

# SHIFTING GEARS

**DANICA PATRICK** THE MOST FAMOUS AND SUCCESSFUL FEMALE  
RACE-CAR DRIVER IN HISTORY, TALKS ABOUT HER  
NEW PASSION PROJECT IN THE FITNESS REALM, *PRETTY INTENSE*.

INTERVIEW BY MICHAEL BERG





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**DANICA PATRICK** *is no stranger to challenges. A trailblazer in the sport of racing, the Wisconsin native — who started her career in go-karts at age 10 — faced down all the typical stereotypes and disdain that comes with competing as a woman in a male-dominated sport as she debuted in the IndyCar Series in 2005 and later moved to NASCAR in 2010.*

*Along the way, she became the first woman to lead the Indianapolis 500, in 2005, and later, the first to win an IndyCar Series race, the 2008 Indy Japan 300. Thanks to her spirit and talent — and, it has to be said, her stunning beauty — she's also earned the devotion of fans, nabbing the IndyCar Series "Most Popular Driver" award six years running while more than proving her mettle over 366 races in the IndyCar and NASCAR circuits.*

*Now, as that career comes to a close in 2018 with two more races planned — the Daytona 500, where she won the pole in 2013, and one final chase for that coveted milk bottle at the Indy 500, where her best finish to date was third in 2009 — Patrick is ready to turn to another of her beloved pursuits.*

*Since the age of 14, Patrick — who lives in Morehead, North Carolina — has been honing her body through exercise and nutrition, and recently she put her favorite workouts, recipes and mindfulness strategies to paper in her just-released book *Pretty Intense* (Avery, 2017). Here, the yoga and CrossFit enthusiast maps out her fitness history and the highlights of the new tome in an exclusive interview with Muscle & Performance.*

## KART START

"I've been racing since I was 10. I started working out so that I was strong enough to race my go-kart — the tires are sticky and the track has a lot of rubber on it, making the go-kart physically hard to drive. But I also did plenty of other things when I was younger, like track, cheerleading, volleyball, basketball, tumbling, T-ball. ... I did just about everything when I was a kid."

## FROM EVOLUTION TO REVOLUTION

"When I was young, I didn't know what to do in the gym, so I'd run on the treadmill, then I'd go do a set of biceps curls, leg extensions or whatever. Then I got into running with my mom — we'd get up at 5:30 and go run. From [ages] 16 to 19, I lived in England and had a trainer who would take me through workouts,

or sometimes it was running and sprinting and hill work. I tried yoga before I left England; that's probably the thing I've kept with the longest. In 2013, I started doing CrossFit. That's kind of how [my training has evolved]. I wanted to write the book because I finally felt like I had done something that really worked — not just like, 'Oh, eat less, move more.' My [combined] style of working out has been so much more effective than anything else I've done. So I felt it was worth writing about."

## YOGA VS. CROSSFIT

"Yoga is more stretching and mental confidence as you're holding poses. I have really come to love the mental and meditation side of yoga ... feeling your body open up and breathing. Similar to yoga, in CrossFit, there's always another level. You can go further, you can lift more, you can do the next level of the movement. If you can do handstand push-ups,

now you try strict handstand push-ups, then deficit handstand push-ups. I love the challenge, the timer, the go, go, go."

## DREAMING BIG

"In my documentary (*Danica*, which premiered on Epix in November), there is a part where I'm being interviewed when I was really young. I said that 'the power is within me to do anything I want to do.' All my life, I've had exposure to the power of positive thinking. My dad is a big dreamer, and my parents knew the power of the mind, how it's critical to everything. And when you're constantly put into an arena, like racing, where you're being tested and challenged mentally to either be confident or stay strong or overcome adversity, you get a lot of practice at how the mind works."

## 'KITTENS AND RAINBOWS, BABY'

"If you wake up, drop your toothbrush and stub your toe and you say to yourself, 'It's going to be a horrible day,' how can it be anything else? Instead, try just waking up and saying it's going to be a great day. Walk out and be like, 'OK, it's kittens and rainbows today. It's going to be amazing. Feel so great. Whoa, the sun is shining, woohoo!' You know, you can seriously transform your whole energy field and your emotions into being positive just by the thought of it — and faking it if you don't yet believe it."

## DON'T HIT 'REPEAT'

"I literally just make up my workouts every day. I enjoy that. In *Pretty Intense*, all the workouts are structured differently. Maybe they're EMOMs (every minute on the minute), maybe it's an AMRAP (as many reps as possible), maybe it's Tabata (a pattern of 20 seconds



of activity followed by 10 seconds of rest), maybe it's going for rounds, maybe it's doing 50/40/30/20/10 of something. I just like to break it down in different ways. Otherwise, you get bored when you know what to expect."

