

THE Club Insider

NEWS

The Pulse of the Health, Racquet & Sports Club Business

NORM CATES ON FIGHTING SKIN CANCER YOU SHOULD KNOW THE DANGERS... SEEK HELP EARLY!

By Norm Cates

I sit here humbled by God and grateful for the cures available today in modern medicine.

I am now a skin cancer survivor. I am writing this with the sincere hope that I can help others avoid the mistakes that I have made. Skin cancer could strike you. It could strike one of your loved ones. And, I am sure it has hit some of your club members. I want to share my experience with you now, even though it is too late for me to avoid paying a significant price for my lack of early action. My faith and hope is that you will consider these comments and will become more aware of the risks of excessive sun exposure and will help others to do so.

On June 11th I visited a dermatologist to have a skin spot that would not heal on my forehead checked out. I was pretty sure it was skin cancer. 15 years ago I had a small growth removed and it tested to be cancerous, but fortunately, it was not the worst kind, melanoma. I had procrastinated on dealing with this and other skin problems because of many factors, none of which are now valid.

How wrong I was!

The doctor was highly rec-

ommended by a friend of mine, Sonny Marsh. In fact, Dr. Dirk Robertson, the M.D whom I was referred to, was booked until September, 1998. So, I decided to accept an appointment with Dr. Robertson's only Associate, Dr. Kim Tran. It turns out that Dr. Tran not only is Dr. Robertson's only Associate, she is his protegee, as she trained under Dr. Robertson during a one year fellowship at Emory University in Atlanta. Dr. Tran was born in Viet Nam. She moved to Hawaii at an early age and attended the University of Hawaii for her undergraduate work. She went to Duke University Medical School and did fellowships at Southwestern Hospital in Dallas, Texas and Emory University in Atlanta. She is very talented and I would wager as good as they get in the field of dermatology.

Thank God that I didn't wait until an appointment in September!

During my initial examination Dr. Tran examined the spot on my forehead about which I was concerned. She also checked out several other spots on my chest, shoulder and back. Then she examined the left side of my head, adjacent to the temple and above the ear. She commented, "This

(See *Skin Cancer* page 3)



CLUB SPORTS INTERNATIONAL Announces Agreement To Acquire New Mexico Sports & Wellness

Denver, CO.- Club Sports International, owners and managers of over 50 upscale athletic clubs, has announced a definitive agreement in which CSI will acquire New Mexico Sports & Wellness on August 17, 1998. New Mexico

Sports & Wellness is a five-club operation based in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The clubs range in size from a 15,000 square-foot urban club to a 45,000 square-foot, suburban club with outdoor tennis and pools. New Mexico Sports (See *Club Sports Int'l* page 20)

SURVEY SHOWS HEALTH CLUB REVENUES UP By 9% Study Examines Top Performers in the Industry

Boston, MA. - Preliminary results of the International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association's (IHRSA's) industry data survey show average revenues of \$1.79 million per club last year—an increase of 9.14% over the previous year's figures of \$1.64 mil-

lion. The study, conducted for IHRSA by the University of Massachusetts, involved 231 clubs.

"Since the study is self-selecting, it generally attracts some of the industry's top-performing clubs," said Bill Howland, Manager of Publications and Research for IHRSA.

"However, if the top performers are doing this well, it's a safe bet that the average club had a banner year as well."

Mr. Howland pointed to other evidence indicating that the industry is solid and growing. He noted that total health club memberships in the U.S. increased by 8% (See *Revenues* page 20)

Inside The Insider

- Partnership Charters: The Process For Achieving "Interpersonal Equity"
- Consultants: Who Needs 'Em?
- The Power of Accreditation
- 10 Most Common Exercise Mistakes
- Helping Members Succeed
- 25 Ways To Promote Your Wellness Program

CLUB INSIDER News Goes On-Line!

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articles for publication consideration through the internet. And, you can order new subscriptions for your other clubs, renew your subscriptions or order past editions using e-mail and your American Express or

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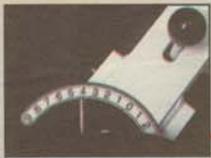
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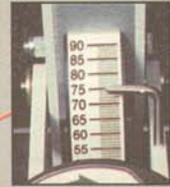
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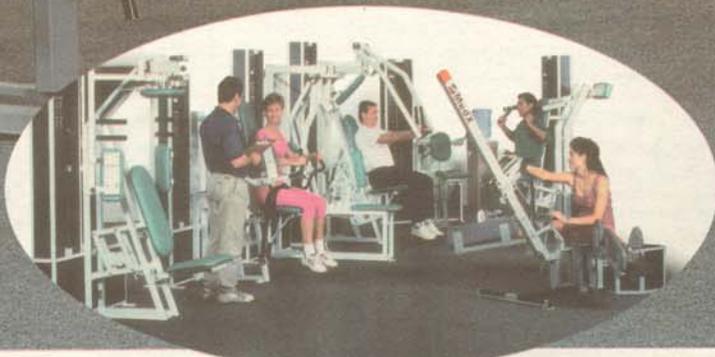
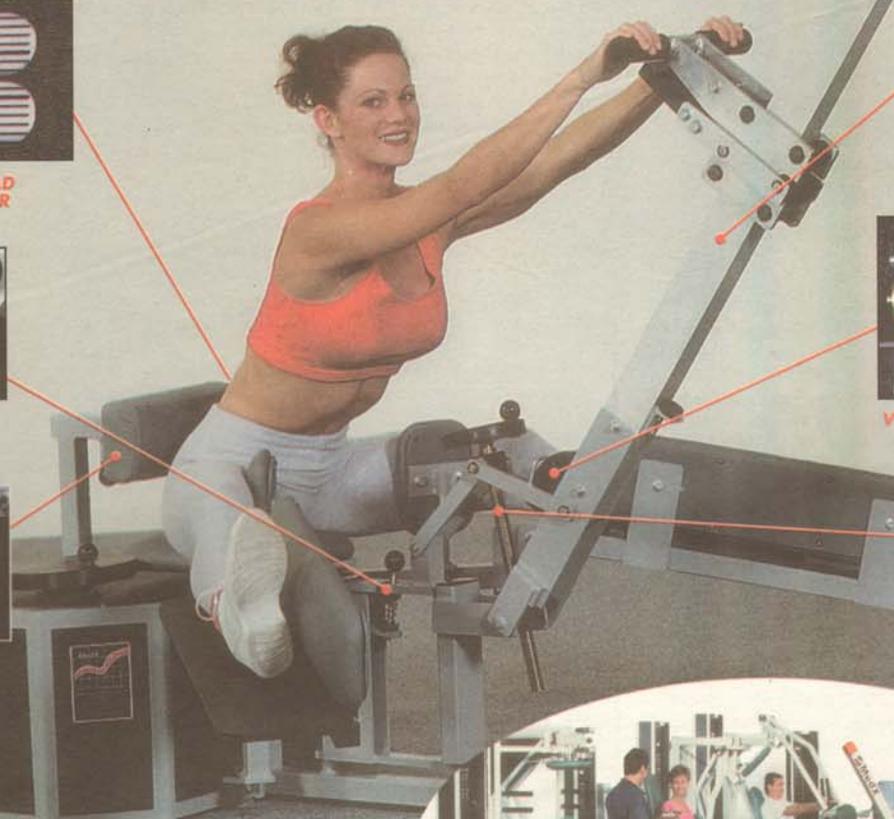
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...Skin Cancer

continued from cover

is a very big problem. It will take most of a day to deal with." Naturally, that really got my attention! She removed small skin samples in six areas including my head, chest, shoulder and back and sent them out for biopsy. Three days later she called and informed me that all six areas had tested positive for skin cancer and would require surgical procedures to fully remove the infected areas. Dr. Tran explained that they would use a procedure called Mohs Micrographic Surgery. She explained that each cancerous area would be removed and tested in the doctor's office while I wait. The beauty of the Mohs process is that it allows each area to be fully cleared and declared cancer free by the Doctor before you leave the office. All three days of operations were done on an outpatient basis using local anesthesia.

Arriving at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, June 29th, I thought I was mentally prepared for what was to come. But, I don't think I was prepared enough. Dr. Tran operated for about 45 minutes during the first phase of the operation. As promised they tested the results right then using the MOHS process. After about an hour she came back with a little sketch of the cancer area with the remaining cancer shown in red. There was still a lot of cancerous tissue yet to be removed. She

injected more Lidocaine (local anesthetic) and began to work on removing the remaining cancer areas. After maybe 20-25 more minutes she stopped and the tissue was again tested to see if all the cancer had been removed. Once again she returned with another sketch. This time she showed me that just a small little area was still in red and I was near elimination of the problem from this area. More Lidocaine. More scapel work. This time only 10 minutes or so. Back to the testing lab. After a little while Dr. Tran came in and told me the biopsy on the entire area showed that I was now rid of the cancer!

DAMN THE TORPEDOS... FULL SPEED AHEAD!

I am sure I heard that line in some movie. Anyway, that is my down-home way of telling you that I am fine and expect to fully recover. Dr. Tran tells me the big area on the side of my head will heal with time almost to normal. I am going to start doing things that I should have been doing all along to avoid future problems. Here is a brief list of what I plan to do. I urge you and your loved ones and your members to consider the same plan. I've also done a little research on skin cancer and those facts also appear below. If this

information doesn't convince you to watch skin cancer carefully, then just give me a call and I'll send you a copy of the photo of the hole that is now in my head!

(1) Avoid prolonged-unprotected exposure to the sun and/or to tanning beds. I was a life guard for years during college and was a young sun-worshipper when I wasn't life guarding or teaching water skiing at the resort where my family lived during my college years. Dr. Tran tells me that the things I did 30 years ago are most likely contributing to my skin issues today.

Bottom line: Use sunscreen. Take sun exposure on a limited basis. Be conservative with your exposure. Don't overcook in a sunbed. Dr. Tran and other dermatologists say tanning beds are very dangerous.

(2) Pay attention to your body. If you have any skin areas that are not normal and do not correct themselves within four weeks, seek help and don't delay. The treatment for problems at that stage is comparatively simple, painless and leaves little if any scars.

(3) Find a good dermatologist and have any and all skin problem areas checked on a regular six-month basis. There is a world of things they can do for you at this stage which will help you avoid the level of damage

I've experienced. Don't put it off.... just do it!

SKIN CANCER FACTS

• Skin cancer is the most common of all cancers.

• There are three main types of skin cancer: basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and melanoma. Basal cell carcinoma, the most common type, develops in the basal, or bottom layer of the epidermis, the top layer of skin. Squamous cell carcinoma, the second most common type, develops in the upper layers of the epidermis. The American Cancer Society estimates that basal cell and squamous cell skin cancers account for more than 800,000 new cases each year, but for only 2100 deaths.

• The third type of skin cancer and most deadly is melanoma. It develops in the melanocytes, or pigment cells, which are found throughout the basal layer. Melanoma is the most dangerous type of skin cancer and is responsible for about three-quarters of all skin cancer deaths. About 38,300 new cases of melanoma are diagnosed annually in the United States, and an estimated 7300 people die from this disease each year. The incidence of melanoma has been increasing faster in the United States than any other form of cancer, and a person born in the early 1990's is 12 times more

likely to develop melanoma than a person born in the early 1940's.

• Skin cancers can grow in any part of the skin, but approximately 90 percent develop in areas exposed to the sun, especially the face, neck, backs of the hands, and the scalps of bald men. Exposure to direct sunlight, especially during childhood, is the chief risk factor for skin cancer, and the greater the number of blistering sunburns a person has had, the greater the risk for skin cancer, particularly if their skin burns or freckles easily. The incidence rate of melanoma is more than 40 times higher among American whites than blacks. Family history of skin cancer can also increase a person's risk. And, diet may play a role as well. A recent study found that patients on a diet of 20% fat had fewer precancerous growths and non-melanoma skin cancers than those who ate a normal diet of about 38% fat.

