connection between mind and body, vipassana is said to give insight into the true nature of reality. Heavy.

To practice vipassana as they did thousands of years ago, people attend 10-day silent retreats in places like Joshua Tree and Hudson Valley. And silent means no phones, internet, writing, reading, eye contact, or any sort of contact from the outside world. Oh, and sometimes you aren't allowed to move for hours on end while practice is in session. There is evidence to support why people have been relying on vipassana for years to fully unlock the power the mind has over the body.

Ever craved something? Vipassana programs have been reported as being powerful tools for helping inmates who struggle with relapse that has kept them in prison. A study conducted by Seattle's North Rehabilitation Facility on King County Jail inmates showed a 20-percent less likelihood of recidivism after a four-year vipassana program, while the University of Washington reported inmates having an all-around decrease in substance abuse. Most modern-day vipassana, such as the ones used in Washington, aren't as strict on distractions, yet sessions can still last for hours on end.

COLD SHOWERS

If you are like 90 percent of the population, you probably hate being too cold. Standing-on-a-train-platform-at-6-a.m.-during-winter-in-Sweden cold, for example. Who would argue against taking a hot shower on a cold morning, fresh from a cozy bed? Maybe the Swedes, but for most, a hot shower can sometimes be life-saving. According to research, the benefits of cold showers are surprising for those cold-hating souls. According to the British Journal of Sports Medicine, immersing yourself in cold water can lead to an increase in metabolism since the body needs to work harder to maintain the warm temp we love so much (and stave off hypothermia). Researchers in the PLOS ONE journal also concluded that subjects were less likely to call in sick compared to heat-seeking shower takers by 29 percent. The duration of the shower didn't have an effect on the subject's ability to power through signs of illness, which is good news for most people. While frigid water or subzero temps hitting your body at 7 a.m. might not sound pleasant,

it sure is a way to wake you and your body's immune system up, and trust us, you definitely don't want the immune system hitting snooze.

If going even icier appeals, cryotherapy might be your next step on the low-temperature health train. Cryotherapy uses ultra-low temperatures ranging from -200 to -300 degrees fahrenheit and you can now find cryo studios. Dip in fast the enclosed chamber where your head often isn't enclosed—for maximum scream ability once your body hits those treacherous temps presumably. The treatment typically lasts two to four minutes, anything more could be risky. Like cold showers, cryotherapy has been said to alleviate arthritis and muscle pain, chronic conditions, improve energy, reduce migraines and skin conditions. But, like anything not regulated by the FDA, talk to your doctor before taking to the deep freeze.



PRESCRIPTION NATURE



Ever take a walk through a really great park and think, “Ahh, the great outdoors.” That feeling of satisfaction isn't just from having a pleasant day out, it's actually your surroundings that are playing a part in making you feel so darn good. A 16th-century physician named Paracelsus was famous for saying, “The art of healing comes from nature, not from the physician.” He couldn't have anticipated our lives would now be consumed by so much technology, mostly living in highly urban areas with little to no plant life except overpriced succulents. There is hope yet. Around the world, small groups of physicians are prescribing nature as medicine. They see this as the first line of defense before prescribing anything artificial in an effort to help correct obesity, anxiety, depression and overall mental health. By doing a range of activities outside in nature, patients are able to reconnect with their surroundings as well as themselves. This type of “ecotherapy” as it's now named isn't anything new. Studies in Japan by Dr. Qing Li during the 1980s promoted “forest bathing,” as a way to reconnect with trees and nature to help overcome ailments inflicted on us by our daily lives. Feeling stressed? Go take a walk in the park and hug a tree—literally.

PRIMAL MOVEMENT

If you see people at the gym doing some funky movements that almost look a bit like your cat's usual stretch routine, don't hate on 'em—join 'em! Those individuals are getting back to the primal roots of movement and partaking in "animal flow." Animal Flow is a ground-based movement that helps to improve strength, coordination and mobility. A sort of back-to-the-basics series of movements that gets people utilizing all fours to challenge the body to move more fluidly. A bit like animal yoga, Animal Flow has six components that have your body in positions similar to animal moves we see out in nature. These components each have specific exercises with

purposeful benefits for the body. For example, a traveling form is an exercise that mimics the movements of an animal. Imagine walking on your hands and kicking your legs up, then forward to propel yourself, similar to an ape. These movements, in turn, help us to improve the human animal, according to Mike Fitch. Animals may have been the originators of this fluid movement, but it was Mike Fitch who developed the system people are implementing into their training regimens. If you're watching Animal Flow, it may seem like a mash-up of different practices, but those in the community swear by its ability to reconnect the body—a body reboot of sorts through movement.



SENSORY DEPRIVATION

Don't be alarmed when you slip inside a dark pod filled with water. No one is trying to capture you for experiments (we think). You are just about to embark on a sensory deprivation journey. A sensory deprivation tank (aka isolation or float tank) may look like a futuristic bathtub. More specifically, a dark tank filled with a foot or less of salty water without sounds or light. This therapy is known as Restricted Environmental Stimulation Therapy or REST. Now isn't that ironic. This enlightened tub was first designed in 1954 by American physician and neuroscientist, John C. Lilly. His original study meant to explore the human consciousness, thus he cut off any outside stimuli for isolation purposes. The water is heated close to body temperature and the epsom salt creates buoyancy cradling you effortlessly. Studies have shown that while in this state, your mind can reach a certain level of deep relaxation, promoting creativity, and even improving concentration. The most notable benefits are documented in the athletic arena with athletes from all disciplines flocking to the tanks to aid in muscle recovery found by The Journal of Strength & Conditioning Research. Frequent visitors of these blissful baths use them to prevent and treat chronic pain, tension headaches and even muscle tension. Muscle and mind stress? Take a dark dip and leave your stresses behind.



