



Form Follows Function

The goal of CrossFit is producing increased work capacity—but you'd have to be blind not to see that it also produces exquisite physiques.

Russell Berger



In the quest for elite-level fitness, CrossFit has successfully delivered its most devoted followers with another, less-advertised gift: rock-star sex appeal.

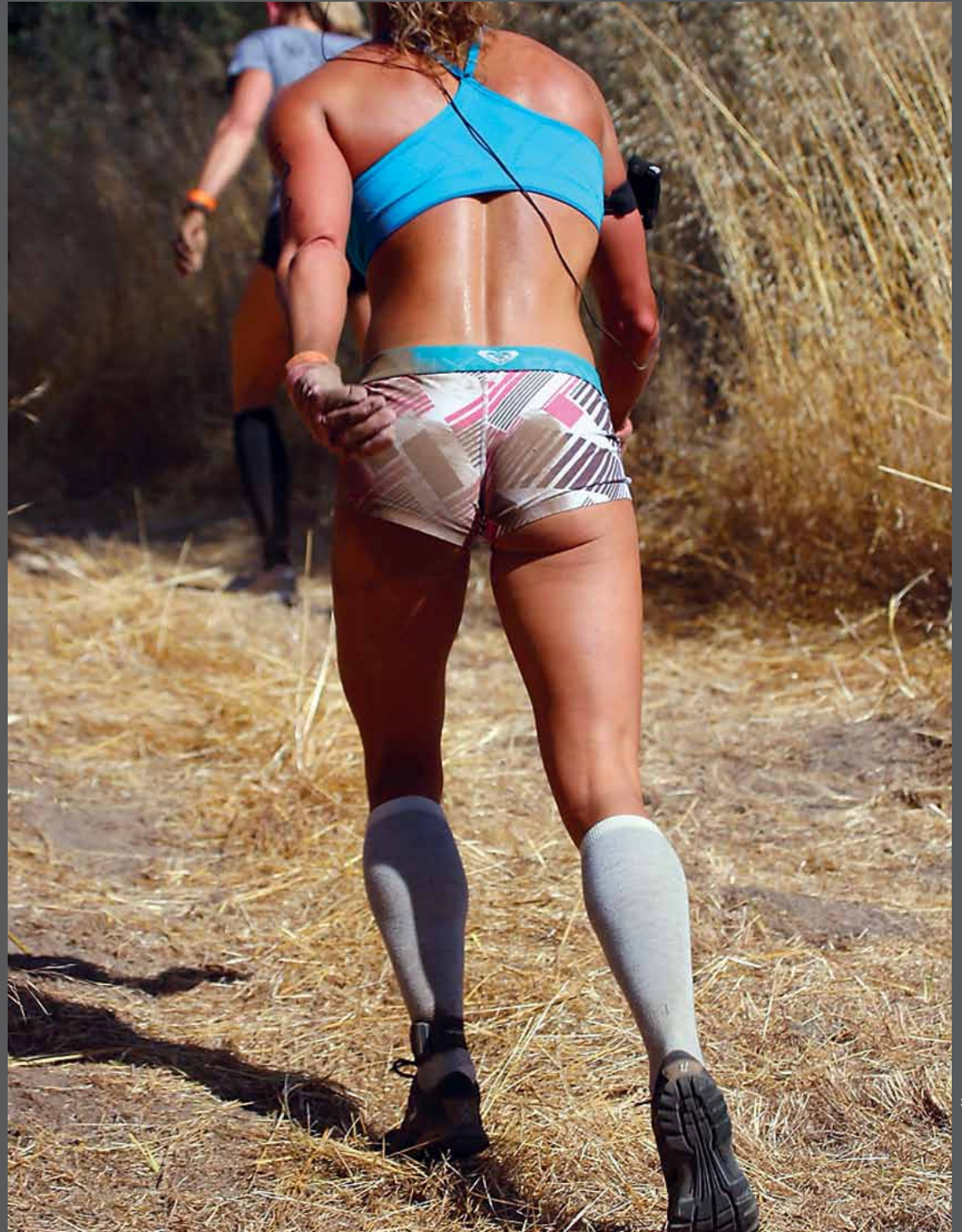
CrossFit isn't designed to make you look good naked. That benefit is just an unavoidable side effect of increasing your work capacity at life's most basic tasks. We don't ask our athletes to jump, sprint, push and pull until they can't go any harder because it "ripples muscles" and "tightens loose backsides." We go at unmatched intensity to improve our performance and ability, but dedicated CrossFitters can take satisfaction in knowing that when they look in the mirror they'll see attractive people looking back—people who look like they hunt and kill their food with a spear.

