

**The TEEN SPORTS NUTRITION BLUEPRINT**  
PLAN TO WIN!

**SPECIAL REPORT!**

**THE BATTLE OF THE BARS**



VS.



**“This one is too close to call!”**

**Reading Between The "LIES"  
Of Health Bar HYPE!**

**By Jeff Cavaliere MSPT, CSCS**

## **Don't Believe the Hype – Bar Buyer Beware!**

When it comes to finding healthy snack options for teens on the go, nothing seems more convenient, portable and reliable than one of the numerous “energy” bars that flood the store shelves these days, marketed as an instant and wholesome pick-me-up.

If only it were true. Instead, when we actually dig below the clever marketing, what we're left with is nothing but a glorified candy bar that might very well give you that instant boost you were after...but along with it, a thunderous energy crash from the blood sugar roller coaster you were just sent on by eating it!

Nothing aggravates me more than to watch well-intentioned athletes (and their parents and coaches) who place their trust in a brand and reach for something they feel is helping their cause, only to be doing the exact opposite. Now, don't get me wrong, I'm really not trying to single out any one company or brand here...because frankly, there are so many offenders (many of which are covered within the pages of the Teen Sports Nutrition Blueprint) that to detail how each one is misleading the consumer in an effort to simply sell product, I'd have you here all day long. That's not the point.

What I'm trying to share with you is just some simple tactics you can use the next time you find yourself looking for something truly healthy that will help you identify the good from the bad. After all, if you're going to wind up eating something that has as much nutritional value as a candy bar...why not at least know this? We both know the candy bar tastes a heck of a lot better than these “energy” bars anyway right?

Ok...so where do we start? Probably the best place is to figure out what actually is a good bar. Once we do this, then we can measure up every other bar and decide whether to eat it...or eliminate it from our healthy meal plan once and for all. To do this we need to figure out what the main objective of the bar is for you. Are you looking for “energy” bars to provide that quick dose of pep or are you looking into the numerous protein bars to support your muscle building efforts? Either way...the cautions are going to remain the same. Remember, the main determining factor of a GOOD bar is going to be what it is actually INSIDE the bar and not what it says in bold letters across the outside packaging.

You're going to need to become savvy when it comes to reading labels, because these manufacturers you're competing against (it sort of is like a game isn't it?) have spent millions of dollars, hired the best marketing execs in the world, and

have had years of practice in the art of deception and how to lure you to their product with colors, logos, words, and unfortunately...empty promises.

So, just because a "health bar" claims to be high in protein or full of antioxidants, doesn't mean it *actually* is! I know...I told you this was frustrating!

It's really crazy. I can remember back in the early 90's when the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) decided they wanted to "clarify" the confusion that had overtaken the American public when it came to reading food labels. They were going to put an end, once and for all, to the "label games" food manufacturers were playing to make unhealthy foods appear much healthier than they were.

Man...am I sure glad they did that! I could only imagine what it would be like today if they hadn't stepped in to "end the confusion"! I hope my sarcasm comes through in my writing!

But that was then and this is now. 20 years ago The Teen Sports Nutrition Blueprint was nothing but an idea waaaaayyy in the back of my mind, as I was forming my own successful plan for eating the right way and eating for performance. Today, the TSNB is here to cut through the clutter and make this whole bar-buying decision a snap. No need for a pocket nutritionist app or anything else like that to help you figure out what you need to know to determine whether what you are about to eat or buy is something that will help you or hurt you on your quest to improved performance.

It's time to share with you the exact things that I have found have helped my athletes (and those that are shopping for them) to become smarter readers and ultimately smarter eaters when it comes to labels!

## **The "3 S's" to Energy Bar Shopping Success**

I like to call these my "3 S's" – Serving Size, Sugars, and Saturated Fats/Fats. Using just these three categories, you can discover how to quickly pick up a bar from the grocery store or your local GNC or Vitamin Shoppe and within seconds, determine whether it should go in the cart or back on the shelf to collect cobwebs.

