

3 Keys To Successful Training, Diet & Preparation For Victory In An MMA Fight

Win Your MMA Fight

A Step-By-Step System For Preparing For A Mixed
Martial Arts Fight

Yoshi Kundagawa

Included:

- How To Train For Strength, Explosive Power & Endurance!
- How To Cut Weight Without Starving Yourself!
- How To Increase Your Sponsorship Dollars!
- How To Prepare For The Weigh-in!
- How To Develop A Strategy For Fight Night!

About the author

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Yoshi Kundagawa is widely considered one of the top mixed martial arts authors on the Internet. He is a freelance journalist covering the MMA industry.

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Articles by Yoshi: http://ezinearticles.com/?expert=Yoshi_Kundagawa

Yoshi's MMA Blog: <http://www.martialarts3000.com/free-articles.html>

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3 Keys To Successful Training, Diet & Preparation For Victory In An MMA Fight

Welcome, this is Yoshi Kundagawa. In this special report I am going to share proven strategies that can help you achieve victory in your next mixed martial arts fight.

TRAINING

MMA is notorious for chaos before a fight card. It doesn't matter if it's the UFC, Pride or some tiny regional show, the one thing that is guaranteed are last-minute changes to the card. Because the sport is so physical, injuries are common, as are medical issues, governing body approvals, as well as screw-ups with making weight.

Are you the type of fighter that can handle getting a phone call from a desperate promoter 5 or 6 days before the fight, begging you to step in and save the day by taking a fight? Can your mind handle a panicking promoter calling you with the news that your scheduled opponent had had to pull out, but "Don't worry, I have the perfect guy for you to fight instead"?

Nothing will ever be perfect in the weeks leading up to your fight, but ideally you will have a window of training of roughly 6-10 weeks. Think of this as your "CAMP", especially the 4 weeks leading up to the show. There is a lot to be learned from guys like Tito Ortiz and Team Punishment. They hide themselves away from the world up at his camp in Big Bear for a solid month. They live, eat, breath and crap for one reason only: to be in the ultimate condition come fight time.

If you are a part-time fighter, you may not have the luxuries of a 7-figure superstar, YET! But that simply means you need more focus and discipline to carry you and your team over the 4-6 weeks of your camp.

Training for a fight is complicated. I'm a big believer in keeping things simple. I've attempted to break down the entire world of getting ready for a fight into components and checklists for you. Let's look at the 5 essential components of your training.

1. Strength
2. Power
3. Endurance
4. Technique
5. Recovery

Amazing, isn't it? Forty hours a week of training boiled down to 5 key ideas. Let's look at each training component individually.

CORE STRENGTH TRAINING

Mixed martial arts sure isn't bodybuilding. You see a champion like Tim Sylvia, or a top-level competitor like Cabbage or Butterbean and you wonder if these guys even work out. They have no overwhelming muscle mass (at least visibly!) no definition, no beach body...until they hit something and the lights go out.

If you've ever read any of the bodybuilding magazines, you can pretty much flush anything you think you've learned. Building pretty muscles requires multiple sets from multiple angles with sets to failure in the 8-12 rep range. Unfortunately your opponent doesn't care how nice your pecs or biceps are when they take full mount and ground and pound your face.

Do you have a strength coach? Unless you are fortunate to be a top ranked contender, or train at a university or one of the top-tier gyms, chances are you don't. It's up to you to design a functional strength routine based on the equipment you have available.

Try to focus about an hour a week on pure strength training during your 6-week camp. The key is to work the large compound exercises and basic lifts, with a sufficient quantity of sets with low to medium reps. The entire workout should be under 45 minutes and less than 20 sets to optimize your body's natural production of growth hormone.

Here's an example for bench press. If you can press 250 for a max single, warm up with 135 for 15, 185 for 10-12, then work at 80% of your max, in this case 200 pounds for 5 sets of 5. If that is too easy, go up to 225 for 5 sets of 5. Rest 1 minute between sets. On the week of the fight, back off the poundages as you will be at your most vulnerable for injury.

Use specific training routines for the big core exercises like:

1. Squats
2. Deadlifts & Chins
3. Military press
4. Upright rows

We have been experimenting with Russian kettle bell routines and I have found them incredibly effective and brutal in terms of harnessing raw body power. Try a Google search for "kettle bell training" and you'll see how popular this cannonball with a handle has become!

We will be releasing a special report on Core Strength Training For Mixed Martial Artists. If you would like to be placed on a private notification list, go to <http://www.winyourmmafight.com/notify.html> you will receive priority notification when that report is released.

