

Rants from John Koenig



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Jason Bergmann Has Strong Showing at World Strongman Super Series

In his first competition since tearing a pectoral muscle a few months ago, Bergmann comes in third against some of the best strongmen in the world.



The Venice Beach Grand Prix is one of a series of international professional strongman competitions leading to the ultimate test, the World's Strongest Man contest. Held in legendary Venice Beach, California, home of the original Gold's Gym (known as "The Mecca" to many), our own Jason Bergmann was giving it his all last Saturday against eleven of the best in the world.

Six events were held in one long, grueling day. It began with the Farmers Walk for 40 meters, then an overhead lifting medley (let's just say it was four crazy heavy, different moves). Next was the Shield Carry, 20 meters down and back with this nice 400 pound oddly-shaped thing in their arms. As if this isn't enough, the Super Yoke followed, merely a 902

Photo by Randall J. Strossen, IronMind Enterprises

Food Inc. - *Essential Viewing*

pound weight to be carried 20 meters, set down and lifted again, only to be carried back another 20 meters! This was followed by a Deadlift Medley, and if I detail it you won't even believe what they had to do. Last was the Circle of Stones, where the athletes lifted and loaded five stones, ranging in weight from 310 to 430 pounds onto pedestals.

Brian Shaw of the United States won the overall title. Jason came in a superb third, and would have been second if not for what happened to him during the shield event. Let me set the stage.

Prior to the start of the Shield Carry, competitors were warned that if and when they dropped the shield, their race would be over, as it was impossible to get fingers under, and thus could not be picked up from flat on the ground. At the start the shields were upright on platforms. During the heats preceding Jason's, a few of the athletes floundered, ran out of gas and strength, indeed dropped the shield, and ended their race at that point.

Nearing the finish line, Bergmann felt the shield slip from his hands and arms and hit the ground. In a competitive rage, Jason somehow lifted it far enough with his fingers to get it into his hands, picked it up again, and ran across the finish line. Everyone was stunned; some of the Eastern European professionals who knew him but had never competed against Jason learned a great deal about him in those moments. Those of us who know him and have watched him train already know that he is a fearless competitor. Frankly, I wouldn't have been surprised if he had picked that 400 lb. object up with his fingernails and thrown it across the line. In Jason's words, "When the DVD comes out they'll have to edit the audio, as nothing but bad words were coming out of my mouth!"

Congratulations to Jason Bergmann, one of the premier professional strongmen in the world, and best of luck in the next step of the series, to be held in Sweden the first week of December.

Filmmaker Robert Kenner's important documentary *Food Inc.* has finally made its highly anticipated debut on DVD.

Documentaries are easy for me to enjoy, but *Food Inc.* is many cuts above the norm. Not only is discussion of the quality of our food critical to our health and wellness, but what



Kenner discovers about events happening in the world of agribusiness and the mechanized processing of our food is shocking and eye-opening.

In the event you thought the fruits and vegetables you are buying in the grocery store are relatively healthy and untainted by chemicals, think again. And just close your eyes about what really happens to animals producing our meat supply. Take your worst fears, magnify them and add a bit of science fiction, and you'll be closing in on the reality of the food processing industry.

There is much hope for our food system. *Food Inc.* isn't a downer. I wasn't depressed, and I wasn't even very surprised, but it's sure thought-provoking.

Writers and pundits in the nutrition field such as author Michael Pollan and Eric Schlosser (*Fast Food Nation*) add a great deal to the flow and watchability of the film. Breakthroughs in the mass marketing of organic and healthier foods offer hope for the future.

Within a couple of days of watching *Food Inc.*, I was researching grass-fed beef and poultry sources in central Wisconsin, as well as farms selling free-range eggs. For a while I've been buying omega-3 eggs from Copps and Festival, and looking into grass-fed meat, but this film serves as quite a motivator. My early research tells me that local grass-fed farms sell seasonally, which is actually good news. Unfortunately, there is very little grass-fed meat available right now, but orders can be placed. I'll report some of my findings after more investigation.

My great emotional conflict came over the weekend, while purchasing a bunch of on-sale tenderloin from Copps, and wondering if this made any sense. Realistically, grass-fed beef is quite expensive, and adding it to my life will take planning and budgeting, but I'm planning on heading down that path.

In the meantime, rent *Food Inc.*, or purchase it, and please watch this important film.

(www.foodincmovie.com)

If You're Going To Insist On Eating Yogurt...

Go to the health food section of the grocery and buy some Fage Nonfat Greek Yogurt. This all-natural yogurt truly has nothing added to it. Alone, it's a bit tart, but mix in some fruit and the taste and flavor blossoms. I love the thick texture and nutrient profile: one 6 oz. container has only 90 calories, zero fat, 65mg sodium, 0 fiber, 7g of natural, yogurt sugar (the only carbs), and a whopping 15 grams of protein!

(www.fageusa.com)



Fox Valley Running Company store sold to Fleet Feet Sports

Maureen Wallenfang reported in her "Buzz" column in the Post-Crescent Online that Steve and Gina Bernhardt, who founded Fox Valley Running Co. four years ago, have sold to the national Fleet Feet Sports chain. Plans are to expand the store, maintaining their focus on triathletes, runners, and walkers, whether competitive or casual.

I've long admired the attention the staff of Fox Valley Running paid to customers. They don't just sell you quality shoes; your running and walking gait, your needs and physical structure are always taken into account so your needs are served. If only all retail was like this.

Fox Valley Running Co. is at 3404 W. College Ave., in the commercial strip near HuHot Mongolian Grill.

Clif Adds New Lemon Flavor to My Favorite Protein Bar



Many of you are aware of my low opinion of most protein bars. Compared to real food and protein shakes you prepare yourself, controlling the ingredients, the average protein bar falls short. Sugar and processed carbs comprise too much of the ingredient list, and don't get me started on the fats, filler and glycerol.

Clif products across the board are the best of the mass-market bars. Easily found in Copps, Woodmans, Target, bike shops and many other stores, the Clif Builder's Bar is their highest-protein-content food bar. For a few years they've had two different chocolate flavors, introduced a great peanut butter entry a year ago, but now their new Lemon-flavored bar has hit the shelves.

Refreshing is the first word that comes to mind. Not cloying, not too artificial on the tongue. Bars such as this are helpful to me when traveling, stuck in a situation where shakes and food aren't appropriate (business meetings, etc.), or even at the movie theater.

Clif Builder's Bars contain 20 grams of protein, have no trans fats or partially hydrogenated oils, and only 31 grams of carbs.

Try a Lemon Builder's Bar - you will enjoy it!