## TWO-A-DAY TRAINING

"In the book, I talk about what inspired me to push a little harder, having done IVF (in vitro fertilization) treatment — with the effects of hormones, I gained a few pounds and I was like, 'Where did this come from?' It happened in, like, 10 days, and after a month or so, I realized it's not going away. So I was like, 'All right, I have to dig deeper.' It started off with CrossFit-style workouts,

and then I thought later in the day, 'I need to keep moving.' So I would take my dogs for a walk, and then I thought, if I'm going to walk the dogs, I should just work out while I do it. I'll cover more ground, they'll get more exercise. So that's when I added interval cardio workouts."

## MUCHA MACA

"I give CrossFit credit for the Paleo diet — that's the style of eating that's in the book, for the most part. I think the core of it is just getting back to real food and not eating things that have multiple ingredients beyond, say, five things. That's really what I [strive for], and that's essentially what Paleo is, too. I would say the most common things I eat are sweet potatoes, salmon, almond butter, spinach, apples, berries, chia

pudding. ... I think that's a good food because when you don't have dairy anymore, you kind of miss that spoon-feeding feel like you get with yogurt. Chia pudding is a great substitute. I like maca pumpkin pancakes [from my book], too. Pumpkin is super low in sugar and really beefs up any recipe. Who doesn't want pancakes when you can eat them and realize that they have just seven ingredients total?"

## TEAM SPIRIT

"If I'm cooking, you eat what I make — I don't make two meals, so you either eat it or you fend for yourself. Maybe my approach is a tough-love sort of thing, but I think that it's important [to have family support]. One of the hard things about health and fitness is that it's not always



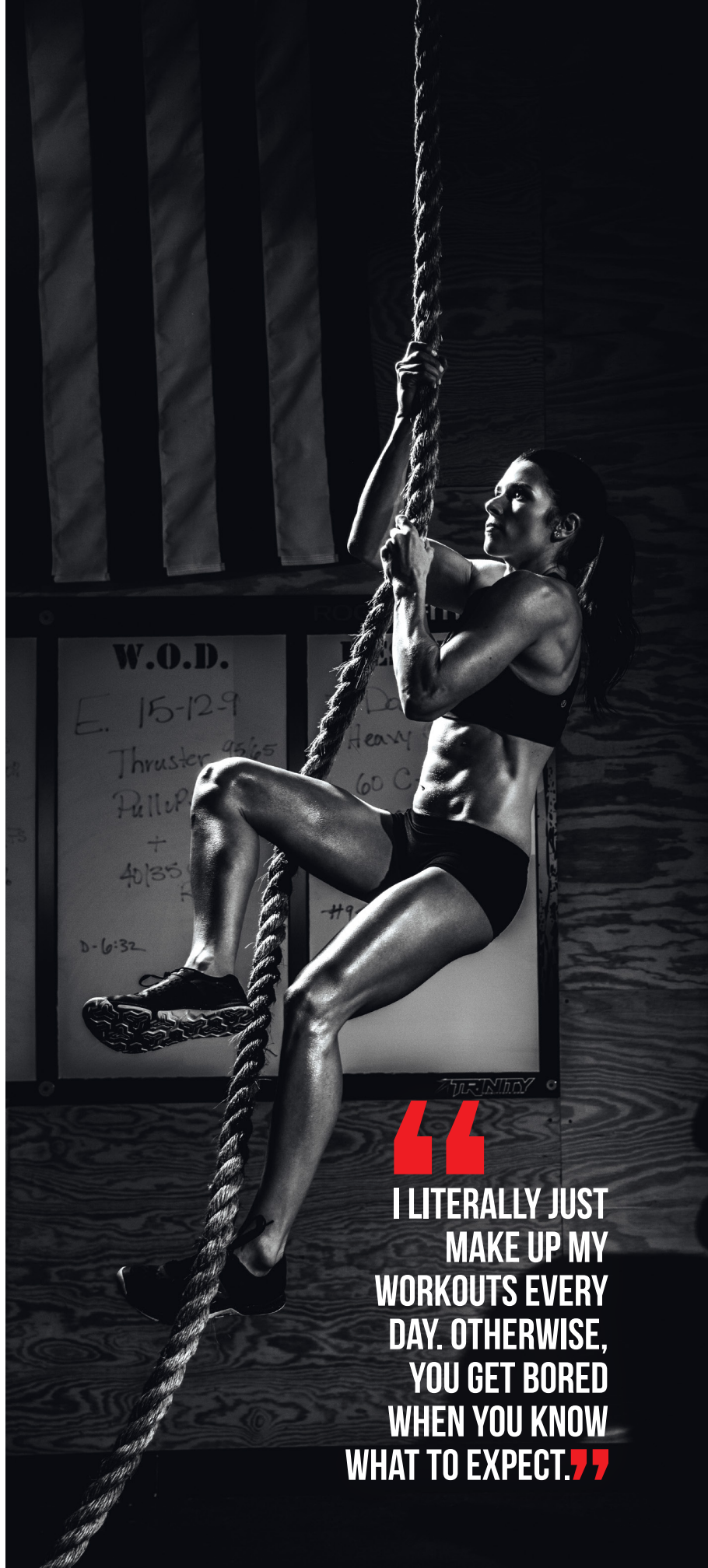
something that everybody in the house is doing, so sometimes it feels uncomfortable. ... You're out of place in a way. But I feel like anyone who really loves you and wants you to do better for yourself should be on board. Maybe it's a sign if they aren't."