EXPLOSIVE POWER

Imagine your opponent is sitting on your chest in full mount, starring into your eyes about to throw bombs at your face. What do you do? HURRY! WHAT DO YOU DO?

I hope you didn't say, "Shit my shorts and pray."

Did you say, "EXPLODE!"

Building explosive power is extremely vital in mixed martial arts. You need that power in takedowns and take down defense. You need it in a clinch against the cage. You need it on the ground.

Everyone's body is different. If you are the classic thick-boned, heavily muscled mesomorph who had 16-inch arms in grade 9, fine, screw you lucky dog. If you have 5-inch wrists like me and struggle to squat your bodyweight for 10 reps, brother I feel for you in the genetics department. Regardless of how many white muscle fibers you have and how small your joints are, you can increase your current levels of explosive power.

Here's an exercise to test your guts. Get a sturdy wooden box about 8 inches high, or stack the ladies step aerobic thingies into a stable pile. Stand just to the left side of it, face forward, and jump straight up in the air and to the right until your heels hit your ass, then come down on top of the box. Jump off the box to the right, heels hitting your butt and land just beside the box. Those two jumps form a half rep. Jump back to the left onto the box, then off the box to the left, both times heels hitting your butt. Those are a full rep, once across and back. About 3 feet in total distance covered in a lateral motion.

By jumping with your heels hitting your butt you make this harder.

This builds explosive power in your calves, hamstrings and glutes. Do 50 reps and record how you feel. Each workout increase this number by at least 10%. If your heels don't hit you butt, the rep doesn't count.

If you watched the intro to Spike TV's "The Ultimate Fighter" you see them doing a variety of pushups. Doing pushups with a clap in the middle builds explosive power in the pecs, delts and triceps.

Jumping squats will help build your quad power. There is a ton of variety possible to keep your enthusiasm fresh and to keep your muscle memory from getting stale. Train your max reps in 60 seconds with your butt all the way down to parallel and full jump up. Train 100 straight reps. Train jumping squats with your arms held straight up in the air above your head. Train jumping squats with a training partner on your shoulders!

When I was training with one of our pro fighters, we had a durable gunnysack filled with 200 pounds of sand. He had to grab the end of it with MMA gloves on, and then tow it backwards for 100 feet full speed. He turned around at the end, and came back the same way. He would do 20-30 lengths towing the sand bag to blast his glutes, hamstrings and lower back. We would then tie the bag to him with an old skipping rope and weight belt. He then would run sprints towing the same 200-pound bag.

When you are training for explosive power, don't be surprised if you are sore the next day. This type of training puts extra stress on joints, tendons, ligaments, and muscle insertion points. See the tips on Recovery in section 5.

ENDURANCE TRAINING

Take a deep breath for a count of 5. Hold it for a count of 5, and then blow it out for the count of 5. How do you feel?

Now do it ten thousand times.

Just kidding. Training your aerobic and anaerobic endurance is one of the greatest gifts you will give yourself come fight time. Read this out loud:

“TRAINING ENDURANCE IS THE GREATEST GIFT I CAN GIVE MYSELF!”

If you repeat that often enough, eventually you will come to believe it. Especially when you hit the third round and your opponent is fried and you feel fresh!

Question; how long is your fight?

Most amateur MMA fights are 3 rounds of 3 minutes with 1 or 2 minute breaks. Pro fights are 3 rounds of 5 minutes with 1-minute breaks. Title fights are often 5 rounds of 5 minutes.

Are you ready?

Seriously, how is your cardio?

If you've ever watched the Rocky movies, you see the old time boxers enduring long jogs of 'roadwork' every day. Let me ask you a serious question. Do you really think running 10 miles a day is what you need right now?

Let me give you an example of a recent cardio session with our amateur MMA team.

After we stretched and loosened up, we did a 30-minute cardio drill. We started shadow boxing at a quick pace, with lots of combinations. Our cardio coach would yell out a number between 1 and 5. 1 is a jab. 2 is a jab, cross. 3 is a jab, cross, left hook. 4 is a

jab, cross, hook, cross. 5 is an uppercut, hook, cross, jab. If he yelled, “Sprawl!” we sprawled fully on the floor, laces down, head up and got up with our hands up. We did this for 3 minutes to warm up at a pace comparable to a real fight.

Then he yelled “Sprawl and stay down!” Then we did mountain climbers for 60 seconds, then rolled over and did abs for 60 seconds, then rolled over and did pushups for 60 seconds full blast. Then he would yell at us to get up and shadow box as he yelled out combinations for 3 minutes. Then back down to do pushups for 60 seconds, abs for 60 seconds, 60 seconds of wrestling neck bridges, then 60 seconds of jumping squats. Then 3 minutes of shadow boxing. Then back down...this cycle repeats for a full 30-minute cardio blast.

