

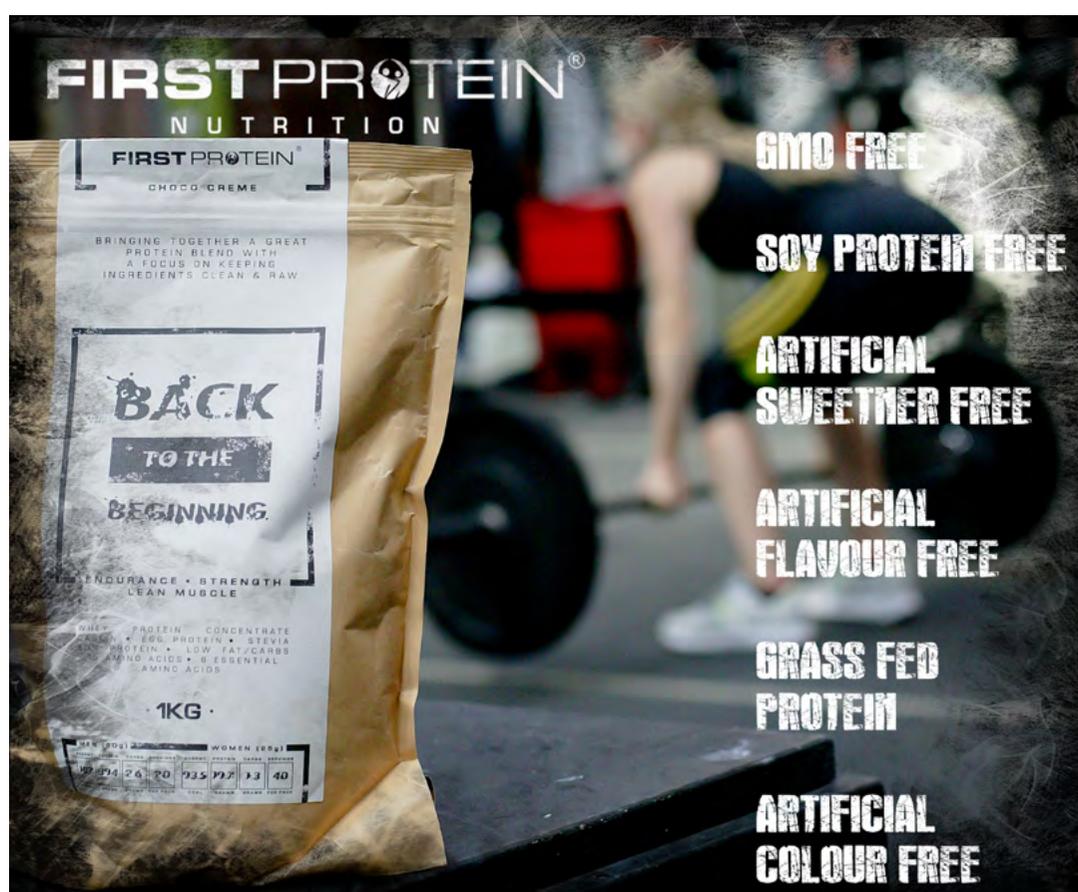
REVIEWS

ALL THE GEAR AND EVERY IDEA...
EVERYTHING YOU NEED FOR THE MONTH AHEAD

FIRST PROTEIN BTTB CREME

BTTB stands for 'back to the beginning', which should tell you a lot about First Protein's range of products. Their credo is to avoid additives, artificial sweeteners and other nasties to produce the very best protein supplement they can. The result is BTTB Creme, available in Strawberry Creme and Choco Creme, in 1kg or 2kg bags. First Protein claim that their process achieves better protein concentration than mass-produced supplements offering more bang for your buck. In BTTB Creme, you'll find 69% casein, 29% whey protein Concentrate and 2% egg protein. But it's what's not in the product that is interesting. If you're one of the growing number of people trying to eliminate sugar from your diet, supplements are a bit of a minefield. But BTTB is sweetened by plant extract Stevia and has no artificial sweeteners. First Protein also insists that none of the animals that produce their protein is fed with anything containing genetically modified organisms and are grass-fed. So not only will you feel virtuous post-workout, you'll also have that sunny glow knowing that no cows were saddened in the making of your protein shake.