ZERO-DROP SHOES

We all have a pair of sneakers (or a few dozen pairs if you're a Spartan) so we're all aware of the construction of a typical running shoe, right? A hefty bit running the length of the sole and an extra bit of padding on the heel. This gives us about a half-inch to one-inch of height. Small people rejoice. Typically most people don't mind the height, but purists are saying the added padding throws off the alignment of the spine which can cause an unnatural heel strike when running. A man named Golden Harper, who would eventually become the founder of Altra Running Shoes, believed most products out there were causing more injuries than they helped prevent due to the elevated heel. Around 2008 or 2009 Harper experimented with a local shoemaker to shave off the extra height and create an evenly lined sole from heel to toe, reinstating the naturally even stance. The term "zero-drop" comes from the lack of drop in reference to the front of the foot compared to the heel, and like Harper said, "Way more catchy of a term." But, don't get these confused with barefoot running shoes which offer absolutely no cushioning at all. The two designs started around the same time and sometimes get intertwined. Harper still believes in cushioning the foot while running for terrain protection—he's just looking to level the playing field, after all.

For more Extreme Wellness techniques and guided meditations please go to spartan.com/en/magazine



LESSONS FROM A FEW OF SPARTAN UP'S MOST MEMORABLE GUESTS

RICHARD BRANSON

Richard Branson almost always defies conventional wisdom. Forget meticulous planning and market research when it comes to starting an airline. He started Virgin Airlines literally in an afternoon. And if you follow his lead, as with Virgin Cola—forget starting small. He competed against one of the most successful companies of all time and almost won. As with Necker Island, forget raising sufficient capital, he acquired the island first believing that the money to develop it would show up eventually, which it did. A celebrated and notorious adventurer, Branson reaches literal new heights all the time.



"I THINK THOSE PEOPLE WHO PUSH THEMSELVES BEYOND THEIR LIMITS GET MUCH MORE OUT OF LIFE. THOSE PEOPLE THAT SAY YES, RATHER THAN WATCHING OTHER PEOPLE DO IT, SEE THAT IT'S WORTH THE RISK."

"EVERYTHING HAS A PRICE. EVERYTHING HAS A PRICE, EVEN THE GREAT THINGS HAVE A PRICE. AND WHAT PRICE ARE YOU PREPARED TO PAY? YOU KNOW PRINCIPLES DON'T MEAN ANYTHING IF YOU ABANDON THEM WHEN IT'S HARD. I STAY TRUE TO MYSELF, AND NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT TO ME THAN THAT...AND I HAVE BAD MOMENTS, AND WEAK MOMENTS, AND MOMENTS THAT I REGRET, BUT I NEVER WALK AWAY OR COLLAPSE INTO BED AT THE END OF THE DAY KNOWING THAT I DID EVERYTHING THAT WAS HUMANLY POSSIBLE FOR ME."

LARA LOGAN

Lara Logan, an Emmy-winning journalist and war correspondent, has reported from the front lines of civil war in Africa, battlefields in Afghanistan, the Red Zone in Baghdad and uprisings in Egypt to name just a few. She has endured assaults, been kidnapped and witnessed death and destruction on many continents to spread awareness of what is happening globally. Through all of these events she has demonstrated to us how to hold true to our principles.

THEO EPSTEIN

The youngest GM in baseball history, Theo Epstein led the Red Sox to a World Series title after 86 years, and then did the same for the Chicago Cubs after 108 years. What techniques did he use to change the culture of his organization? In this interview, he explains how he chooses players (it has a lot to do with their mindset and resilience), his theory on taking and giving credit, and the three things you should do if you want to improve your team culture.



"YOU CAN'T JUST ARTICULATE A VISION AND EXPECT PEOPLE TO BUY IN. YOU HAVE TO MAKE IT PERSONAL FOR THEM...IT'S AUTHENTICALLY GETTING PEOPLE TO GO ALONG WITH YOU. ANYTIME SOMETHING GOES WRONG, STEP UP AND TAKE THE BLAME. ANYTIME SOMETHING GOES WELL, YOU PUSH THAT CREDIT DOWN TO OTHER PEOPLE... DON'T JUST TALK ABOUT THE VALUES YOU WANT, BUT DEMONSTRATE THEM."

KARIM JAUDE

After running successful real estate businesses in Lebanon and Iran, Karim Jaude arrived in Los Angeles in 1979 with \$17 in his pocket and not a friend within a thousand miles. By merely being in the wrong place at the wrong time, he lost almost everything—twice. He was kidnapped, tortured and forced to flee the country, but, in an extraordinary display of resilience, he got up and thrived again and again. Jaude's determination started early in life and pushed him through the rough spots, of which there were many.



"NOTHING BOTHERS ME ANYMORE. I TEACH MY DAUGHTER, MY SON, MY WIFE, EVERYBODY AROUND ME THAT IT'S NOT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU THAT MATTERS, IT'S HOW TO REACT TO IT AND WHAT YOU DO WITH IT THAT MATTERS.... YOU CAN SIT IN A CORNER AND WHINE, OR YOU CAN GO ON WITH YOUR LIFE."

"NO ESCAPE PLAN, SO WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? YOU ARE GOING TO ENDURE!...I WOULD SAY I KEPT A RELATIVELY POSITIVE OUTLOOK THROUGHOUT IT ALL. I KNEW I WAS GOING TO LIVE..."



DAN CROWLEY

The story of Dan Crowley, a 96-year-old WWII POW, survivor of the horrific Bataan Death March, and a delightful man, might be the most important interview in Spartan Up history. Faced with unfathomable torture, he showed true resilience, and is one of the most remarkable and optimistic human beings we have had the privilege to meet. This extended episode covers a dark period in the world's history, yet his smiling jovial face belies true and utter strength, grit and resolve.

"WHEN I'M OUT HERE AND SEEING PEOPLE KIND OF LETTING THE DIFFERENT OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES IN AGOGE GET TO THEM, I JUST THINK THAT IT'S IMPORTANT THAT YOU REMEMBER YOU ARE CAPABLE OF FAR MORE THAN YOU THINK. BECAUSE YOUR SOUL IS GOING TO LEAD YOU THROUGH. AND ONCE YOU TRAIN YOUR SOUL, WHICH YOU DO BY TRAINING YOUR MIND—YOU'RE ALL SET."

