

Posted Online: Jun 12, 2008 10:23PM

Diet & exercise doing wonders for 'Wheelers GM

[Comment on this story](#)

By Steve Tappa, stappa@qconline.com

Like a lot of 30-somethings, career and family demands had slowly turned Shawn Brown from a 3-sport high-school athlete into a couch potato-in-training.

The Quad City Steamwheelers vice president and general manager saw both his waistline (38-inches) and weight (227.5 pounds) grow when those priorities took precedence over pickup basketball games with his brother, and fellow 'Wheelers employee, Darren.

The grad of Iowa's nearby Burlington High School also had been going to the fast-food drive-up window rather than a workout gym, trying to maximize precious minutes in a jammed schedule.

"That's this business – during the season, especially, we eat late and we don't eat well," the 32-year-old said. "And I'm so busy with the job and my 1-year-old son, I didn't take time to workout like I should. I know a lot of people are in the same boat."

That changed this spring, though, when Brown was talking with Scott Herkes from the 'Wheelers official nutritionists, Max Muscle, about an upcoming promotion with the af2 team's players.

"Scott said, 'Why don't you become the promotion?'" Brown recalled. "'Why don't you go through the program and become our poster boy?'"

Later that day, Ryan Arnold from the QC Acceleration program called.

Acceleration works in concert with Max Muscle to improve the performance of the 'Wheelers players, as well as local high school and college athletes, and offered a like-minded trial to two teenage 'Wheelers fans last season, which was detailed in The Dispatch and The Rock Island Argus.

"So Ryan said, 'If you're doing Max Muscle, why don't we also put you through the Acceleration program?'" Brown recalled with a laugh. "And I said, 'You've got to be kidding me!'"



[More photos from this shoot](#)

Photo: Patrick Traylor

Shawn Brown, Quad City Steamwheelers General Manager, laughs with his brother Darren Brown during their workout with QC Acceleration at the Bettendorf Fitness Center on Tuesday morning, June 10. The two have been working on the fitness program since May 19.



[More photos from this shoot](#)

Photo: Patrick Traylor

Scott Herkes, co-owner of Max Muscle Sports Nutrition, shows Quad City Steamwheelers' General Manager Shawn Brown the report of his weight loss program at the Bettendorf store on Tuesday morning, June 10. Brown lost around 12 pounds of fat and gained 2 pounds of muscle since his last measurement.

Brown's chuckling for other reasons these days, with Monday marking his first-month anniversary of participation in the dual challenge.

The GM has already lost 12 pounds of fat, while gaining 2 pounds of muscle. His waist is down to 36 inches, dropping Brown down a pant size, which required shopping for a new wardrobe recently.

Brother Darren, the 'Wheelers 25-year-old Director of Operations, also joined to offer moral support. He has shed 7 ½ pounds on a 205 ½-pound frame, and moved up a notch on his belt loop.

"The results have been truly amazing," Darren said.

Part of the shock comes from the feeling they're "eating all of the time now," added Shawn, who consumes something six times each day now. "But I can't walk around eating pizza all of the time anymore. We're eating more times, but they're smaller portions, and better food."

Besides the traditional 3 daily meals – with an emphasis on lean meats and green vegetables – Max Muscle recommended, after health assessments for each, the Browns consume four protein-filled shakes daily, one at breakfast time and the others for snacks.

"I actually dropped 5 pounds at my last weigh-in," Darren added, "so Scott told me I can start having another chicken breast at lunch."

All of that protein is necessary to fuel the workout fire at Acceleration, which offers the Browns two grueling, 90-minute sessions each week. High school, college and pro athletes workout 3-4 times each week, the Browns said, with more individual exercise repetitions also required.

"We're just two average guys trying to get in better shape," Darren said. "So we really haven't done much weight lifting. We did one day of upper-body work, and that was a killer. We were both dragging the next day. So the rest have been cardio workouts, where we run, run and run some more."

The routine includes running on a treadmill for 30 minutes, with challenging changes in elevations and speeds.

There's also a withering Plyometric course, where participants jump from one numbered circle to the next, a la dance routines, or run shuttle drills with resistance bands on.

"The first workout was the worst thing I've *EVER* been through," Shawn said. "I puked. I passed out. It was bad."

The killer is an end-of-the-workout, 5-minute period focused on abdominal work and improving body core strength. "It's not that long," Darren said. "but it's brutal."

Then again, as the cliché goes, anything good never comes easy.

"It's gotten better every time we've gone," Shawn said. "And, if I can get through it, and lose the weight and get healthy, then anybody can do it."

"If I can finish, and I think I can, I'll speak to organizations about how Max Muscle improved my life and health, and about how Acceleration is more than just for the high school, college or pro athlete. The average person wanting to get into shape can see a lot of benefits, too."

For more information about Max Muscle, call Herkes at (309) 235-7336. Arnold can be reached at Acceleration at (563) 355-7601. Track the Browns' progress soon at www.qcsteamwheelers.com.

Winning formula

Max Muscle Nutrition's menu for a typical Brown brother's day:

- **7 a.m. breakfast:** Max Muscle's High 5 Protein Shake; 2 cups of "Special K" cereal; 12 oz. of skim milk split between the shake and cereal.
- **10:30 a.m. snack:** Another High 5 shake (packs enough protein to equal a 5 oz. chicken breast).
- **Noon or 1 p.m. lunch:** 5 oz. grilled chicken or fish or steak (or a turkey sandwich); Rice; Green Beans or Broccoli or a salad.
- **3:30 p.m. snack:** Another High 5 shake.
- **6:30 p.m. dinner:** Choice of some of the same entrees as lunch -- grilled meat paired with green vegetables. "They just want us to cut back on the breads at dinner to stay away from the carbs late in the day," Darren Brown said.
- **10 p.m. bedtime snack:** A final High 5 shake.

Acceleration's exercise program twice per week for the Brown brothers:

- **Step 1:** Warm up exercises.
- **Step 2:** 30-minute treadmill running session, featuring bursts of changing elevations and speeds.
- **Step 3:** Leg extensions and abductions on a weight machine.
- **Step 4:** Plyometrics, featuring a half hour of quick-jumping, fast-movement exercises.
- **Step 5:** A 5-minute abdominal muscle workout, featuring exercises called crunches and planks, ends the 90-minute sessions.
- **Step 6:** To help prevent muscle breakdown, Glutamine and a Max Muscle ISO Extreme Shake (which moves quickly into the bloodstream) is recommended after the workout.