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Rare Meat

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DIRECT****April 2010**

“Spring brings a spell of pure anticipation, when the not-yet, the almost, the what-will-be tugs at the cells of humans and animals alike.”— *Diane Ackerman in Dawn Light*

Meet aspiring Olympic triathlete Amanda Stevens

With the Vancouver Winter Olympics now relegated to the record books, it's time to look ahead to the 2012 London Summer Olympics. Ranch Foods Direct is sponsoring professional triathlete and aspiring Olympian Amanda Stevens, as she competes at championships around the world and in Ironman races, all in preparation for the Olympic qualifying trials.

“I totally love what I do,” she says. “A lot of people don't have the opportunity to go after their dream. I'm just enjoying the whole journey.”

A native of Enid, Okla., Amanda always dreamed of competing at the Olympics, swimming in her first meet at age 3 and competing on the national level by age 13. Swimming was a family affair. Her brother and two sisters also competed on college swim teams. Their father was an athlete, spending two years on the PGA tournament; their mother, a teacher.

Amanda was used to swimming 20 to 30 hours, six days a week, for most of her life, when friends in medical school convinced her to try a triathlon — which includes biking and running as well as swimming — and she was hooked.

Amanda earned her medical degree from the University of Oklahoma in 2006 and plans to specialize in orthopedics and sports medicine, but is putting her career as a doctor on hold to take another shot at the Olympics. At the 2004 and 2008 Olympic trials, she came in 8th and 9th, just missing the cut. The top three qualifiers and an alternate get to go.

Reed slim and very toned, Amanda's training consists of 25 to 30 hours a week of swimming, biking, running and stretching. While U.S. swimming champion Michael Phelps gained notoriety for eating pizza and other



junk food, Amanda says good nutrition is important for a world class athlete. “I burn an enormous amount of calories,” she concedes. “I'm a race car. My body is my job. I'm very particular about what I eat. I always have been. I can't just swing by McDonalds on the way home.”

“The way I eat is very intuitive,” she continues. “It's about listening to your body to find out what it

needs. Sometimes I come home and I crave a steak or an avocado — you learn to listen to that and let it help you achieve a good balanced diet.”

Ranch Foods Direct set Amanda up on a home service plan with a freezer and six-month supply of meat and organic vegetables.

“I couldn't be more excited about it,” she says. The delivery arrived just in time for she and her fiance Randy to grill steaks to celebrate her 33rd birthday.

Having a supply of the highest quality frozen food on hand will be especially convenient for someone like Amanda, who last year traveled internationally for 14 out of 16 International Triathlon Union racing events.

Amanda is also a motivational speaker, who recommends setting goals and creating a roadmap to where you want to go. She practices what she preaches, writing encouragement on stickie notes to herself and keeping inspirational items and sayings in her apartment and even her car. It's easy to set goals but harder to maintain the needed momentum. “If you put your goals up on the mirror or the wall, you'll be more committed to doing it,” she advises.

Turn to the inside to share Amanda's favorite recipes.



Eating for Peak Performance



Triathlete Amanda Stevens cooks like most of us do: quick, practical, healthy foods that fit into a busy lifestyle while offering satisfying substance and flavor. Here, she shares some recipe favorites.

Her substitute for the crispy allure of french fries is a batch of oven-roasted broccoli. And she picks up new recipes from her frequent travels.

“I just spent two weeks in

Vancouver for the winter Olympics, and it was such an amazing atmosphere,” she says. Her coach is based in Canada, and she does a lot of her training there as well. She stays with a host family on Vancouver Island. “The woman I stay with gardens and cooks,” Amanda notes. “They grow their own food and have lots of fresh fish. There are little farmers markets everywhere. They call it the Mediterranean of Canada, because of the unique micro-climate. It’s surrounded by water and protected by mountains.” Her hosts supplied her with the recipe at left for a delicious apple pecan bread.

Apple Pecan Bread

2 apples
1 c. sugar
1 1/4 c. flour
1 t. baking soda
1 t. cinnamon
1 t. allspice
1/2 t. salt
1 c. chopped pecans
1/3 c. butter OR 1/4 c. applesauce and 1/4 c. butter
1 egg

Peel, core and chop apples. Place in bowl and mix with sugar. Sift flour, soda, cinnamon, spice and salt into large bowl and mix with nuts.

Melt butter in pan and let cool slightly, then beat in the egg. Add apples. Lightly mix in with flour mixture and fold ingredients together. Spoon into greased 8 inch loaf tin. Bake at 350 degrees F. for 45-55 minutes. Cool on wire rack, and sprinkle with powdered sugar.

Quick Miso Chicken

3 T. miso (bean paste)
3 T. orange marmelade
Salt and pepper to taste

Combine above ingredients in a bowl. Dice up and add two cups uncooked chicken breast meat to the bowl. Mix together. Saute the chicken for 7 to 10 minutes. Serve over rice or noodles.

Crispy Broccoli

One bunch fresh broccoli
1/4 c. oil
5-6 garlic cloves
1 T. chili powder
1 T. steak seasoning (Try it with Ranch Foods Direct’s Chef Rene blend)

Mix oil and seasonings in a bowl and stir in broccoli. Spread coated broccoli on a cookie sheet. Bake in a 425 degree F. oven for 20 minutes.



Happy Easter, Happy Spring!

“Eostri, the goddess of the dawn, lives even in ancient Sanskrit, where she’s called Ursa. From her daily rising came our words *East* and *Easter*, where the sun dawns and the son dawns again, both stepping across a threshold of light.”

— Diane Ackerman in *Dawn Light*

Rabbits are the new chickens, according to a March article in the *NEW YORK TIMES*. Whole frozen rabbits, duck, bison, wild seafood — an exciting variety of healthy meats are available at Ranch Foods Direct. Shop now for holiday hams.