• Early detection and treatment are the keys to survival, especially melanoma. Any of several skin changes may signal skin cancer and should be reported to a physician. These include any change in the size, shape, color, or texture of a mole or other darkly pigmented area; any mole that begins to itch or becomes tender; the development of a new mole or other growth, particularly if it feels hard; any mole or other growth that spontaneously or persistently

(See *Skin Cancer* page 4)

MAXICAM

BY MUSCLE DYNAMICS

20100 Hamilton Avenue, Torrance, CA 90502
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July 10, 1998

Ms. Annbeth Eschbach
 IHRSA President
 c/o IHRSA
 263 Summer Street
 Boston, MA 02210

Dear Annbeth:

My company, Muscle Dynamics, is a long time associate member of IHRSA and I am writing today to express my views about why I think Bally Total Fitness should be recruited for admission into IHRSA.

Bally is America's largest health club chain and the organization that the average consumer thinks of when health clubs are mentioned. Over the past two years, Lee Hillman, the CEO and President of Bally Total Fitness, has embarked on a significant set of initiatives that are targeted to modification of the culture of the organization. He has also installed a Medical Advisory Board with such luminaries as Dr. Jim Skinner, Dr. Jason Conviser and others as members. In short, I feel the time is right to now bring Bally Total Fitness into IHRSA membership for the following reasons:

- IHRSA and Bally together would muster significant strength in the efforts to combat unfair competition in the community. Together, the efforts in the legislative arena (sales taxes on memberships, etc.) would be stronger.
- Admission to IHRSA would encourage many non IHRSA members to come into or rejoin the Association.
- Bally spends over \$60 million per year on advertising. A positive influence from IHRSA would benefit everyone.
- IHRSA benefits from the new membership revenues and this better serves the Association's key initiatives.
- In my mind it is always good to know your competition. IHRSA clubs already compete against each other but also learn from each other. Just think of what could be acquired from Bally's areas of expertise.

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BY MUSCLE DYNAMICS

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- A tie-in between Bally and IHRSA for a nationwide membership marketing campaign focused on quality would "float-the-boat" for everyone. It is time to embrace for the greater good of the industry.

Finally, let me say that I agree with Ben Emdin, past IHRSA president, when he stated that the people in this industry, "are not only remarkably open to sharing information with each other-about what works, or doesn't, and what looks promising, or problematic-but are also among the warmest, most positive and energetic individuals you'll ever meet anywhere." A lot has changed since New Orleans in 1986 when the Bally's admission was last discussed. While I know Bally has made no specific request for formal membership in IHRSA, I truly believe that Lee Hillman and his employees are like those mentioned above and I encourage you as IHRSA president to put the recruiting and admission of Bally Total Fitness onto the next IHRSA board meeting agenda for discussion.

Sincerely Yours,

Terence J. Rogan
 Terence J. Rogan
 Vice President
 Sales and Marketing

cc: Mr. John McCarthy
 Mr. Norm Cates ✓

•NORM'S NOTES•

•We are happy to be On-line! We want to hear your news, so e-mail us at: clubinsidernews@mindspring.com

•Congratulations to **TODD PULIS** and **FAMILY** as they have just completed a total relocation of their 31-year old club, The Thoreau Club and 47-year old summer camp operation to a brand new facility about a mile away. Todd and family are true pioneers in our industry and the story about their organization is a great one!

•**JUDI SHEPPARD MISSETT** and the folks at **Jazzercise, Inc.** are preparing to celebrate their 30th Anniversary! Jazzercise provides over 13,000 classes each week, including 665 Jazzercise classes taught in 120 United States health clubs. Judi is one of the true pioneers of the fitness industry and has contributed greatly to the fitness movement in North America during the last three decades. If you are seeking alternatives to your aerobic program, it might be a good

idea to call the folks at Jazzercise for information on how Jazzercise might work within the walls of your club.

•Looks like **MARK SMITH** and the team at **New York based Town Sports International (TSI)** are successfully spending that \$100 million they raised last fall. Their club count is approaching 70 locations in the Northeast now and growing rapidly through both acquisitions and new club development.

•**TIM RICHARDS** the owner of the **Orchard Hills Athletic Club** and the **Berkshire West Athletic Club** in Massachusetts, is 54 years of age and has been doing one hour of cardio workouts in his clubs regularly for years. Recently, he got a wild hair and decided to try the Boston Marathon. Tim tells me that without any additional training beyond his normal daily cardio routine, he successfully completed the Boston Marathon in 4 hours and 34 minutes! Nice job, Tim! Tim was one of the Founders of IHRSA back in 1981 and still serves on IHRSA's Advisory Council. He owns and operates two successful multi-purpose

clubs in New England and enjoys life with his lovely wife **SHEILA**.

•Can you believe that **Bally Total Fitness** stock? At press time today, it was at around 35!

•Word is that **DAVID GIAMPAOLO's Forza Fitness** in England has taken on a partner and is now beginning to buy clubs in Europe. The partner? None other than that dynamo, **MARK MASTROV**, CEO of the fastest growing club company in the world, **24 Hour Fitness**. The clubs they have acquired include long-time IHRSA member, **P.A.Dagborn's Sports Club Stockholm**, a chain of five highly successful clubs. Good luck guys!

•Official sources at **StairMaster** tell me that the discussions that had been taking place regarding **StairMaster** acquiring **Quinton Treadmills** have ended. According to my source, everything is amicable and the companies will continue to work together, but the purchase of Quinton by StairMaster is off for now.

•**LifeTime Fitness** in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area is now building some incredible new 96,000 square foot clubs with enough equipment in them to make equipment vendors thrill at the thought. Sounds like quite an expansion program at LifeTime Fitness.

•Speaking of new clubs, things are going nuts over in Europe! **RICHARD BRANSON**, the Chairman of **Virgin Records, Virgin Airways, etc.** has dedicated \$160 million of his fortune to begin a chain of clubs, **DAVID LLOYD**, who just a few years back sold his chain of 16 clubs to the giant **Whitbread, L.L.C.**, is now coming back into the business with a new chain of clubs, many that will be in competitive markets with his former clubs. **The Vardon Group** has purchased the **Cannons Sports Clubs**.

•Whatever happened to **DAVE LECOMPTE**?

•Get out your calendar and make plans to attend some conferences. Here is a quick rundown on what is coming up: 1998 **WORLD FITNESS IDEA**, July 21-26th, Orlando, Florida,

National Fitness Therapy Association Summer Retreat, July 11 & 12th, Breckenridge, Colorado, **1998 Can-Fit-Pro-Club Business and Management Conference**, August 21-23rd, Toronto, Canada, **New England ACSM and NEHRSA Conference and Trade Show**, October 1 & 2, Providence, Rhode Island, **Club Industry Conference and Trade Show**, October 14-17th, Chicago, Illinois and **IHRSA/Athletic Business 13th Annual Sales, Marketing and Programming Convention and Trade Show**, December 2-5th, Orlando, Florida. Go. Learn. Buy new equipment and services for your members. Make new friends. See old friends. Have fun!

•And speaking of fun, the **2nd Annual F.I.T. Cruise** is set to sail on March 5, 1999 from Los Angeles. The F.I.T. Cruise will host over 45 seminars and workshops taught by leading fitness professionals. Over 400 fitness professionals are expected to sail and Continuing Education Credits will be awarded to those attending. For more information contact **Mercer Communications**, (212) 983-2425.

•**HAPPY TRAILS TO YOU UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN.**

...Skin Cancer

continued from page 3

bleeds; a skin ulcer that does not heal; and a black spot under a toenail or fingernail that extends beneath the cuticle. To confirm a diagnosis a physician may perform a biopsy, removing a small piece of the skin to examine under a microscope for the presence of skin cancer.

•Although skin cancer is the most common cancer in the U.S., it is also the most curable, especially when detected early.

One of several surgical methods is used to remove the cancerous tissue. In some cases, the tissue is destroyed through the application of intense cold (cryosurgery). In advanced cases, surgical removal of the tissue coupled with radiation, chemotherapy, or both may be required.

•Sunlight that reaches the earth's surface contains two kinds of ultraviolet (UV) radiation. UV-A and UV-B both contribute to sunburn and skin cancer, as well as to conditions such as premature wrinkling of the skin. The U.S. Envi-

ronmental Protection Agency has determined that depletion of the ozone layer in the upper atmosphere will continue to increase radiation damage to skin and skin cancer rates in the future.

•The Skin Cancer Foundation recommends that people avoid the sun at its peak (from 10 am to 3 pm), seek shade, and cover up with clothing and a brimmed hat. It also recommends the regular use of sunscreen, which has been

shown to prevent the development of precancerous keratoses (skin lesions that appear during middle age) and decrease the risk of skin cancer. Because skin cancer develops slowly over many years, it is important that protection from too much sun begin in childhood. Indoor tanning parlors should also be avoided, since they expose people to the same kinds of ultraviolet radiation as sunlight. Learning to identify

early signs of skin cancer is crucial, as is periodic self-examination of the skin. Any skin changes or abnormalities should be reported to a physician.

•The five-year survival rate for patients with malignant melanoma is 87%. For melanoma that has not spread to other parts of the body, the five-year survival rate rises to 94%. About 82% of melanomas are diagnosed at this stage. The five-year survival rate lowers to 60% for melanoma that has spread to adjacent organs. If the disease has spread to distant parts of the body, the five-year survival rate drops to 16%.

•Credit for "Skin Cancer" information to Microsoft® Encarta® 98 Encyclopedia.

In closing, let me say that I am very happy to be able to provide this report to you because I believe there may be some of you out there who have family, friends or members of your club that might need to hear about the dangers of skin cancer. Please accept my authorization to photocopy and distribute this article to people you know. I hope and pray that this helps someone out there.

(Norm Cates is the Publisher and Editor of **The CLUB INSIDER News**, a 25 year club industry veteran, the 1st President and a Co-founder of IHRSA in 1981/82 Norm is a reformed sun worshiper. To reach Norm call: (770) 850-8506.)

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MAYBE YOU SHOULD CHANGE YOUR NAME...

said one of our customers at a recent trade show. Why should we do that, we asked? Well, they said, you no longer make just stairclimbers – you have these new bikes, and treadmills, innovative strength equipment lines – and even this great elliptical product – maybe you should call yourselves ProductMasters or something...

We ran this interesting suggestion up the flagpole back at headquarters. It generated a lot of spirited discussion, but in the end, it just didn't cut the mustard.

