

Mr. Exercise

PARKER COTE

Some people take on more than they can handle — always chasing temporary highs.

Not Parker Cote. He has chosen the road less traveled . . . and couldn't be happier.

Parker Cote's attitude toward fitness is anything but typical. He never "mans out" his lifts. He likes to work legs. And when he's just not feeling it, he cuts himself some slack and takes the day off. Why? Because Parker Cote is all about longevity. He doesn't want to become one of those middle-aged guys nostalgic over a once-perfect physique — it's just not for him. Longevity. This way, he knows that his best days are always ahead of him.

Athleticism runs deep within the Cote family. With encouragement from mom, dad and his four brothers and sisters, Cote, 22, dabbled in all kinds of sports as a youngster — from soccer to baseball to football — until he found the right fit. In ninth grade, Cote joined his high school wrestling team and never looked back. He was hooked. And it was clear there were important lessons to be learned, such as fair play, proper discipline and unsurpassed work ethic. But Cote had stars in his eyes and wanted something more.

One afternoon, while getting ready to hit the books, Parker heard chaos in the room below his bedroom — loud music . . . grunting . . . the clanking of metal. His brother, Tyler, had put together a makeshift gym of old free weights

and a bench press in an extra bedroom the family had downstairs. But what at first was a distraction soon became an inspiration. Always thinking ahead, Parker knew his days of high school wrestling would one day come to an end. Lifting, he thought, seemed to be a natural extension of his favorite sport.

Fast-forward seven years. Cote, a senior at Boston University, splits his time between academia and his passion for fitness. The 5-10, 190-pounder trains with weights five days per week targeting a specific bodypart each day using moderate weight in the 8-12 rep range. Why? He's a firm believer in being as efficient as possible in the gym. "I usually complete most of my workouts in 45 minutes and I'm definitely not one to lift extremely heavy," he says. "I like to feel my muscles working, which is pretty impossible to do with heavy weights."

This former grappler also is no stranger to following a strict diet. His strategy is one that he's lived by for years — dating back to his old competition days. Here is how it works: Eat lean meats, colorful vegetables and complex carbohydrates all week, but on Sunday treat yourself to whatever you like — all day. This weekly splurge gives him enough motivation to stick to his diet and prevents his

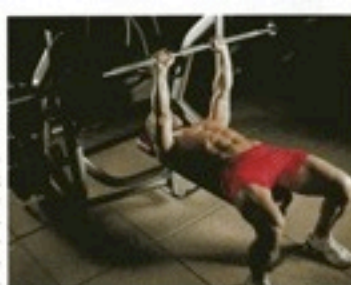
By Mary Gillis

metabolism from slowing down.

For those of you out there reading this, Parker Cote has some advice. "Stick with the basics. Don't get caught up in the details. Pace yourself and understand that peak fitness is a life-long commitment." These are pretty wise words for a guy who's not even out of college. One more thing — the fact that you're reading this article means you're off to a good start. It just so happens that Cote's feature falls in the very same issue month of the person he drew inspiration from just one year ago — January 2008's Mr. Exercise, Brian Thomas. "The full spread, the photos — it was absolutely incredible and I wanted it for myself."

What's next for Cote? He knows it will be media-related, but has yet to decide whether he prefers life in front of the camera or behind it. The senior will graduate from Boston University this spring with a degree in psychology. He's currently toying with a career in advertising. My take? He should be in front of the camera — at least for now.

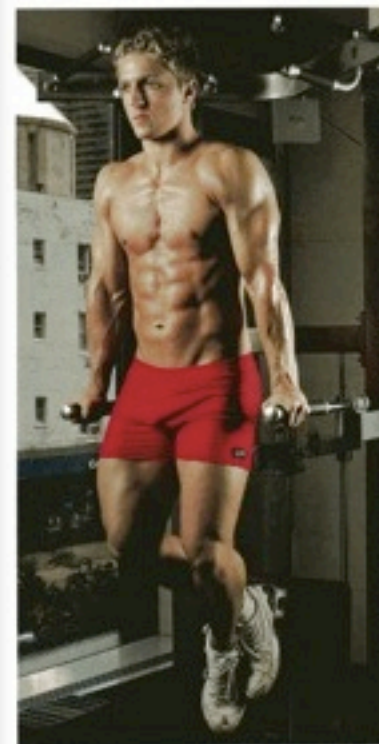
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CLOSE-GRIP BENCH PRESS
Lie supine on a flat bench, holding a barbell with your arms extended fully over your chest. Your hands should be placed eight inches apart. Your palms should be facing forward. From this position, lower the bar slowly until it touches your chest, keeping your elbows close to your sides as you lower the weight. Do not pause at the bottom; instead, begin pressing the bar back up immediately once it contacts your chest, and repeat. Perform 3-4 sets of 8-12 repetitions.



TRICEPS



TRICEPS



DIPS

Support yourself on the parallel dipping bars with your elbows straight, head level and spine in its natural curve. Your knees should be bent with your lower legs crossed to keep your feet off the floor. Limiting motion to your shoulders and elbows, lower your body slowly until your elbows are bent fully. Once you are all the way down, extend back to the starting position, concentrating on squeezing your pectorals and triceps as you lock out; repeat. Maintain your normal spinal curve throughout by keeping your chest up and shoulders back. If you lean forward, you will place more emphasis on your chest and less on your triceps. To add more resistance, hang a dumbbell from a dipping belt or hold one between your ankles. Perform 3-4 sets of 8-12 repetitions.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TONY PHELPS & ANDREAS SACCO
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