Strange things happen when you push your cardio. The world gets two-dimensional. You lose cognitive functions as your heart rate accelerates. Your labored breathing and the coach yelling instructions dominate your hearing. The world looks flat, and narrow. The color changes. You get a strange taste in your mouth.

Remember, training your aerobic and anaerobic endurance is one of the greatest gifts you will give yourself come fight time.

That 30-minute, non-stop cardio drill was like fighting 3 fights back to back to back. We did again the next day, and it felt easier than the day before.

To boost cardio we play King Of The Hill. 2 guys get on the mats with two opponents. They spar with jujitsu and wrestling only until one gets a submission. Loser goes out and a fresh opponent comes in to repeat the drill. We play this for 30 minutes. My Sifu and a top IFL pro fighter recently took on our entire class of 20 people and neither got tapped in 30 minutes. That’s a lot of fresh fighters to face!

Pushing your cardio is critical. Running 10 miles at a slow pace isn’t going to cut it.

Have you tried:

1. Hill Sprints

Find a nice hill with about 100-150 feet of useable space. Sprint up full blast. Walk down (watch your joints!). Repeat until you see angels or taste breakfast.

2. Stairs

We have an old set of 5 sturdy wooden steps in our gym. Start at the bottom and use your fast footwork to go 1-2, 1-2 up each one, and 1-2, 1-2 down them. It takes a ton of mental focus to get your feet working properly to do these. Try full out blast for 6 minutes then take a 1-minute rest, and repeat.

3. Sprints Plus Plus

Our gym is 120 feet long. We sprint to the end, and do 10 jumping squat high knees like Tito Ortiz does. Then sprint backwards half way back. 10 more jumping high knees. Then sprint forwards to the end, 10 more high knees, then turn around and sprint full blast all the way back. That's 1. Rest 30 seconds. Repeat the set. Rest 40 seconds. Repeat the set. Rest 50 seconds. Repeat the set. 5 sprints is one giant set. Rest one minute. Then do the same sprints, but instead of jumping high knees, you do burpees. 5 full sets of sprints and burpees plus rests are now 2 giant sets. If you aren't woozy, do a 3rd giant set of 5 sprints, but do pushups this time instead of burpees.

If you ever feel super sadistic, do the 100 reps of jumps on and over the box from the EXPLOSIVENESS section. Immediately after doing the 100 reps, start the sprints. Don't be surprised if your legs give out momentarily. It's okay; it's good for you....

FIGHTING TECHNIQUES

It's beyond the scope of this special report to dissect all the types of fighting styles that you need to win in the cage. Back in the early days of the sport you had a boxer fighting a karate expert. You had a ninjitsu assassin vs. a wrestler. You had a sumo vs. a jujitsu man. It was a real life video game. But no longer.

Today, you need quick hands, kickboxing, grappling, and wrestling and jujitsu skills. You need to be able to survive on the ground, handle the clinch, and battle against the cage. Your game must be well-rounded and well thought out.

Don't panic if you aren't there just yet. The good news is your opponent probably isn't perfect either. And you can improve a lot in 6-8 weeks.

The Importance of Sparring

You will need people to help you get ready for your fight. And good sparring partners are essential.

Sparring is not trying to kill each other.
Sparring is not trying to injure each other.
Sparring is a responsibility. Trust is essential.

You will need someone to spar with on the ground for wrestling and jujitsu. You will need a sparring partner to work your standup. You will need a sparring partner for working clinch, takedowns and against the cage. This can be the same person. It can even be your coach. But your coach will find it a lot easier to coach you with a training partner.

If you train at a decent gym, you and your coach should try a sign-up sheet at the front desk. The sport of MMA is hot right now, and a lot of weekend warriors would love to help you to train to get ready for your show. You can never have enough or too many sparring partners. Most will be part-time with crazy schedules. Always book 2 guys or more for any slot, so you have fresh training partners to rotate with.

Your chances of getting injured are highest during sparring. We always start camp with headgear, shin guards and 16-ounce gloves. By 3 weeks out we are sparring with 4 oz gloves. We have one rule at our camps.

Rule #1: No one gets hurt.

We have a video series in development that shows how we train fighters for stand-up, kickboxing, clinch, take downs, on the ground, and on the cage. If you would like to be placed on a private notification list, go to <http://www.winyourmmafight.com/notify.html> You will receive priority notification when the videos are in pre-release.

