

3500

JAPAN

Miyabiyama The Sumo Wrestler

ONE DAY'S FOOD

IN JUNE

EARLY WORKOUT Water (sipped ritually between bouts)

LUNCH AT THE SUMO STABLE Fried chicken, 6.2 oz • Chanko nabe (traditional sumo wrestlers' stew) with pork (2), 1.7 lb • Vegetable tempura, 2.7 oz • Cabbage, egg, and stewed chicken, 4.5 oz • White rice, 14.3 oz

DINNER AT THE SUMO STABLE Grilled hokke (atka mackerel, a saltwater fish), 3.5 oz • Scrambled egg with chives, 2.3 oz • Tuna, somen noodles, cucumber, and onion in a water broth, 1 lb • White radish and chicken in a water broth, 7.6 oz • Miso soup with chives, 10.9 oz • White rice, 15.1 oz • White radish, 1.8 oz • Pickled cucumber, 1.3 oz

THROUGHOUT THE DAY *Roots Aroma Black Original* bottled coffee (4), 1.3 qt • *So Ken Bi Cha* roasted barley tea, 2.1 qt • *Rokko No Oisii Mizu* bottled water, 1.6 gal

CALORIES 3,500

Age: 29 • Height: 6'2" • Weight: 400 pounds

NAGOYA • To the untrained eye, the sport of Sumo looks like a couple of fat guys duking it out in a fancy ring, but to sumo enthusiasts, it's a centuries-old fight for supremacy, steeped in ritual and Shintoism—"the way of the gods." Cleverness and experience count in the *dohyo*, or ring, but no one wins without sheer brute strength and a physical size of mammoth proportions. What does first contact feel like? "...Like hitting a wall," says Miyabiyama, of the Tokyo-based sumo club Musashigawa Beya.

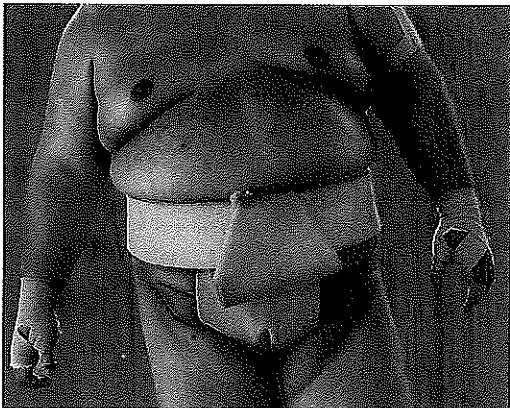
Miyabiyama began his career as an amateur at age 15, packing on the pounds by force-feeding himself to achieve fighting

