

Lisa Abramson

## Coming back from a heart attack

*Learning a good lesson the hard way*

Name: Mark Fishbein

Age: 54

City of Residence: Oro Valley

Quote: "Fitness is something we do to stay alive, something we have to work for."

**Background:** Mark Fishbein is married with three children ages 15, 12 and 3. As an estate and financial planner, a football coach and dad his hands are full. When he was young, Fishbein was active in many different sports, but family and the challenge of balancing work and daily life quickly caught up with him. He put exercise on a back burner.

**The Challenge:** On Mother's Day in 2002, Fishbein had a severe heart attack. Heredity played a role — his father died of to a heart attack at age 50 — as well as his lack of regular exercise, high cholesterol and poor nutrition. He had a quadruple bypass and a collapsed left lung repaired, resulting in a compromised respiratory system. During 2006 and 2007, Fishbein was at his lowest point. His doctors prescribed medications that left him in a lethargic fog with leg pains and other side effects. After respiratory therapy for six months, he started to feel miserable again.

**The Turning Point:** Over time, Fishbein realized he didn't want to be a victim, but rather to be in charge and be a hero to his little kids. With a desire to recoup his fitness, he joined a fitness program and found a personal trainer who could work with his

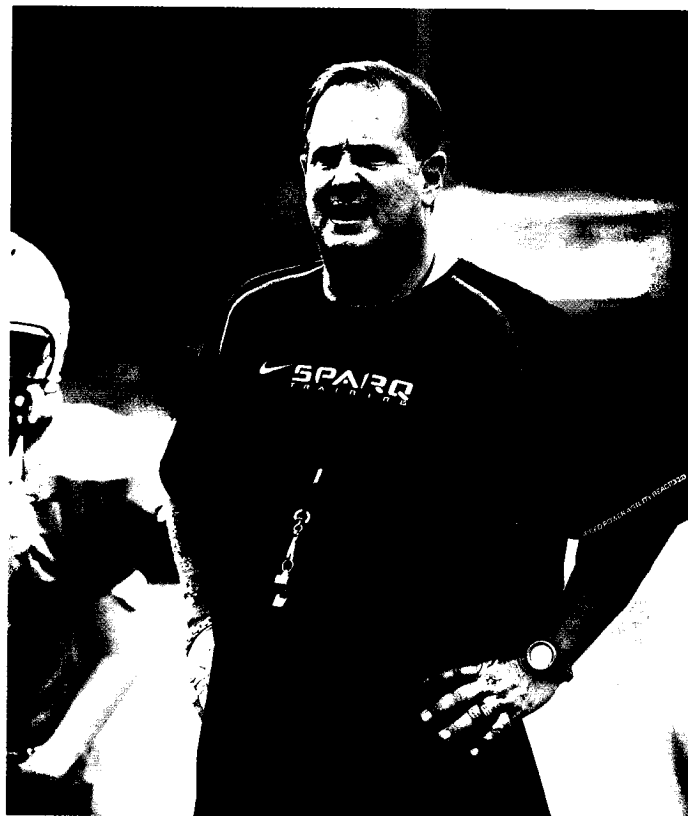


Photo by James M. Patrick

physician to help him with very aggressive workouts. In six months he lost 25 pounds, got off his cholesterol medicines and regained his stamina. He now coaches Pop Warner football for 12-year-old boys, running up and down the field without effort. He performs bootcamp-like exercises called "groundwork" like the NFL uses.

**Staying Motivated:** Fishbein rediscovered his love and commitment to fitness. He doesn't want to go back to the way things were prior to his event, and he has a wife and children that he wants to be around to support for a very long time.

**Goals:** Fishbein's goals are simple: Continue forward in his fitness pursuits and learn to eat healthy. In the long term, he'd like to drop 10 more pounds and continue to inspire his young athletes about injury prevention and appreciating the need to be active throughout their lifetimes.



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