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January 2, 2007

quick & simple

A NEW WEEKLY FROM Good Housekeeping

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'I Made Money Losing Weight'

VICKI'S 62-LB. BONANZA!

Feeling Good

'I Hit the Weight-Loss JACKPOT!'

Photographs by David Ellis

Vicki Sorensen made a bet that she could drop almost 70 lbs — and she won big! Here, she coaches others on how to get fit like she did

Vicki and her husband, Scott, still enjoy kids in one site. Recently, they hit the magic with Scott. "Now he has to capture his weight," Vicki reports.

By January 2003, Vicki Sorensen — overweight at 200 lbs. — had gambled long enough with her health. So the School A member of two Boot Camper, Mom, and Grandma signed up for the 12 of Nasdaq, Fox, a fitness challenge. Five years before, Vicki and her then-fiancé, Scott, (see photo) had lost a combined 100 pounds before their wedding. With 10 grandkids who needed to exercise so her broken leg healed, she was ready to try. Vicki decided to wager a cup of cappuccino on the completion of three 20- to 45-minute workout sessions a week for eight weeks.

The Payoff

Mother and daughter both scored by sticking to their workouts. "Turning losing weight into a game gave me the motivation to exercise," says Vicki. To celebrate, they exchanged pampering spa treatments — and Vicki's prize for the bet. In the end, she went from a size 18 to a size 8 and was down to 138 lbs. And Stephanie's leg had healed beautifully, astounding her surgeon.

Making Money Losing Weight

Vicki's success inspired her family and self an actual board game (based on Hasbro fitness competition. Not surprisingly, the idea took off. Now, Vicki and Scott manufacture and offer their colorful game, called The Fitness Challenge. Now anyone can lose big using Vicki's weight-loss competition!

Team Up to Slim Down!

Jill Stephens, Vicki Sorensen, Scott Sorensen, Stephanie and Vicki Sorensen

Here's how to play The Fitness Challenge!

Step 1: Wager — Agree on the exercises and their rewards. Vicki and her family wagered a cup of cappuccino (or dark chocolate) a week for eight weeks. A player earns one point for each of the first two workouts, two points for completing the third, and one of the week gets three points. Challenge it whose exercise and rewards suit your family.

Step 2: Keep Score — Keep track of points on the game board.

What to Bet | Anything! Cash, stamps, treats or trips.

Step 3: Win — If only one player racks up 40 points, she wins. But if you hand out 40 points or more, there must be at least an eight-point difference in order for one person to win. If the point spread is less, it's a tie.

WANT THE GAME? Log on to shop.quickandsimple.com to buy The Fitness Challenge ($30).

How to Pick a Workout Pal

Have shared a locker or joke like friends? Friendship pick number 1.

Is your friend a good sport? You're playing based on the honor system. Pick someone you can trust.

Pick a fitness minded, not a priority? Vicki's pal who doesn't make an honest effort makes the game too easy — she won't compel you to continue.

More fitness tips at quickandsimple.com/dietingandhealth

Try One of Vicki's Winning Weight-Loss Strategies

1 Have a good mood "Not every year gave Vicki an easy time. This year, she was stressed! You have to be positive!"

2 Find time to work out "I go first thing in the morning, before other things come up and I end up not exercising."

3 Favorite weight-loss drink "Green tea! The hot liquid fills me up, and knowing that it has all these great antioxidants kicks me in the right direction."

4 How to stay motivated when the scale won't budge "I'm at the same count of every 50s — and up — I take, I found out that the sugar sweetener, Splenda, has enough every day was about 600 calories. Now I use Splenda, a lower version of home by rising. Instead of a sweet coffee with six calories, I 2 percent milk and Splenda. I were recovery and calories."

5 Finally to quit "I hope you calorie counting what I'm exercising so often, but I do calculate the calories South Beach Diet. I quit eating all processed foods — the crackers, desserts and white bread. I eat only the 'good' carbs, such as sweet potatoes or whole-grain cereal."

6 Favorite food "After I work out, I reward myself with egg whites, fresh spinach, mushrooms, onions and shredded Jack cheese."

Vicki's Chicken Florentine-Stuffed Red Peppers

Serves 4

- 4 large red bell peppers
- 4 cups chopped fresh spinach
- 28-oz. package fresh mushrooms, diced
- 1 medium onion, diced and chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups diced cooked chicken breast
- 1 cup prepared tomato-basil sauce
- ¼ cup shredded Parmesan cheese

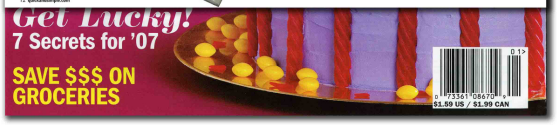
1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Mist an 8-inch square baking dish with nonstick spray. Cut tops off peppers, remove seeds and membranes and (taking care) slice peppers upright to prepared dish. Set aside.

2. In a skillet misted with olive oil flavored cooking spray, sauté spinach, mushrooms, onion, garlic, and chicken breast until softened, about 4 minutes. Add chicken and tomato-basil sauce; cook 2 to 4 minutes, until heated through. Remove from heat.

3. Fill each pepper with chicken mixture; mix each pepper. Top with Parmesan cheese.

4. Place peppers with any remaining mixture, crushed crumbs, and 3 cups water in dish. Bake 1 hour or lower peppers are fork tender and bake 55 to 60 minutes, or until peppers are tender. Serve with remaining sauce.

Each serving (without bread): About 260 calories, 24g protein, 30g carbohydrate, 6g fiber, 6g total fat (1g saturated), 8g fiber, 57mg cholesterol, 350mg sodium



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7 Secrets for '07

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