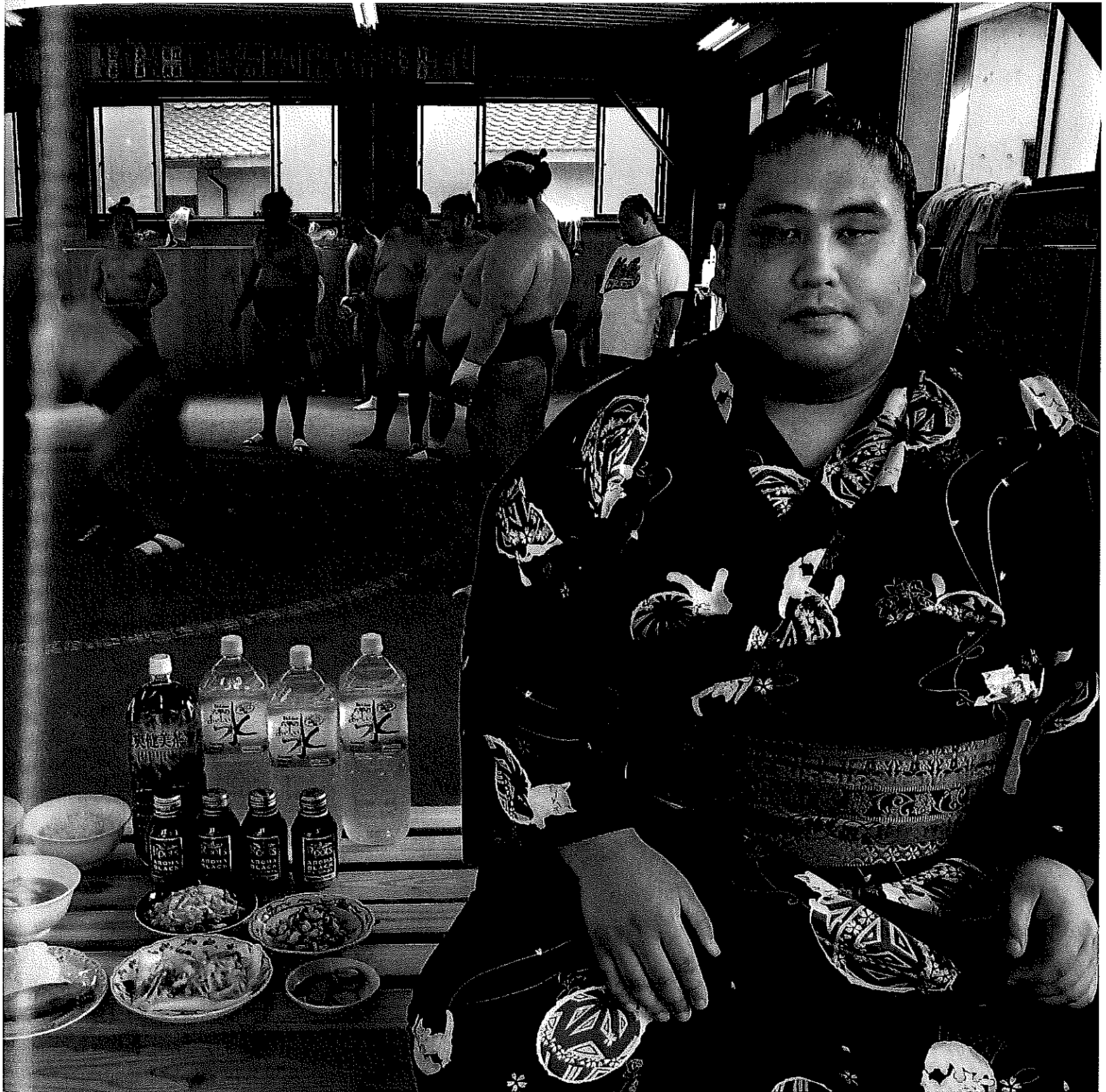
weight as he moved up through the ranks to the top echelons of the sport. Now he eats to maintain his weight, which doesn't take much effort—or much food. Is he healthy? "My cholesterol is a bit high," he says, "but overall, I am." This doesn't extend to injuries, however, and his fortunes in the ring have ebbed and flowed because of them.

Miyabiyama has reached the level of *ozeki*—sumo's second highest—and has won several prizes, but this isn't a level that a sumo can hold on to. The wrestlers are promoted and demoted before each *basho* (grand sumo tournament) according to their previous performance. Only 42 wrestlers are allowed into the top division of professional sumo, and there are ranks within that division. The fact that there's no set criteria for achieving different levels in sumo makes it a bit of a moving target for the wrestlers, who are called *rikishi*.

Ritual guides all aspects of the life of the *rikishi*. Junior *rikishi* cook the food for the club, do the cleaning, and wait on their seniors, but Miyabiyama progressed quickly and did little of that: "I never really had the opportunity to cook much. I only reached chopping vegetables."

The junior *rikishi* sleep in one giant room that also serves as living and dining room.





Takeuchi Masato, a professional sumo wrestler whose ring name is Miyabiyama (meaning "Graceful Mountain"), in the team's practice ring with his typical day's worth of food. In Nagoya, in preparation for a tournament, Miyabiyama's stable runs through a brutal three-hour practice—sweaty, combative, and silent. Miyabiyama wears the white *mawashi* (at left) denoting his *sekitori* status during practice. His food may not look like much for a 400-pound man, but it's enough to maintain his weight and give him energy for the ring. When he isn't in intensive training before a match, he is wined and dined nightly by sponsors. The portrait above is a composite, taken on two consecutive days: the sumo association wouldn't allow Miyabiyama to be photographed during practice.



Upper-echelon fighters—called *sekitori*—have their own rooms and eat first, but no one eats in the morning. The junior fighters begin practice at 5 a.m. in black *mawashi* (loincloths) and are joined later by the *sekitori*, wearing white. All take only ritual sips of water during practice, which can last three or four hours. The first meal of the day is lunch.

Lunch and dinner consist of mountains of rice, pasta, and a high-protein vegetable stew with meat or fish, called *chanko nabe*, which, when cooked well, uses bone marrow and long cooking times to develop flavor. When cooked fast by busy wrestlers, the stew base often consists of packaged broth, but the result is slurped down with gusto nonetheless.

