

Nodens' Table Newsletter - June 2008



Welcome to the June edition of The Nodens' Table newsletter. Please pass it on to any family and friends that may be interested. This month sees the launch of our new fitness tips section. I have already been following the advice in this first article and have found it very useful - particularly for my 'crunchy' knees. I hope you like it too!

Forthcoming Events

A massive thank you to **Karen Swanston**, from **Fashion Pixie**, who did a splendid job with her colours presentation at our last Nodens' Table evening. Everybody who came along had their colours 'done' and we came away with fantastic tips for making the best of how we dress and the colours we choose. The biggest testimonial to Karen's skill is that I bought some summer tops a few days ago and managed to almost completely steer away from my beloved black! Thanks karen. I see a future Gillies wardrobe that isn't completely monochromatic!

Our next event will be held on Monday 23rd June 2008. This time we will meet at the gallery as usual, then head out for a **walk along the nearby canal path**. We will start the evening with a fortifying shake before our exercise then finish with some relaxing afterwards in one of the pubs near the canal (ahem!). Plans will change if the weather is bad. All very welcome to attend.



Date: Monday 23rd June 2008

Time: 7 pm - 9 pm

Venue: The Kaya Gallery, 24 Lochrin Buildings, Gilmore Place, Edinburgh.

Please note that there is plenty of parking outside the gallery after 6.30pm. If you arrive earlier than that the traffic wardens will catch you!

Recipe Corner

This month why not try out a **Brain Freeze Shake**? It looks so yummy. I shall have some of this one made for you all to taste before our walk on 23rd June.

Whizz up the following in a blender then pour into a glass and enjoy.....

2 scoops of tropical fruit flavour Formula 1

1 scoop of Personal Protein Powder

1/2 banana

1/2 peach

1 tbsp pineapple juice

1 tbsp cranberry juice

250 ml **freshly squeezed** orange juice



Exercise tip #1

This month we kick off our exercise section with an article written by Ian Astley. Ian is a qualified cricket coach and is full of excellent ideas for getting and staying fit. Thanks Ian. Tracy Griffen, a personal trainer, also sent me an article on the same subject! Small world! Thanks Tracy. Ian beat you to it!

Tenement stairs: Loathe them? – LIKE them! by Ian Astley



Many of us will live in that typical feature of the Edinburgh skyline, the tenement. If, like me, you went for an upper-storey flat, you will not be unfamiliar with the daunting prospect of getting to your front door after a hard day at work. Whilst I will readily confess that I do not fly up them two at a time at a sprinter's pace every day, there are some very simple ways in which to turn what is sometimes a pain in the proverbial (especially if you have a briefcase full of work in one hand and a bag of groceries in the other) into gentle but useful training. If it helps, you can call it body-sculpting!

Firstly, I always go up stairs two at a time unless I can avoid it. My reasoning is that if I have, say, fifty steps to climb, halving the number of leg movements has to be a good thing. It also gives the fibres in my leg muscles a greater range of movement for every step I take.

Secondly, I pay attention to the technique I use for climbing the stairs. In my capacity as a cricket coach, I am very keen to teach people correct walking and running technique as the basis of the movements required to play the sport. It pains me to watch runners on the Meadows sometimes (yes, I invariably walk to and from work!). Some of the techniques are doing more harm than good to their owners. Paying attention to the sequence of your footfalls as you go upstairs, deliberate step for deliberate step, is one way of making your body aware of how the movements in your feet can have an effect on the posture of your whole body – and hence the efficiency of movement which you attain.

So, when I say technique for climbing stairs, what do I mean? Surely it's not some kind of rocket science, I hear you say. Well, it's not: I use various techniques and they're all as simple as they are effective. My staple gait is to place the balls of my feet just inside the edge of the step and spring up on them, heels kept slightly higher than the step. I make sure that my lower lumbar region is straight, which keeps my spine straight and my shoulders pulled slightly back. Thus, my head does not sink down either. If you try this but do not correct rounded shoulders and a hanging head you are actually putting a lot of strain on the lower lumbar region – and those muscles will not last forever! Get it right, on the other hand, and you will be strengthening that crucial region, not taxing it. You will be able to feel the springing movement from the balls of your feet working its way through your calves, thighs and hips, into your back, shoulders and neck. Feel the different areas of your body working together as a unit, rather than having the various bits and bobs working against each other and making you tired and miserable. If you don't believe me, the next time you have two heavy shopping bags to cart home, go upstairs one step at a time, holding the bags in front of you with rounded shoulders and a hanging head.

Another point I pay attention to is the alignment of my feet. Especially when one is tired, there is a tendency to allow the feet to fall across the centre line of the body. This tendency is especially prominent in women, due to the greater width of the hips and the attendant greater moment about the body's vertical axis. Make an effort to place the balls of your feet in line below the hip joint. (Forget about those semi-anorexic dolls on the catwalk – they're paid to throw their hips around the place.) This will help to correct any torsional forces going through your knees and hips in particular and will in turn help to start soothing away imbalances in your back.

A refinement of the above is to place my heels at the edge of the step and roll through the balls of my feet as I climb the stairs. This gives the calf muscles a greater range of movement but requires a slightly better level of flexibility and fitness. Do not start off doing this if you are going up two at a time, you may well give yourself a calf strain, a niggling but surprisingly debilitating injury. On the other hand, if you are going up one at a time, you will probably find it easier.

So, there you have it. I am a great believer in carrying training over into the minutiae of everyday life. Once you get into the habit, it does not take much effort. It also gives some of the more tedious aspects of everyday life a new aspect and a new interest. And your everyday life is not undoing all the good you do in the gym!

Ian Astley is a cricket coach, accredited at Level 2 by the English Cricket Board. He also has what is politely referred to as a high training age. (And he uses Herbalife to keep himself going during the six or seven hours of a league match!) If you enjoyed this excursion into the depths of his tenement life, next month he will show you how to go down stairs too. Can you wait?

This month's special offer.....

Now that summer is finally here (hurrah!) and we are shaking off our winter sluggishness, how about a little something that tastes great and gives you an energy boost but is full of vitamins and is good for you as well?

Have you tried LiftOff yet? It keeps you going while playing sport, helps you focus at work when you start to flag and gives you some 'get up and go' when you really need it.

It comes in two wonderful flavours - Lemon 'n' Lime and Tangy Orange. All you do is drop the tablet into a glass of water, wait for it to dissolve and then it's ready to enjoy.



This month we are offering a 20% introductory discount on LiftOff. The usual price is £20 for a box of 10 tablets but you can buy it in June for just £16, while stocks last!

That's all for now,

See you in July!

love

Amanda x