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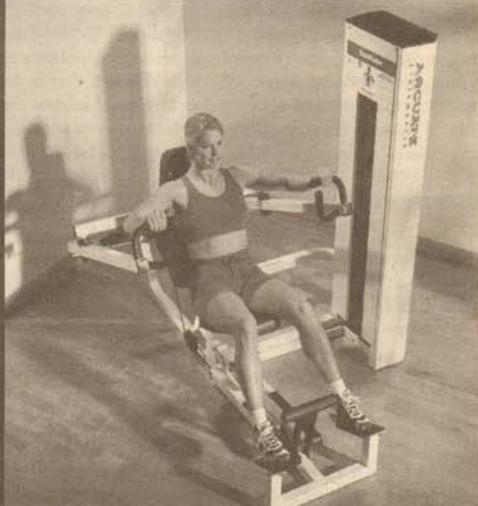
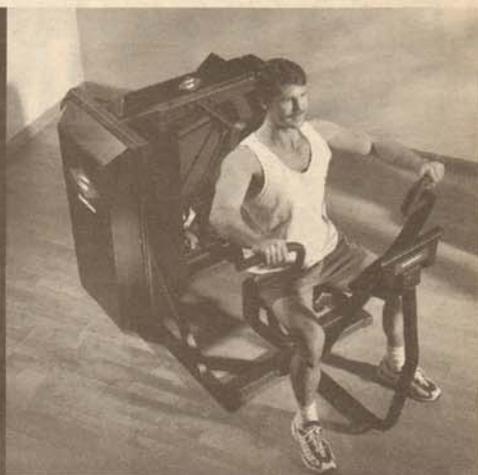
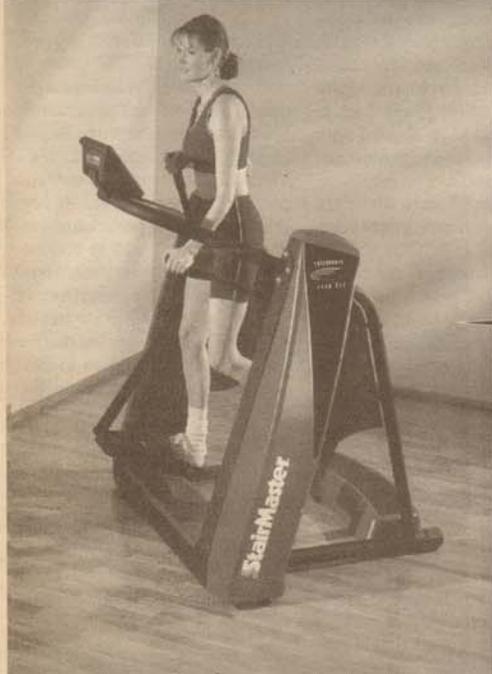
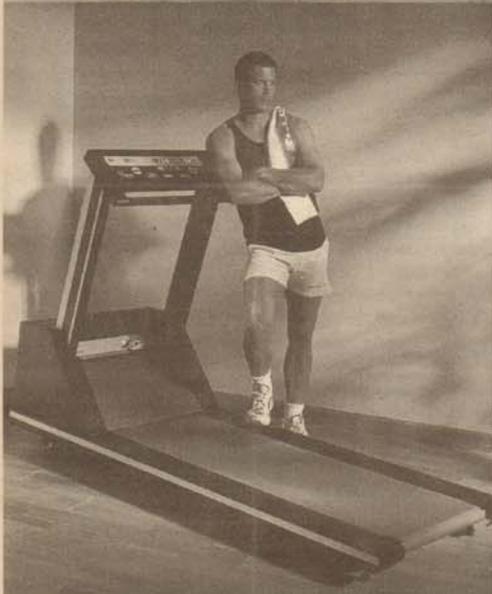
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THE POWER OF ACCREDITATION TO TRANSFORM THE HEALTH CLUB INDUSTRY INTO A BRANCH OF THE HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY

By Eric P. Durak, MSc
Director of Fitness Therapy
International Sports Sciences
Association

For years fitness professionals have looked into the window of the health care industry and asked how to be part of their profession: how to be a "provider". Of course, there is much more to being a bona fide member of the health care community than having a lot of strength equipment and a large pool. It takes a level commitment.

The first shot at being a

part of health care came in the form of licensure. This formidable task has taken part in many states over the past 15 years. Mostly with no success. Many of the licensure bills have been poorly written or don't address all of the issues of health care that are needed to qualify professionals. Those that are written well have been killed by either inside health care professionals (who don't want the competition) or even those in the fitness industry who believe that certification is the only method of professional competency for our industry. Whether that is the case is not as important as how the health care industry views fitness. At a recent management care meeting in Atlanta⁽¹⁾, I had the opportunity to chair

a roundtable on fitness and managed care. I asked leaders in the HMO profession what they were looking for in order to do business with the health and fitness industry. They had three elements that they felt were important in doing business with the fitness industry. Their first response was ACCREDITATION. The second element was: the formation of networks (important in doing business with HMO's who have large numbers of members in their health plans), and Return On Investment (ROI) - how much will they make or save financially when doing business with fitness facilities. We already know the dollar savings from fitness. Reports from Oldridge⁽⁴⁾ and Pellitier⁽⁵⁾ have stated the cost savings of exercise and health programs for a wide variety of participants. We also have the beginnings of networks from health club chains and companies who are looking to form provider networks⁽⁷⁾. What is lacking is the accreditation process.

Why is accreditation so important? Recently, the AARP (American Association of Retired Persons) mentioned in its newsletter that their back pain programs could be accredited. CARF - the rehabilitation accreditation committee in Tucson, Arizona, received over 6,000 calls in one week for a listing of accredited pain programs throughout the country. Christine MacDonnell, National Director of the Rehabilitation Division, states that this example, and the fact that MCO's call for an accredited facility lists to do business with - are strong examples of the power of accreditation in today's competitive health care environment. "Taking the extra step to meet national standards gives consumers and payers confidence and security when doing business with your facility.", states Linda Williams, MN, RN of Columbia Regional Medical Center in Atlanta, GA. She continues by saying that many managed care payers include CARF accreditation among their criteria⁽²⁾.

With many health clubs already securing managed care contracts, there is certainly a need to establish a level of professional service that will be recognized by hospitals, allied health agencies and managed care organizations which will be paying for wellness and post-rehab services. This is why I believe that accreditation will be so important in establishing the professionalism that the

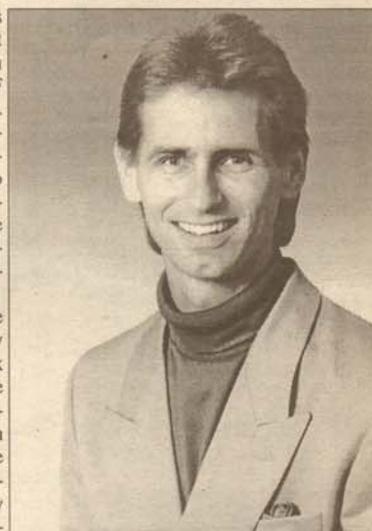
health care industry is looking for. Does that mean that every health club has to become CARF certified? Probably not. Hospital and rehab facility guidelines carry elements that do not apply to the health and fitness industry. So, how does the health club world undertake the task of accreditation?

This year, the National Fitness Therapy Association (NFTA) took elements from health care accreditation and developed facility standards on a national basis. Since NFTA is a bipartisan/independent regulatory body, they have no interest in one particular type of health club but are looking for general issues for their process. Like other accrediting organizations, there is an application fee and a site inspection surveyor fee. These are all elements of viewing health clubs to see how they meet certain facility components, staffing requirements, and outcome reporting⁽³⁾.

The costs of health care services has skyrocketed over the past fifteen years. The response by HMO's has been to lower costs by cutting back on services. We know in the health promotion world that by engaging in preventative health measures and using exercise in a therapeutic format, we can improve the health of our community members and lower care costs in the process. We need only to look at studies from Steelcase and Tenneco in the corporate health data, and from the Ornish Healthy Heart Trial to see that cost savings abound with the use of exercise and health promotion services⁽⁶⁾.

In health care there are many independent accreditation organizations (JACCO, CARF, NCOA) - Now there is the fitness industry NFTA, which promotes the certification of health clubs to meet minimum guidelines of qualifications to enhance their standards in the health care community. We also have results from the 1996 Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity which can be interpreted by many to show that exercise is a medical necessity; now we can implement these programs through our accreditation process.

Once clubs become part of NFTA, they will have to maintain their accreditation process through continuing education programs. These topics (ranging from



Eric Durak

business to post-rehab programming) are offered state by state through independent CEU providers to keep health clubs on the forefront of health care and facility topics.

The rewards of becoming accredited will include an improved ability to market senior or other special population programs in your community, receiving referrals from your community physicians, physical therapists, visiting nurse association, and medical clinics, and most important - the ability to communicate with managed care payers from the perspective of a provider instead of a health club.

In conclusion, having a foundation to build on in any profession is critical. The timing is ripe for health clubs and managed care to build on the foundation of health club memberships as part of HMO enrollment packages. The addition of qualified staff and comprehensive post-rehab programs that track participant outcomes over time will be a value-added service without peer. Those who understand the importance of improving the nation's health through exercise will find that the addition of accreditation to their profession is a welcome addition to our growth within the ever-changing health care market in the United States.

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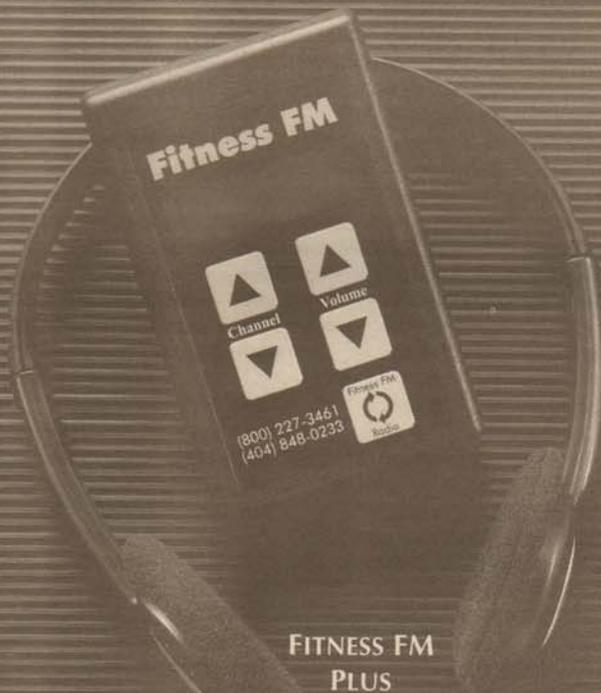
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Consultants: Who Needs 'Em?

By Karen D. Woodard, President
Premium Performance Training

Being a club owner for 13 years and helping other club owners throughout the world, I see some common scenarios frequently. As you read these, see if you recognize anyone you know in the industry or perhaps even yourself.

1. Experienced club owner has operated his/her club for 15+ years. Competition is getting bigger, club profits are getting smaller, business is getting tougher and the owner is frustrated because he/she doesn't know how to turn it around other than with low price cash deals.

2. New club owner finds him/herself opening club and not meeting projections for either rev-

enue or expenses and losing more than anticipated. He/she cuts labor expenses, cuts advertising expenses and starts doing everything him/herself. Because of this, many things slip through the cracks, existing employees see no growth opportunity for their careers, it feels as though it's always "two steps back" rather than any steps forward, and nothing changes. It's a struggle.

3. Club owner is great at owning, but not so experienced in operating. He/she knows it's time to make some changes to move the club forward and make it more profitable, but doesn't know where to start.

Do any of these scenarios sound familiar to you? If not, kudos to you. If so, don't sweat it but instead acknowledge

it, get some help to eliminate the struggle and start growing your business. The purpose of this article is to discuss consultants and who needs 'em, why you should and how you should work with a consultant.

CONSULTANTS: Who Needs 'Em?

Most of us as club owners do. Now I realize that statement may offend some of you reading this and it certainly is not designed to. Think about the reality of it though—it is improbable that as a club owner you are excellent at every aspect of operating our clubs. Some of you may be saying to yourself "That is true and that is why I hire staff to lead the departments that I can't or don't want to lead." Your thoughts are good and partially correct. The part of this thought that is flawed is that your staff needs help as well. More than likely, you have created a culture at your club that is conducive to staff asking lots of questions, being open to the learning process and OK to make mistakes that they learn from. If not (which I see too often), then everybody gets stuck which adversely affects morale, performance, member/staff retention and profitability. It's understandable (but not acceptable) how circumstances get to this point because of the independence factor that starts so early on. As a club owner, you survived by doing many things on your own and it probably served you well for many years. The trap is that we believe it will always work that way.

Bottom line is that as club owners, our egos get in the way and limit our success because we think we know all the answers and can do everything better at our clubs than anyone else or any stranger could. That is the tragic flaw. If we simply acknowledge that we don't have the answers and seek help, it's amazing how the struggle lessens.