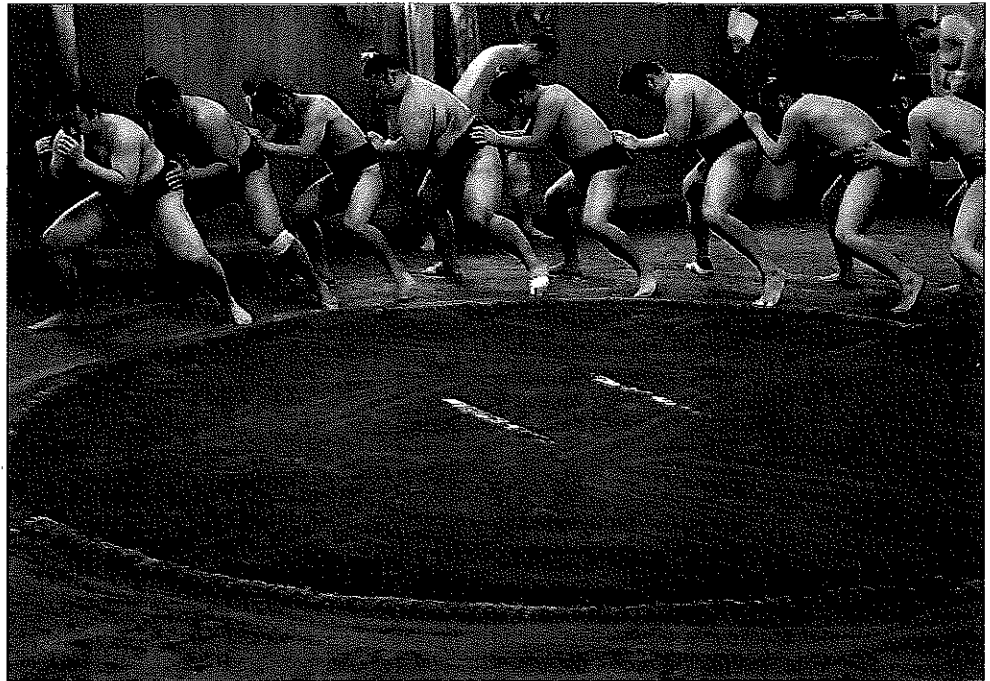
There is a right way to pack on the pounds, says Miyabiyama: "I'm very fussy about food. When I see the younger [wrestlers] eating foods that aren't good for them just to gain weight, I say something about it. Cakes, cookies, sweets, and chips aren't helping them to gain weight healthily." He says that the *rikishi* don't talk too much about nutrition, but that "wrestlers are susceptible to diabetes—we talk about that."

When we visit, the atmosphere is relaxed and collegial as the lower-ranked wrestlers cook. This is the kitchen for their training camp in Nagoya, where the club's top wrestlers will compete in a week's time. The *rikishi* carted the contents of the Tokyo kitchen to Nagoya and cooked the following day as though they hadn't moved hundreds of miles.

They chop vegetables on long stainless steel countertops, grate white radish into snowy white mounds, and open cans of mackerel, which two men dump on plates and sprinkle with ground chillies.

The chief chef, Akira Nagai, tastes a sumo-sized pot of *chanko nabe* simmering on the stove. He adds sake and tastes it again. "I need to teach someone to taste, so that when I die..." The chef, who is also a wrestler, says this to no one in particular, trailing off as he grabs a pair of chopsticks to test the *gobo* (burdock root), which he has braised with soy sauce, sesame oil, sesame seeds, and chili peppers.

The chef splits the dish between several plastic plates as others move the pots of soba noodles, cooked pasta, and steamed rice from the kitchen to the adjacent room, where eating has already begun. The kitchen is large, but it seems small because of the size of the men in it. "Oh, you're too fat," says one *rikishi* to another as he tries to sidle by with a pan full of grilled chicken breasts.



Younger, smaller, and less experienced members of the stable wear black loincloths. At the end of a grueling morning practice in their Tokyo ring, they finish with exercises emphasizing team unity (top right). The wrestlers take turns cooking (at left), and the younger ones do most of the work. Their dining area is also their sleeping area (bottom right). All the wrestlers eat together on tatami mats; the bedding is stacked up at the rear. Because younger wrestlers must bulk up to fighting weight, they're encouraged to eat and eat and eat. Sponsors pay for most of the food, but it isn't always Japanese fare: "If I serve fast food, it goes faster than the Japanese food," says the chef.