Let me give you an example of each. First, the **servicing size**. If your bar comes advertised as anything more than 1 serving per container...run for the hills! Seriously, unless you plan on cutting your bar into pieces with a knife and fork (reminiscent of one of the greatest Seinfeld episodes ever!), then tell me how practical it is to make a bar that comes packaged as 2.5 servings or some other

crazy number?!? The reason you see this is so that the manufacturer can cut down on calorie, fat and sugar content that it is probably embarrassed by. By dividing the bar into multiple servings, they can legally slash the offensive numbers in half or more to make the bar look like a much more viable option. Don't forget to do the math if you see this, and you'll reveal the true nutritional value of what you're about to eat. If it says 2 servings per bar...then simply multiply all the values by 2 and you'll be able to make an apples to apples comparison versus other bars you're deciding against. Most often, the minute you have to start doing math to determine whether you should eat something, you're going to wind up with an answer that will undoubtedly equal "NO".

Want even more proof that this sort of marketing trick is rampant in today's healthy food choices? Look no further than the "nutrient energy" drinks. There is perhaps no greater manipulation of the serving sizes than on these sugar waters! Food manufacturers have made millions disguising the loads of sugars and calories their drinks contain, even when they claim to have "nothing to hide"!

For instance, Naked Juice (rapidly becoming a popular juice particularly for athletes) is one of the biggest offenders despite its abundance of "natural ingredients and wholesomeness". They are so proud of the freshness and pureness of their ingredients that they literally boast "nothing to hide". A 15.2 oz bottle of their Pomegranate Blueberry Antioxidant drink has just 150 calories and 23 grams of sugar per serving. That is of course until you realize that that bottle contains 2.5 servings! Yes...drinking that whole bottle now would leave you with over 400 calories and 56 grams of sugar...more than in a can of coca cola! Can you imagine that they even sell 32 oz bottles now?!? Your insulin should be cringing at the very thought.

But I digress. Back to the bars and the first thing you must look for when deciding to buy is that serving size. It is your only weapon against the misleading "healthy" claims that are abundant on far too many unhealthy foods, especially the ones geared at those of us actually trying to be healthy! Remember, if they are playing games with the serving sizes then there is usually a pretty good reason for it, and even more reason for you to steer clear in your search for something healthy to fuel your efforts on the field.

Next up is **Sugars**. Every label will have the number of carbohydrates listed, as well as, how many of those carbs come in the form of simple sugars. Remember, the simple sugars are the ones that cause the rapid rise in blood sugar that, while providing an immediate source of energy, unfortunately leave you on empty when the spike reverses direction and plummets (usually shortly after you've started your game or practice!) Try and stick to bars that contain less than 12 grams of simple sugars per serving. Doing so will ensure that you get a steadier delivery of "energy sustaining and not energy draining" complex carbs to keep you going strong long after the opening tip.

Finally, the last thing I want you to be on the lookout for is the amount of **Saturated Fats and Total Fats** contained in the bar you are about to consume. I know what you're thinking. You're young and don't need to be too worried about clogging up your arteries at this point so who cares about saturated fat? Well, unfortunately that is not true. Before you dig into that grease dripping cheeseburger you must realize that you are never too young to start developing high cholesterol (especially if you have a family history of it) and cardiovascular issues. A compromised heart, even in the smallest degree, can hurt your performance on the field by limiting your ability to get blood to all the working muscles as efficiently as possible during activity.

Your choices should contain 5 or less grams of saturated fat and 10 grams of total fat per serving. Making these informed choices now will have taking the early action needed to prevent heart disease from coming back to wreak havoc on you later in life...long after you've hung up your spikes and won your last game in high school. Not to mention, sticking to a diet lower in these unhealthy fats, while increasing your intake of the "good for you mono and poly unsaturated fats" will also pay off in your ability to fit into your uniform by keeping the waistline lean and muscular, and sparing the spare tire!

