



AMERICAN NINJA WARRIOR

Where Gladiators Meet Mortals

ST: How did your parents react when you first told them you wanted to rock climb?

ISSAC: I was very young and they initially were like, "There's no way you're going to do that. No way. Maybe when you get older." I convinced them to watch me climb at an indoor facility to show them I was taking precautions and being safe as possible. They were OK with me indoors, but, I didn't tell them I was doing outdoor rock climbing too. I eventually shared some pictures, and they freaked out. At that point I was old enough what could they say? They were like... "Well you're alive and haven't hurt yourself so it must be safe." I've posted videos of me 50-70 feet off the ground with no protection. They're like, "What are you doing?" I don't send pictures anymore.

ST: You completed Stage 1 and Stage 2, and you dominated Stage 3, becoming the very first EVER American to complete Stage 3 in the national competition. Then, on to Stage 4 where you won. How does it feel to be the first contestant in the history of American Ninja Warrior to finish the course?

ISSAC: I prepared for it for along time. I knew the final stage would be hard. My desire and passion for what I do has always helped me. I did not grow up with access to unlimited finances to be able to go off and do these amazing things in life. I started simple. I did many jobs when I was younger like cleaning bathrooms at the local climbing gym in trade to use the facility to practice climbing. I did whatever I could

to get myself in that environment. When I realized climbing was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life, I worked hard to be the best. I like to be outdoors. I figured a way I could design my life around a very simplistic way of training, eating and living, and not spend much money doing it. I work three or four months of the year doing construction or restaurant work or guiding and save a little pool of money, then I can travel and rock climb the rest of the year.

ST: You've found your own recipe for fitness — no fancy gyms for you?

ISSAC: I never wanted to go to a gym to train and lift weights. It's too repetitive, too monotonous for me. That's what's cool about Ninja training. The entire time you rock climb and do ninja training, you don't feel like you're training or working out — you're having fun. You're doing what you love to do, and at the end of the day you feel great. Your arms are sore, hands, feet — my whole body is sore because I got a full workout. I was having fun with friends on a mountain or in a climbing center. My girlfriend (Laura Kisana, a competitor on "American Ninja Warrior") and I, and my friends are constantly thinking up cool ideas to stay in shape and be healthy. We are always constantly outdoors rock climbing, and doing what we love to do and, that's the most important thing of it all. At the end of the day you have to ask yourself, "Am I really happy going to the gym everyday, lifting weights, doing repetitive exercise — that can

require a great deal of discipline. Or would I be happier going outdoors to see what nature has to offer? Whatever it is, playing tennis, rock climbing... I love being in nature.

Recognized as one of the top rock climbers in the world, and a member of the famed Wolf Pack, Issac has played important roles in the establishment and conservation of some of the most nationally recognized rock climbing destinations as the inspiring Buttermilks in Bishop, CA; Joe's Valley outside of Orangeville, UT; and Moe's Valley located in Saint George, in Southern Utah. Issac and Laura live together in Las Vegas, but Issac says the world is their home. Living a nomadic and by what some describe as an "unconventional lifestyle" these two soulmates travel around the country in their RV, looking for the next rock to climb and conquer.

ST: Any great and amazing plans for your incredible million-dollar first-prize win?

ISSAC: We will keep things simple. I do have plans to do some much needed work on our RV and, we will do more traveling to some new places we haven't been where there are great mountains to climb.

ST: As most sports champions, I am sure you lead a healthy lifestyle. What about diet? Traveling around so much how do you maintain a good diet?

ISSAC: Laura and I have comfortably lived off of less than \$10,000 a year our entire lives. For us to maintain a high-level of health, and travel and do what we want, and live out the dreams we have, we learned all sorts of cool tips and tricks. Where our diet is concerned, things as simple as, you know, replacing easy access foods. For instance instead of going out and getting fast food — which would be easy for me to do — instead we will get a head of cabbage, peel apart the layers, and then we will use them as crunchy chips, and dip them in hummus or salsa. There are all sorts of healthy snacks like that which are simply to make and very affordable. You just have to know about them. You don't need a lot of money to buy them, and they are the best for your body — your health, strength and endurance.

Amazing! Issac shows us how "simple" can be "happy" ever after — after all.