3500

USA

Ernie Johnson The Paddle Surfer

ONE DAY'S FOOD

IN SEPTEMBER

BREAKFAST *Kirkland Signature* liquid egg whites with hot sauce and black pepper, 8.4 oz; cooked with olive oil, 1 tsp • *Coach's Oats* oatmeal, 3.7 oz; with *Ocean Spray Craisins* (sweetened dried cranberries), 0.4 oz • Bananas (2), 12 oz • Green tea, 12 fl oz

LUNCH White-meat chicken burrito with pinto beans and salsa from Las Golondrinas restaurant, 1 lb • Banana, 6 oz

DINNER Salmon filet, 9.4 oz (raw weight) • *Trader Joe's* long-grain brown rice with black barley and daikon radish seeds, 9.5 oz • Salad of lettuce, bell pepper, tomato, carrot, and mushroom, 4.9 oz; with *Bernstein's* Italian dressing, 2 oz • *Coors Light* beer (4), 47 fl oz

SNACKS AND OTHER *Clif Bar*, oatmeal raisin walnut, 2.4 oz • Apple, 5.5 oz • *Sparkletts* bottled water, distilled, 1 gal • Supplements: multimineral; arginine (amino acid); B complex; beta-carotene; calcium; fish oil; glucosamine chondroitin; milk thistle; tryptophan (amino acid)

CALORIES 3,500

Age: 45 • Height: 5'10" • Weight: 165 pounds

SAN ONOFRE, CALIFORNIA • Ernie (EJ) Johnson and his wife, Andie, live aboard their 38-foot sailboat in the harbor at Dana Point, south of Los Angeles. He's a finish carpenter by trade and a longtime surfer who found his niche in 2006: stand-up paddle surfing.

Several days a week EJ can be found standing around on the waves sweeping the ocean with a long-handled paddle. "Yeah, they call us janitors of the sea," says EJ, laughing. With his board and paddle, he can navigate and accelerate to go after the big swells, and also turn on a dime if he needs to. Stand-up paddle surfing, which dates back to Hawaii in the 1920s and 1930s, has become a popular competition sport in both quiet harbors and rough ocean waves.

EJ's long blond hair makes him easy to spot on the horizon. "I've been a long-haired guy all my life. Anyone can do the buzz-cut; it takes dedication to have long hair," he says. He's equally dedicated to eating habits honed since age 18, when he started weight training. "No junk food," he says emphatically. He drinks protein shakes made with skim milk and banana, eats only the whites of eggs, and chooses foods that are labeled organic:

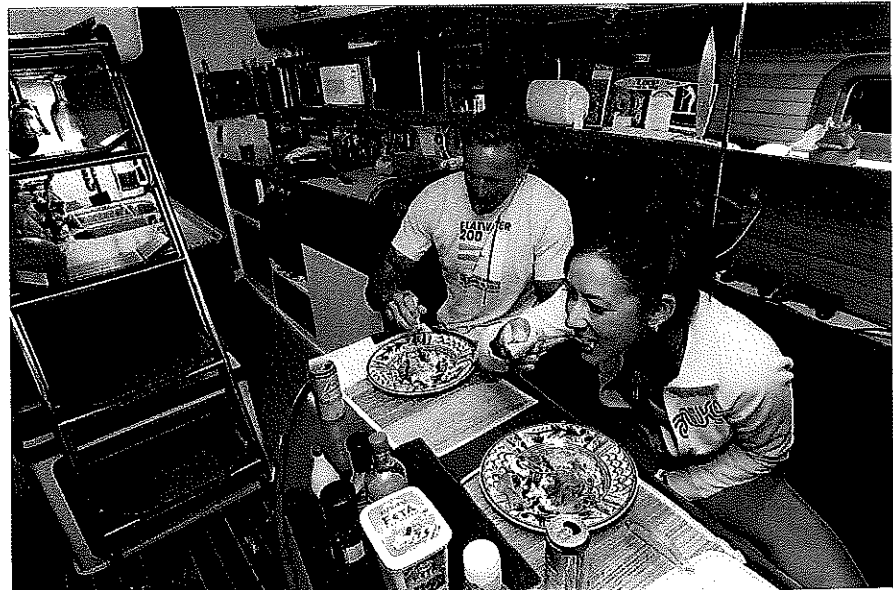
Ernie Johnson, a finish carpenter and paddle surfer, near the San Onofre Nuclear Generating Station with his typical day's worth of food. At right: EJ and Andie dine on grilled salmon.