AMANDA SULLIVAN

She was run over not once, but twice, and still runs with a smile. But Amanda Sullivan is someone who runs into the fire. She has worked with little girls who were victims of sex trafficking, orphans and refugees from areas of natural disaster and conflict. Her previous experiences fortified her with a remarkably resilient baseline, her infectious smile and enthusiasm reminds us to "be the hero you're waiting for," and that we all must rise above our circumstances.



THE RACES DESIGNED

TO BREAK YOU.

THE MOST EXTREME ENDURANCE EVENTS IN
THE WORDS OF THE SPARTANS WHO LIVED
TO TELL THE TALE...

"A SINGLE PIECE OF ADVICE I CAN GIVE: IT'S GOING TO SUCK! YOU'RE GOING TO BE EXHAUSTED MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY, JUST DON'T QUIT. WHEN IT'S ALL DONE, THE RELATIONSHIPS YOU BUILD AND THE KNOWLEDGE YOU GAIN FROM THE EXPERIENCE WILL LAST A LIFETIME."

-Robert Killian Spartan Race World Champion and Endurance Event Survivor

ULTRA

Consisting of 30+ miles of off-road (and even off-trail) terrain with 60+ obstacles, the Spartan Ultra will push you past limits that you didn't even know existed. If the specifics of the race don't seem tough enough, consider that the race may occur on the side of a mountain in below-freezing conditions.

Every time I have raced a Spartan Ultra I have tripped, fell, ran off course, bonked, cried, and questioned my sanity and the sanity of those racing aside me. In 2017, I failed so many obstacles that I had to do nearly 300 penalty burpees during the race. Spartan's saying "You'll know at the finish line" should really be "You'll know you just ran 30 miles when you can barely walk at the finish line." Yet, feelings of physical pain and mental anguish are quickly replaced with feelings of accomplishment and satisfaction.

-Frankie DiSomma

HURRICANE HEAT 12 HOUR

The Spartan Hurricane Heat 12 Hour is a departure from the Hurricane Heat 4 Hours that are very focused on teamwork and team-building activities.

If you do an Hurricane Heat 12 Hour you will be challenged both mentally and physically. You may or may not complete the event, but you will definitely learn something about yourself while doing it.

The Hurricane Heat 12 Hour is a good intro to endurance challenges that pose little risk—like dipping your toe in the water, but the Hurricane Heat 12 Hour is jumping right into the deep end. You will sink or swim. It's an excellent middle ground between the Hurricane Heat 4 Hour and the Death Race which would be like jumping off a cliff into alligator-infested water while wearing a suit of raw chicken chained to your body.

-Dave Huckle

HURRICANE HEAT 24 HOUR

I have had the pleasure of being involved in Hurricane Heat 24 Hour 001 and both Hurricane Heat endurance events. The 24-hour format is a perfect stepping stone to understanding your ability both mentally and physically for taking on longer events such as Agoge and Death Race. When you toe the line at the start you must trust the training and push aside any self-doubt. I like to inform the group that nothing in the world matters for the next 24 hours except focusing on the task given, working as a team, and always giving 100 percent.

The tasks include team cohesion where the group may do things such as carry a telephone pole over rough terrain or exercise in unison. Some feel they can not go any further during the event and we as leaders will do what we need to do to keep the athlete in the event and motivated. Reminding them of their "Why" is usually what it takes. Each person's story is unique and has brought them to the event for a reason. Endurance is raw and gritty causing many athletes to forge deep bonds that continue long after the event.

-B.J. Pierce



AGOGE

The Spartan Agoge is not just another team-based endurance event. In the Spartan Extreme Endurance tier of team events, it's the highest possible accomplishment. Set at 60 hours, it is the longest as well. It's not for the weekend warrior or the individual who doesn't want to do their homework before an event. The Agoge will ask you to learn skills like map reading, knot tying, and gear prep as in waterproofing your pack. Showing up unprepared will lead to you not progressing.

I took part in Agoge 006 Isles of Skye in Scotland. Even though I have completed my fair share of hard endurance events (HH12 & Death Race) the Agoge was an eye-opener in that I could not finish it alone. The task and objectives were grueling and near impossible for an individual to complete. But the ones of us that did show up well trained and educated in skills, made becoming a team memorable. The ones who do finish share a bond with all Agoge finishers—we all have been tested and know we can be counted on when times get tough.

-Patrick Mies

LA RUTA

It's been called the world's hardest mountain bike race. I may not have set any land speed records or any records for that matter in La Ruta, but what all of us who raced did do was inspire hope. In addition to the loss of my left leg below the knee, about a year ago, I also lost the function of my right hamstring, calf and the feeling within that entire leg. With that loss the spark inside of me started to dim. La Ruta was an opportunity to encourage the young local triathlon team to never, ever, give up and to remember that you are stronger than you know. On my third day racing through the jungles of Costa Rica I can honestly say that my internal spark began to brighten.

What more could one ask for than to see the beauty and nature of Costa Rica as you bike from the west coast to the east coast? The event will test your resolve though, while also helping you realize that you are capable of so much more.

-Amy Palmiero-Winters

PEAK DISTANCE RACES

You can cut through the cloud of uncertainty with your mandatory gear list machete and place it in your ever-needed bucket. Contrary to its name this race is life. The design is simple—like life. You have no idea what will happen next. What you expect, what you plan for, what you set as a goal is ever changing. It's designed to break you down. But you survive. You make it through the hardship. You are a stronger person.

Once you are past all reasonable limits you thought you could endure, you go ever further, redefining what was possible. Your perceived notion of yourself is now dead. Discovering the new you, your true self, and the limitless potential to go way beyond what could be imagined.

-Chris Acord

DEATH RACE

The Death Race will test you beyond your perception of your greatest limits. It is a race of unknown length, usually lasting a few days, all without sleep, where you will need to complete a plethora of physical and mental challenges. The race actually begins months out with some timely tasks announced online, with their outcome affecting your race.