How You'll Benefit From Working With A Consultant...

1. Shorten Your Learning Curve

One of the most valuable benefits you'll receive from working with a consultant is that they will dramatically shorten your learning curve on whatever challenge you hire them for. The resulting benefit to a shortened learning curve is that you start seeing the

fruits (your desired goal whether it be membership growth, profits, organizational challenges, political challenges, etc.) of your labor faster and/or bigger. Some club owners may see value in waiting for several years to see some changes happen while those who choose to work with a consultant see the value in investing in outside help to see a much bigger return faster.

2. Outside, Objective Perspective

There are times when we as club owners are simply too close to a situation to be able to see what needs to be done as a solution. There are also times when intuitively we know what needs to be done but we need someone to compel us to simply do it. Whether you know or don't know what to do, it doesn't amount to anything unless you do it. A consultant will create the structure and facilitate changes for you to move forward.

3. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge/Experience

Simply by nature of the fact that consultants work with so many different clubs in so many different markets, they get to see the best (and the worst) of what is happening currently in the market. The benefit to you is that they bring the best of everything, filtered by your needs to back to you.

4. Specialized Area of Expertise to Provide Solutions to Your Problems

Most consultants specialize in one or several areas of club operations; thus, you benefit from their years of specialized practice, research and education. Each consultant will be able to provide answers, solutions and a template for you to break through whatever is holding you back.

5. Breaks Through the "Parental" Communication Barrier With Your Staff

Have you ever uttered these words before "My staff doesn't listen to me"? It's not that they don't respect what you have to say or have built. It's simply the "parental syndrome" of management ownership which means that you're there everyday and they "hear" the same things



Karen Woodard

from you because of the filter they hear things through. It is a totally subconscious act on their part. The way you can break through this is to have a consultant come in from time to time providing four very important benefits to you and your staff: 1. fresh perspective, 2. support or affirmation of what you are saying, 3. forward movement and excitement and 4. a new attitude from the staff towards you because you are willing to not always be the one who has "all the answers". It's amazing what a paradigm shift this point makes in attitude and performance.

To Maximize Your Relationship with a Consultant...

If you are considering working with a consultant, the following points will help you get the most out of the relationship:

1. Identify and articulate what your needs are prior to speaking with any consultant.

Take some time to write down what is keeping you awake at night about the business, what you want to change and the results you expect. The more clear you are, the more effective your time will be when spent with a consultant. This list may change when you speak with the consultant due to the reality of your expectations or other issues that may be brought to the surface, but it is imperative that you know what your core issues are.

2. Make sure you like what the consultant is about both professionally and personally. This is a relationship you are entering into and developing. You need to feel completely comfortable with this person to be able to open up, be honest and lose any ego that may hold you back. Therefore, it is critical that you like this person. If

(See Woodard page 10)

TOWN SPORTS INTERNATIONAL DEMONSTRATES EXPLOSIVE GROWTH NYC's Largest Health Club Owner Continues To Assert Itself In The Northeast

NEW YORK, N.Y. - Town Sports International, the leading owner and operator of health and fitness clubs in the Northeast and parent company to New York Sports Clubs, Boston Sports Clubs, Philadelphia Sports Clubs and Washington Sports Clubs, formally announced the addition of twenty-three new locations to its existing network of clubs. These new locations, which reflect the company's development efforts over the last 60 days, consist of twelve acquisitions from other club operators and eleven new club sites which will be developed. In the preceding twelve months, the company also added ten other new locations. Today's announcement brings the total number of TSI operating locations to 56 and significantly enhances the company's presence in the greater Northeast.

"These openings reflect the rapid pace at which TSI is moving to solidify and enhance its position in the New York area," said Mark Smith, the company's chief executive. "Having recently se-

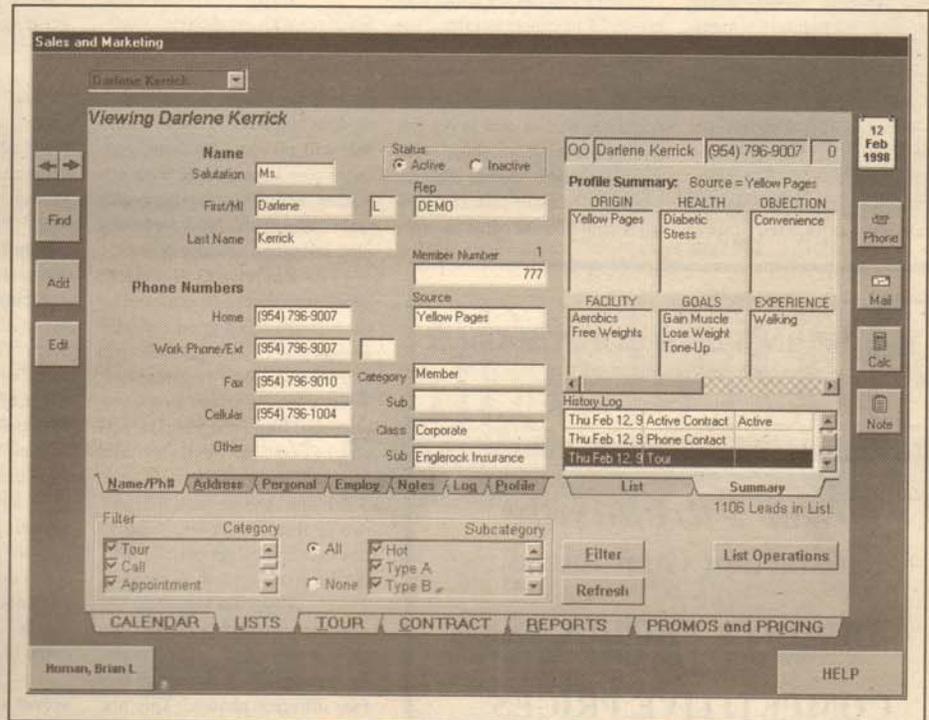
cured significant additional financing, we are very well positioned as an aggressive player in this market, growing rapidly by both acquisitions and new openings. These new club openings further demonstrate our dedication to providing the highest level of service to our members. We must constantly provide the highest quality of service on a daily basis due to our "commitment-free" memberships. Convenience plays an extremely important role in this decision, as commuters will now be able to take full advantage of our facilities near their homes and offices," said Mr. Smith.

Town Sports International clubs are full service fitness facilities, that offer the latest in exercise equipment, innovative group fitness classes (such as boxing, ballet, African dance and meditation) and an array of helpful services (including baby-sitting and massage.)

Town Sports International now has 130,000 members.

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HELPING MEMBERS SUCCEED

By Tom Cotner

I've been employed in the health and fitness industry since 1982. Somethings have changed a lot. Others have remained the same. Today I will address something that's relatively new: Personal Training.

I'm confused about Personal Training. Perhaps I'm speaking out of ignorance, but honestly, Personal Training doesn't make sense to me. Why should a member pay someone \$25 to \$50 an hour to supervise his workout? An exercise session is fairly straight forward. After one or two supervised exercise sessions, a member should be able to do their workout by themselves. After six to eight weeks, they can meet with their trainer

again to update their program. Ideally, the trainer is available between updates. Other than this, I see no need for Personal Training. And it's my belief that the scenario just described should be free of charge and available to all members. If a member wants to pay for a "one-on-one" spotter, encourager, educator and coach- that's fine. I clearly see the benefits if a member can afford it. But let's not ignore the vast majority of members who can not afford this luxury. I'm concerned that Personal Training encourages clubs to give non-paying customers a "quick once over" in their exercise orientations and saves the quality training for those who pay for it (the higher income bracket). To avoid this, I believe each club should offer the fol-

lowing services free of charge to all members:

Health History & Medical Screening: I'm surprised how many clubs aren't doing this. Let's know the status of our members before they start exercising (their risks for heart disease, musculo-skeletal problems, and drugs/medications). We're putting ourselves at risk (negligence) and the member's health at risk if we don't know health histories.

Written Exercise Plan: Sit down with the member, determine his exercise schedule (when he will be using the club- you'll be surprised how many haven't thought about this), the obstacles that will prevent him from coming, a plan to overcome these obstacles, and determine his health and fitness goals. Now we have a plan and some accountability.

Exercise Orientation: Write out (most clubs use exercise cards to do; this a good idea) the aerobic, flexibility, and strength exercises you recommend. There's lots to know: frequency, intensity, time, progression, and type of exercise. Next, show him (not tell them) what to do and coach him through their first one, two or three workouts. Now he can exercise independently without direct one-on-one supervision.

Program Updates: Update the member's exercise program every six to eight weeks. Progress members through at least four different phases. This prevents boredom, ensures exercise progression, gives a sense of accountability to the member (someone will be checking up on me)

and the fitness staff (I need to keep track of the member's progress through the program updates).

If we don't offer the above services, our retention rates will be dismal. Exercise, like any behavioral change, is very difficult and requires a rational, realistic, well thought out plan of change. Most members will not pay for Personal Training so the above services need to be free.

"But wait a minute!" says a club manager, "I can't afford this. It will add too many hours to the club's payroll." My answer is "pay now or pay later." Pay for membership retention up front with adequate retention services or pay for it later by replacing these members through advertising and membership sales costs. The service we provide existing members has a carry-over effect, too. Most of us have heard statistics that unhappy members will tell many, many others about their bad experience at our club. Let's have members saying positive things like "I can't believe the help they're giving me," or "they really do care about my success." Let's not hear, "I signed up and that was it.... no more service.... just come in, use the gym and leave."

Membership retention revolves around the relationship we create with customers- our members. By using the model described above, a positive relationship will develop between your club's fit-



Tom Cotner

ness staff and members. And the fitness staff will be using a well thought out plan to maximize the member's success.

Let's ensure Personal Training doesn't turn our clubs into cruise ships like the Titanic with first, second and third class customers. Our clubs, like the Titanic, rely on second and third class customers to survive. Having adequate services for all will prevent our clubs from hitting the iceberg of high membership turnover. And we all know what happened next.

(Tom Cotner is the President of Employee Health Management, Inc., a consulting firm specializing in worksite health and wellness. He is author of the book Helping Members Succeed. Contact Tom at (605) 692-2071.)



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...Woodard

continued from page 8

you don't, it won't be a productive match.

3. Establish a budget.

Your budget needs to include both your financial ability to invest in the services as well as a time budget. What are your expectations in seeing results? How much time can you commit to making these changes? Is this a short term change or a long term change?

4. Be Honest.

This is not a time to impress your consultant with what you know. Your consultant will have a good understanding of what you know due to how successful you have already been. This is a time for you to learn and grow. When we are learning, that means we don't have all the an-

swers. You will be wasting time and energy if you are trying to impress your consultant or are not being entirely honest with her/him. Remember, the goal is to help you move faster.

5. Be a Sponge.

Learn as much as you can. Have a list of prepared questions every day you work with them or for every phone conference you have with them. If you aren't clear about something that was said, ask for clarification. Take copious notes. If you hire a consultant to train your staff—attend the training. You'll know what was said, how to make it more effective, you'll learn some new stuff and your staff will be impressed with your willingness to participate and the level of importance you place on the training.

After reading about who needs to work with a consultant,

the benefits to working with a consultant and how to make the most of the relationship, it's clear to see that we can all reap the rewards of focused, specialized assistance to help us grow and in the process, shorten our learning curve. The big picture realization of working with a consultant is that she/he will show you how to maximize your result by minimizing your effort and time.

If you have any questions about how this works, send for a free Club Success Survey by sending a SASE to Premium Performance Training, 270 Pearl St., Ste.15, Boulder, CO. 80302.

(Karen D. Woodard, President of Premium Performance Training provides consulting, staff training, books and tapes on successful sales, service and management programs. Contact her at: 303.417.0653.)