RECOVERY

1. Injury Prevention & Treatment
2. Symptoms of Overtraining
3. Proper Rest
4. Mindset

Your body is a magnificent machine. It can do some amazing things. If you take care of it.

If you take care of it.

No one is going to tuck you into bed at night. No one is going to make sure you drink enough water, sleep enough, eat enough, and train enough. It's up to you. That personal responsibility, that discipline is the mark of a true champion's mindset.

Let's talk about INJURIES

As I type this, I am 4 weeks out from an amateur show and have been training with the team for about 2 weeks. My hands are sore, my left elbow is aching from an arm bar attempt, I have done close to 1000 pushups in the last 6 days (truly!) and have averaged 45 minutes of flat-out cardio per day for 4 out of the last 5 days.

Here's what I know about my body.

Win Your MMA Fight

I must avoid training 4 days in a row. 3 are ok but I find the third session drags.
My body really loves 2 days off in a row after 3 workouts in a row.
I need to eat at least 5 times a day minimum when training hard.
I am a fanatic for nutritional supplements and thrive on them.
I respond well to sauna and Jacuzzi soaks for my joints.
I can only handle 1 glass of red wine as a treat; the 2nd glass slows me down the next day.

Take a minute right now and jot down a few things that you know about your body and how it responds to training and rest.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

PREVENTION OF INJURIES

Not having stupid-ass training partners is a start. If a guy you train with is a goof or is dangerous, drop him immediately!

I repeat: DROP HIM IMMEDIATELY

Remember Rule #1?

Rule #1: No one gets hurt.

If a training partner is a liability to you winning your MMA fight, he has to go. Period.

Ego is a big problem. How is your ego?

Do you tap out in jujitsu? Why or why not? What do you believe about tapping out in practice?

Do you lift too heavy in weight training and risk injury? What do you believe about lifting big weights?

Where has your ego played a negative role in your training? What are you prepared to do to change that?

During a 6-week camp your body is going to have a tremendous amount of stress inflicted upon it, far in excess of the actual fight. Your muscles, joints, bones, and connective tissue will take a pounding.

Can you get access to a sauna, whirlpool, and/or massage therapy? Can potential sponsors or the gym help out in anyway? How can you get creative to find a way to treat

your body regularly with heat and massage? It will help flush out lactic acid, muscle toxins, and improve circulation and recovery. Consider it ESSENTIAL.

OVERTRAINING

When you over train, your heart rate when you first wake up in the morning is higher than usual. Keep a log next to your bed and track your waking heart rate. This may be an early indication that your body needs a break.

Overtraining creates a damaging hormone called cortisol. This chemical in the body literally cannibalizes your muscle tissue. All that work in the gym will be wasted if you over train.

Many athletes get flu like symptoms when they over train. That runny nose, coughing and congestion is caused by your body's immune system being overtaxed. Think about where and how you train for a minute. Do you think a hot, sweaty wrestling mat is a good breeding ground for germs? Add in a compromised immune system and you get a recipe for a sick martial artist.

Your body needs rest. Training everyday is dumb. Don't train for the sake of training. Train smart. Keep a journal. Record how you feel, how you perform, track everything like a pro does.

REST IS ESSENTIAL

If you think you can train 4-5 days a week for 3-4 hours per session, plus keep a physical job, plus party with the homies on the weekend and coast on 5 hours of sleep a night, brother are you on drugs!

Your muscles only grow when you are asleep. Not in the gym. Not in the bathtub. When you are in bed in deep sleep, your growth hormone gets released and works its magic on your cells. Your tissues rebuild itself from the damage from training. Coupled with a proper diet you will awake refreshed, recharged and stronger and more fit that the day before.

Some people need 6 or 7 hours, others 8-10. There is a lot of proven benefit to daily naps just after lunch. Think of it this way.

The harder you train, the more sleep you need.
The harder you train, the more nutrition you need.
The harder you train, the less you can party.
The harder you train, the easier the fight will be.

MINDSET

How is your personal discipline? What is working in your life, and what is screwed up? How can you get rid of those things that stress you out?

During your training camp, it's natural to feel apprehensive, stressed and anxious. The last thing you need is people around you that don't support your goals. Can you think of a way to avoid toxic relationships for the next month?

Things like cutting the lawn, doing laundry or cooking, banking, and a million other daily chores can wear on you. Do you have someone in your support team that you can talk to and get help in areas that you are mentally weak on?