## THE LONG ROAD

"It's not about reward and punishment. That's just the worst relationship possible with working out and dieting. Realizing that working out makes you function better and feel better, and eating right makes you function better and feel better — once you develop that relationship with food and working out, then it becomes a lifestyle. It's not about doing a three-month thing and being done. It's more like, 'No, I want to change the way that I live for the better, permanently.' While the program is 12 weeks, it's meant to show you over that time when you commit to it, you won't want to go back."

## IT ALL ADDS UP

"You're either adding to or subtracting from your health with every decision. You're either eating bad and sitting around doing nothing, or you're moving and feeding it vitamins and nutrients. When you add, you have so much energy and optimism, happiness and joy — you feel better about yourself. You do more, period. So sometimes if I'm a little tired, I'll tell myself, 'Go work out to get energy.' I think that the most powerful thing about eating well and working out is that while it takes a little time, you get so much from it that I feel like you have more to give in all aspects of your life. Taking care of yourself is not selfish if it benefits everyone else [around you], too. You're happier, you're more confident, you don't feel like you're running on empty ... you've taken a little bit of time for yourself. You have more to give on a daily basis when you feel better."



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I LITERALLY JUST  
MAKE UP MY  
WORKOUTS EVERY  
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## MACA PUMPKIN PANCAKES

Makes  
4 to 6  
pancakes

- 3 teaspoons coconut oil
- 2 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons almond flour
- 1 tablespoon coconut flour
- ¼ cup pure pumpkin
- 1 teaspoon maca powder (optional)
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

In a large sauté pan, melt 2 teaspoons of the coconut oil over medium heat, swirling the pan to coat completely. In a large bowl using a fork or whisk, mix the eggs, almond flour, coconut flour, pumpkin, maca (if using), and cinnamon. Spoon half the batter into the pan to make 3 small pancakes. Place a fry screen over the pan to help trap the heat. Once the edges are brown and the tops of the pancakes are firm on the edges, flip the pancakes; the second side takes much less time to cook. Repeat with the remaining 1 teaspoon coconut oil and the rest of the batter. Top with any fruit, nut butter, honey, syrup, or butter you like. I use Madagascar vanilla ghee, almond butter, and honey, blueberries, and banana.

*The recipe is reprinted from Pretty Intense: The 90-Day Mind, Body and Food Plan That Will Absolutely Change Your Life by arrangement with Avery, an imprint of Penguin Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House LLC. Copyright © 2017, Danica Patrick.*

## WIN A COPY OF PRETTY INTENSE

**"PEOPLE SAY I'M PRETTY INTENSE. WOULDN'T IT BE COOL IF 'PRETTY INTENSE' WAS THE WAY THEY TALKED ABOUT YOU, TOO?"**

So begins Danica Patrick's new book *Pretty Intense: The 90-Day Mind, Body and Food Plan That Will Absolutely Change Your Life*. This book provides readers with the tools they need to attack and achieve their physical and mental goals. Combining high-intensity workouts, Paleo-influenced diets and a mental-conditioning program that features yoga and meditation for people who want to live an intense and successful life, *Pretty Intense* helps readers take their health and fitness to the next level.

You can enter to win one of five copies we're giving away! Just follow [@muscleandperformance](#) and [@prettyintensebydanica](#) on Instagram and share a photo of yourself getting intense during your workout, using the hashtag [#prettyintensemusc](#) before March 15, 2018, and you will be eligible to win a free copy of *Pretty Intense*.