## **A Lopsided Matchup? Not So Fast!**

So now that you're armed with the ability to quickly scan these labels to distinguish the real deals from the real steals, let's put your new knowledge to the test and check out the stats on two popular bar options to decide for yourself if they match up with your bodies' needs. For this report, we're going to pit the world famous energy bar champion, PowerBar Harvest Whole Grain (ooh...it even sounds so healthy) against...drum roll please...the Milky Way! Yes...THAT Milky Way.

I know what you're thinking. This has a chance to be about as close as a first round game in the NCAA March Madness Tournament where the underdog #16 seed tries to hang with the formidable #1 seed. Well, there's a reason why they play the game. You never know what can happen!

First up....hailing from Glendale California...the undisputed champion...

## PowerBar Harvest Whole Grain – Toffee Chocolate Chip

Let's take a look at the ingredients. Don't worry if you can't pronounce some of them. After all...maybe the secret to "wholesome goodness" is in the exotic ingredients that contain almost every letter of the alphabet? Let's see.

### Ingredients

WHOLE OATS, BROWN RICE SYRUP, EVAPORATED CANE JUICE SYRUP, SOY CRISPS (SOY PROTEIN ISOLATE, RICE FLOUR, BARLEY MALT, SALT), CHOCOLATEY COATING (SUGAR, FRACTIONATED PALM KERNEL OIL, COCOA, WHEY, NONFAT MILK, SOY LECITHIN, VANILLA), CHOCOLATE CHIPS (SUGAR, CHOCOLATE, MILK FAT, COCOA BUTTER, SOY LECITHIN, VANILLA), SOY PROTEIN ISOLATE, RICE CRISPS (MILLED RICE, SUGAR, SALT, BARLEY MALT), INULIN (FIBER), HONEY, ROASTED SOY BEANS, ALMOND BUTTER, GLYCERIN, NATURAL FLAVOR (CONTAINS BARLEY MALT, MILK), OAT FIBER, PEANUT BUTTER, **MINERALS:** CALCIUM PHOSPHATE, CALCIUM CARBONATE, MAGNESIUM OXIDE, IRON (FERROUS FUMARATE), ZINC OXIDE, COPPER GLUCONATE, MANGANESE SULFATE, CHROMIUM CHLORIDE, POTASSIUM IODIDE, SODIUM MOLYBDATE, SODIUM SELENITE, **VITAMINS:** VITAMIN C (ASCORBIC ACID), VITAMIN E ACETATE, PANTOTHENIC ACID (CALCIUM PANTOTHENATE), VITAMIN B3 (NIACINAMIDE), VITAMIN B6, VITAMIN B2, VITAMIN B1 (THIAMIN MONONITRATE), FOLIC ACID, VITAMIN A PALMITATE, BETA CAROTENE, BIOTIN, VITAMIN K1, VITAMIN B12. **CONTAINS ALMOND, MILK, PEANUT, AND SOY INGREDIENTS. MADE ON EQUIPMENT THAT ALSO PROCESSES WHEAT.**

The first thing that should jump out at you right away is the number of ingredients included in this relatively small PowerBar. One thing you can almost always count on is that, as the ingredient list gets longer, the value of the food itself gets lower. Funny how that works huh? It's almost like the manufacturer says, "well, we know that this thing is not so nutritious, so let's just throw even more ingredients in to try and hide the garbage". PowerBars have the cane juice syrup that is better than straight up table sugar but then you find later down the line more sugars from the old reliable but less desirable sources (sugar, glucose syrup).

