





Power camp involves a fair bit of outside training, running the steps inside of downtown Denver buildings, etc. I like the outdoors and all, and don't necessarily have a strong affinity for elevators in skyscrapers, but it sounds like these classes begin early in the morning. A before-sunrise wake-up call to head outdoors on a Denver morning in February isn't necessarily something I'm craving. Thus, I opt for the full-time, indoor option – performance camp.

With my mornings signed away Monday through Thursday for the next four weeks, I show up for day No. 1 with naïve expectations. Per the web site:

THIS CAMP IS IDEAL FOR PEOPLE WHO...

Want a very challenging workout and are motivated to succeed in a fun, yet intense, environment (It's my job, so as long as I don't die, hit deadlines and feel better about myself, I'm game. Check.)

Are looking for a fast-moving, circuit-based workout (Define "fast moving." What the heck? Check.)

Want to burn a lot of calories in a short amount of time (Hey, the shorter the better. More time to get over to Starbucks. Check.)

Want a group workout individually tailored to their personal abilities and fitness level (Group = pretty girls + guys who might be fatter than me. Check)

Prefer to work out indoors in a climate-controlled environment (See above. Check.)

Like to be coached, strongly encouraged and are open to constructive criticism (Love to be coached, thrive on "strong encouragement" and don't mind constructive criticism when it's not involving things I'm doing wrong. Check.)

PREREQUISITES / REQUIREMENTS:

None

No prerequisites? How hard can this be?

I enter the Tech Center location on a frigid February morning. Opening the door, the heat drills me in the face. Either these guys aren't paying the same heat prices I am or there's a deliberate attempt at creating a super sweat-inducing environment here. I walk in and immediately shed the sweats, without needing a warm-up. The floor of the center is littered with equipment in makeshift stations – jump ropes, dumbbells, plastic steps, etc. Ronnie, with wireless microphone headset attached in Backstreet Boys fashion, takes attendance and explains each station over the sound system. I'd be fine with it if he weren't interrupting Flo Rida's "Low."

Rules of the game for today are five different stations, two to three exercises at each stop. We will rotate through the exercises at each station in 60-second segments. I start with a group at the chest and back station. I rotate through sets of bench press, barbell rows and flies then head to the treadmill for my second station. On my way to the treadmill, the melodic resonance of Britney Spears' "Oops I Did It Again" interrupts an otherwise wonderful workout.

"Sorry guys, you didn't make it to your stations in time" quips Ronnie.

As if having heard this before, the group breaks into an orchestration of "up-downs." An up-down is a pushup followed by a jump-and-roll onto the back – then repeated 10 times. Apparently, up-downs are cued by Ms. Spears. Following this somewhat arduous pursuit, I finally make it to the treadmill with no break other than the 15 seconds it takes to get there and get the thing started.

During my nine minutes on the mill, Ronnie has me running a consistent eight miles per hour at anywhere from a two- to five-percent incline. This sucks, and there seems to be little room for cheating with this guy. Bouncing around like a monkey on

about 90 cups of coffee, he's constantly checking and adjusting levels. Dude, it's seven o'clock in the morning! Generally, I'm not even up for another three hours. In what seems to be 85-degree heat, I'm feeling like I just ate a box of Saltines without a drop of water. It's a bad day to forget the water bottle, AG.

I HAVEN'T JUMPED ROPE SINCE (MAYBE) SIXTH-GRADE GYM CLASS.

My nine minutes on the treadmill mercifully elapses and I move to the legs station. On the way, we are yet again interrupted by Ms. Spears – 10 more up-downs (I now realize the significance of the pop star's lyrics). What the heck, dude? There's no way I didn't get to this station in time.

When I finally get to the legs station, jump boxes are first. I jump from the floor to about a three-foot platform and back to the floor, continually for 60 seconds. In case you're reading this and thinking, "That sounds pretty crappy," you'd be correct. Wheezing at this point and nearly falling inches short of the platform causing me to plunge onto my face, 60 seconds is up. I move to a step platform for "skaters" (imagine an ice skater going side to side with an extreme stretch and side lunge on each side). If this doesn't sound pleasant, then you have the right image in your head – another 60 seconds. Following a good nine-minute rotation between these two, we are off to another cardio station. Ahhh, and guess what? Another run of Britney. As if I needed another reason to dislike that chick.

Jump rope. Seriously? I haven't jumped rope since (maybe) sixth-grade gym class. This is kids' stuff. I grab my jump rope and start skipping. After about five successful attempts, the rope hits me square in the shoelaces. I get jumping again and this time, I last for about 15 rotations. Crap, this is harder than I remember

– and more of a workout. Flashing back to "Rocky III," I'm thinking that Sly's rope jumping routine might not be as lame as I originally thought. We alternate between skipping rope and toe taps on a step platform; then, I'm off to arms.

Now we're talking – curls and dips. This is more in the element of what I'm used to. Nine minutes of this, and I cruise right on through.

The last station is abs – bicycles, leg raises and butterflies – with three sets of each. By this point, I'm soaked. I do a quick double check to make sure I haven't peed my pants. Too much information? Maybe, but I've probably lost two to three pounds in sweat alone. And, you know what? If that's too much information for you, I'm guessing that you have the most to gain from this program.

Fifty minutes from Ronnie's opening Britney line, we're mercifully done, with only 3.8 weeks to go. Monday through Thursday mornings for the next 15 sessions, I sweat my way through station after station, trainer after trainer.

The Genesis way is not only to switch out the workout in its entirety each day, but to switch out the instructors, as well. It's an effective system that doesn't allow you to get complacent with either a routine or a trainer. In the pursuit, I find that many in my group bounce from camp to camp, finding the fat-shedding workouts to give them what they need in their pursuit of a healthy lifestyle.

Coming out of my first boot camp, I find that I'm about five pounds shy of my starting weight. Now, given my current lack of intimidating size, shedding tonnage may not be my preferred direction, but I'll guarantee it isn't muscle that I've shed. I just need to pour on the protein to put the pounds back on in muscle.

If you're looking to shed some of that winter weight put on by the months of hibernation, you've got to check out one of these Genesis training camps. You might even be able to indulge in a Big Mac every once in a while and still manage to look decent on your virgin voyage to the pool this summer. Do us all a favor and give them a call. **MHS**

BOOT CAMP 101

Genesis Fitness was founded five years ago by Garth Heth with the goal of serving the growing focus of Coloradans to become physically fit while providing a top line customer experience. Quality and value Boot camps are starting almost continually; check out www.genesisfitnesscamps.com. The next camp Genesis offers three locations to choose from in the Denver area: downtown at Capitol Hill, LoDo and down south in the Tech Center.

GENESIS WAS RECENTLY NAMED THE "BEST BUTT-KICKING WORKOUT" IN 2007 BY WESTWORD.

On, Tuesday, April 5, Genesis will celebrate the 1st Annual Genesis Fitness Health and Wellness Fair; I don't think any roller coasters, tilt-a-whirls or plush toy contests will be there.