



Happy New Year!

Luke Barden, January 2014

The start of the year is always a good time to work out where you want to be. This refers to both gym goals, and life or career goals. You will find you are much more likely to succeed if you stick to the SMART goals principle (Small - Measurable - Achievable - Relentless - Targets). This way, you won't aim so high that too much time passes before you achieve one of your goals, and you could end up disheartened or even just totally giving up. Breaking things down into smaller stages also allows you to work out exactly what you need to do, and in what order.

Looking into gym routines, it is important to ensure you change up what you are doing from time to time. You should never feel overly comfortable in a workout, because if it isn't challenging you, it won't be improving you.

During the winter people tend to put on a bit of weight (accidentally or intentionally!), so a period of more cardiovascular styles of training can be beneficial in January to help with that 'holiday weight'. With weight training, this can be referred to as a phase of capillarisation. This can be weights at higher rep ranges (16-20 per set) or with shorter rests between sets to increase the intensity (rests could even be removed totally (in a circuit for example). Alternatively, some choose to increase the amount of cardio sessions they do within a week, or the intensity of their current sessions.

These periods are good for a number of reasons:

1. Capillarisation helps to open up all of the blood vessels within the muscles, which enables the body to clear any blockages and also increases the stretch of the muscle fascia.
2. The body's generic 'fitness' levels will be increased, meaning that as your training progresses through the year, you will be able to push yourself harder and get even better results.
3. This change in routine will shock the body, as it is something it isn't used to. This is vital to ensure that results are maintained and improved upon. It also helps to prevent boredom for the gym-goer!

There are many more, but it is also important to mention that if you are already doing a lot of cardio, or higher reps with weights, you should still change it up and see how alternative methods work and feel for you.

Try something new, and you never know....you might just like it!

