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Aging Athletes May Be Older, But Not Slower

High Tech Training Helps Extend Athletes' Careers

By **DESIREE ADIB** and **LEE FERRAN**

Oct. 12, 2008

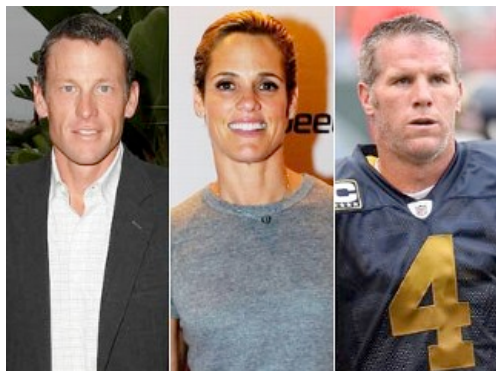


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Swimmer Dara Torres nabbed three silver medals in the Beijing Olympics. Cancer survivor Lance Armstrong is currently training to win his eighth Tour de France. Brett Favre recently hurt his ankle, and then threw for six touchdowns in a game.

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Lance Armstrong, 37, Dara Torres, 41, and Brett Favre, 38, prove that even age cannot slow them down. (Getty Images)

The stats are impressive by themselves, but add in the fact that the average age between these athletes is 39, and it is a whole different animal.

Torres, Armstrong and Favre are the front runners of a generation that sometimes refuses to stop playing and new technology, and a better understanding of conditioning, have allowed them to keep on going.

New high-tech gyms such as Performance Athletics in Temple, Ariz., are helping some elite athletes make the absolute most out of their aging bodies. The training allows some athletes to compete

with the experience of a seasoned veteran and retain the raw energy and power of a rookie.

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"If we can keep their physical ability here," he told "Good Morning America," "while they learn more about their game, you start to look at changing the face of sport."

Performance Athletics sports gaggles of machines and computers to pinpoint workout problems and inefficiencies. There are "Alter-G" treadmills that are air-filled to reduce stress on joints.

Dr. Roger Fielding of Tufts University, one of the leading researchers in aging athletes, believes that the method of training has also evolved.

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"Because of the way people train and the way that they approach this as a year-long activity and conditioning programs lasting that last a whole year, there is no in and out of season type thing," he told "Good Morning America." "People are able to maintain a very high level for a very long time."

Ken Croner, Farve's trainer, knows that his training style has certainly evolved as well.

"Always in the past we thought, 'more is better, more is better.' Now we know that more is not better and muscles only actually get stronger when we rest and recover," he said.

And elite athletes are not the only ones benefiting from the new technology.

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So what if Torres didn't "win any gold"!! She won a silver--and showed that she's certainly still in the thick of it. How can it possibly be an embarrassment to keep a healthy body and strong mind and the belief that yes, you can do it, whatever it is? It's not necessarily about 'being competitive with 20 something elite athletes'...it's about staying alive and healthy and doing what you're good at and love. I say good for them, and thank them for the inspiration they give to us everyday, regular folks seeking motivation in our daily lives. kfreeman67 Oct-12

good for them but i wonder if some of this is just the Peter Pan syndrome. i mean Torres didn't win any Gold. do these folks seriously believe in 4,6 or 8 years they will still be competitive with 20 something elite athletes? at what point do you stop training and have a life? at what point do you end up like Ali or Sinatra just staying too long and becoming an embarrassment? pautunes Oct-12



Don't forget Jamie Moyer. The 45 (soon to be 46) year old will be starting Game 4 for the Phillies versus the Dodgers in the NLCS. Moyer was 16-7 this year with a 3.71 ERA. Not too bad for a guy who's been in the big leagues for over 22 years.
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