What TV are you watching? Try watching less TV for a month, and listening to music more to help reduce the load on your nervous system. I love subliminal sports tapes. I have one of those fancy light and sound machines. They have these special goggles that flash red lights into your eyes and put rhythmic beats into your ears to induce mild trances and reduce stress. I learned about them from former Mr. Olympia Frank Zane. Zane beat Arnold Schwarzenegger at about 185 pounds. He turned me onto subliminal learning.

Keeping a journal of your training camp is one of the best things you can do. Jot down your fears, write down your thoughts, and keep track of your ideas. It will make you feel better to share it privately on paper, and it will be an invaluable training aid down the road for you.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DIET IN MIXED MARTIAL ARTS

1. Weight Classes
2. Gaining Vs. Cutting
3. Cutting SMART

What do you weigh right now? Write it here:

What weight are you competing at? Write it here:

How many days until the fight? Write it here:

You and your managers and coaches really need to keep an eye on those three numbers!

If you are trying to gain weight, you have my sympathies. Especially if you are smart and are doing it drug-free. In 2006 it was shocking to see how many top pros got nailed for ‘roids Or worse! Imagine siphoning the urine of a dead cadaver through the hole in the end of your Johnson, filling your bladder with some poor dead shmucks pee, just so you can pass a drug test and make \$5 grand...stupid is as stupid does!

Gaining weight and cutting weight have one thing in common. Frequency of meals.

Most athletes I see, especially the younger ones, eat completely wrong. I train with a 19 year-old kid who has amazing skills, yet can't drop his 20 pounds of baby fat from 175 to get to 155. He trains hard, but he eats only two huge meals a day! One around 2pm, and then a massive meal around 10 pm. When you go to bed on a full stomach, you sleep like crap and your body works all night to store that food as fat.

How many meals per day are you currently eating? Write the number here:

If you wrote 4 (or less) then you are missing feedings. Yes, even if you are trying to drop weight! The more frequently you eat small meals, the more efficient your body has to become at burning it. There are special hormone routines that get activated, and your inner machine runs much smoother.

About 4 months ago I cut from 150 lbs to 139 for a jujitsu tournament. This was the lowest my weight had ever been. Considering that just 4 months earlier I weighed 165lbs, you can see I was the incredible shrinking man that summer!

There was no sauna and weigh-ins were only an hour before you grappled, so there was no room for shenanigans. You really can't re-hydrate much in an hour. Guzzling 6 Gatorades gives you a huge gut that hurts when a guy kneels on it!

I brought my weight down around 1-2 pounds a week for 4 weeks. My final week I was 143, and needed to drop 4 pounds. I was doing plenty of cardio every day, roughly an hour a day on the recumbent bike. I had torn my sauna suit, so I improvised. You can use Vaseline on your torso, or a make-up remover like Abilene, and then tape a green garbage bag on with holes cut for your arms and head. Then you put your sweats over top.

I was eating 6 meals a day, of 275 calories per meal. The weeks leading up to the tournament I was drinking about a gallon of water a day. A week out that was cut to 3-4 glasses, and by Wednesday I was down to ice cubes to handle the thirst. I weighed in Saturday morning at 138.5 lbs. I drank Pedialyte and Gatorade to re-hydrate for my match.

Unfortunately I was up against a collegiate level wrestler who took jujitsu for fun. I was up on points when I stuck my head in a serious triangle. I postured up to pass; he rolled me and ended up sitting on my face in ace mount, still in the triangle. I rolled him back around, tried one more pass before my lights went out. Sometimes you eat the bear,

sometimes the bear eats you. I weighed myself right after the match and I was 142 pounds.

BIG MISTAKES IN CUTTING

1. Starving

Have you ever starved yourself? You see those scrawny models on TV that live on wine and cigarettes? Ever see the look in their eyes?

When you starve yourself, a hormone called leptin gets activated. I have seen first hand what happens when a bodybuilder starving himself before a contest lost the battle with his hormones. He snapped around 11pm at night, and drove to an A&W drive-through. He ate a Grandpa Burger, onion rings, fries, a couple of micro waved apple pies and a few root beers. He completely looked like crap the next day. All the salt and fat pulled the water back into his body.

How do you prevent crashing on a diet? Have you ever heard the term “cheat day”? The body can be tricked into thinking a famine or starvation has ended and prevents the leptin from driving you crazy and blowing your diet. How? On Wednesdays and Saturdays you get to cheat A LITTLE BIT on your diet.

What does a little bit mean? About 300-400 calories over your normal daily intake. Think one slice of pizza, or a small bowl of ice cream. A treat. Something to eat slowly and savor. A release for the mind and hormones.