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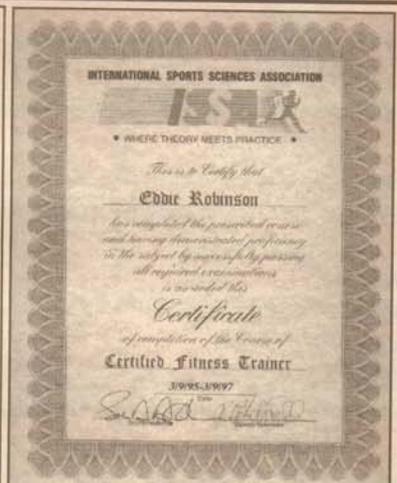
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10 MOST COMMON EXERCISE MISTAKES

Contributed by the American Council on Exercise (ACE)

Exercisers Beware: American Council on Exercises' Pros Divulge Most Common Workout Mistakes

San Diego - "Wanna see a fitness professional sweat? Just engage in one of the ten most common workout mistakes made in health clubs and gyms across the country.

The American Council on Exercise (ACE), the largest non-profit fitness certifying organization in the world, called upon more than 3,000 ACE-certified fitness professionals across the country to give their take on the worst mistakes they see people making in the gym. At best, these mistakes may simply mean the difference between an effective and an ineffective workout; at worst, the mistakes can be more costly, leading to strain and injury.

Here's a list of the ten most popular answers which also appear in the March/April issue of ACE FitnessMatters:

1. Not stretching enough. The best time to stretch is immediately before and after aerobic activity. Before stretching, take a few minutes to warm up as stretching cold

muscles can cause injury. Flexible muscles are far less likely to be strained or pulled than tight ones.

2. Lifting Too Much Weight. The best way to guarantee yourself an injury is to try to lift more weight than your muscles can handle. Gradual, progressive resistance is a far more effective—and safe—way to increase muscle strength.

3. Not warming up prior to aerobic activity. Muscles need time to adjust to the new demands aerobic activity places on them. Rather than hitting the treadmill running, for example, take a few minutes to walk, build up to a light jog, and then hit your stride.

4. Not cooling down after any type of workout. Too many people wrap up their workouts and head straight to the showers. Instead, take a few minutes to lower your heart rate and stretch your muscles. This will improve flexibility and help prepare the body for your next workout.

5. Exercising too intensely. This is the primary vice of the

weekend warrior, the individual who tries to fit a week's worth of exercise into a Sunday afternoon. For weight loss, it's more effective to sustain a moderate workout for longer periods of time than to exercise intensely for only a few minutes. For others, the expectation that a workout must be intense to be effective can lead some to burnout or injury, while others abandon their training altogether.

6. Not drinking enough water. This cannot be said—or heard—too many times. Unless you're exercising for more than two hours per day, water can fill all your fluid needs.

7. Leaning heavily on the stairstepper. What's the point of cranking the machine up to the highest level if you're just going to support your weight on the siderails? It's much more effective—not to mention easier on your wrists and elbows—to lower the intensity to the point at which you can maintain good posture while lightly resting your hands on the rails for balance.

8. Not exercising intensely

enough. You want results, but how hard are you willing to work to get them? While it's true you don't want to overdo it, you should exercise intensely enough to work up a light sweat, get your heart beating up into that training zone, and feel a sense of satisfaction for having completed your workout.

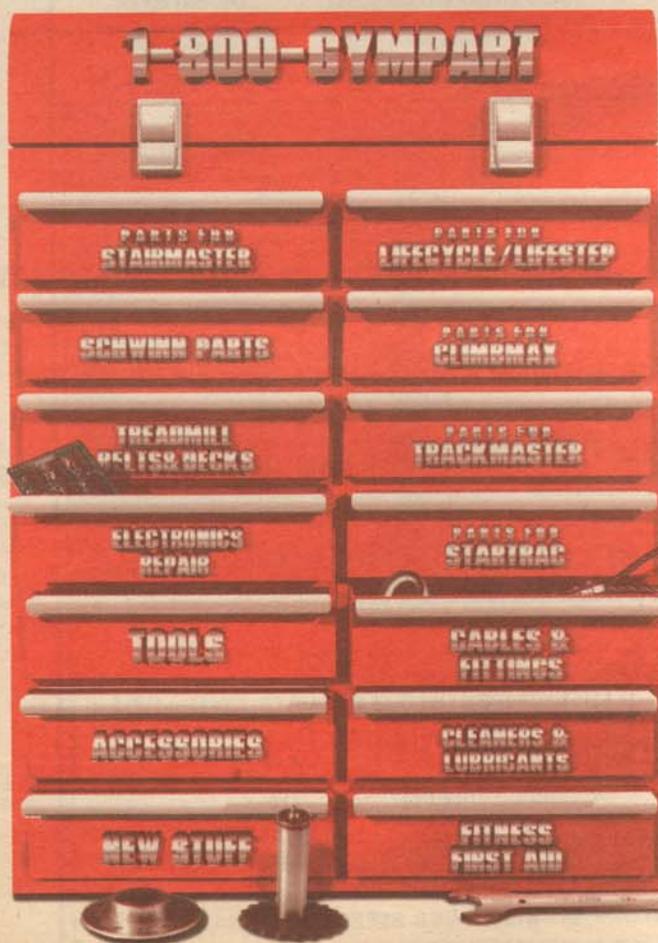
9. Jerking while lifting weights. This goes along with number 2—lifting too much weight. The most effective way to train is to control the weight—the weight shouldn't control you. When you have to jerk the weight, you're likely jerking other muscles as well. This can lead to strain and injury, with the muscles of the back being particularly vulnerable.

10. Consuming energy bars and sports drinks during moderate workouts. Most agree that unless you're working out for longer than two hours per day, you really don't need to supplement with high-energy bars and drinks. High energy is often a code word for high calorie, which is the last thing someone who is trying to reduce their body weight needs. A healthy, well-rounded diet and plenty of water are sufficient to

meet most exerciser's needs.

ACE stresses the fundamental importance of using qualified fitness instructors as the number one way to ensure a safe and effective workout. When hiring an instructor who is currently certified by a reputable organization such as ACE, you are assured that the instructor has met the requirements to design and implement fitness programs. ACE certification means the instructor has demonstrated knowledge in the areas of exercise science and programming—including anatomy, kinesiology, health screening, basic nutrition and instructional methods—as well as emergency procedures and CPR. For the name of an ACE-certified fitness professional near you, call: 800/825-3636.

The American Council on Exercise (ACE) is a non-profit organization committed to promoting active, healthy lifestyles and their positive effects on the mind, body and spirit. ACE pledges to enable all segments of society to enjoy the benefits of physical activity and protect the public against unsafe and ineffective fitness products and instruction.



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MAKE IT FUN!

Fun In The Fitness Environment

By Fern Pessin,
Retention Resources

Technology is supposed to give us more freedom, more time. So, why is it that things seem so much more frenetic now? Faxes, e-mail, pagers, cell phones, all urging us to get things done faster and faster. This hectic pace is echoed in the way our families are being raised. Everything is scheduled and planned. Play dates and lessons, work and learning; there isn't any more time to just free-play, to free ourselves and let inspiration carry us. We do all the things we SHOULD do. What about time to relax and laugh and enjoy simple pleasures?

One of the things people do with their hectic schedule is try to

fit exercise into their lives. It's another thing most people feel they should do. Those who cannot find their way clear to make time to exercise still recognize they "should" do it. The more we urge potential members and existing members to exercise because they "should," the more I fear we will create a distaste for this essential life activity.

However, if we could create an environment that gives people an opportunity to have a little fun, smile, laugh and get a sense of playfulness and joy for a few moments—think of how attractive that would be. Think of how that might entice otherwise reluctant participants to fit exercise into their schedules. On that thought, I'd like to share with you a few simple things that you can

do to add some "fun" for both your staff and your members.

For Staff:

- Consider surprising staff with random rewards and treats. Wrap paychecks around a "PayDay" candy bar or deliver a bouquet of balloons with inspirational notes attached to a stressed-out department.

- Throw a carnival for your staff and their families.

For Members:

- How about surprising the 100th member who walks through your door with a shower of confetti, and a free book of guest passes? Thank them for their business and loyalty. (You can pick whatever number you like. You can do this over time (i.e., the 1,000,000th visitor to the club), or all in one day.)

- Hire a comedian to entertain your members while they're exercising in your fitness center.

- Bring in a clown or the mascot of a local sports team to walk the club, ham it up with members, do exaggerated exercises, play with the kids, etc.

- Promote Your Programs creatively - in ways that make people stop, laugh and take notice.

- Wear fake eyeballs on your fingers for a free eye screening day or a lecture on preventing sports eye injuries.

- Wear tuxedo t-shirts, Hawaiian dancer t-shirts, sombreros, etc. to promote upcoming theme events.

- Shoot members with a water gun to tell them about a

"shotgun start" golf outing or road race, or laser tag night, or mystery night, etc.

There are lots of ways to add fun to your environment without taking people out of their routine. It doesn't cost much money and it will create an atmosphere that is appealing to a wide variety of people. What could be wrong with smiling members and happy staff? Why can't exercise be fun?

Let's not take ourselves too seriously. Just a thought!

(Fern Pessin is the President of Retention Resources. For additional information on "Over 3 Dozen Ways to Add Fun & Creativity to Your Environment" by Fern Pessin, call Fern at (800) 250-9543. This article reprinted courtesy of the New England Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association).



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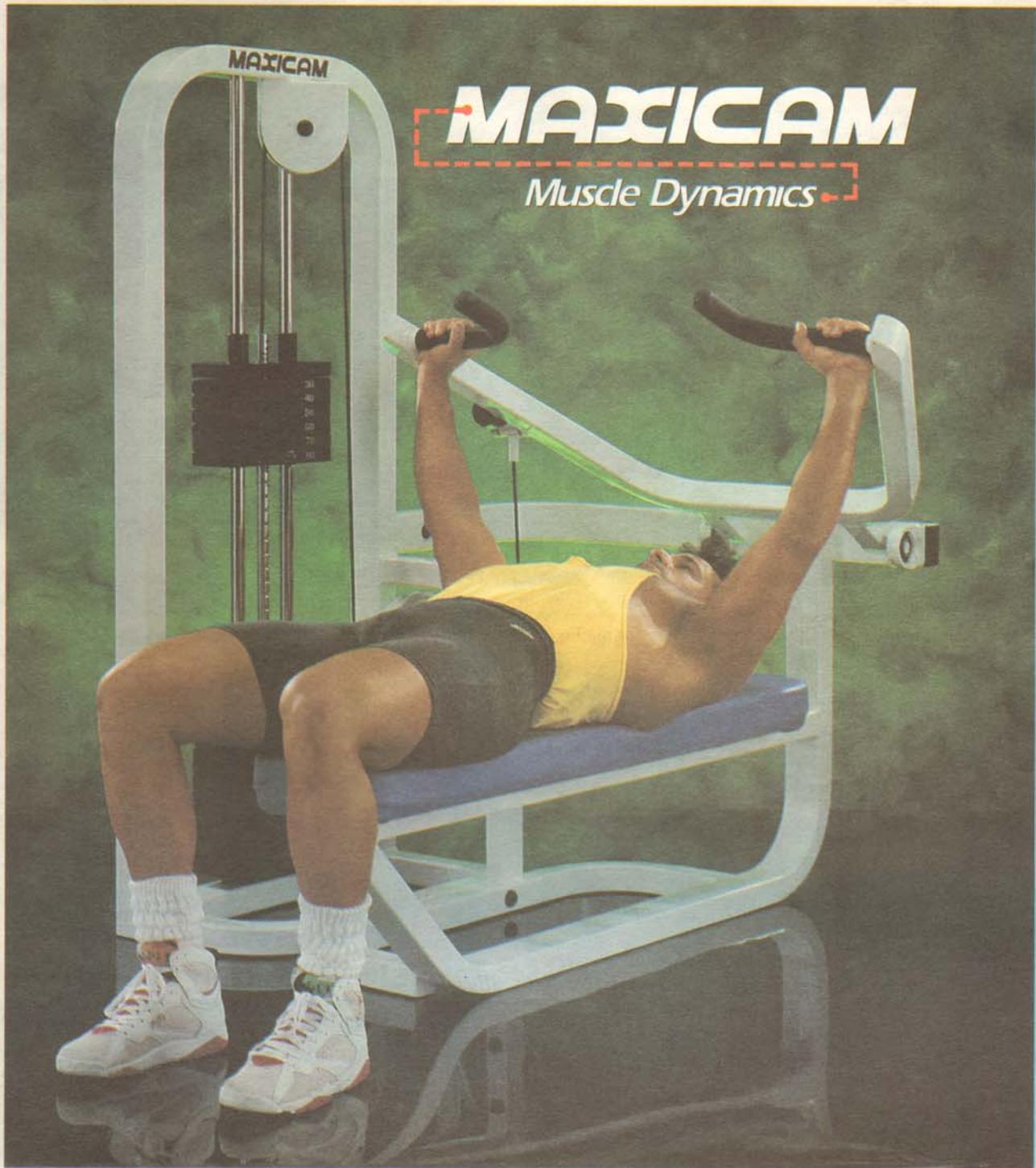
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*Both villas feature spectacular, ocean views.
Villa Papagayo (below) is a four-bedroom, five-bath villa.*