Over the four Death Races I completed, the longest being 65 hours, I have encountered tasks including carrying heavy, obscure objects through the mountains for many hours, splitting endless piles of wood, orienteering, a near 8-hour silent physical challenge paired with a knowledge test that if you failed, you were DNFed, solving riddles, memorizing lengthy numbers, nearly 100 miles on my feet and thousands of burpees. Even the most mundane tasks become arduous when you are heavily sleep deprived and your body wants to shut down. Many sign up, some show up, and few finish.

-Stef Bishop



DO YOU DEKAFIT?

GIVE SPARTAN'S NEWEST EVENT SERIES A TRY

Spartan takes their passion for competition indoors with an exciting new concept that will keep anyone motivated to compete even in the busiest cities and with the busiest schedules. DEKAFIT is a true modern-day decathlon of fitness for participants at each and every fitness level. DEKAFIT has created the very first environment in which athletes of all skill levels can continuously train, test, and compete in the same arena. The course is complete with 10 DEKA Fitness Zones—all preceded by a 500-meter run. Functional and easily accessible, participants will be able to train in any gym worldwide to compete in zone movements such as medicine ball throws, weighted squats and rowing, just to name a few.

Test out your own DEKAFIT level before signing up to the newest fitness craze by trying out our functional on-the-go training tips below:

ZONE 1, 2, 3 WORKOUT

WARMUP

- ♦ Run x 5 minutes
- ♦ Bodyweight Squats x 30

2 ROUNDS

- ♦ Run x 500m (treadmill 1.0 incline, 6-7 effort)
- ♦ Spartan Ram Squats x 30
- ♦ Run x 500m (treadmill 1.0 incline, 6-7 effort)
- ♦ Row x 500m
- ♦ Run x 500m (treadmill 1.0 incline, 6-7 effort)
- ♦ Box Jump or Step Overs x 20

2



3



1



ZONE 4, 5, 6 WORKOUT

WARMUP

- ♦ Run x 5 minutes; Ski Erg x 250m at Easy Effort

2 ROUNDS

- ♦ Run x 500m (treadmill 1.0 incline, 6-7 effort)
- ♦ Med Ball Sit-up Throws x 20
- ♦ Run x 500m (treadmill 1.0 incline, 6-7 effort)
- ♦ Ski Erg x 500m
- ♦ Run x 500m (treadmill 1.0 incline, 6-7 effort)
- ♦ Farmer's Carry x 100m (place dumbbell or kettlebell on the floor next to each of your feet. Squat to grab onto the weights with a neutral, palms-in grip, then walk).

COOL DOWN

- ♦ 10 min run at Easy Effort to finish

6



ZONE 7,8,9,10 WORKOUT

WARMUP

- ♦ Air Bike, or Stationary, 5 minutes (easy effort)

2 ROUNDS

- ♦ Run x 500m (treadmill 1.0 incline)
- ♦ Air Bike x 25CAL (race effort)
- ♦ Run x 500m (treadmill 1.0 incline, 6-7 effort)
- ♦ Dead Ball Wall Over x 20
- ♦ Run x 500m (treadmill 1.0 incline, 6-7 effort)
- ♦ Sled Push/Pull x 10M x 5
- ♦ Run x 500m (treadmill 1.0 incline)
- ♦ Burpees x 20

4



5



7



8



9



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SUPPLEMENTING THE BEAST

MODERN WARRIORS CAN LEARN A LOT ABOUT NUTRITION FROM THEIR ANCIENT COUNTERPARTS

Ancient Spartans made the most of the natural ingredients growing around them to supplement their nutrition. Mountain herbs and plants would aid in keeping their beastly warrior physiques at peak performance. Our modern-day Spartan community follows essentially the same philosophy as our Greek ancestors. Simply put, we believe that “food is medicine.” Here you will find a list of products we believe our modern Spartans can take advantage of to reach their peaks. Fair warning: Consumption of these foods may come with side effects of AROO.

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To purchase products visit shop.spartan.com

> SPARTAN TEA <

Growing along the mountainsides of Sparta is the Greek herb *Sideritis syriaca*, the literal meaning is translated to “he who has the iron.” Probably an appropriate name for this herb which was consumed by ancient warriors who might use it after being wounded in battle, to aid in recovery from strain or as a morning ritual. Drinking this herb as tea was found to contain significant levels of antioxidants, polyphenols and phytonutrients. This naturally caffeine-free tea is known for its anti-inflammatory aid, gut health and oxidative stress-reduction properties.

> SPARTAN HYDRATE <

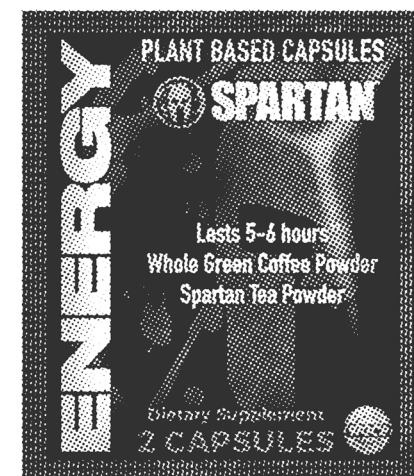
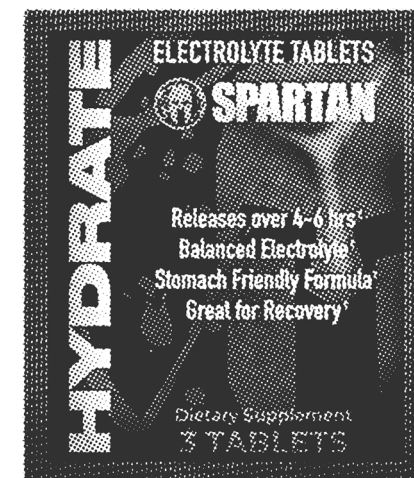
Constantly testing their physical limits, Spartans of today often face extreme fatigue and muscle cramping—uncomfortable side effects of their hard work that are a result of de-hydration and the depletion of the body’s electrolyte balance and key sodium and minerals.

