

THE ENERGIZER BUNNY

· NUGGETS STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING COACH STEVE HESS KEEPS GOING AND GOING by Melissa Taylor

Take a can of Coke, shake it up, open it. That's Steve Hess. All day. He's the Nugget's strength and conditioning coach, part owner in Forza Fitness Club, sponsored by Mix 1, Under Armour, Red Bird and Hard Nutrition, husband and father of two. His life is the fizz shooting out of a Coke. I spent a day with him just to see for myself.

5:00 A.M. Steve begins his day on the exercise bike at home. One hour of cardio. He leaves the house with two large coolers of food, one over each shoulder, and a backpack stuffed full of supplements. One cooler contains protein. The other, carbs. Bottles of supplements fill his backpack. His wife, Alicia, smiles, "Can you believe he takes all those (supplements) in one day?" Alicia cooks all his food. Seriously? "Alicia is the most selfless person I know," Steve says. Damn straight. Every day she cooks all his food, weighs it, packs it up in containers and sticks it into the coolers. Why? Because Hess eats every hour and a half. And get this: Alicia ships the meals to him when he's on road trips. The woman is a saint.

6:30 A.M. On the road in his Audi RS4 convertible, Hess grabs a venti coffee with two added shots.

7:00 A.M. Hess unloads in his office. Pictures of his boys and wife sit near a large bodybuilder statue on his desk. "Do you plan out your day?" I ask. "No. I know what I have to do. I dream about it." Hess meets with Jim Gillen, the Nuggets athletic trainer, as well as Daniel and Matt, his assistants. They discuss Steven Hunter's knee and Carmelo Anthony's hand.

8:30 A.M. Next, Hess meets with Mike, the Nuggets chef, to go over the players' daily food plans.

9:00 A.M. He meets with Coach Karl.

9:15 A.M. Finally, he's in the weight room. Hess turns up 50 Cent. Loud. The weight room overlooks the practice basketball court, but Hess pulls

the shades down. Black walls. Black shades. Black and steel equipment. Basketball on TV. Hunter arrives and lies down. Hess pushes on his right leg. No give. Hess rubs pain relief gel on Hunter's knees before he does fast leg presses on the shuttle ramp.

9:26 A.M. J.R. Smith shows up. He begins isometric leg presses, lots of reps. Hess stretches him out then uses "the stick" on his hamstrings. Back to Hunter. Wall squats against a gray exercise ball with weights. "Love it. One. Two. Three." Hess paces back and forth counting. "Yeah, Steve!" he yells. Pacing. "Slow, not too deep. Perfect." More pacing.

9:40 A.M. Anthony Carter arrives. Hess starts him on cable shoulder pulls. Back to Hunter and more ball squats.

9:43 A.M. Chris Andersen and his headband saunter in. Hess sticks him on the leg press. "Come on, freak!" Meanwhile, Hunter stops his squats and tells me, "Hess is the best trainer in the NBA."

9:47 A.M. Hess moves Andersen to the incline platform for squats. Two short steps, turn, two short steps, turn. He counts and paces.

Andersen is either getting dizzy or pumped. Hard to say.

9:49 A.M. Chauncey Billups and Chucky Atkins walk in. The small weight room feels smaller. I'm sitting against the wall trying to blend into the background. Except, I don't blend in. Hess makes a point to introduce everyone to me. I wave and smile. Don't mind me. Is it me or is this weight room kind of small?

10:00 A.M. Hess and the players leave the weight room for practice on the court. Hess lies down at center court, the vortex of the players. Simon says, sort of. Stretch and touch your toes. Knee ups down the court. Run backwards. "This isn't like you're a coach in college. You have to be adaptive and creative. You can't just say, 'This is what you're doing today.' You have to adapt with what they like and how they're feeling."

10:15 A.M. Channel 7 shows up to film Hess, but they aren't allowed on the court. They shoot the stretches through the glass window and leave. They'll see Hess later.

10:30 A.M. Hess returns to the weight room

STEVE HESS ON TRAINING STEVE HESS

WORKOUT

Day 1: Chest and biceps

Day 2: Back and triceps

Day 3: Shoulders and traps

Day 4: Quads and arms

Day 5: Hamstrings and shoulders

SETS: Varies between supersets to two-minute rests **REPETITIONS:** Four to 100

DIET

1: 12 oatmeal/egg white pancakes (made with 15 egg whites and 2 cups raw oatmeal) with sugar free syrup

2: 8-ounce ground chicken with 12-ounce yams

3: 8-ounce turkey chili with 12-ounce yams

4: 8-ounce buffalo chili with 12-ounce yams

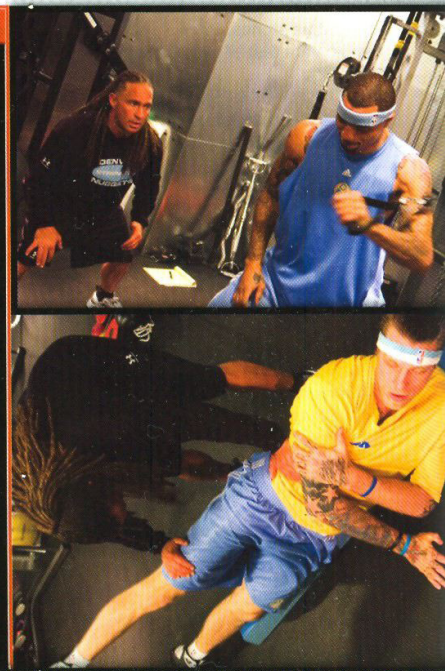
5: 8-ounce chicken with two cups brown rice

