

Twelve weeks to a SIX-PACK

Despite a raft of gym memberships and faddy regimes, *Michael Hennegan* had never achieved a washboard stomach. Until he tried the hardcore, men-only Warrior Workout

PHOTOGRAPH: EVA SALVI

Don't take this the wrong way, mate, but you're really good at hiding fat. I mean, I just pinched 3in on your pecs and I wasn't expecting that."

It's 6am, and I'm standing in my pants in a blokey basement gym in east London, meeting Tim Walker, the founder and head trainer at Evolution of Man fitness (EoM), for the first time. He has just taken his callipers to my moobs, waist, arms, thighs and hips to measure my muscle versus fat. "Wow, your body fat percentage is 23%, I can't believe that." Frankly, neither can I.

Apparently I'm carrying 18kg of fat to 59kg of lean mass, and according to the NHS, more than 25% in a male is obese, putting you at an increased risk of type 2 diabetes. To make matters worse, I'm no stranger to the gym; I have access to facilities at three different chains and one at a members' club. I'm your typical faddy yo-yo dieter, on a cleanse one week and then out every night for the next three; into Piloxing one minute, Pret A Manger cheddar and pickle sandwiches the next.

So, when the press release for the Warrior Workout arrived, promising a "male-only programme, transforming desk-bound physiques from zero to hero in just 12 weeks", by slamming sledgehammers, flipping tractor tyres and weightlifting beer barrels, I suspected it would provide some serious lolz if nothing else. The premise is simple: 12 weeks of hardcore training, made up of

four personal training sessions a week, working in tandem with a few top-up sessions of cardio that you're responsible for doing on your own, and a strict diet.

It doesn't start off too badly, the weigh-in aside. "The initial stage is about conditioning, adapting to new lifestyle choices and any physiotherapy that might be needed to deal with problems that come up with your technique," says Walker, who has been a personal trainer for 13 years.

The first two weeks are spent working on technique: dumbbells, not too bad; deadlifts, horrific; bench press, needs some work. A trip to New York and several illegal martinis derail week three, and then it's onto week four: Defcon Three-level training.

A TYPICAL DAY'S DIET

No dairy. One coffee allowed

On waking 2g fish oil and a probiotic

Breakfast 120g steak with leafy green vegetables

Elevenes Three eggs, or a protein shake with a handful of nuts

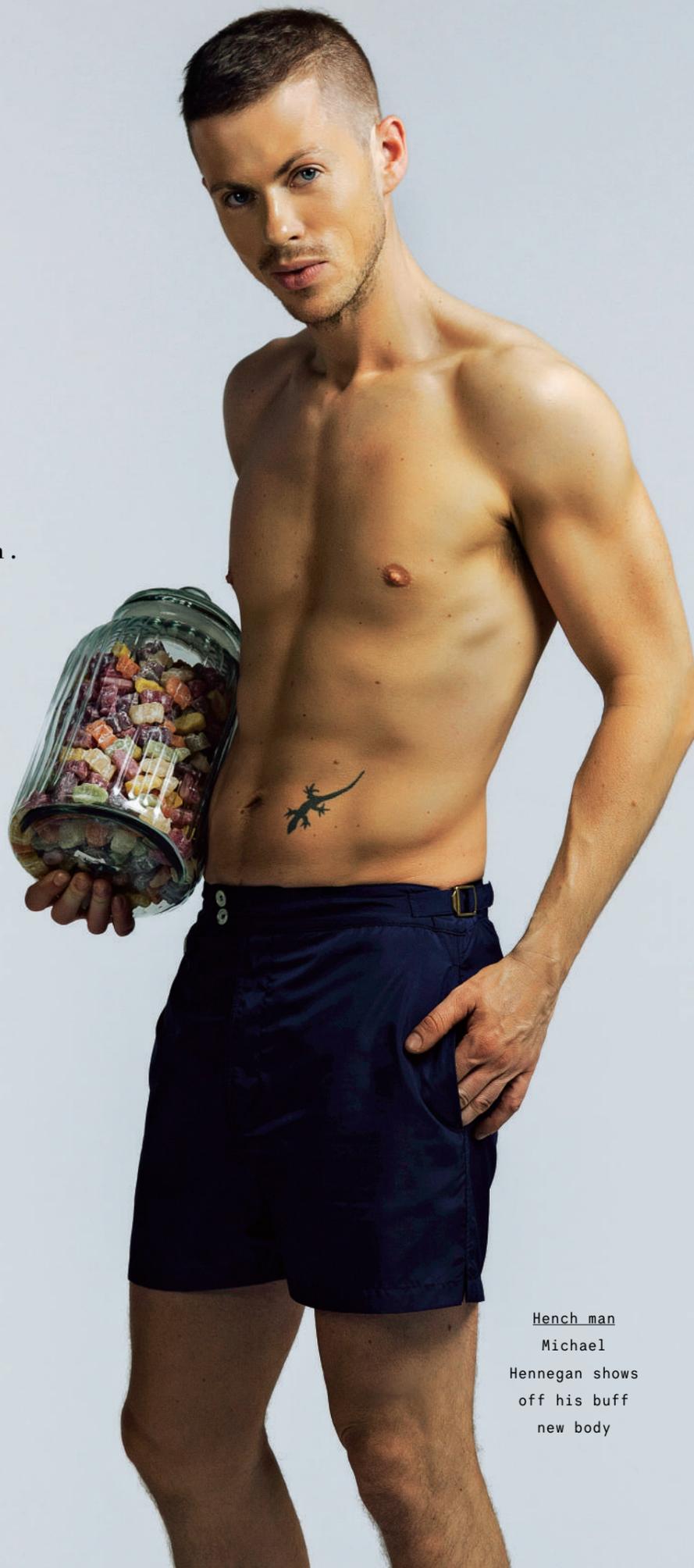
Lunch Chicken, green vegetables and a 15g portion of fat (nuts, avocado or coconut oil)