I also stop when I see words like 'fractionated' as in fractionated palm kernel oil. This is a process where they take the palm kernel oil and then they heat it up and cool it down very quickly. This causes the oil to separate into fractions. They use the fraction that is more stable and add it to things like chocolate to keep it from melting too quickly. It sounds innocent enough but the problem is that the fraction they have removed is the part highest in saturated fats which is the artery clogging fat you want to avoid. If it can change what we know as chocolate, into something that doesn't melt...hmm, you might want to question what it can do once it's inside you!

Now, let's take a look at the nutrition information on the label.

# POWER BAR

## Harvest Whole Grain Toffee Chocolate Chip

### Nutrition Facts

Serving size 1 bar

**Calories 250**

Calories from fat 45 \* Percent Daily Values (DV) are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

Amount/Serving	% DV*
<b>Serving Size</b> 1 bar	
<b>Calories</b> 250	
<b>Total Fat</b> 6g	10%
Sat Fat 3.5g	18%
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	0%
<b>Sodium</b> 140mg	6%
<b>Total Carb</b> 42g	14%
Dietary Fiber 5g	20%
Sugars 20g	
<b>Protein</b> 10g	16%

Our tale of the tape reveals first and foremost...no serving size secrecy here! That means no need for knowing your multiplication tables or for bar microsurgery to produce a single serving. That's a plus. Total calories weigh in at a solid 250 calories. Perfect for a viable snack option without cramming you with too many calories to disrupt your digestion right before game time.

So far so good.

A quick glance at the saturated fat also yields a bar that just sneaks under the recommended 5 grams of saturated fat...and also slides in under the 10 grams of total fat limit. While this is good...it certainly wouldn't be as good as it gets. There are other bars that you can find even half these amounts. When you consider that you may actually be eating one of these every day as a snack, it's worth considering how you could improve even these "not bad" numbers.

That said, as we move onto our final category of carbohydrates and simple sugars...things begin to take a turn for the worse. A glance at the sugars here reveals a whopping 20 grams per bar! When you consider that this is as much as you'd find in half a can of Pepsi, then any thought of declaring the PowerBar the #1 Power Snack Choice should have just left your mind as quickly as your

blood sugar will skyrocket and then nosedive after eating one of these glorified candy bars. The 20 grams of sugar is equal to eating 5 teaspoonfuls of the

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pure white sugar you'd get from the bag of sugar your mom cooks with! Ok, I think it's fair to say, this one isn't going to win the award for Best in Bars!

Next up...the underdog....hailing from McLean (ironic) Virginia

### **The Milky Way Bar**

This bar has been "providing comfort in every bar" for years. Most people who've had one would probably tell you that while it may in fact do this...it also provides you with a need for a new wardrobe after your pants become way too snug from eating these suckers! I'm sure we all can agree that a well-timed Milky Way is not what we think of as an athlete's choice for good nutrition in a crunch. That said, let's take a look at what's actually in one of these.

### **Ingredients**

MILK CHOCOLATE (SUGAR, COCOA BUTTER, CHOCOLATE, SKIMMED MILK, LACTOSE, MILKFAT, SOY LECITHIN, ARTIFICIAL FLAVOR), PEANUTS, CORN SYRUP, SUGAR, SKIM MILK, BUTTER, MILKFAT, PARTIALLY HYDROGENATED SOYBEAN OIL, LACTOSE, SALT, EGG WHITES AND ARTIFICIAL FLAVORS

Well, the first thing you should notice here is the relatively small ingredient list (at least compared to the laundry list of unpronounceables on the PowerBar)! Next, as you look through each one, I've got to say...only one truly offensive ingredient here and that is the partially hydrogenated soybean oil (for the reasons we mentioned earlier on). However, besides the butter, chocolate, and milkfat being somewhat high in fat...at least you can't knock the fact that they are actual whole foods! I mean, these aren't things that are being synthesized in a test tube in some lab! So as far as that goes...our underdog may have just landed the first blow to the chin of the champion. Not a knockout punch by any means but at least it's got his attention now!

To dig a little deeper let's take a look at the nutrition content of the Milky Way so we can really see this mismatch play out...or not.