It is not easy to know exactly when to replenish and with the right concoction of electrolytes. After much research on the gamut of sports electrolyte products in varying forms of powders, pills—more often filled with ingredients your body does not need, Spartan found a manufacturer who has a proven track record in providing heart patients with a clean electrolyte tablet that slowly releases just the right amount of electrolytes into the body as needed. The key was in the patented technology of the vegetable wax matrix, or the vegetable coating, that surrounds the tablet helping to bind it together. After trialing the product with endurance athletes, results proved they could take 1-3 stomach-friendly tablets with some water prior to their race and stay optimally hydrated and cramp-free for 4-6 hours with a few glasses of water throughout.

> SPARTAN ENERGY <

If you’re a Spartan and off to your weekend race, you may want to think twice about throwing down that morning coffee prior to hitting the course. While there are certainly many documented cases to support the benefits of caffeine on boosting athletic performance, choosing the best source might be the most difficult part. A simple cup of coffee isn’t it.

Being able to obtain a clean and sustainable source of caffeine is not a new dilemma. Our ancient warrior friends would prepare for battle by mashing the whole green coffee beans into a paste and mixing it with animal fat. You see, not only were these warriors getting the caffeine from the coffee bean, they were getting the phytonutrients, polyphenols and fiber from ingesting the entire plant, which allowed them to sustain their energy for longer periods of time. After partnering with a company that has a patented manufacturing process of milling the whole green coffee bean to a powder form, Spartan found the perfect source of balanced energy. By combining power-packed antioxidant-rich Spartan Tea with the whole green coffee powder and Suntheanine® L-theanine, we developed a tiny clean energy capsule of our own—naturally dubbed Spartan Energy.





GARBAGE IN, GARBAGE OUT

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

BY KATY NASTRO

Growing up, maybe your parents' voices echoed the refrain, "Eat your veggies." As a kid, maybe you were more concerned with dessert than how much broccoli was left on your plate. Fast forward to today and you're a lean, mean, veggie-loving machine. But when did this transition take place? How does one grow to crave cauliflower, and for an athlete who's burning dozens of calories by the minute, will that salad be enough to fuel you?

People have relied on plants for sustenance well before anyone was roasting ribs over open flames. The earliest written accounts of meat-free diets are from ancient Greece. Our well-known friend Pythagoras evidently had a theorem about greens, too. His eating style may have not been the strictest according to some, but people adopted his eating style because they believed it would aid in longevity. It wasn't just old philosopher mathematicians who say the value of plant power. Recent evidence in studies from the Department of Forensic Medicine at the MedUni Vienna in cooperation with the Department of Anthropology at the Institute of Forensic

Medicine at the University of Bern show Ancient Roman gladiators practiced a mostly vegetarian diet based on examinations of bone collagen in their remains. Beans and barley apparently fueled these ancient warrior athletes.

Physicians have long touted a diet containing a variety of healthy fats, proteins, and carbs as being key for fueling your body. When we peel back the Western diet even further, according to the USDA, we begin to see an emphasis on finding these key three elements to makeup a healthy diet: meat = protein, grains = carbohydrates, and butter, = fat (okay, okay, Paula Dean may or may not have contributed to that last bit), but you get the picture. But, as obesity, heart disease, and other chronic ailments are on the rise, physicians are looking more closely at how diet might be a contributing factor. Medical journals are finding more and more about the benefits of plant-based or plant-centric diets. Research published in the Permanente Journal reports that diets with a higher concentration of plants vs. meat showed reductions in blood pressure, cholesterol, and BMI—all factors that lead to a strong, healthy ticker.

WHAT YOU PUT IN

When race day comes, the training an athlete put in will show. Elite athletes approach their diets as seriously as their training regimes—and more and more are looking to plant-based ones. Matt Frazier, an ultramarathoner and author of No Meat Athlete, subscribes to the vegan way of life, debunking the biggest concern for many that veggie-based athletes don't get enough protein to compete at the same level as meat-eating athletes.

"It's not just tofu, beans, and nuts that pack the protein in a plant-based diet. Indeed, just about everything else in whole-food, plant-based diets—grains, veggies, everything except most fruit—has a protein content at or above 12 to 15 percent of total calories. Put it all together, and you get a diet that provides you with plenty of protein—even as an athlete."

The documentary The Game Changers, follows James Wilks, an Ultimate Fighter winner and elite Special Forces trainer, as he travels the world interviewing athletes, scientists, celebrities, and weekend warriors uncovering their personal accounts of performing at the highest levels of sports on plant-based diets.

Dr. James Loomis, a former internist for the St.

Louis Rams and St. Louis Cardinals, was featured in the film as a proponent of the lifestyle for athletes. Loomis suffered his own health issues after a knee injury and found a plant-based diet significantly aided in his own recovery and overall health. Aside from being featured in the film, Dr. Loomis, alongside other physicians, published a study in the Permanente Journal regarding the physiological benefits of a plant-based diet for endurance performance. Loomis and his colleagues found evidence of the diet aiding in overall cardiovascular health, which in turn may maximize performance.





GET INTO IT

If you're considering making the switch, some great resources include Brendan Brazier's Thrive series, Rip Esselstyn's book The Engine 2 Diet, and Rich Roll's The Plantpower Way (he's a former pro triathlete). If you're feeling a bit hesitant, worrying you might miss the occasional rack of ribs or chicken parm, Mark Fraizer suggests introducing changes slowly.

"I'm a big fan of gradually incorporating more plants into your diet instead of "going vegan" overnight. When you spend a week or two or even a month eating mostly vegetarian (still including some eggs, dairy, and even meat, just much less than before), you give yourself and your body the chance to adjust over time. Not just in terms of finding recipes or meal prep, but also in terms of managing social situations, or getting used to being slightly restricted when you go out to eat or have dinner at a friend's house. Then once you're comfortable with that—and hopefully, once you've started to notice an increase in energy or performance benefits or weight loss or whatever you're hoping to gain from it—then you go further with it, perhaps removing all meat from your diet (leaving eggs and cheese allowed sometimes if needed). Hopefully, you see more benefits, all the while being careful to avoid making it so hard you feel like quitting.

Frazier also notes it's a habitual process as well, "Over time your taste buds change and you get used to eating this way. Really this is about habit change. Most habit-change experts will say that small steps are much better than all at once."

