

INTERVIEW WITH DAVE DRAPER

Interview by Steve Austin, special to the Clarion-Ledger

He was the image of bodybuilding in the late 1960s. Standing on a sunny southern California beach, flanked by beautiful women admiring his championship physique, Dave Draper was, and still is, a true inspiration for those of us who pump iron and eat properly to stay fit and look great.

His titles include Mr. America, Mr. World and Mr. Universe, and at the age of 65 his workouts still make his fans gasp in awe.

Draper has graced tons of magazine covers, appeared on dozens of TV shows, starred in movies and is a popular public speaker. His bestselling books, *Your Body Revival* and *Brother Iron, Sister Steel*, provide top advice about weight loss and weight training, respectively. He lives in California with his wife, Laree.

His Web site, www.davedraper.com, is filled with lots of information, including exercise routines and nutritional advice.

Q: It's summertime and everyone is thinking about the beach and pool, often trying fad diets to lose those last five pounds. Why do they often fail?

A: They put their efforts into play too late without sufficient psychological or physical preparation. Body changes need more than a last-minute dietary nudge. They need time, common sense and commitment. And they require vigorous exercise.

Q: Choose the three most nutritious foods that pack the most power for the punch.

A: I suggest a superior milk-based protein powder supplement for tasty and convenient meals. They are ideal for breakfast and pre- and post-workout nourishment. Tuna and water plus raw vegetables for lean, no-fuss feedings are superb. And low-fat, grass-fed red meat is for those with droplets of drive in their plasma.

Q: Does your current diet resemble the diet you followed during your competitive days? And when you were competing did you have forbidden snacks as an occasional treat?

A: My diet is a carbon copy of my early high-protein training menu. It's all about lean red meat, fish, poultry, eggs and milk products, plenty of raw vegetables plus sufficient servings of fruit, nuts and grains. As for forbidden snacks in the old days, I ate enough cheesecake to put a smile on my face, but not enough to make me round and pudgy.

Q: You spent time in the gym with Arnold Schwarzenegger and traveled all over the world with him. Any funny dining stories?

A: Once three of us sat chatting eagerly at a cafe after our workout at Muscle Beach. The waiter took Arnold's order of three ham and cheese omelettes. He brought the order, placing one plate before each of us. The three were for Arnold! Not knowing his voracious patrons, the waiter moved on thinking he was done. We fought over the toast.

Q: So many kids in the U.S. today are obese and out of shape. What's the cure?

A: Exercise and right eating, plus education starting with Mom and Dad. Schools should provide physical education and instruction in basic nutrition and personal responsibility. Let's save the kids from emotional pain and physical limitation. Save the kids, save the nation, save the world.

MUSCLE BEACH SKIRT STEAK

2 pounds skirt steak, cut into pieces as desired

1/2 cup olive oil

1/4 cup soy sauce

1/4 cup balsamic vinegar

1/4 cup lime juice

2 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

Blend oil, soy sauce, vinegar, lime juice, garlic and cumin in a bowl or zipper-lock bag. Marinate skirt steak in blend for at least an hour in the refrigerator before grilling over hot coals until cooked to taste. Don't overcook or undercook; skirt steak is best at medium-rare. Serve with side salad and feel free to top steak with grilled mushrooms, onions, red potatoes or peppers.

Serves 4-6.