Note I said “a slice” and not an entire pizza or tub of ice cream! Discipline my friend. Imagine how great the victory meal will be after you win your fight. Plan that party. Look at Chuck Liddell. He invites 10,000 fans to his after parties!

2. Water

Water is an essential part of cutting. You need your body to believe that water is plentiful in the weeks leading up to the fight. Drink a gallon a day spread over the day. If you are on a diet, drink 2 large glasses of ice-cold water before every meal? Why? Your body will burn calories to warm up the water, and it will give your stomach a feeling of fullness before you eat your delicious steamed fish or chicken salad.

The final week before the show, you must watch your water intake. Have your coach control the water bottle at training. Your body will die without water, but you must gradually taper it off before the weigh-in if you are cutting. But since you’re smart, you started your diet early and you won’t have a ridiculous amount of water to cut, right?

CUTTING WITHOUT DYING

In early 2007 Travis Lutter, the middleweight winner of Season 3 of The Ultimate Fighter on Spike TV had a title match against champion Anderson Silva at 185lbs. He showed up at 207 lbs, and attempted to cut 22lbs in less than 36 hours. Unfortunately his body shut down and stopped sweating...and he showed up at weigh-ins at 187lbs. For a title fight you don't get the 1-pound buffer, so they sent him back into the sauna to try to drop 2 final pounds in 2 hours. When he came back to re-weigh he had only lost ½ pound and LOST HIS TITLE FIGHT! He had months to prepare, he knew everything was riding on this, and yet he gambled and lost. He fought without heart Saturday night and was pounded in a triangle choke with elbows by a very pissed off Silva.

I have seen it work though. Recently I was at a King of The Cage match in Ottawa Canada. Mark Bocek, a gifted jujitsu black belt, arrived Thursday morning at 172 lbs, and showed up Friday afternoon at 156lbs for his lightweight weigh-in. He looked like shit! If you looked into his eyes, you saw the gaze of a man who had stared death in the face in the sauna. Let me tell you something...he has amazing discipline. He sat in that sauna in a sauna suit for 15 hours plus on Thursday. He was up at the crack of dawn Friday and sat in that sauna non-stop. The bus to the weigh-ins left at noon, but being the pro that he is, he stayed in the sauna. He showed up to the weigh-in at 3 pm. He had a manager at the weigh-in with a cell phone, and a manager at the sauna waiting to drive him to the venue. They knew exactly what they were doing. He never moaned or showed any drama. Athletes were crawling out of the sauna after an hour or two, gasping as if they were dying. Bocek sat there for an entire day. He re-hydrated back nearly to 170 and easily crushed his opponent Saturday night.

Do I suggest this drastic cutting? Hell no!

When you drop 15 or 20 pounds of water in a day or two, where do you think it comes from? Muscles, yes. And you need muscles to fight. What about your brain?

Your brain floats in a pool in your skull. What happens when you drain that pool?

Somebody is getting knocked the f* out!

Sadly, people have died from cutting. The greatest "small" bodybuilder who ever lived, Momo B died after a pro bodybuilding show. His diuretics had messed with the ratios of sodium and potassium in his body. The heart is an electrical system, and shut down because of it. Several states like New Jersey are passing laws to prevent extreme cutting before athletic shows, and this will change the game immensely.

That's why having time and a plan are the smartest things. Sometimes a promoter calls at the last second begging you to fight. Sometimes Exlax and a sauna are unavoidable in order to make weight. But if you have the chance, train smart, diet smart and show up for

the show relaxed, comfortable and strong instead of withered, weak, shaky and whimpering.

PREFIGHT PREP

The final 48 hours before a show is nerve wracking. Having a solid team around you is essential. You need competent people to handle the details, leaving you to relax, develop the mindset, the game plan and then take care of business.

I had a training partner who used to be a pro fighter show up with 7 of his friends for a pro fight. They were his entourage. They smoked in the car on the way to the show. They partied until 4 a.m. 2 days before the show, and 5 a.m. the day of the show. They all got lost on the way to the show. The showed up for a 7:30 pro card at 7:45 pm. They were all in the locker room screaming and hollering and shooting video. I'm not kidding...it was a scene from a comedy. Want to guess how the fight went? Worst ... fight ... ever.

You do not need an entourage, especially a bunch of wannabe gangsters blazing all the time. Save it for the rap videos.

You came to fight. Surround yourself with people who are there to help make your life easier.

CHECKLISTS

Here is a checklist of what I go through with a fighter the day before the weigh-in.