Mid-afternoon 120g lean protein (chicken or white fish) with green vegetables, or a protein shake and nuts

Dinner 140g fatty protein (beef, lamb, steak, salmon or mackerel) with green vegetables

The ante is upped – progress is slow and the sessions more intense. "You need to do exercises that challenge every part of your body and strip away fat while building muscle," says Walker. Which is where the tyres come in. The diet is strict: steak for breakfast, boiled eggs for elevenses, chicken and green veg for lunch, a protein shake and a handful of seeds mid-afternoon, and more meat and green veg for dinner. And I am still dry. But, huzzah, the pounds are shifting; by week six, I've put an inch of muscle on each shoulder and lost two off my waist, prompting a switch in training regime to concentrate on my chest and shoulders, and a reintroduction of select carbohydrates such as brown rice and sweet potato.

Five weeks from D-day, I'm getting separation anxiety about life without the personal trainers. I've also started to properly enjoy the workout sessions, and have even



Hench man
Michael
Hennegan shows
off his buff
new body

THE RESULTS

Body fat lost **11.5%**
Muscle gained **3kg**
Fat lost **10kg**
Lost off waist **4in**
Gain on each shoulder **1in**
Gain on arms **1in**

turned down a trip to Coachella so I can cram in extra spin classes. I've also dropped my body fat percentage to 16%.

Three weeks to go, and everyone in the office is sick of hearing about it, I'm sick of hearing about it, and I've had a few cheeky nights on the booze, so the pounds are trickier to shift. T minus two weeks, I pack in a panic-level 13 sessions

in a week – four of resistance weights with the trainers at EoM, six spin and three Bikram yoga classes – and by the final weigh-in it has paid off. My body fat percentage is down to 11.5%, with 62kg of lean mass and 8kg of fat. High on the sugary jelly babies they gave me before the photoshoot to pump up my veins, I have no worries about stripping down to my pants for this shot.

So, roll on summer. At 33, I've altered the shape of the body I've had since I was a teen, adding an inch to each shoulder and losing four inches off my waist. I could even wear Speedos if I wanted to. I won't, but I could. And yes, I'd do it all over again.

"Three months is not a lot of time," says Walker. "The good thing about the programme is that it shows what a difference you could make in a short space of time. Imagine what you could do if you kept it up for 6, 9 or 12 months. You could transform your body beyond recognition." Bring it on. ●

The 12-week Warrior Workout programme costs £4,000; eomfitness.com