

Balanced Living Goes To The North Pole

Working as a Natural Health Practitioner, I receive many varying requests for nutritional support which involve all ages. One of the most interesting and challenging requests was developing an entire support program for a client wanting to train for a 14 day excursion to the North Pole via cross country skis pulling a heavy sled. Many of the things I originally suggested would have either frozen, not been able to be prepared or were too heavy. This is where I turned to the incredible, Health Force products of Vitamineral Green and Spirulina and a high quality Australian Bee Pollen along with other foods that were high in healthy fats, protein, antioxidants and natural plant sugars.

Figuring out how to mix these into an easily carried, edible 'powerball' was a task that had to be figured out! This could be a life or death situation. Traveling to the north pole was not an excursion that could easily be dropped out of because of lactic acid build up, fatigue, sickness or lack of blood circulation. I invited Sal Amery over to my house to show him the concoction of Superfood powders, dried fruits, nuts, seeds, herbs and healthy fats that I had rolled together hoping that he could stomach them, "WOW, these are good!", he said. I replied, 'Great, these are going to be your food and energy source for 2 weeks, it is important you love them!'

North Pole Expedition

by Saladin Amery



I recently went on an expedition to the North Pole, which demanded a great deal of preparation for the journey. Under the guidance of Inge Solheim, from Storm Adventures (www.stormadventures.no), I began my exercise routine to help build stamina, the core muscles in my body and to help me get used to the pull of a 75kg to 100kg sled (known as a "pull"), that would contain all our gear and supplies. This routine included a lot of long distance running, core body workout, and tying a car tire to my hips and dragging, while I ran.

While I knew that my friends Inge and Farzin Pourmokhtar had me on the right track regarding my needs around exercising, I turned to my dear friend, Dana Heather of Balanced Living, (who has also become my naturopath & homeopath), for a supplements regimen that would prepare me for the journey. Although the supplements and quantities varied throughout the year of preparation, Vitamineral green(a natural organic power made from various high nutrient super food substances), Superfoods, essential fatty acids and anti oxidants were always present.

As our expedition was drawing near, once again I went to Dana for her advice, to help sustain me during my journey. Our daily routine was going to be very demanding, and Dana listened patiently to understand our needs:

Morning: wake up, eat breakfast, fill thermoses with boiling water for the day, address daily ablutions, break up camp, pack pulls and start to ski

Day: ski for about 10 to 12 hours a day, breaking every two hours to eat and drink, refueling the body. (While skiing, we would be wearing long underwear and vortex shells, and while stationary, we would be putting on big heavy down coats. This meant that, apart from the exercise itself, the body would be burning extra energy to help keep us warm during the day)

Night: make camp at night, eat dinner, fill thermoses with boiling water, deal with nightly ablutions and finally sleep. (Though we did have -40C synthetic sleeping bags, we were never truly warm, keeping our body burning extra energy to keep us warm, during the night as well)

Dana was really excited and decided to sponsor the supplements for our expedition. Taking Vita-Mineral Green as a base mixed with a plethora of other super foods, dried fruits, nuts, seeds, raw cacao and healthy fats were combined and called 'power balls' that I could take with me. The energy balls would address all my minerals and vitamin needs while on the journey, help with the necessary antioxidants and lactic acid build up, during the day's exercises, and make sure my overall health did not deteriorate during the expedition.

The journey started according to plan, but we soon learnt that at the extremities of the World, there are no guarantees and the weather is very unpredictable. We put our lives at risk daily, trying to find ways to cross water leads across our path, tested by pressure ridges (where the ice flows would push against each other, creating high jagged barriers) that we would have to climb over, and the constant challenge of the weather. With freezing temperatures reaching -35C, high winds and for a period of 58 hours, we were pinned down in a blizzard; as if it wasn't enough, a crack developed in the ice that ran under two of our tents putting us in grave danger. It was a grilling and dangerous adventure, but we all survived, reached our target, and were better individuals after the experience.



I can honestly say, that the power balls, which I tried to take at every break, truly helped, not only myself, as I had made extra, but at least half the group, relied on them to some degree. I never experienced any muscle pain, or lactic acid build up. My body energy was always at an optimum level, and my health never deteriorated during the expedition. My tent partner Kevin Kilduff, who we endearingly called 'Baby Shack', in light of his Irish descent and in honor of Shackleton, relied on the power balls as much as I did.

It was very kind of Dana to sponsor me with the Vita-mineral Green, and other super

foods during the expedition. I have a truly high regard for such natural super foods, and have come to rely on them in my daily life.

Thank you Balanced Living and Jameth Sheridan of Health Force for making this all possible.