1. 3 pairs of ring shorts
2. jock
3. 2 mouth-guards
4. Sponsored t-shirts
5. 4 pairs of underwear
6. 2 cd's with ring entrance music, labeled,
7. Black sharpie
8. 3 pens
9. PHOTO ID
10. Phone numbers of promoter, hotel, venue
11. Water
12. Food
13. ipod with headphones
14. Sandals
15. Camera
16. Towels
17. 4oz gloves and focus mitts for warm-up
18. Pedialyte (for re-hydrating)
19. Abilene or Vaseline

20. Garbage bags
21. Copies of medical records
22. Check with host hotel for sauna and gym

Imagine how good it feels as a fighter to know that everything is packed and taken care of. We often will track down a backup sauna. We were at a pro show in Winnipeg and the host hotel was basically a flophouse with no sauna. It's good to have a Plan B, isn't it?

DAY OF WEIGH-IN

Depending on a fighter's weight, sometimes we are up early and in the sauna, otherwise take it easy and rest. When I am cornering, I always find the promoter, and find the official weigh-in scale that the commission will be using. Scales are like clocks, everyone tells a different weight. We do checks throughout the morning.

Here is a checklist of Weigh-in Day

1. Map to weigh-in (drive if you can, taking the team bus means a lot of waiting)
2. Phone numbers of venue and promoter
3. Towels
4. Sandals for fighters feet
5. Ice cubes
6. PHOTO ID
7. Copies of medical records
8. Pedialyte or Gatorade
9. Garbage bag and Vaseline or makeup remover (last minute weight-loss)

You may notice I listed PHOTO ID in all caps. I knew a fighter who showed up to a fight without a single piece of id. Not one. No license, no bankcard, nothing. He thought he was famous enough that he didn't need it. Too bad the regulatory government bodies that sanction MMA need to see photo id. This poor guy showed up for his fight without a mouth guard. Without gloves. Without ID. He used to be a hell of a great fighter....

At the weigh-in if you have done your homework and prepared, you will look dry, muscular and frankly, in the best shape of your life. When you step on that scale remember to hit a pose, smile, look confident and show the world you are ready to win.

It is important to listen to the commissioner give the guidelines on fouls. Every region and promotion is different. Are elbows to the face allowed? What about knees? Make sure you and your team discusses the rules and how they may play into your game plan.

For example, when we fought in Quebec, you could put ZERO Vaseline on a fighter. When we fought in Ohio, there were no strikes of any kind to the head except a fist.

FIGHT DAY

I always like to drive from the host hotel to the show venue the day before or the morning of the show to map the route. I knew a pro fighter who wanted to ride to a show in his friend's car instead of his manager and trainer's car. They got lost on the way to the show and arrived 23 minutes before his fight.

Fight Day is about staying calm and going into that "fighter's bubble". Got an ipod? Use it. Stay mellow, hydrated, fed and focused. Let your managers sweat for you.

If you can have access to the cage or ring the day of the fight, it's a good idea to head over for a light warm up session. Don't blow a knee or ankle just because your adrenaline is pumping as you hear your breathing in an empty convention hall. Look around the room, get used to the size. Stalk the cage. Practice grappling against the cage with your coach. Do a little pretend ground and pound to get a feel for the floor. Check to see if the sponsor's logos on the mats are slick. Make a mental note about it. Soak it all in and relax.

As the fight approaches, let your manager talk to the promoters to find out exactly what order the fights are listed. Let them find your dressing room. Get there early and start to make yourself at home. In the dressing room should be your two corner men only. Your friends and family can cheer out in the stands and party with you after the fight.

Make sure you have a jock, shorts, a sponsor's t-shirt, and a mouth guard. Start your warm up at least 30 minutes out from your slot. Under card fights are notorious for being first round knockouts or choke outs. You want to be ready to roll in case they fall quick.

It's generally chaotic in the dressing room. I was at a pro show where out of 12 fighters in the room, I was the ONLY guy with a pair of scissors! I had to help a dozen other guys tape up, and then cut the tape off their hands afterwards. Out of 12 fights, the only winner in that entire room was our guy. Our dressing room went 1-11. I guess not knowing to bring scissors was an indication of how green these other fighters were.

We generally warm up in the dressing room with stand up with focus pads after we have taped the hands and had the commission sign off on the tape. Most venues provide official MMA gloves so everyone has the same equipment. We work the clinch against the wall, pretending it's the cage. We work punching our way in close for a takedown. And plenty of floor work if there are mats. I want the fighter to get a soft sweat going and get loose and stretched out during the warm up.

