

# ultra

fit magazine

**COMMONWEALTH GAMES FEVER!**

**WE TALK TO STEVE HOOKER, THE MAN AT THE TOP!**

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# STEVEN HOOKER

HE'S GOT  
THE HAIR,  
THE GIRL  
AND  
THE GENES!



Meet Australia's own Steven Hooker.

Not only did he win our only gold medal in track and field at Beijing in 2008, he is the first Aussie to win gold in Pole Vaulting in 60 years at the Olympics! With the Commonwealth Games in October in Delhi, Steve has every chance of bringing home gold again and establishing himself as one of the world's best ever Pole Vaulters.

By Michael Henry

**A**t 27 years old this unassuming athlete is a superstar in a sport that we think sets the level in bravery when compared to any other track and field event. With your body upside down and six metres above Terra Firma, there are loads of things that can go wrong. However, at that point it's far too late to even worry about what might happen. As Steve Hooker sprints down the 45 metre runway in exactly 18 steps, he manages to place the end of a 5.2 metre pole into the take-off box before literally taking his life in his own hands and launching his 82 kilos skyward. Upon clearing the jump, any competition shot of Steve will show his joy at beating his own record yet again. This amazing athlete not only loves what he does, but he gets better at doing it every year...

He has increased his record nearly every year for the past 11 years. A chronological view of Steve's performance is:	1999	5.00m	2005	5.87m
	2000	5.20m	2006	5.96m
	2001	5.30m	2007	5.91m
	2002	5.35m	2008	6.00m
	2003	5.45m	2009	6.06m
	2004	5.65m		

It is no accident that Steve is a world beater at the sport. His mother Erica represented Australia in the 1972 Olympics and won silver in the Long Jump at the Commonwealth Games in 1978. Oh, and his father Bill represented Australia in the 1974 Commonwealth Games - he was a national champion competing in the 4 x 400m relay. Steven has a personal 100metre sprint time of 10.68 seconds and his 200m time is 21.1seconds - so he could actually qualify for the Olympic Sprint Team. When Steve set the World Pole Vault record in Boston last year he cleared 6.06m. This easily places him amongst the most elite of athletes ever to compete for Australia. Only 15 men in history have ever cleared 6 metres in this event.

**UPON CLEARING THE JUMP, ANY COMPETITION SHOT OF STEVE WILL SHOW HIS JOY AT BEATING HIS OWN RECORD YET AGAIN.**

**THIS AMAZING ATHLETE NOT ONLY LOVES WHAT HE DOES, BUT HE GETS BETTER AT DOING IT EVERY YEAR...**

We asked him how it feels to Pole Vault and he assured us that it's great fun! You start with a non-bendy pole and practise running and placing it in the box at speed. Then you practise follow through, with a jump onto some crash mats and hope it all goes OK. At this point you still have not really gone vertical or upside down. As you progress, you buy your own pole that is matched to your body weight and style (cost is about US\$600) and you go for it! What does that mean? In Pole Vault language it means you...hang on and don't look back. In Steven's words if you don't commit 100% you're in trouble - and sometimes if you do commit you're also in trouble! Like over 2million others, we have watched Steven on YouTube when things went wrong one afternoon in training...and oooooouch is all we can say! (Go ahead and have a look, you'll see it can go wrong, and badly!)

**WHEN STEVE SET THE WORLD POLE VAULT RECORD IN BOSTON LAST YEAR HE CLEARED 6.06M.**

**THIS EASILY PLACES HIM AMONGST THE MOST ELITE OF ATHLETES EVER TO COMPETE FOR AUSTRALIA. ONLY 15 MEN IN HISTORY HAVE EVER CLEARED 6 METRES IN THIS EVENT.**



Having endured his fair share of injuries, Steve takes into the Commonwealth Games a great experience and energy that should see him dominate this exciting sport. His training divides his year into two blocks. Initial training focuses on the Australia circuit with competitions in February to March each year. The busy International season is between July and September and for these months each year, Steve is travelling and competing. Training in Australia takes place in Western Australia. His coach Mark Stewart has created 3 month training blocks for each season. Each block typically follows a 3 week cycle of 2 heavy weeks and then 1 light week in rotation. A heavy week will have two pole vault sessions and two circuit training sessions a day. Steve will train on the track with hurdles and interval runs at 300metre lengths, followed by short sprint sessions. Skipping uphill is included in the regime along with extensive plyometrics.

As you would expect, his nutrition is also managed by his Nutrition Coach as supplied by the WA Institute of Sport. Steve has used Usana Nutritional Supplements for about 10 years. He feels he gets increased recovery with these products, so much so that he approached them in 2004 for sponsorship. They have retained him to this day as a spokesperson and willing voice for products that he believes in very strongly.

When not competing, Steve is training or hanging out with his very attractive Russian girlfriend (sorry ladies his is spoken for). He

**YOU GO FOR IT! WHAT DOES THAT MEAN? IN POLE VAULTER LANGUAGE IT MEANS YOU...HANG ON AND DON'T LOOK BACK.**

**IN STEVEN'S WORDS IF YOU DON'T COMMIT 100% YOU'RE IN TROUBLE - AND SOMETIMES IF YOU DO COMMIT YOU'RE ALSO IN TROUBLE!**

likes to surf and we also think that we owe him a free Kite Surfing Lesson as he would be a natural at an airborne sport!).

At the ripe old age of 27 Steve has many years left to compete at world beating levels. However, before going pro he trained and worked in property development in his home town of Melbourne. He had a great career going for 4 years until in 2007 he decided to go pro-athlete and prepare for the 2008 Olympics. Having done so well, Steven is very humble; we have to say he is one of the nicest athletes you could hope to meet! There is something about a young Aussie who is able to repeatedly 'cream' the competition and still act like his/her sport is fun!

Steven is so casual off the field; his long curly red locks, huge smile and warm personality make you so glad that he is representing our fine country. When Aussies compete at world record levels and remain true people-loving Aussies, it's a great thing! We guarantee there is not one person this star has met who would not be behind him 100% of the way. A regular visitor to school groups and the like, we definitely have a national star here ready and able to bring home another Commonwealth Gold. **ufm**

## STEVEN'S FAVS

**FAVOURITE MOVIE**  
UP IN THE AIR.

**FAVOURITE MUSIC**  
PHOENIX

**FAVOURITE YUMMY FOOD**  
STEAK!

**FUTURE AMBITIONS**  
COMMONWEALTH GAMES AND THEN LONDON OLYMPICS IN 2012

**GREATEST DAY EVER IN COMPETITION**  
WORLD INDOORS (WON BY 31CM AND CLEARED 6.01CM)

**FAVOURITE SPORTING HERO**  
CHRIS JUDD

**OTHER SPORTS HE LIKES**  
NO TIME TO DO THEM!



**WE GUARANTEE THERE IS NOT ONE PERSON THIS STAR HAS MET WHO WOULD NOT BE BEHIND HIM 100% OF THE WAY.**

**A REGULAR VISITOR TO SCHOOL GROUPS AND THE LIKE, WE DEFINITELY HAVE A NATIONAL STAR HERE READY AND ABLE TO BRING HOME ANOTHER COMMONWEALTH GOLD.**