# **MILKY WAY**

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## Nutrition Facts

Serving size 1 bar

**Calories 260**

Calories from fat 90 \* Percent Daily Values (DV) are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

Amount/Serving	% DV*
<b>Serving Size</b> 1 bar	
<b>Calories</b> 260	
<b>Total Fat</b> 9g	13%
Sat Fat 6g	28%
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 5mg	2%
<b>Sodium</b> 95mg	3%
<b>Total Carb</b> 41g	14%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Sugars 30g	
<b>Protein</b> 3g	5%

At 260 calories, the Milky Way is only 10 calories more than the PowerBar. That one probably grabbed some of you by surprise didn't it? A further glance at the sugar and fat content reveal 30 grams and 9 grams respectively. Ouch. Yep...this is definitely a candy bar!

But that said, remember the PowerBar's numbers. It had 20 grams of sugar and 5 grams of fat. That's still 2/3 of the sweet stuff and more than half the lard of the obvious candy bar!

So what am I trying to say? Did the PowerBar come out the winner? Well yes...but I wouldn't say this was a blowout by any stretch of the imagination. More like a buzzer beater or a fight decided by decision on the scorecards. The problem with this outcome is it shouldn't be this close at all. After all, one is clearly billed as a candy bar to satisfy one's sweet tooth...and well...the other is billed as a nutritious and healthy snack option. Somebody isn't telling the truth and I'll give you a hint. It's the one that rhymes with Power Car.

You see...you can't underestimate the power of becoming label savvy. Commercialism casts its shadow over everything we do, everything we want, and everything we buy. It's like the commercial world hands a pair of rose-colored glasses to everyone at birth. You can choose to wear those glasses all of your life and accept the 'curve ball' realities you get pitched or get wise and

do your own research. The important thing is that you make well thought out choices about what you put in your body, especially as a growing and maturing athlete.

That said, I figured what better way to put YOU in control of what you eat than to arm you with just a few tools that you can start using right away to make smart snack choices today. No more guessing what is good for you by what looks good on the shelf. Instead, you can now look at the other side of the label (where the nutritional numbers are) and be able to figure out which one should be put right back where it came from!

### **Conclusion**

It's a pretty universal thought that the Milky Way is merely a candy bar with no nutritive value and nothing more right? Well then how come the PowerBar is just as accepted as a great choice for healthy energy when it's nutritional profile, we've shown, isn't much different than this? Marketing, marketing, marketing. It all comes back to how something is and has been sold to us for years and years. Our brains become conditioned to believe what it is that our advertisers are telling us. Simply because, not doing so would require too much time on our part trying to figure out the benefits of what is being sold to us. If PowerBar tells us their products are perfect for the active, on-the-go person as a healthy snack...well then, we might as well believe them. After all...they wouldn't bend the truth just to sell a few (million) bars would they!?

The point is this. Unfortunately they would...and they do. But we don't have to live in the dark any longer. The Teen Sports Nutrition Blueprint is here to rip off these wrappers to reveal the truth behind the marketing so that once and for all, our young athletes can be sure that what they're eating is helping them on the field...and saving their parents some wasted dollars in the process!

The Teen Sports Nutrition Blueprint will cut through the clutter and show you the top 4 offenders in this category...and more importantly which bars you should be turning to to get the most bang for your buck. Finally...the TSNB gives you a simple do-it-yourself "ultimate energy bar" recipe that anyone can make at home with just a few simple ingredients. Not only is it something you'll love...but consider that this one comes packed with a protein power punch as well so you can start using this homemade bar as your choice for building muscle as well as helping your hustle. You don't want to miss this as it's worth the price of this incredible resource alone! So don't wait another second. The TSNB is just a click away from giving you a step by step blueprint to cutting edge nutrition tactics for teens...and over the long haul...a plan to win both on and off the field! [Click on the link below and Go Blue Today!](#)