



Max Muscle founder and CEO Joe Wells shows how rewarding it is to balance family, a successful career and a dedication to health and fitness.

By Amanda Beckman • Photos by Israel Anderson

Living life to **THE MAX**

The passions of youth usually fall to the wayside as teens turn to 20s, 30s and so on. How many of us haven't wished our high school or college sports days were a thing of the present, not the past? Few of us have the opportunity to live out those passions and use them as a foundation for success. It's certainly not the easy route, but that's exactly where Max Muscle Founder and CEO Joe Wells, 49, finds himself today.

You might think a man with this kind of success and drive has led a life of amazing opportunities. Quite the contrary. Joe struggled to balance school and after-school work to help make ends meet for his broken family. Until he was 13, he never had the chance to play sports. It was then that his father was granted custody of him, so Joe moved to Utah and started a new life.

"The first thing I did was sign up for football and every sport that came my way," Joe said. "I was thrilled to finally get the opportunity to play sports."

And no, Joe didn't start off as a phenomenal natural. But he did learn very quickly that if you want something bad enough, you've got to be determined and you definitely

need to practice. If you're wondering just how determined he was and just how much he practiced, think about the fact that he became an All State Guard and Linebacker in Football (very rare), an All State Basketball player with an average of 23 points a game and an All State in Track, not to mention the state record holder for shot put. Deservedly, he was flooded with scholarship offers after graduation.

When he finally made his decision on a college, it wasn't based on the glitz, glamour or exposure the school could offer. Instead, he headed to Southern Utah State College for the simple fact that they would allow him to play three sports – football, basketball and track. It was there that the need to gain weight turned into the desire for knowledge about fitness and nutrition.

"I read every book I could find and began focusing on diet and super intense training," he said. "Sure enough, I got great results and went on to become an All Conference Linebacker and held the school scoring record in football for more than 20 years!"

Like the sing-along song, first came titles, then came college then came an offer for the NFL...and the United

States Football League (USFL). Joe played professional football for four years, spending as much time and energy as he could building up his already amazing wealth of knowledge in the areas of fitness and nutrition. It was then he really grasped the concept of all types of supplements, namely protein supplements.

His departure from professional ball evolved into an entirely new “ball game” for Joe. He’d done some research on amino acids, partnered with friend Dave Smith and launched one of the first low molecular weight amino acids on the market. On friendly terms, they parted ways, which opened the door for Joe to start Max Muscle Sports Nutrition and realize his dream of owning a chain of sports nutrition stores.

At 49 years of age, Joe manages to run a cutting-edge sports nutrition company, stay in fantastic shape, parent five amazing children with his lovely wife, Gloriana, and still feel 30... except in the knees.

“I love to work out and to this day, I can still lift just about the same weights as I did 20 years ago,” he said, adding that “I just can’t jump as high as I used to, but I still play basketball 2-3 times a week for conditioning.”

Along with his regular workouts, Joe and Gloriana keep up with the activities of their five children, ages 8 through 12, including school, music, sports and all the other running around that comes with parenthood.

“My priorities are family, then work, and that seems to keep me in balance,” Joe said.

It’s a constant challenge, but Joe and his wife (awesome wife, in his words) work together to ensure that the day-to-day struggles they face in the family and in the business are taken care of. In the morning, Gloriana packs lunches while Joe makes protein pancakes for Team Wells – Cheyanne, 12, Briana, 11, Logan, 11, Tyson, 8, and Luke, also 8. (No, Gloriana was not pregnant every 9 months. The couple recently married and brought their families together.) Then, at Max Muscle corporate in Anaheim, Calif., Joe works to ensure the quality of MMSN products never falters while Gloriana helps new franchisees get on their feet. You’ve got to hand it to them - five children, a great marriage AND a successful business. But that’s not to say it’s always smooth sailing.

“When it all gets too hectic, I head to the gym,” Joe explained.

The stress-reducing benefits of exercise are amazing. For Joe, playing a game of basketball is exactly what he needs to clear his head, get a good sweat and burn some major calories. But sometimes he opts for his bike and the open road/mountain. Either way, it keeps him healthy and balanced.

One of his greatest joys, however, is being a father. The rewards are practically limitless in his eyes. Everything from coaching to teaching to just watching them grow means a lot to him, which, aside from his passion for health and

fitness, is a driving force behind his lifestyle and business.

As he’s been quoted saying many times, he’s a “consumer first, businessman second.” Name an MMSN product and you can bet he’s taken or at least tried it. He absolutely loves the Iso-Extreme proteins and has a great recipe that he uses every day. (Look for it in the August issue of MS&F.) Aside from protein, his personal core MMSN products include Max EFAs, Glutamine, Full Blown Extreme and Max Vit-Acell.

Clearly, Joe stands behind his brand and is extremely proud of the results his and his franchisees’ efforts have warranted. From the sprouting up of Max Muscle franchises across the U.S. to the development of new products and the daily joys of marriage and parenthood, something happens every day for him to be proud of, he said.

Although he’s had tons of inspiration along the way, his biggest asset has been 100 percent belief in what he sets out to accomplish. In business and in life, he tries to abide by the old sports quote, “If you’re not failing, you’re not trying.” The bottom line, he said, is to never fear failure. Like him, if you know that you can succeed, you will. **MS&F**

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Joe and Gloriana married on September 29, 2007 in Huntington Beach, Calif. Here they are pictured at the wedding with their lovely combined family of children.