Remembering that everybody is different and that every mind chooses what they put inside said body. With some clarity on the choices out there, we can all agree that putting garbage in leaves us with nothing but a garbage performance coming out, whether it's how we train or what we eat.

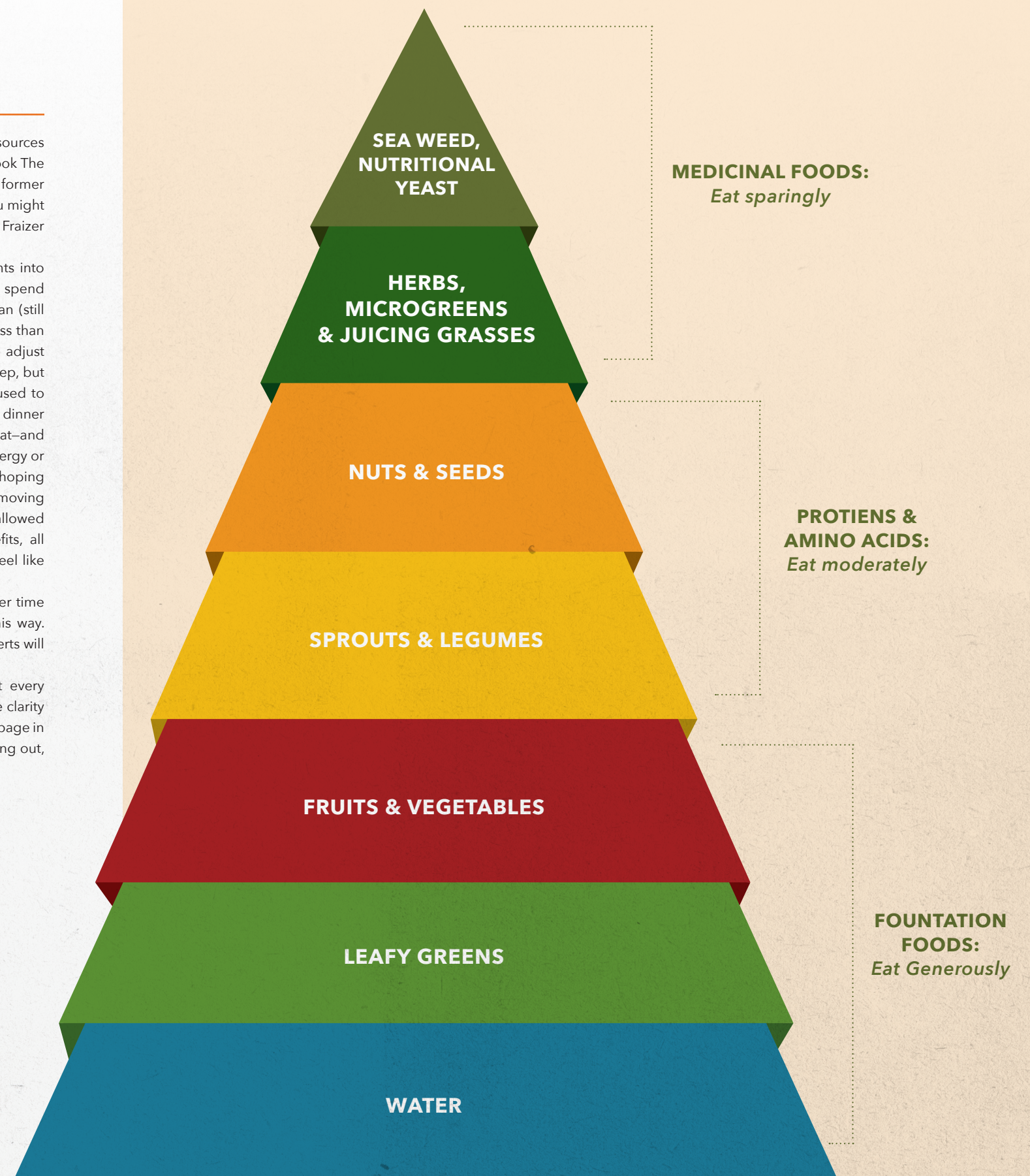
THE RAW FOOD → PYRAMID

"Specifically, these diets improve plasma lipid concentrations, blood pressure, body weight, and blood glucose control, and, as part of a healthy lifestyle, have been shown to reverse atherosclerosis. The possibility that such diets may also contribute to improved performance and accelerated recovery in endurance sports is raised by their effects on blood flow, body composition, antioxidant capacity, systemic inflammation, and glycogen storage. These attributes provide a scientific foundation for the increased use of plant-based diets by endurance athletes."

Kevin Gillotti, a long-time Spartan and accomplished duathlon racer, has been a vegetarian for more than 30 years. He based his decision to go green on his athletic goals at the time, believing it to be the best way to gain a competitive edge. Gillotti has seen a lot of negativity surrounding being a high-performance veggie athlete. Critics have all said the same thing: You can't be an elite athlete and be a vegetarian. To this Gillotti delightfully argues he can.

"I am 30 years of living, breathing, proof. And I have the results and history in endurance sports to prove it. Certainly genetics plays a role in athletic ability, but I was not a superstar child athlete."

Gillotti is a year-round racer, averaging at least 30 races per year, and an 8x USAT All American among many other accomplishments. Translation, he is constantly pushing his body and has done so for decades, mostly on the power of plants.



THE CHAMPIONSHIP OF YOUR LIFE

SPARTAN WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS HEAD TO THE UAE

Imagine a starting line filled with hundreds of Spartans, each of them having earned their chance at glory. Ahead lies an almost alien landscape: sand dunes rising out of the abyss, salted rock formations, a rolling expanse at oddly

extreme angles—nothing flat or easy. A half marathon and 30 obstacles is what beckons; a culmination of a journey that began months ago. At stake: the 2020 Spartan World Championship.



THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

For the first time in history, the world's best endurance athletes will journey to Abu Dhabi, UAE for the Spartan World Championship Powered by Rakuten. This means that the event that was previously held in the mountains of Lake Tahoe, CA will expand globally to the Middle East, to be contested on December 12, 2020 and sanctioned by the Abu Dhabi Sports Council.