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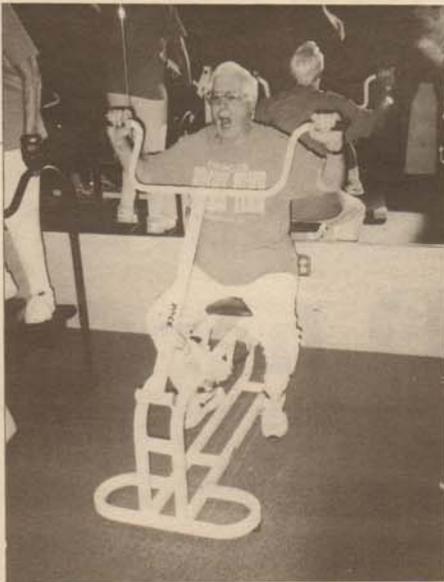


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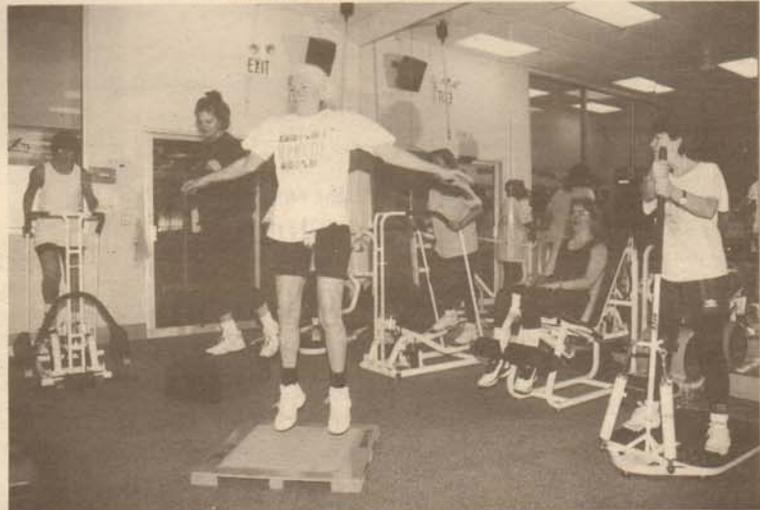
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Life Fitness and the Clark Hatch Group Create Strategic Partnership in Asia Pacific

HONG KONG- Life Fitness and the Clark Hatch Group of fitness centers have announced the creation of a Strategic Partnership for the Asia Pacific region. The agreement was signed at the annual Clark Hatch Managers meeting in Manila, Philippines.

This strategic partnership between two of the fitness industry's most senior companies creates an exclusive purchasing agreement of Life Fitness Cardiovascular, Strength and Hammer Strength premium quality fitness equipment for each of the 58 Clark Hatch Centers managed by the group in Asia.

"The fitness industry is global, with chains of fitness centers crossing many borders to establish high-quality professionally-managed centers in almost every country. The Clark Hatch Group is definitely a leader in innovation, consistency and professionalism in our industry," stated Augie Nieto, president of Life Fitness. "If we are to achieve the Life Fitness corporate vision of doubling the number of people exercising on quality equipment, it is important that we continue to be associated with groups committed to providing their club members top quality in their equipment selection."

"More and more companies are realizing the benefits of creating strategic partnerships with complementary companies in many businesses around the world," noted Hatch. "Our membership of more than 30,000 members travel regularly to other centers in Asia and are used to having excellent quality programs and equipment in each center. With the global distribution of Life Fitness in each country where the Clark Hatch Group is located, our members and managers can be assured of excellent standards of sales support and service. This gives the managers peace of mind, and they can dedicate more time to servicing our members."

About The Clark Hatch Group

The Clark Hatch Group was established 35 years ago in Tokyo, Japan, by Clark Hatch. In this pioneering role, Clark was one of the first fitness professionals focused on growing the fitness industry in the Asia Pacific region

through wholly-owned, joint venture, or management agreements to manage and operate the fitness facilities of key Asian hotels and fitness centers. Clark is headquartered in Honolulu, Hawaii. However, there are regional companies established in Asia that are independently owned and separately

operated that are authorized to use the Clark Hatch Center trade names, trademarks, service marks, health and fitness services, programs and materials. The companies are located in Guam, Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand. Clark Hatch Fitness Centers are

located in 14 countries in the Asia Pacific region.

About Life Fitness

Life Fitness, a Brunswick company, is the global leader in designing and manufacturing a full line of reliable,

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Partnership Charters: The Process for Achieving "Interpersonal Equity" and Avoiding the Partnership Distress Syndrome

By Richard Yocum

Editor's Note: This is Part II of the two-part series on Partnership and Family businesses.

Have you ever felt the relationship you have with your partner(s) wasn't working to your satisfaction? Is it presently out of balance? What tools do you use to establish or strengthen the existing bond? What process is available to help you and your partners thoroughly examine the relationship and generate agreements about those conditions that cause you to believe your partnership is out of alignment?

In a recent poll conducted by INC. Magazine, 60% of respondents cited "personal conflicts" and 59% reported "unmet expectations" as top reasons why partnerships don't work. When partners' personal balance sheets aren't adding up and their interpersonal balance sheets are not satisfying, partnership distress syndrome is bound to threaten the relationship. Sooner or later, someone will do something to restore Partner Interpersonal Equity (PIE).

Most partners develop legal agreements (partnership and buy/sell) during the early formation of the deal. Partners derive some sense of comfort that these documents will protect them from the disastrous consequences of any egregious acts committed by their partners and provide a means by which the parties can separate amicably and financially intact. Partnerships are more likely to run smoothly and realize their potential, though, when they are guided by a more complete and thorough set of understandings and agreements. Developed by David Gage, Ph.D., founder and President of Business Mediation Associates, the Partnership Charter is a tool that results from healthy, open, private discussions, often facilitated by professionals with expertise in working with partners and partnerships. Here are seven elements so often avoided by partners, yet essential to discuss and incorporate to documented partnership charters:

Expectations. Under their expectations for the business, the partners document how they agree on the direction and future of the business and on how they will cause business to happen. This is essentially a mini-business plan or executive summary and includes things like the expected workloads

of the partners, and ideas about employee participation (equity, profit, decision making) and probable rate of growth. Under their expectations for each other and for the partnership, the partners give consideration to the possibility of new partners, the consequences if one partner fails to perform, how they will keep each other informed, to what degree they will socialize, how long the partnership will last, and what each will do to keep the partnership healthy.

Partner's Interpersonal Equity (PIE). This is an important elaboration on the matter of fairness—something which makes or breaks many partnerships. PIE includes an examination of what each partner plans on contributing to the business, such as money, expertise, reputation and business. It's never as simple as money, though money is important. Also important are indirect compensation, time off, titles and positions, power, control and authority, and freedom to travel or the freedom not to travel. What the partners will receive from one another is definitely worth including, such as trust and cooperation, recognition, predictability, and a positive attitude. It is crucial to know what your partners value—and give them as much of what they value as possible—because a positive sense of interpersonal equity is motivating. A feeling that one's partners are getting more out of the partnership leads to what we call partnership distress syndrome. Remember, when it comes to fairness and PIE, it's the partners' perception of what everyone is putting in and taking out that's paramount, not necessarily the reality.

Values and Ethics Statement. Successful partners often speak of what a difference it made to share the same values. Having an objective test administered provides an accurate assessment of values. During the discussion of values and ethics, partners realize their differences and their tolerance of differences. The partners express how they intend to have their values "live out" in the business and with each other.

Scenario Planning. Partners imagine a host of possibilities of what might happen in the future; and through their dialogue they develop guidelines about how they will operate the

business and the partnership. The list of what-if scenarios may include things such as incredible business success and/or failure, a suitor appears and wants to retain only one partner, strategic partnership issues, requirements for capital infusion, a key employee defects to a competitor or the partners disagree on direction of the company.

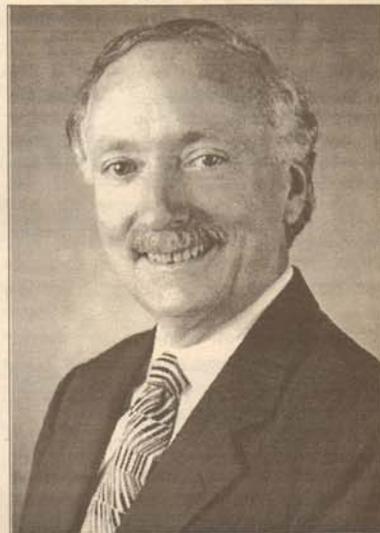
The point of scenario planning is not to try to plan for every eventuality but to learn more about how your partners would handle the unexpected. Too often partners only learn this kind of thing when reality strikes. It also allows partners to create clear guidelines for dealing with situations that could happen. Dealing with them ahead of time in the hypothetical—rather than later in reality—is much, much easier. For example, deciding how to handle a six-month inability to work is much easier to do when it could happen to anybody than when it's already happened to one person. The list of what-ifs to consider should also include things such as losing trust in one another, a partner becoming dependent on alcohol or drugs, and a partner developing a lifestyle which the other partners believe is harmful to the company's reputation or status in the community.

Roles, Responsibilities, Authority. Partners need to be clear about how they will share leadership. They should delineate which duties and areas will be co-managed and which will be separately controlled by one or another partner. Clarity about how decisions will be made and not just who has titles, is crucial to a well functioning partnership.

Mechanisms for Maintaining Communication and Resolving Differences. When difficulties arise in partnerships, communication has a tendency to taper off, even though more talking is what is usually needed. Mechanisms for maintaining communication during normal and difficult times should be in place. Partners should establish what is confidential between or among them and what is not. The type and frequency of partner meetings should be established. The use of mediators and a step-wise progression for resolving disputes should be set to agreement when everyone is coming together, or at least before any dispute arises.

Plan For The End. Mortality is one of the most avoided areas of discussions, understandably so. Nobody likes to think about ending when they are just beginning. But there are real advantages to doing it. Planning for the eventual dissolution of the partnership and the business, as difficult as these scenarios may be to consider, has the potential to prevent disastrous consequences for each other, estates, families, employees and customers.