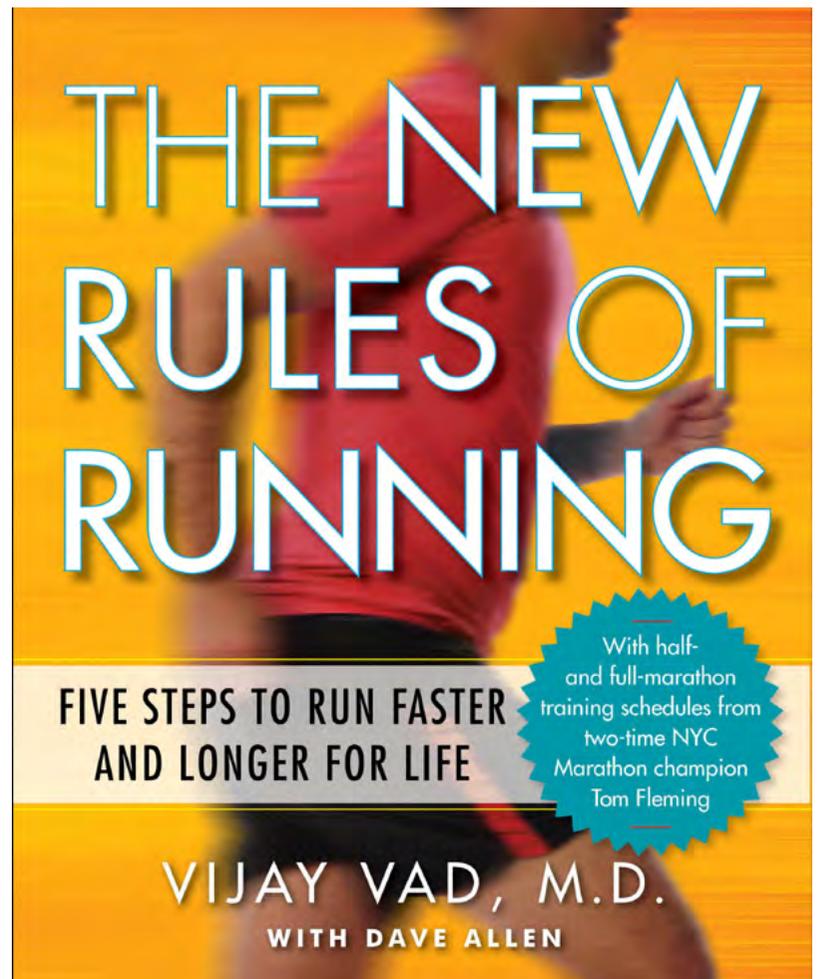
Price: £34.99 (1kg)
From: www.firstprotein.co.uk



THE NEW RULES OF RUNNING - VIJAY VID MD & DAVE ALLEN

Assuming you weren't one of the thousands of this year's London Marathon participants, in which case you may well be vowing to never run again, this fascinating new book could be for you. Sports medicine expert Vid has recruited two-time New York Marathon winner turned coach Tom Fleming to provide training schedules for those looking to avoid injury and improve their running times. One of Fleming's key phrases is "fitter equals faster" and he believes "speed will come from running lots of miles" – meaning that runners and racers should aim to rack up more mileage at slower pace rather than get too caught up in speedwork if they want to improve their marathon, half, 10k or 5k times. The approach makes sense, putting less stress on your body with less pace, while still improving the cardiovascular system, and the book sets out how to go about it. Vid also uses his expertise to outline a programme of preventative strength exercises and stretches to keep you off the sideline, as well as dietary and hydration tips.

Price: £12.10
From: Amazon



VERTICAL WATER

Hot on the heels of the coconut water craze, comes another tree-based beverage – maple water. Called Vertical Water because in springtime, the maple tree takes in nutrients upwards from its roots, it's being marketed as having health benefits – maple sap has for centuries been used as a tonic by Native Americans. The idea behind it is to help conserve the forests of North America – keeping the trees in place for longer without damaging them. The tree can be tapped with just a tiny amount of the maple water being removed from each tree. The makers say a 240ml serving has just 15 calories (your average coconut water has 19) and around 3g of sugar (slightly less than many coconut waters). Eco-friendly and a slightly sweeter alternative to water, it's expected in shops in April.

Price: £TBC
From: www.verticalwater.com



BOSE SIE2i SPORT HEADPHONES

Finding a pair of sports headphones that fit and stay in your ear is like meeting Mr or Miss Right - you want to hang on to them for as long as possible and take them everywhere with you. Bose's SIE2i are Bradley Cooper and Amber Heard rolled into one. The in-ear phones have clever little horns of soft plastic sticking up from the bud part, which Bose call their StayHear tip. It's genius. Unlike similar models with hard plastic extensions at the top, these never get uncomfortable and show no signs of budging no matter how extreme your workout. In the box, you get small, medium and large spare tips so you can customise your pair to your very own lugholes. You also get a 21in extension cord and a free Reebok fitness armband. The sound is natural and the headphones fit so snugly that external noise is barely noticeable without turning up to ridiculous levels. Sweat and weather-resistant, it won't bother the phones if you're an indoor or an outdoor person and the inline control offers you the chance to skip tracks, pump up (or down) the volume and answer calls while you're on the move.



Price: £129.95
From: www.bose.co.uk

UNDER ARMOUR UA CHARGE RC2



American company Under Armour have really found their stride with their running shoe range, with regular users swearing by them. The UA Charge RC 2 is the latest in their running line. Claiming not just to work with your anatomy, but to "evolve it", the shoe is said to be their most technical yet. The upper is built to flex and mimic the foot's natural movement while the Micro G foam in the sole "turns cushioned landings into explosive takeoffs". With the company's patented HeatGear wrapped around your foot, sweat is wicked away to keep your feet dry and cool whatever the conditions. They also look as cool as you'd hope a shoe from the innovative Under Armour would, at a price that won't break the bank.

**Price: (Mens): £66 (Black and grey colourways)
£110 (Blue) (Women's): £66**
From: www.underarmour.com/shop/uk/en