This location will be central for a growing multitude of Spartan Racers that are competing from all over the globe. The opportunity to have a destination that brings the best athletes from all over the world together for one course, on one day means one thing: Spartan is looking to put global OCR on the biggest stage, without debate.

So, how will you make it to Abu Dhabi?

"Serious development and consideration happened for this location. Spartan has been to many out-of-the-way places, but this region had so much to offer. It has incredible history and culture. It's different from the design of the Lake Tahoe race (site of the 2019 world championship), and in Sweden (site of the 2019 ultra championship). Tahoe and Sweden had mountains, snow, mud, and forest. In the UAE, we went out to the far reaches of the region—known as The Empty Quarter—took a GPS, and mapped out an entire course. There are challenging climbs, oasis, fast running across salt flats, huge expanses between dunes, and eye-watering descents. It's very much a proper Spartan Race."

— David Watson, Spartan's Head of Sport

QUALIFYING IN THE WIDE WORLD OF SPARTAN

There are currently three tiers of competition within Spartan Race, and two of those tiers will enable racers to qualify for the 2020 Spartan World Championships. That means anyone in the world will be able to register and race for a chance to make it to Abu Dhabi, but they will have to earn a spot.

The three registration tiers are for Open entries, Age-Group entries, and Elite entries. For most Spartans racing in a local event, they will band together and compete in the open bracket. More serious competitors will look toward the age-group classification (which has 10 classes determined by five year increments)—and awards finishers with a ranking within their age group. Top-tier racers will register as elites. Of the three tiers, only racers who compete in the age-group class or elite class will earn points eligible to qualify for the 2020 Spartan World Championships.

What races are available? This year, in North America alone, there are over 70 different Spartan Race event weekends to compete in and hundreds of race opportunities worldwide. But out of this total are only a few events that hold important stature as part of a national or regional series, which will count toward a racer's point total. In the USA, racers will earn points in Jacksonville on 2/22, Seattle on 4/4, Montana on 5/3, Utah on 7/18, and West Virginia on 8/29. Outside the United States there are 15 other series of a similar nature taking place.

For Spartans competing in an age-group classification, finishers will earn points based on their finishing time against their competition. For elite Spartans, it's a similar point system based on performance. David Watson, Head of Sport, gave further insight about the elite class: "For the initial Spartan Pro Team (elites), we managed between 20-30 athletes who were the best in the world and competed mainly in America. Today, that number is over 240 athletes and they're stationed internationally. There's

a selection process for our Spartan Pro Team, but now, anyone will have a chance to earn an elite entry status."

Overall, racers from either of these two classes—within their age-group or as an elite—will have to race consistently across the series in order to accumulate enough points to make it to Abu Dhabi this way. But that's not the only method of qualification.

In addition to racing in one of the 16 national or regional series, there will be five national championship races in five regional locations across the world: North America (Lake Tahoe), Europe (Oberndorf, Austria), Latin America (San Luis Potosi, Mexico), Asia-Pacific (Alviera, Philippines), and Middle East-Africa (Al Ain, UAE), that will allow participants the opportunity to qualify directly from that event.

Watson confirmed the methodology: "Athletes in an age-group or elite class will be able to have consistent performances rewarded over the course of a series, but for athletes that train year-round for the opportunity of making the Spartan World Championship from a single national championship, they'll have that chance, too."

In 2020, elite spots will still be scarce, but worthwhile. The advantage being elite racers will have the course to themselves for an entire day at the world championship, with prize money available to earn.

"What a huge takeaway has been for Spartan is seeing the growth in the age-group category. More than 1,000 age-groupers attended the 2019 World Championship in Tahoe, and they all had to qualify. That doubled the attendance in a single year, which is certainly one of the biggest areas of focus for Spartan. At the end of the day it's incredible anyone can sign up and compete on the SAME championship course," shared Watson.

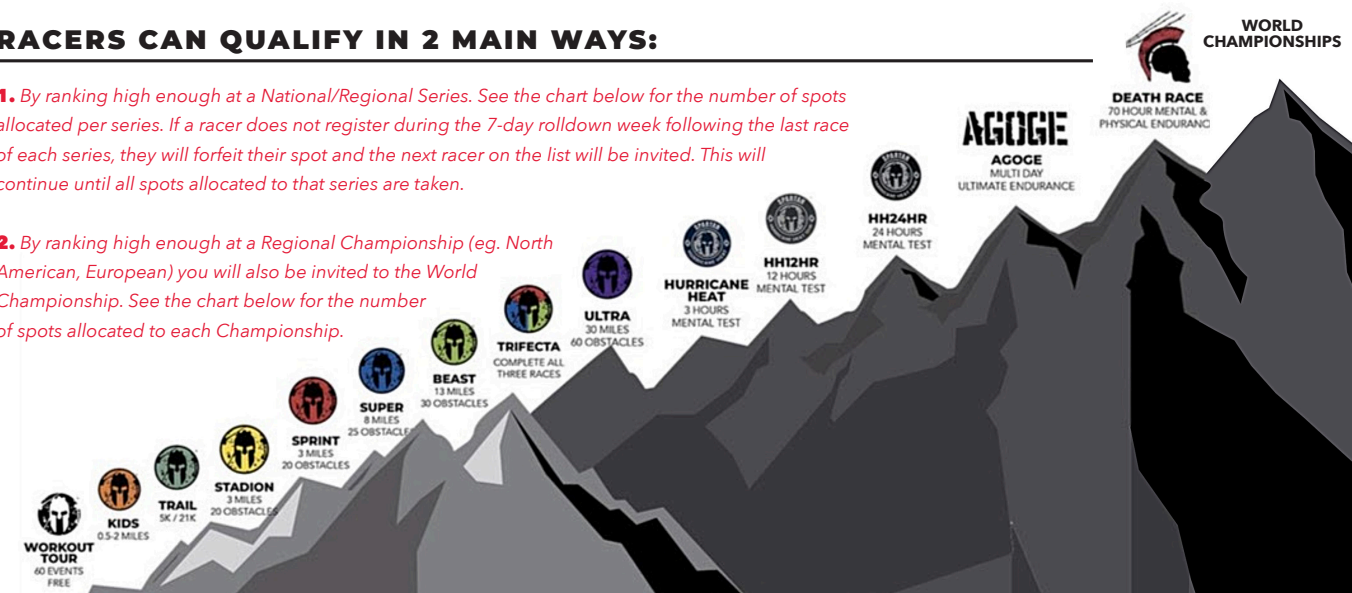
All that's left, out of the 5,700 strong that will be racing in Abu Dhabi on December 12, 2020...is YOU. It's time to earn your spot and make history. It's going to be the championship of your life.