Whether your partnership is mature or in infancy, in crisis or in creation, a set of agreements (See Yocum page 24)



Richard Yocum

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25 Ways To Promote Your Wellness Program

Reprinted from Australian Body Work's FISCAL FITNESS Corporate Newsletter

(Editor's Note: These are guidelines provided for members who seek to establish and promote corporate wellness programs within their company. The list can also serve as part of a package delivered to corporations that are prospective corporate membership candidates.)

- #1** Host a Wellness Breakfast. Offer bagels and juice and display your program information and schedules.
- #2** Paycheck stuffers - distribute monthly updates of Wellness Plan programs.
- #3** Employee newsletter - include articles on the company's wellness plans.

#4 "Fitbucks" - develop cash incentives with which employees can buy logo products that promote the wellness plan. Reward employees for attending wellness programs.

#5 Competitive Games - encourage employees to participate in competitive games.

#6 Stress Reduction Tips - give sand-filled balloons to the most stressed out department. Rotate monthly and offer stress-reduction tips with the balloons.

#7 Use cafeteria and common-area bulletin boards to post program schedules, fliers, etc...

#8 Email program registration forms to all employees on a monthly basis.

#9 Schedule lunchtime visits with fitness specialists to demo or introduce new programs or workshops.

#10 Develop new employee packet stuffed with wellness plan information

#11 Print messages relating to Wellness Plan on employee paycheck stubs.

#12 Input classes or programs onto community calendar in company email.

#13 Awareness Kits - send all department heads an "Awareness Kit" explaining the company's commitment and expectations relating to the Wellness Plan.

#14 Mail or fax press releases to the local media about the success of your employee wellness plan.

#15 Testimonial Book-

start a book of employee testimonials to help nonexercisers get started.

#16 Reward System- develop a reward system for exercising employees who help non-exercisers get started.

#17 Photographs - Display photos taken of employees participating in a wellness program.

#18 Before & After Photos - Display photos of employees who have lost body fat.

#19 Personal Invitations - from department heads or HR Department inviting non-exercisers participate in a class.

#20 Balloons - give to any employee to attach to his or her desk for participating in a wellness program.

#21 Employee of the Month - identify an employee who does well by posting his/her photo and testimonial.

#22 Statistics - display positive stats regarding the success of an employee or group of employees.

#23 Internet- set up a home page for the company's wellness plan program. Establish a forum for employees to discuss the program among other employees.

#24 Have a party! Employees love to party. Make sure Wellness Plan information is available at all employee parties or functions.

#25 Fortune Cookies - buy cookies with your program message and words of encouragement. Hand deliver to employees.

...CSI

continued from Cover

& Wellness dominates the Albuquerque market. The clubs, owned by Scott and Spencer Garrett, are within five miles of each other, and draw

membership from every residential and commercial area of the city.

New Mexico Sports & Wellness has over 10,000 memberships. They won the IHRSA Fitness Director of the Year Award in 1997 and the IHRSA Kaiser 50+ for senior programming in 1998.

...Revenues

continued from Cover

between 1996 and 1997— from 20.8 million to 22.5 million. He further noted that the number of

health clubs grew by 5% in the six-month period from July, 1997 (13,097 clubs) to January, 1998 (13,799 clubs).

"Health clubs are increasingly emphasizing that regular exercise in a supervised

environment is a necessity, not a luxury. And our aging population is ready to hear that message", Mr. Howland said. "This is a good time to be in the health club business."

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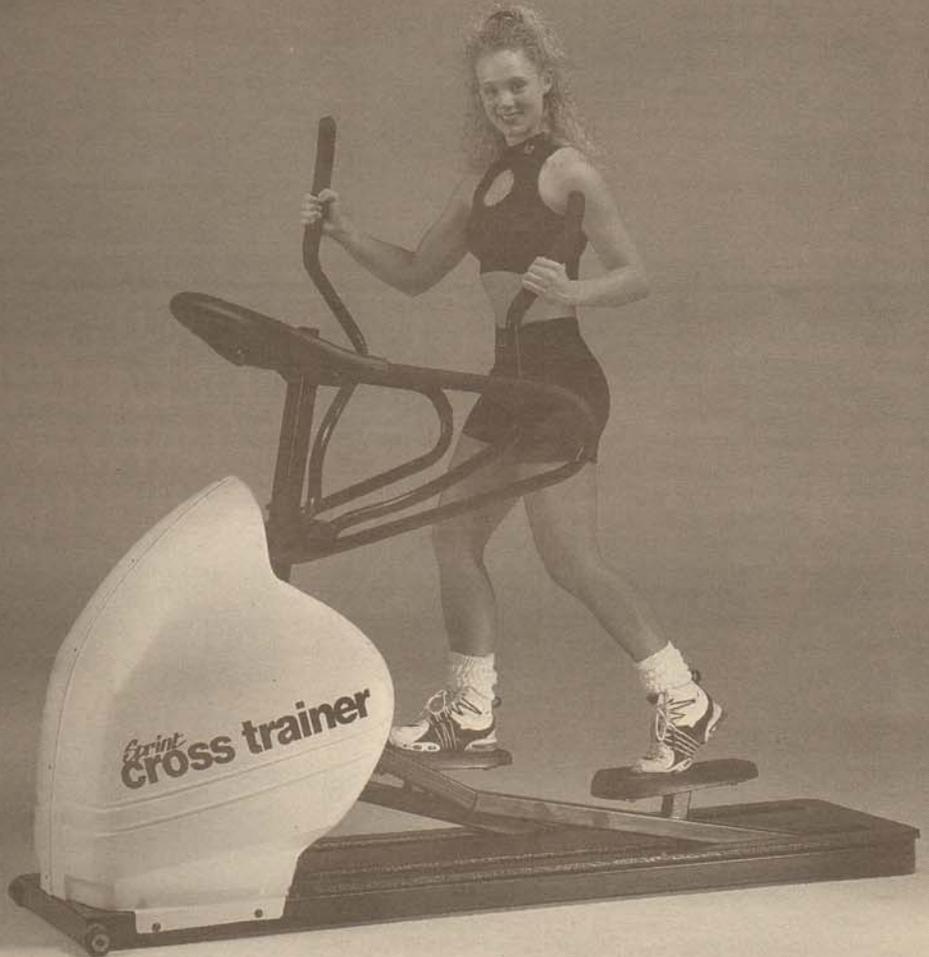
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IHRSA UPDATES

FITNESS CLUB NETWORK SOLD Sale Designed To Enhance Program For Clubs

In a move designed to enhance the ability of its Fitness Club Network to deliver corporate leads and prospects to its member clubs, IHRSA has transferred all rights and title to the network to the International Fitness Club Network, Inc. (IFCN). This will be the sole business concern of IFCN, which is owned by IHRSA's former Director of Networks, David Pickering. The new ownership is effective immediately.

"Within the constraints of operating our membership-driven association, IHRSA is not able to keep up with member expectations for the FCN program," said John McCarthy, executive director of IHRSA, in explaining the decision to sell. "Dave has worked hard to develop the existing network client base and has ongoing negotiations with scores of other clients."

The IFCN currently serves 15 corporations and health insurers, representing more than 15 million employees and insureds in the U.S. Among recent clients signed on by Pickering is Digital Equipment Corp. which is offering a \$200 annual health club membership subsidy to its 27,000 eligible employees worldwide. Among other clients are Microsoft, FedEx, Aetna, Pitney Bowes, Charles Schwab and others.

The IFCN will honor existing enrollment terms and benefits for clubs currently involved in the network, including:

- IHRSA standards will be required of all participating facilities;
- IHRSA clubs set their own corporate rates, and offer their lowest rate to network client employees or insureds/members;
- IHRSA club participation in the network will be free and voluntary.

Other clubs interested in joining the IFCN should contact Pickering or Ann Driscoll, Vice President of Network Operations, at 1-888-321-IFCN(4326).

IHRSA AWARDS FIRST TENNIS GRANT Funding is Part of USTA's Plan to "Grow the Game"

Aerofit at Royal Oaks

Club in Bryan Station, Texas, has become the first recipient of a series of grants that IHRSA is making to its member clubs to encourage them to increase participation in tennis.

As part of its \$31 million initiative to "Grow the Game", the U.S. Tennis Association awarded \$50,000 to IHRSA for the grant program. The grants support IHRSA clubs which are willing to organize and run a "Tennis Free For All" lesson event, along with a low cost, follow-up instructional program called "USA Tennis".

IHRSA's USA Tennis Community Leader grant of \$3225 matched Aerofit's investment to pay the pros and promote the first of three programs it is running. Aerofit's five-month program launched in March. The club gave lessons to 200 participants last year through a similar initiative and hopes to double the numbers this year, according to Darren Busby, General Manager. Aerofit is owned by the Galindo Group.

A total of 170 communities are receiving financial support directly from the USTA this year to "Grow the Game". IHRSA clubs outside of these communities may apply for IHRSA's USA Tennis Community Leader grant to organize USA Tennis programs. For more information, contact Rick Devereux at 800-228-4772.

World Educational Tour Planned Aim is to Expand Learning/Networking Opportunities

Taipei, Taiwan will be the first of 10 stops on the World Educational Tour being organized by IHRSA. The seminar will be held on August 26 in conjunction with the Aerobic Fitness & Health Association's annual convention.

The seminar series has been created in partnership with some of the industry's leading suppliers, including Cardio-Theater, Cybex, Precor, Schwinn Fitness, StairMaster, StarTrac and Technogym.

"Our goal is to provide both business education and networking opportunities to club owners and managers outside of the U.S.," said Hans Muench, Director of International Development for IHRSA. "A secondary benefit is that owners and operators from other countries—including the U.S.—will have the opportunity to attend seminars in the tour countries and get a new perspective from a different culture on their business."

Among the topics to be addressed at the seminars, which will be presented by some of the industry's leading club owners and consultants, are: club management, sales marketing and promotions; member retention; financial planning, operations; and worldwide industry trends.

In addition to Taiwan, the World Tour will include nine other countries over the next 12 months. Currently scheduled dates include:

- August 26 - Taipei, Taiwan
- August 31 - Bombay, India
- September 26 - Barcelona, Spain
- October 10 - Buenos Aires, Argentina
- October 23-24 - Stockholm, Sweden
- November 19 - Sydney, Australia
- February 24 - San Paulo, Brazil

A complete list of upcoming locations and dates can be found on IHRSA's website at www.ihrsa.org/international. For more information, send e-mail to intl@ihrsa.org, or contact John Kersh at 617-951-0055, ext. 151.

Health Clubs Win Legislative Battles; IHRSA Is Catalyst for Victory in Five States

Boston, MA.- The Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin legislatures were the ones to watch this past year, as each passed precedent-setting bills that profoundly affected not only health clubs in their states, but potentially nationwide.

In Massachusetts, Acting Governor Paul Cellucci signed into law a bill that guarantees the right of women-only health clubs to exist in the state. Pennsylvania passed first-of-its-kind legislation giving small

business the right to sue because of unfair competition. And Wisconsin passed legislation requiring all hospital health clubs to pay property tax.

"Passage of these laws is significant beyond the borders of these states," said Helen Durkin, director of IHRSA's government relations department, noting that IHRSA worked closely with member clubs in the three states to pass the laws. "In all three cases, a precedent has been set. Other states considering similar legislation will look at these laws and be influenced by them."

IHRSA was also the catalyst for legislative and judicial victories in two other states over the past 12 months, including:

- Missouri, where the Supreme Court ruled that Gold's Gym in Columbia does not have to collect sales tax on its membership dues;
- New Hampshire, where IHRSA clubs lobbied successfully for legislation giving consumers increased protection from unscrupulous club operators. The bill has been sent to the Governor for her approval.