6: 8-ounce turkey chili

7: 8-ounce chicken breast

8: 6-ounce large scallops baked with 6-ounce baked salmon, spinach salad and steamed asparagus

SUPPLEMENTATION: Glucosamine, aminos 3, 6, 9, 02; digestive enzymes, Cell Charge, Joint Restore, TRIB, 5-HTP Complete, Tendon Renew, Mix 1, Hard Nutrition Functional Waters



FITNESS 2009

MARCH 2009 mileniumpoints.com

with Hunter and Melo. Hunter gets on a bike, while Hess works out with Melo. I'm cracking up watching the two of them on the elliptical. Hess comes up to Melo's shoulder. The elliptical has a stride length feature. Hess is a one. Melo is a 10. Hilarious. "I'd rather be 5-foot-4 than 6-foot-6," he retorts as I laugh. The pair moves to the treadmill for three minutes. Melo's running 11 miles an hour. Hess says, "We have to keep his cardio up. He'll come back better than ever." One minute active recovery on the elliptical. Back to the treadmill. And repeat. When cardio is done, Hess begins Melo's functional training with bands. This is classic Hess – training innovation and variety. "My puppet master," Melo remarks to me between sets. "Power, baby!" Steve yells.

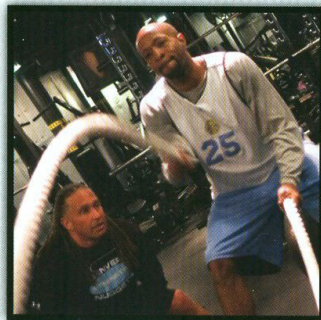
10:45 A.M. Kenyon Martin strolls in and lies down on his back. "Hey," he calls to me, "How tall he'd say he was?" "5-foot-4" "He told you he was 5-foot-4? He's 5-foot-3. Hess," he yells across the room, "You 5-foot-3, man." Hess shouts, "I'm 5-foot-3-and-a-half; swear to God." K-Mart shakes his head. "He's 5-foot-3." By now Hess has already eaten three times and taken God knows how many supplements. You can see by his striated calves that he's all muscle. His robust frame gives him the appearance of a taller man, even if he is 5-foot-3; it's not something you notice about him. Bodybuilding is Hess' only hobby, which explains his permanent tan. "It's an incredible lifestyle if you do it correctly. I love it. I love competition. It keeps me focused and goal-oriented. I don't believe in maintenance. Either you're getting better or you're getting worse."

11:30 A.M. Sonny Weems and Billups start working out. Hess gets Billups started with delts. "Basketball players are weaker on delts, so I work on that first." He moves Billups to the vibrating power plate for squats. Billups winks at me. "I love working out with Steve. He's high energy all the time. We all feed off that energy. He's the best I've ever worked out with." Billups and Hess have been training together for 10 years. Hess says, "He's the greatest point guard in the league. If this (stuff) didn't work, he wouldn't do it."

11:45 A.M. The weight room is empty. Hess hops on the bike to get in more cardio. Coach Tim Grguich gets on another bike. He's not speaking to Hess today because he hates media at practice. "He gets so mad at me," Hess laughs. "He won't speak to me for like three weeks." It's a team of coaches, not just Hess. Hess says, "I was doing pregame warm-ups a certain way, but the other coaches had a new idea; so

now we've changed it. We work together; it's a team effort. You can't inflate your own importance or it negates the power of the team. We are all pieces of a big puzzle. Never underestimate the abilities of the other guys."

1:30 p.m. Hess is done at Pepsi Center for now. He drives to the club he co-owns, Forza, for a Team Fit appearance with Hunter, Melo and Jones. After the players answer questions, Hess leads the kids in a workout – stretching, jacks, push ups, and runs them up, down and around the stairs, hill, and gym floor. It's Hess with 30 nine-year-olds dragging



behind him. Fox 31, Altitude and Channel 7 film the whole thing. I'm thinking of his wife's comment, "He's the Energizer Bunny with muscles." Isn't he getting tired yet? No. Still going. Hess does brief interviews with all the TV stations.

4:00 p.m. Hess hustles back to Pepsi Center for tonight's game. Hunter and Melo get more rehab. I get more caffeine.

6:00 p.m. Hess works with the starters first. Nene, legs, K-Mart, legs, Billups, core, A.C., core. And so on. They all get an overall lift, then Hess stretches out each player.

7:00 p.m. The Nuggets play Dallas. At halftime, Hess stretches the guys out again.

9:30 p.m. Nuggets win! Hess is stoked. Now, he has to give a short tour to a charity group. "I'm glad we won; you have no idea how it would be to give a tour if we lost," he tells me. Hess has eaten eight meals today – a variety of ground chicken, turkey chili, fish and yams. Alicia says, "He has to eat so much and so quickly that the ground meats are the best because he can eat them fast."

11:00 p.m. At home, Hess gets more cardio on the bike, and then lifts at the gym across the street. It's 12:30 a.m. when his day ends. I ask Hess how many hours he works. "I don't want to count. I'm probably not the most balanced person."

MaxMuscleColorado.com



are you determined?



*are you stronger
than ever?*

*To dedicate yourself
to a healthier
lifestyle visit*

MaxMuscleColorado.com

and you can enter to win

\$25,000