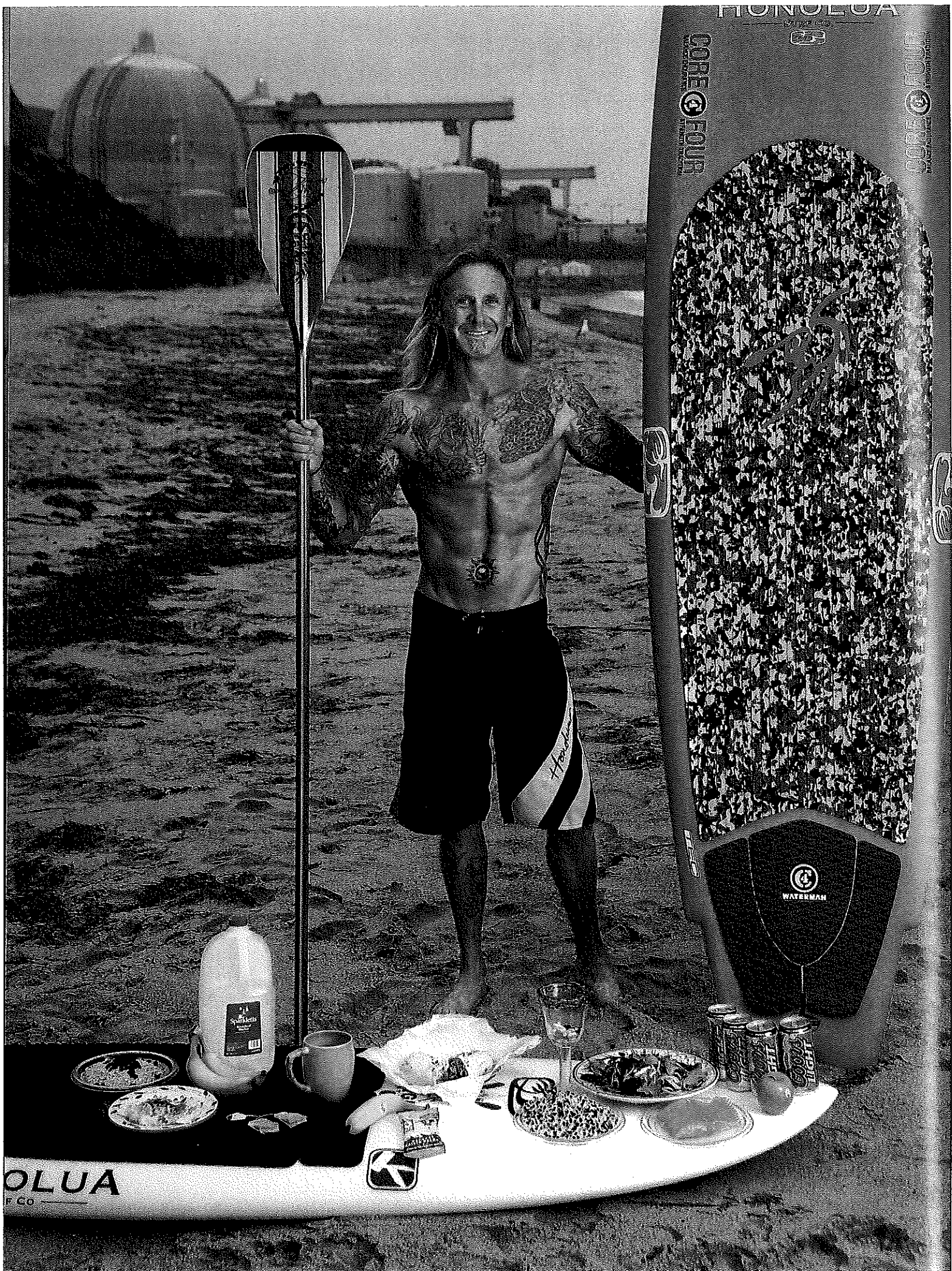
"Big spinach salads with bell peppers and tomatoes, wild fish, organic chicken breasts—that's pretty much all week." He drinks two to six beers or has wine most nights. "Don't tell my doctor," he jokes.

Although he and Andie usually buy fish locally, occasionally they take the boat out to spear wild fish. "We'll go 20 miles out and find kelp—dive in and shoot the big fish underneath. It's pretty exciting stuff," he says.

The beach he prefers for paddling is di-

rectly opposite the nuclear power plant in San Onofre; it's not crowded and is dog-friendly—much appreciated by his dog, Taco. None of the regulars are phased by the plant. "I'm not really bothered. I surf mostly right out in front of it. Fishermen tell me they catch odd fish around there... That's when I say, 'Hey, maybe I'll have some three-eyed fish for dinner...'" We have warning sirens that they test biannually; when they go off it kind of makes you think, "Whoa, hopefully that will never happen."





HONOLUA
CORE FOUR
HONOLUA

CORE FOUR
HONOLUA

CORE FOUR
HONOLUA

WATERMAN

HONOLUA
HONOLUA