Ms. Durkin noted that currently there are 11 states to watch for legislative and judicial activity affecting health clubs in the coming year. They include:

- Arkansas: considering fighting the sales tax;
- Florida: fighting the sales tax;
- Illinois: fighting unfair competition from hospitals;
- Louisiana: considering fighting the sales tax;
- Massachusetts: introducing fair competition legislation;
- Ohio: fighting for sales tax repeal and fair competition
- Pennsylvania: making a test case on new fair competition law;
- Texas: introducing fair competition legislation;
- Utah: fighting sales tax and pursuing fair competition legal case;
- Washington: fighting for sales tax repeal and considering fair competition action;
- Wisconsin: mounting

a comprehensive effort to stop unfair competition.

New Award to Recognize Best Club Managers First Recipients to Be Named at IHRSA Convention

Boston, MA.- In order to recognize the crucial role played by health club managers in determining the success of their operations, IHRSA and Life Fitness are teaming up to establish the annual IHRSA/Life Fitness Club Manager of the Year Award.

"The club manager is the heart of the club," said John McCarthy, Executive Director of IHRSA. "This individual has to motivate and energize the staff to ensure that members always have a good experience when they walk through the doors of the club—the kind of experience that will keep them coming back."

"In addition to being a great host, the club manager must be an excellent strategist with solid business skills—someone who is able to provide the owners with a return on their investment, the staff with opportunities to grow, and members with an environment, support and programs that will help them realize their fitness goals," said Augie Nieto, president of Life Fitness.

The award will be offered in two categories: single club operations and multi-club operations. The winners will be chosen by a panel of judges comprising industry experts. Judges will look at experience, education, profitability, membership growth and retention, staff motivation and retention, creativity, internal club systems, and community involvement.

The first recipients will be named at the Association's annual Convention and Trade Show, which will be held in San Diego, California, March 24-27, 1999.

Deadline for entries is November 16, 1998. Applicants must be members of IHRSA. For a copy of the application, call Donna Garrity at 800-228-4772 (U.S. and Canada or (617) 951-0055.)

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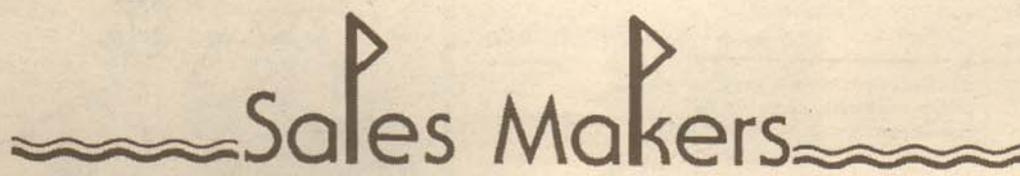
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BALLY TOTAL FITNESS "BFIT UNIVERSITY" RAISING STANDARDS ACROSS THE BOARD

By Jason Conviser, Ph.D.

Chicago, IL.— When you operate 330 fitness centers in 27 states with 12,500 staff members and 4 million members, one of the greatest challenges is obviously to ensure a high quality delivery of professional services across the entire system. If you're Bally Total Fitness, you start by hiring the best people you can find. "Then, you develop a series of training and incentive programs to consistently reinforce the member service behaviors you need exhibited by your staff members. And, to make sure the fitness programs you offer are the best they can be, you invest heavily in a series of educational seminars and work aggressively to get this training to all of your fitness instructors across the country.

Bally Total Fitness' approach to this last strategy is an innovative fitness professional training program called: "BFit University."

The cornerstone of "BFit University" is an innovative 30-hour instructor training program. This intensive training course provides the theoretical and practical foundation needed to launch a career in the fitness industry and emphasizes:

- Anatomy
- Physiology
- Components of an Aerobics/Group Class
- Music and Cueing
- Developing Choreography
- Muscle Conditioning and Flexibility
- Form and Technique
- Injury Prevention
- Risk Effectiveness and High Risk Movement
- Professionalism and Legal

Issues.

Additionally, "BFit University" currently offers 15 other three to four-hour training courses that qualify for continuing education credits to ACE or AFAA certified fitness professionals. These include courses on muscle conditioning, aqua aerobics, cardio-box, kick-box, multi-step, and many other subjects. According to Loren Blake, Bally Total Fitness' National Aerobics Director, "New courses are currently being designed on the subjects of yoga fitness training, arthritis issues, training of the obese, interval training, high performance training and other specialized topics."

Bally Total Fitness not only trains its own instructors through the "BFit University" program, BTF also makes its courses available to other fitness industry professionals, at a cost of \$225 per participant for the 30-

hour instructor training program and an average of \$30 per class per participant for the specialized courses. "We'd love to have more colleagues from other fitness centers join these classes," adds Blake.

Instructors for "BFit University" include Dr. Jason Conviser, Vice President, Clinical Services for Bally Total Fitness, members of the Bally Sports Medicine Advisory Board and key instructors and trainers from Bally Total Fitness' staff.

Bally Total Fitness' Training Hotline can provide more information on the courses, as well as identify the locations and times of upcoming



Jason Conviser, Ph. D.

BFit University programs. The Training Hotline number is: 1-888-227-8836.

CASEY CONRAD EARNS HONORS AS LAW SCHOOL GRADUATE

Bristol, Rhode Island.— Fitness entrepreneur, Casey Conrad, founded Communications Consultants in 1989. Communications Consultants, a fitness industry marketing firm, markets a complete line of successful sales training books, tapes and videos. Casey Conrad is a highly rated international lecturer in the health, racquet and fitness industry as well. Conrad calls herself "an entrepreneurial attorney" and will focus her law practice on helping small business owners improve their marketing and sales skills.

Conrad was elected by the faculty at Roger Williams

School of Law to receive the National Women's Lawyers Association's (NWLA) outstanding female graduate award. Dr. Barbara Bernier, Professor, comments, "The NWLA Award is reserved for the law graduate who contributes most to the advancement of women in society, promotes issues and concerns of women in legal education, exhibits tenacity, enthusiasm and motivation, demonstrates academic achievement and earns respect of faculty and administration." Roger Williams University School of Law is the only law school in Rhode Island

...Yocum

continued from page 19

based on frank, thorough discussions of these seven key topics will solidify, revitalize, or reorder your partnership. Going through the process of creating a charter decreases ambiguity and builds trust in one another. Developing a Partnership Charter, and revisiting this process and tool periodically, helps partners navigate their uncharted "white waters".

Recently, a group of club owners distinguished the tool from the process that generates the

tool. Their insight was "the real value is in the process itself." Scary? Perhaps. Powerful? Always. To maximize value, partners should create "space" for these conversations. Commit to uninterrupted time in a place where each partner feels comfortable. Set operating agreements with each other regarding what and how issues will be discussed. Allow that it may take a series of meetings (three or more sessions, depending on the number of partners and complexities of the partnership and business) to complete the original charter. Subsequent reviews typically take a day or so

and are scheduled quarterly, semi-annually, or annually, as the maturity of the partnership and business warrant. These discussions cover sensitive areas. It may be helpful to utilize an outside facilitator who has the experience and tools to assist partners to explore and document all necessary topics and agreements. Upon completion, celebrate!

(Richard Yocum is a senior mediator and business consultant associated with Business Mediation Associates, Suite 603, 1301 20th Street N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Phone (202) 363-1108)

...Durak

continued from page 6

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PACE: The 'Deconditioned' Friend Referral Tool

By Rande LaDue

Over the years, health clubs have been relying on member referrals as one of their major sources of revenue. That's why they want to keep their existing members happy; it is much less expensive to keep a member and have them bring in friends than it is to go out and try to find new members.

Group exercise programs have proven to be an excellent referral tool for many years- for a good reason. It's more fun to work out with your friends (especially if they are in the same shape as yourself). But what about that friend/spouse/girlfriend or boyfriend who is a bit out of shape or feels too uncoordinated to participate with the traditional group programs? The answer-**PACE: The Group Exercise Program for Everybody™**. Because of its hydraulic resistance that accommodates to the effort of the individual user, it is common to see a deconditioned person work out right alongside a very fit person in the same PACE class. And since PACE requires no skill or coordination, it can be a very non-threatening way to get that out of shape friend into a club.

One recent PACE customer, Spa Health Clubs in Raleigh, N.C., plans on using their PACE Program not only as a referral tool, but a member retention and service tool as well. Jason Douglas, Director of Operations for Spa Health Clubs says, "Twenty-two years in business has taught us that service must always be our #1 priority. Our satisfied customers have always been our best form of advertising. We are looking at PACE as a means of complimenting our different fitness levels in a fun and exciting new way. The key word to PACE is fun! The group format offers a

sense of camaraderie while the instructor provides the fun, supervision and motivation. Because it combines both cardio and strength workouts together, PACE will allow us to service even those busy executives who don't have the time to work out with conventional equipment." "PACE has excited all our staff as well as our members since it's introduction on June 23rd. Most clubs play "Wait and See" before buying new equipment or programs and then play "Follow the Leader" or "Catch-up" a year or two later when everyone else has the same thing. We wanted to remain leaders of the pack; that is why we invested in The PACE Group Exercise Program™ for five of our seven Research Triangle locations. We have no doubt that we will soon be seeing our members bringing in some of their out-of-shape friends who have been too intimidated in the past for their first free PACE class."

Rande LaDue, owner of Pro*Fit Enterprises, National Distributor of PACE, feels that it's the old 80/20 rule. While most clubs are trading members and competing for the 20% of the US population who are already fit, progressive clubs are looking for ways to attract the majority of Americans who are unfit. LaDue cites a May 29th Associated Press article that states the percentage of deconditioned Americans has increased by about one-third in the last 20 years with more on the way as over 25 percent of today's children are overweight or obese. If you are interested in a free video or more information on PACE or a Kids' Pace Program, call Pro*Fit at: 888-604-2244 or visit their website at www.pacepro-fit.com. Pro*Fit has been recognized by the American Council on Exercise (ACE) as a Continuing Education Specialist.



Some Of Spa Health Club Team

Norm Cates' **THE Club Insider** NEWS

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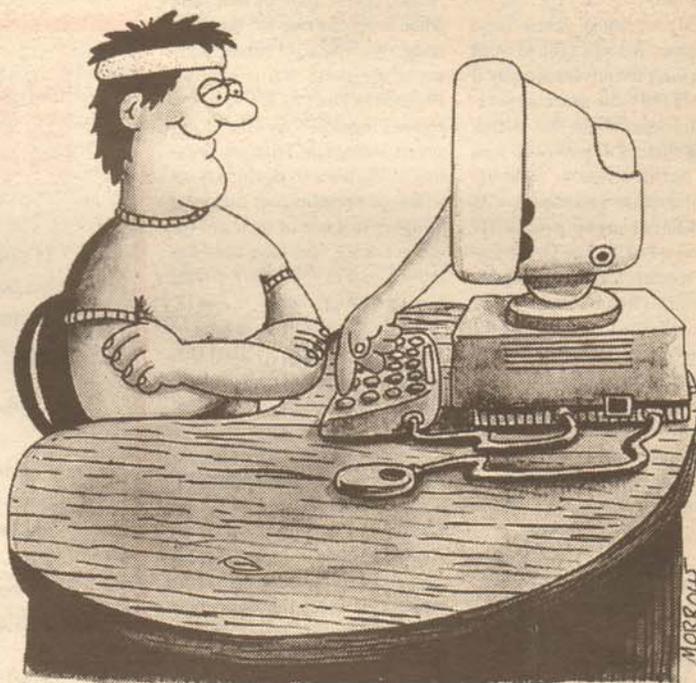
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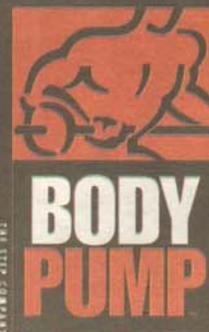
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