North Pole Expedition
by Kevin Kilduff



My preparation for the North Pole expedition was slightly different to Sal's.

My friend Farzin Pourmokhtar had previously skied to the North and South Poles, and I was very excited when he suggested that I come on the next expedition to the North Pole with him and Inge Solheim. He shared with me the type of training he had undertaken for the previous trips: pulling car tyres to build up core body strength, plenty of gym work and long distance running. He mentioned that the North Pole expedition required a lot of stamina and although physically tough it also required a high degree of mental fortitude to cope with the extreme conditions. I always thought I was mentally tough, but not having exercised for years I decided I would start training the next day so I would be in peak condition by the start date in 12 months time. That was my plan.

What transpired was completely different: I kept putting off my training, telling myself I would start "tomorrow", I would give up the cigarettes soon (I was smoking 30 a day at the time) and I still had plenty of time to start training. Time kept rolling by and soon we were a week away from starting the expedition and still I had not trained properly. I had completed a couple of three mile walks on the beach and could do 30 push-ups, and thankfully had given up the cigarettes, but I hadn't seen the inside of a gym in years and so inwardly I began to panic. Here I was about to embark on an expedition to one of the most extreme places on earth, and I was in the most unfit condition of my life. I began convincing myself that "it can't be that tough", that Farzin had said it was 90% mental toughness, and anyhow, I doubted if Captain Scott or Ernest Shackleton or Roald Amundsen or Tom Crean had seen the inside of a gym either, before their expeditions.

I kept my doubts to myself and finally arrived at Barneo Ice station on the Arctic Ocean. My fellow expedition members were a great bunch of people: a tri-athlete, 2 Ski-marathon skiers, a Guinness world record holder for polar exploration (Henry Cookson), a North and South pole skier, a guy who had just climbed Kilimanjaro and our guide Inge Solheim who had been to the North Pole 10 times, had won the South

Pole Race, had skied across Greenland (42 kilometers a day for 60 consecutive days) etc. Boy, was I out of my league!

Off we went, and the first short day went Ok. We skied for a couple of hours and pitched tent for the night. Sal and I shared a tent, and we got on fine. The next day was not as good. After about four hours of skiing and pulling the sledge I completely ran out of energy. I started to get dizzy, was sweating profusely, was extremely thirsty, my feet were hurting and I just wanted to lie down and collapse. I didn't know what was happening to me, and couldn't understand why I had lost my energy so quickly. I called Inge and told him that I couldn't go on and that I wouldn't be able for another 10 days of this. Inge calmly settled me, gave me water and chocolate and spoke to me, motivating me to continue for another while until our next break, and that everyone has their bad days and that I was getting my bad day "out of the way" early. His motivation got me thinking positively again. I could now understand the mental aspect to this trip. Inge realized that I had become dehydrated and had not been replacing calories by continually eating snacks as we skied. This exhaustion could lead to a negative spiral where a person just gives up and loses the will to continue. In the high Arctic environment the consequences are deadly.



That was my first lesson on Calorie burn and calorie replenishment and how important it is to fuel the body correctly. My next lesson occurred at the break when Sal, having also realized that I had not been replacing calories, offered me a "Powerball" which he explained had been formulated by a Nutritionist friend of his to slowly release the energy needs required by the body for this type of exertion. I shoved the "Powerball" into my mouth and chewed. Whether it was due to my body being so depleted of energy at that time, I could almost feel the instant effect of the "Powerball". My body was receiving food again. During the break I stuffed myself with chocolate, nuts, sugar drinks... everything I could eat within the ten minute period. I was beginning to feel better, and could continue with the trip. Later that evening, Sal explained how Dana Heather had coached him on the nutritional preparation for his expedition, and he mentioned strange words like Spirulina, Vitamin Green and Goji berries. Sal explained that the chocolate and sugars provided instant energy which would only last a short time but that the "Powerballs" would release the energy consistently throughout the day. My interest was piqued. If I ever make it to the North Pole and get home safely, I will check out these Superfoods/Supplements and start eating healthy foods.

The next day, I was a new man. I was rested, and now knew the importance of refueling the body. Sal supplied me with "Powerballs" throughout the rest of the trip, and although we encountered some extreme and dangerous conditions and had some exhaustingly challenging days, we skied approximately 120 kilometers and successfully made it to the North Pole on 17th April 2010.

Thanks to INGE, SAL, FARZIN, HENRY AND REST OF THE NP.10 TEAM, DANA FOR THE "POWERBALLS" and JAMETH of HEALTH FORCE for formulating these amazing Superfoods.