Perhaps Henry David Thoreau said it best: "Success usually comes to those who are too busy to be looking for it." It seems life's most desirable rewards rarely come to those who set out in pursuit of them—but strive instead for excellence, and the rewards of life often find you.

In the business world, this non-linear relationship between self, hard work and the good stuff in life is seen in the rat race for wealth. Setting your crosshairs on early retirement rarely results in the financial success hoped for. Those who look past wealth and strive for excellence, on the other hand, often wake up to find themselves well on their way to prosperity. The principle is laid out clear as day in Level 1 Certs: you can muddle your way through unknowable markets or you can pursue excellence with the belief that free markets will reward excellence.

In fitness, the process of improving one's work capacity delivers an equally obvious reward: aesthetics. Those who focus their efforts entirely on 6 percent body fat and washboard abs rarely find success and don't understand why. Programs such as 10 Minute Abs and Butts and Guts are designed, marketed and fueled by the desire to look good naked, but do they produce results? Spot reduction doesn't work, and there are no shortcuts. Fitness products have little worth without a complementary diet, and a lack of effort and commitment can derail even the best program.

"CrossFit girls," as they are endearingly known, are arguably some of the hottest women on Earth. We aren't talking about the air-brushed and half-starved women of Hollywood—taped, tucked, lighted and Photoshopped to perfection. CrossFit's best female athletes boast outstanding work capacities produced by trained bodies that show the perfect balance of curve and tone. These are lean, powerful women forged from sinew and muscle in the most complimentary tribute to the female form imaginable. And they have great asses. These are women of function, and function is beautiful.





The men of the CrossFit look the part of hunters and warriors. The athletes rival the gold standard of male beauty: the Calvin Klein underwear model (without the boyish fragility used to sell white briefs). Compared to the male CrossFitter, bodybuilders look swollen and exaggerated by hypertrophy, often also suffering from disproportionately large biceps and child-like calves. CrossFit's elite ranks are free of artificially ripped men shaped like martini glasses. These are men who earned their physiques not by using machines but by treating the human body as a machine—and it shows.

CrossFit athletes may be attractive by any standard, but they are, first and foremost, functional. They can move heavy loads long distances in short times. CrossFit's top male and female athletes have demonstrated work capacities that our entire community finds inspiring. From the long-time affiliate owner to his or her newest and most deconditioned client, all are motivated by the powerful force of physical accomplishment. Why not let jaw-dropping physiques do the same?

Glorifying the figures of these athletes isn't a sin against functional fitness. It is not our primary goal to improve physiques, but we would be fooling ourselves if we didn't acknowledge the beauty of these CrossFit bodies at work. Sure, the women doing the 170-meter sandbag hill sprint in Aromas showed amazing athleticism—but was anyone really looking to see what grip they were using on the sandbag? A nice ass is a hard thing to ignore. And a heavy snatch is a beautiful thing when it's stacked on top of powerful deltoids and a six-pack stomach.

CrossFit is and always will be about functional fitness, but it's impossible to ignore the amazing physiques of fit, healthy athletes.

So we won't.



About the Author

Raised in Atlanta, Russell Berger spent four years in 1st Ranger Battalion and saw numerous combat deployments. After starting CrossFit in 2004, he left the military, moved to Alabama and opened Crossville Huntsville.

He currently splits his time between running his gym, training for the CrossFit Games (he won the 2009 Dirty South Regional Qualifier), writing for CrossFit, and spending time with his family.





Kim Horsely/aurora.tv

Jenni Orr, First Place, 2009 CrossFit Games Dirty South Regional Qualifier