



Celeb Fitness

Part 1

by Kate Mallord

You may have read in last month's issue that I've been putting myself through a celebrity training regimen to see whether it's possible for a normal person to give her body the same amount of attention as the likes of Diaz, Jolie and Spears give theirs.

The regimen has two aspects: diet and training. I was pretty good with the latter, which involved 12 hours of exercise a week. Three times a week, I did an hour's weight training followed by 30 to 60 minutes of cardio exercise with my personal trainer Khit. On in-between days, I did about two hours of cardio. On Sundays, I rested.

The Exercise

I'd usually start with 10 minutes on the treadmill to warm up, then we'd do some legwork. Khit's pretty imaginative, and I never really got bored, as he'd let me pick a cardio option out

of a packet of annotated playing cards. When I was lucky enough to get star jumps instead of burpies or running up and down stairs, I almost felt like I'd won.

Some sessions were easier than others, and Khit seemed to know when I could push something heavier or do something faster, and when I was near the wall – or, in my case, at the point of vomiting.

He was very attentive to an elbow injury I'd picked up while snowboarding earlier in the year; he showed me how to strengthen the weak joint and treat any pain.

Fearful of getting matronly arms or worse, freakishly defined Madonna guns, I was a little hesitant when Khit wanted to up the weight on the arm-lifts. But he explained I had plenty of chicken-wing to lose before there was any danger of bulking up!

I spent Saturday mornings with another trainer, Ian, working out at McRitchie Reservoir Park. Ian specialises in rehab – no, not

the kind that Amy Winehouse desperately needs to say “Yes, yes, yes” to, but muscular rehabilitation. His focus was on working the correct muscles in the correct posture. A lot of this exercise is isotonic; not a drink, as I discover, but, a way of exercising without a lot of movement. It's all about putting muscles under a constant strain and then making a gentle movement.

Knowing I much preferred the cardio side of things, Ian agreed to let me do some running, so in our penultimate session we ran about 2.5km along a trail to McRitchie's outdoor gym. Now, I'm pretty sure he won't mind me writing this: I beat him! Okay, so he was injured and carrying all my stuff including a full water bottle, plus his water and all the other exercise paraphernalia, and he may have done it to make me feel better – Ian is that nice. I'm taking it as a win, nevertheless.

The Diet

If the training was tough, the diet was even harder. No carbohydrates, no fatty foods and no refined sugar – just fruit, vegetables and lean meat or fish. Once a week, in reward for hard work, I got to have a “cheat meal”; in other words, something tasty and normal. Not being one to deny myself, I really struggled with this and it made me more emotionally unpredictable than Naomi Campbell in a House of Mirrors.

And yes! I did slip up a few times. One particularly shameful story, now known as the Brownie Incident, goes like this. My boyfriend, Tony, brought home a packet of yummy, smell-so-good brownies, ate one and then left them on a kitchen cabinet before going off to get changed.

I'd just come in from the gym, and was headed for the second of my twice-daily protein shakes when I spotted the open packet. An epic battle began in my consciousness. Khit, Richard Simmons, Rosemary Conley and I think I even heard Jesus, too, were saying “Keep on reaching for the shake and ignore that calorific devil’s work.” But Betty Crocker, Nigella and that fat guy from Shallow Hal were saying, “Eat up, it’ll taste so good – you *deserve* that brownie.”

Within seconds, I'd eaten a whole brownie in two bites. Guilt hit, and I heard Tony coming back. I panicked, quickly swapped a brownie from further down the packet into the scoffed one’s position and made a speedy retreat for the shower.

“Kate, did you have a brownie?” called Tony.

“Okay, I did it,” I broke down. “I couldn’t help myself, but how did you know?” “The packet’s torn to shreds!”

Honestly, I fought really, really hard with myself, but that Crocker’s a tough mental foe. This wasn’t my only deviation: I particularly struggled when I was really tired or had a lot of work to do, but on the whole I managed to stick to it fairly closely.

The Results

When I went back for my last session, Khit was ready, tape measure in hand. In six weeks I’d lost half an inch off each upper arm, 3/4 of an inch off my thighs and two inches off my waist. And the scales showed I was 3.5kg lighter. But was it worth it?

This is a fantastic way to lose weight and tone up fast, but it’s a huge commitment. Say goodbye to a social life, as you’ll either be in the gym or too tired. Mine went from catching up with friends four nights a week down to one night, which usually ended early. For me, it’s not a lifestyle I’d choose, and I have new respect for any celebrity who can stick to it.

Oddly, it has made me happier about my pre-regimen body, as I know that those wobbly bits are not to be scoffed at. In fact, they’re a reminder of the good times enjoying food and wine, and being out with friends.

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Trainer Details

Ian (Lim Wen San)

Charges \$90 an hour and will travel to most locations across the island to train and help with injury rehabilitation.

9018 5140

Chong Tze Khit

PT.com.sg personal trainers start from \$70 an hour, and Khit charges \$90 an hour. He is based at Gold’s Gym, a few minutes from Tanjong Pagar MRT station.

A three-month programme of three personal training sessions a week costs \$3,200, and they will throw in a free gym membership worth \$300 when you sign up, giving you unlimited access to the gym. Nutritional and supplemental consultation is included free of additional charge.

Gold’s Gym
86A Tanjong Pagar Road
3110 5888
www.pt.com.sg

What PT Khit says:

Kate was in pretty good shape when I first met her, but had a weak left upper arm due to her elbow injury. In general, her cardiovascular fitness was decent and she scored average for musculoskeletal fitness.

On good days she was motivated, she showed her competitive and “never-give-up” spirit and tried her best to finish an exercise or workout, even if it was hard. But she’s temperamental, and on not-so-good days I had to drag her to exercise, literally!

After six weeks she was stronger, and was using heavier weights for most of the resistance training exercises. Her cardiovascular fitness had improved, too. However, she was feeling tired most of the time, and I didn’t like that. Constant fatigue probably took a toll on her, and she seemed frustrated at times. The sudden increase in exercise frequency in addition to a diet of reduced calories can indeed make a person go nuts.

All in all, I’m proud of Kate for completing the programme. It surely wasn’t easy, and she should feel proud of herself too.



What her work colleagues say:

Despite our best efforts to torment Kate by waiving cups of coffee and chocolate biscuits under her nose, she remained deeply committed to the six-week training programme. Lunch seemed like an especially dour affair for our fellow editor: as we enjoyed various hawker-centre treats or reheated tasty servings of pasta from last night’s dinner, she’d be munching on a plate of leaves that barely constituted a salad. And her vast plastic tub of protein-shake powder in the office kitchenette served as a grim reminder of the sacrifices she was making.

Did Kate’s work suffer? Not really. Somewhat surprisingly, she never flagged in the afternoon hours, even following an especially brutal morning session with Khit.

In fact, it was really only during the first 30 minutes after arriving in the morning that she seemed a bit “off the boil”, clearly physically spent from her training. This proved useful, though, because it meant we could nonchalantly ask her to help with our own tasks, and she’d be too dazed to do anything but agree.

So, good job, Kate! (We were thinking you could do another story like this for February issue. Interested?)

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Questions about the Open House? Contact the Communications Department at communications@cis.edu.sg.

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