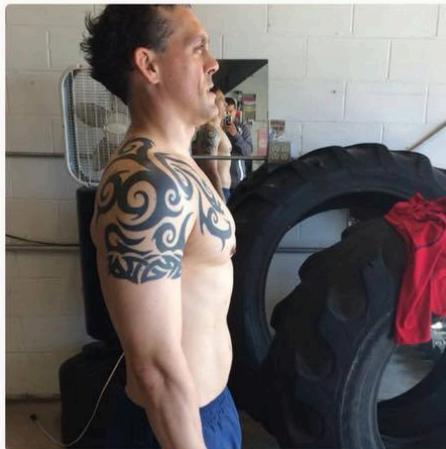
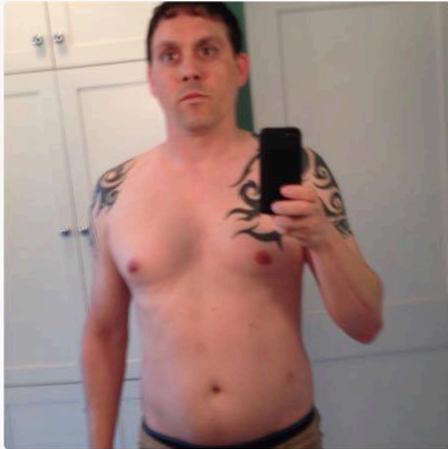


FIT4LINCOLN HELPS FORMER ATHLETE REGAIN CONDITION



SIMEON BUKACEK

Simeon Bukacek had gone from 14 years of competitive swimming to 20 years of, by his own admission, "doing nothing."

That's a lot of inactivity for a guy who, at the age of 20, stopped exercising, started smoking and began to pile on the pounds. Thoughts of the sculpted, 150-pound frame he enjoyed as a Lincoln High School swimmer and 1992 LHS graduate had become a distant memory.

"I pretty much stopped doing everything," he recalled. He never went near a bathroom scale during those 20 years of inactivity, fearful of what he'd find.

The turning point in the comeback story came during a swimming outing last year with his younger brother, Blake

Bukacek. When the brothers removed their shirts, Simeon took stock in how he'd regressed - and marveled at how his younger brother, a four-year gymnast at the University of Nebraska nearly 20 years prior, had managed to stay in shape.

The stark contrast in body shapes was big brother's call to action. He threw away the cigarettes that contributed to his decline and started to remember success stories he'd read in *Star City Sports* about members getting phenomenal results at Fit4Lincoln.

About 10 months ago, he arrived at Fit4Lincoln with a healthy approach and a firm resolve to once again become the guy whose time in the 500 freestyle still remains among the school swimming records at Lincoln High School. He was at the gym by 5:30 a.m. 3-to-4 times a week for the Fit Body Boot Camp classes. He also took up running, covering the 1.5 miles from his home near 29th and Plymouth to the gym north of 33rd and A streets, and back home. Earlier this year, he entered the Lincoln Half-Marathon, scheduled for May 3, and he also enrolled in a 16-week training program to prepare for his first big race.

And he adjusted his eating habits. His consumption wasn't as much dieting as it was watching what he ate. The weight began to dip, at a rate of 1.5 to 2 pounds per week. The result? Simeon reported having dropped 36 pounds, from last July to April 14, and was within 4 pounds of his high school graduation weight in 1992.

"It's all about accountability and the support I get at Fit4Lincoln, not only from the instructors but from the members around me," he said.

And his energy level? Let's just say he's balancing full-time employment at Gallup with being a full-time student at Southeast Community College, studying computer science.

"And I have more energy at the end of the day than I used to," said Simeon.

**by Dennis Buckley / Star City Sports editor May 7, 2015*