

SHAPING UP

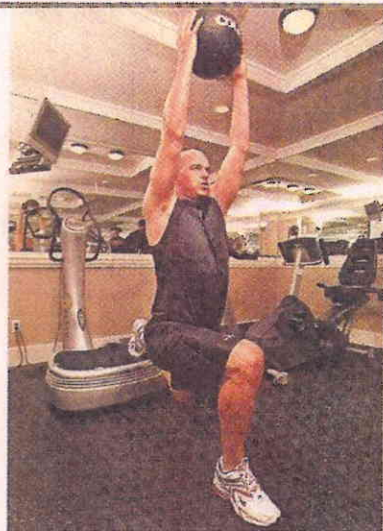
Dropping Back

How Seahawk Matt Hasselbeck lost 17 pounds

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS quarterback Matt Hasselbeck underwent surgery last Jan. 18 to repair a torn labrum in his left (nonthrowing) shoulder, an injury that had been worsening since he first sustained it in a 2004 playoff loss to Green Bay. Not long afterward the 31-year-old Hasselbeck, who'd never had surgery, was weighing in at 242 pounds. The Seahawks promptly ordered him to get down to 225 and be ready for drills by training camp.

To do it, Hasselbeck cut down on desserts—"Giving up ice cream was the hardest," he says. "It's summer, and I have three kids under the age of five"—and loaded up on fruit. He substituted his three-times-daily Myoplex bars or shakes with diet versions, and he stuck to lean proteins like fish and chicken for dinner.

Hasselbeck also relied on an exercise machine that employs vibrations to increase circulation and stimulate muscles.



The Power Plate—which costs between \$2,500 and \$10,000 and is a favorite of entertainers such as Madonna, Diddy and the Police—is based on technology developed in the 1960s for Russian cosmonauts trying to keep their muscles from atrophying in space. The machine, which can be found in about 15 NFL locker rooms, relies on a vibrating platform said to make training more efficient. Hasselbeck's three-times-a-week home regimen included lunges (left), squats and push-ups, as well as stretches, all done on (or partially on) the vibrating plate. "I did the same exercises I always do but with a quarter of the weight and half the repetitions," says Hasselbeck. "You feel your entire neuromuscular system working. It wakes everything up."

The classic mix of diet and exercise worked: The slimmed down QB was ready to go for the team's first intrasquad scrimmage last Saturday. —Lisa Altobelli



HITTING A CURVEBALL

WITH
Matt Holliday
ROCKIES LEFTFIELDER

How he hits 'em

"If I see a curveball out of the pitcher's hand early enough, I plant my [front] foot and wait. A lot of guys see the curve and freeze. I want to be able to see it, so I can swing at it."



Where to hit 'em "Pull gap, centerfield, opposite-field gap—through the middle. You can stay on curveballs much better that way than if you're coming off the ball. Don't try to pull it."

Rules of preparation

Holliday will hit off a pitching machine set to throw curves, but at the plate, he says, "you [expect] the fastball. [Then] if you recognize the curve, hold your ground and swing. Don't take it."

Who's got the best?

"[Giants rookie righthander] Tim Lincecum has a really good one. A lot of curveballs come out of the pitcher's hand and go up. His comes out flat, then [goes] straight down." What about the famously lethal deuce thrown by Lincecum's teammate, southpaw Barry Zito? "It looks like it's in the [lefthanded hitter's] batter's box," says Holliday. "Then it comes back over. You can't give up on it."



The Pop Culture Grid



How do sports stars fit in?	Gossip story that fascinates me	Number of TVs I own	I get nervous when I think about...	Favorite thing to chew	In sushi places I always order...	Finish this song lyric: "Scuse me while I..."
PAUL BYRD Indians P	Who killed JFK	Five	Facing Justin Morneau	Bubblicious	The spider roll	Kiss the sky
PLACIDO POLANCO Tigers 2B	O.J. Simpson	Oh, my God! Like 32	Snakes	Gum	A tuna roll	I don't know
STACEY DALES Sky F	Michael Vick and the dogfighting	One	Being late for something	Extra Spearmint gum	Tuna sashimi, rainbow roll, ginger salad and red wine	Pull out my sarcastic hat
JASON KENDALL Cubs C	I don't pay attention to gossip	Six	Being away from my kids	Kodiak Chew	Beer	Go have a Bud Light