Elite spots are scarce with just 1200 total Elite spots available (600 men/600 women). There are only 4500 spots for Age Group racers (225 per age group).

RACERS CAN QUALIFY IN 2 MAIN WAYS:

1. By ranking high enough at a National/Regional Series. See the chart below for the number of spots allocated per series. If a racer does not register during the 7-day rolldown week following the last race of each series, they will forfeit their spot and the next racer on the list will be invited. This will continue until all spots allocated to that series are taken.

2. By ranking high enough at a Regional Championship (eg. North American, European) you will also be invited to the World Championship. See the chart below for the number of spots allocated to each Championship.



READY FOR A NEW CHALLENGE?

HERE'S WHAT'S COMING IN 2020

By David Watson, VP of Product + Product Team

◆ SPARTAN TRAIL

In Spartan Trail's first year, thousands—both first-timers and veterans—took to 10K and half marathon trails in North America and the Philippines in search of stunning outdoor experiences and epic heights to conquer. This year, discover dozens of new and signature Spartan Trail events across the entire world, featuring courses designed by legendary trail race directors who you might even bump into out on the course.

Spartan Trail offers 10k and half-marathon races that will take new runners to wild places, celebrate age group athletes, award top finishers with cash, and bring together a community of Spartans with one goal—to run their race. All trail events also qualify as part of the Spartan Trail World Series, culminating in the Spartan Trail World Championship in Costa Rica. All 2020 Spartan Trail events feature a unique Trail finisher shirt, medal and lanyard.

◆ SPARTAN CITY

Spartan City is a brand new race experience in Spartan's 2020 global lineup of events. Designed specifically for both newbies as well as groups of friends looking for a more casual Spartan experience, City is an energy-filled 3 to 5 km race held in urban venues that are both easy to get to and fun to be in, while delivering the same high-impact, high-quality race experience Spartan is known for worldwide. Each race is between 3 to 5 km in length with 20 obstacles, which include a mix of Spartan's classic and more accessible obstacles. Races will be during both night and day.

Spartan City events don't feature mud, so you can easily get back into your car afterward or hang out for a catch-up with friends. Spartan City is also the perfect preparation race for anyone looking to start their Spartan journey, particularly before taking on the off-road 5K Sprint and 10K Super formats, as well as the Trifecta challenge.

◆ LA RUTA DE CONQUISTADORES

One of the most iconic mountain bike races has become part of the Spartan world. Now, La Ruta not only features the traditional La Ruta de Conquistadores 3-day mountain bike stage race that crosses Costa Rica from the Caribbean to the Pacific coast, but new for 2020, La Ruta has added an option to register for just the first stage.

This event category will be approximately 80 km and is called La Siesta—a play on the fact that it's a quick nap compared to the entire event and because the first stage was so tough for Lance Armstrong in 2018, he had to take a nap!

In addition, the 2020 Spartan Trail World Championship will be hosted alongside the MTB weekend on some of Costa Rica's most stunning trails, making La Ruta de Conquistadores a not-to-miss endurance sports event of a lifetime.

◆ ENDURANCECON

If you're a true endurance lover, then mark your calendar for the inaugural EnduranceCon. EnduranceCon is a festival designed to capture, convey and celebrate the lifestyle and culture of endurance sports. Don't be discouraged by what is traditionally known as an event expo, EnduranceCon takes it up a notch and introduces adrenaline junkies to their first interactive indoor expo. The event itself takes place over June 27-28, 2020 at the Long Beach Convention Center.

Some unique features to get excited about are the Treadmill Mile Race (Sponsored by Conquer Endurance Group), Footwear Demo Trail, mini OCR course, Endurance Art Installation and Gallery, Podcast Summit (powered by Spartan Up Podcast), and an EnduranceCon Live Stage. Interactive elements meet highly inspirational and educational seminars that feed a true fitness and adrenaline junkie's soul.

◆ DEKAFIT

In an effort to bring anyone off the streets and test their fitness levels in a fun, engaging way, Spartan developed DEKAFIT. The DEKAFIT test alone will provide guidance on how to move the fitness needle. The DEKA Zones system encapsulates the most well-rounded test for all fitness levels ever created. DEKAFIT will be held in standardized indoor arenas in cities, so races won't be affected by weather or climate.

Friends and family can watch as waves of 20 individuals compete in 10 fitness zones testing endurance, strength, coordination, and balance. In between each station, participants will run a 500m lap around the perimeter adding just a bit more cardio to the test. Overall finish times will be calculated and dubbed a "DEKA MARK." The goal would be to evaluate these metrics so that literally anyone could be measured in DEKAFIT at any point, without the discrepancies or technicalities found in other formats. DEKAFIT is taking fitness competitions to the masses starting March 21 in Denver, Colorado.

◆ SPARTAN COMBAT

Coming in 2020, Spartan Combat kicks it up a notch. Spartan will be aggressively expanding its Combat Sports division with brand new offerings in wrestling, Brazilian jiu-jitsu and several other competitive martial arts. The Spartan community has asked for it over the years, and the time has come.

Offerings will include competitive grappling and wrestling tournaments around the country; Brazilian jiu-jitsu gear and equipment; wrestling gear and footwear, fight shorts, rash guards and a full line of premium performance combat compression gear. And of course, fully loaded combat fan gear. Spartan is excited to bring its Combat division to the main stage, putting its grit and determination to the test. Stay tuned at spartancombat.com for all Combat updates. These new developments are going to be a big hit (pun intended).



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