

PLUS
HELLO, LAYDEEZ!
MEET BRITAIN'S MOST
CHARMING MEN

FEMME FATALE
THE DEEP, DARK WORLD
OF ASIA ARGENTO

MAKING BABIES
HOW TO BOOST
YOUR FERTILITY

COSTUME DRAMA

SWIMSUITS TO MAKE YOU SMOULDER

style

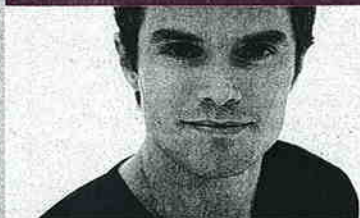
THE SUNDAY TIMES

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MATT
ROBERTS

WORKING IT

BODY MATTERS



BEST BUDDIES

As if it weren't enough to think about how often you go to the gym, how intense your workout should be and (of course) what to wear, there is now research to show that who you exercise with is a crucial part of a successful fitness routine.

According to scientists at the University of Pittsburgh, women who exercised with a training "buddy" lost 33% more weight than those who did not. Similarly, Arizona State University found that men lifted considerably heavier weights in training if they regularly exercised with someone else.

The good news is that this means you don't have to fork out for a personal trainer. Simply exercising with a friend could enhance your results significantly – proof that peer pressure can sometimes be a wonderful thing. The fear of falling behind your training buddy could spur you on to higher levels and new challenges. At worst, it will ensure that you make it to the gym more often, as you won't want to miss an appointment with a friend and let them down. Without that arrangement, a glass of wine and Big Brother might prove a greater lure than the treadmill.

However, working out with a friend is not a fail-safe route to better results. If you are fitter than your workout buddy, you may not be testing your fitness boundaries. So, while it may feel good to have the upper hand during training sessions, if you are not challenging your body, your fitness levels won't improve.

The key, therefore, is to find a partner with similar goals. Talk about your aims and write them down, so that you both understand what you are working towards. And try to establish their fitness level before suggesting that you work together. For example, if they run, ask how far or how fast. This will give you a better idea of whether the two of you will be compatible.

It may sound excessive, but devoting time and effort to finding the right workout buddy is well worth it. Get it wrong and you risk spoiling a friendship; get it right and the benefits to your fitness will be huge.



WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

COURT TRIAL

With the annual tennis frenzy that is Wimbledon upon us, you've probably been inspired to unleash your inner Maria Sharapova. Thankfully, the Lawn Tennis Association is offering free lessons until September for anyone who wants to master the basics or brush up their backhand.

To find a participating club near you, visit www.lta.org.uk

WHAT YOU SHOULD BUY

STRETCH YOUR CHILD

Forget Barbie and Bratz. Ecofriendly parents who want their child to learn more than just how to play dressing-up opt for the Tatty Bumpkin yoga doll. Made from organic cotton, it gets children thinking about asanas as well as their ABC. And when they see the positions this flexible doll can get into, kids will bend over backwards to have a go too. Yoga doll, £15; www.tattybumpkin.com



WHAT YOU SHOULD HAVE

IT'S A WINNER

It is not often that a whole skincare range is based on the needs of frequent exercisers. MenScience, modelled on formulations created for athletes, is just that. Swimmers can try the Daily Shampoo (£24, from Space NK; 020 8740 2085), which helps to get rid of chlorine and contains rich, moisture-boosting ingredients. For surfers, there is the Advanced Lip Protection SPF30 (£10.50). Or how about the Daily Body Wash (£25.50), to buff away lumps and bumps on sweat-irritated skin?

Helen Brown



SCOPE BEAUTY/PHOTOFIT