CORNERMAN'S KIT

Here is what I pack in my corner man's kit:

1. 1 plastic red bucket
2. 3 small Ziploc bags of ice
3. 2 large Ziploc bags of ice
4. 2 containers of Vaseline
5. 6 q-tips
6. 3 rolls of wide gauze
7. 4 rolls of white, 2' cloth tape for hands
8. 2 mouth-guards
9. 2 copies of entrance music
10. Round –edge medical scissors
11. 4 bottles of cold water
12. Cold iron (frozen metal plate to take down eye swelling)
13. Full ice bag
14. 2 large towels

I always hand-deliver a cd with the entrance music, clearly labeled with a black sharpie, to the guy handling the sound system. I catch his name, and spend 30 seconds schmoozing so he remembers my guy and doesn't make a mistake. Bigger shows like KOTC and UFC have strict rules on royalty-free music so be aware ahead if that is the case.

Being ringside at a pro MMA show is easily one of the most intense feelings. You have thousands of people screaming, you're completely, emotionally invested in the outcome, and have little or no power to influence the decision. It is unbelievable.

Find out if one or both corner men are allowed in the cage between rounds. When I was cornering at King of The Cage, only one could enter between rounds. Our fighters' trainer went in, and gave him pointers. I made sure the trainer had water, ice, and a towel before he went in. There is no point in a bunch of guys yelling ideas at a fighter. Figure into your game plan who is going to talk, and who is going to hydrate the fighter.

“Red corner, are you ready?”

“Blue corner, are you ready?”

LET'S GET IT ON!

AFTER THE FIGHT

I hope you won. I know you trained hard, prepared right, and gave it your all. Unless you are carted out on a stretcher, you need a game plan for immediately after the fight.

WORKING THE STICK

If you are victorious, there is a chance that a promoter is going to stick a microphone in your face in front of thousands of people plus the millions watching around the world on TV, video or the web. What do you say?

It is your corner man's job to pull your sponsorship t-shirt on, put a hat on your head, your Xyience drink in your hand, and give you a slip of paper with people to thank. Regardless of what the promoter says, you will have so much adrenaline still pumping through your body that you will probably be deaf. Start by thanking your team and your sponsors. You can't imagine how it feels to have a winning athlete mention your name in public. You will score major points my friend!

Be professional, don't swear. You are amped up, pumped up, but try to maintain your composure and marketability. Be engaging, be humble and if you feel like it, stir up some controversy. Remember to thank the fans. Back in the old "rasslin's" days of pro wrestling they called it a "cheap pop" when you said, "The best fans in the whole MMA world are right here in Broken Toe Idaho!" and the fans go wild!

If you lost, hold your chin up. Be gracious, shake hands with the victor. You will be back. The composure you show in defeat goes a long way to showing a promoter that they need to book you for a rematch.

THE FOLLOW-UP

Here is where you can shine my friend. No one gets handwritten cards anymore. You are going to stand out from the crowd and get noticed.

Send a handwritten thank you card to the promoter, all your sponsors, and anyone and everyone that was involved in the event. If your support team took lots of photos, upload them to your My Space page or blog and mention it in the note. You can't imagine the impact this will have on your cred. People will remember you and be talking about you weeks after the fight is over.

A life worth living is worth recording. The video clips and photos before, during and after the fight can help get your name out there. We have a step-by-step blueprint coming out soon for helping serious MMA fighters to get sponsors, financial backers, publicity and fights. If you would like to be placed on a private notification list, go to <http://www.winyourmmafight.com/notify.html> You will receive priority notification when the system is in pre-release.

PLAN TO IMPROVE

Have a meeting with your team a few days after the event. Swap stories and relive the experience. Have a mastermind think tank session and analyze everything Compare notes.

What worked?

What didn't work?

Where can we improve?

What's next?

Congratulations! Train hard. Inspire others. Keep leading wisely!

IT'S ALL ABOUT ACTION!

Now is your chance to take some action. If you take a little action, you'll get a little result. If you take massive action, you'll get a massive result. Grab a pen right now, and take this little quiz.

1. WHAT'S THE BEST PART OF MY CURRENT TRAINING?
2. WHERE DOES MY FIGHT GAME NEED IMPROVEMENT?
3. HOW MANY MEALS A DAY AM I EATING?
4. WHERE CAN MY CURRENT DIET BE IMPROVED?
5. HOW DOES MY STRENGTH COMPARE TO MY WEIGHT CLASS?
6. WHAT ARE 3 THINGS I CAN DO TO IMPROVE MY STRENGTH?
7. WHAT AM I AFRAID OF?
8. WHAT CAN I DO RIGHT NOW THAT WILL BOOST MY CONFIDENCE?

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