

# Norm Cates' **THE Club Insider** NEWS

JANUARY 1996  
VOLUME III NUMBER 1

*The Pulse of the Health, Racquet & Sports Club Business*

## HEALTH CLUB HARD SELL

By Norm Cates, Jr.

There is an old adage and that is: The "TRUTH HURTS". In the health, racquet and sports club industry, the TRUTH not only hurts..... it has been bad for business.

In writing this article, I want to get some things straight from the start: (1) Our industry is still in its infancy. (2) I personally have made mistakes in the business

which if I knew then what I know now, I would not have made.

First, let me comment on the "infancy" of our industry. Consider this..... consider the age of our health club industry, roughly 50 years. Now compare the age of the hotel industry for example. Looking back, we know that the hotel industry is at least 2,000 years old, if you believe that the baby Jesus was born in a manger because there was "no room at the inn." Just think about the evolution and learning process that the hotel industry world-wide

has experienced over these many centuries. And, think of the changes in philosophy and attitudes that must have happened.

And, now, consider what we in the club industry have not learned and experienced to date.

I am writing this article to lay out for the health, racquet and sportsclub world what I believe in my heart is the TRUTH about our industry. The truth that I am putting into print may not apply to YOU and your organization, but I can assure you that it applies to some of you. In fact, as

I mentioned above, the truth which I am talking about here has applied to me personally during my 20 something years as an owner and operator of clubs. So, if you don't want to hear the truth about our industry..... stop reading this right now.

I decided to write this article because of two recent spats of bad publicity for our industry that I have seen. The first is a four-page article in the CONSUMER REPORTS MAGAZINE and the second was a local Atlanta's TV station's multi-seg-

ment report entitled: "HEALTH CLUB HARD SELL." This month, I am going to address the CONSUMER REPORTS article. Next month, I will report on the TV report entitled: "HEALTH CLUB HARD SELL."

First, let me suggest that you go to your newstand and purchase a copy of the January, 1996 edition of CONSUMER REPORTS. Read it. Digest it. Learn from it. Make changes in your operation, if appropriate, to respond to the issues of our industry that are (See *Hard Sell* page 21)

## American Boomers In FAT CITY!

By Norm Cates, Jr.

Once upon a time there was an American man who had a problem with the disease - obesity. This is about him and the estimated 33% of the American population (or 100 million others) who also suffer from this disease. The percentage of Americans who are obese is on a growth rampage, up by 30% since 1980! This increase has happened to our population despite the "exercise and fitness boom" in America

and around the world.

For those with the disease, the battle of obesity is being waged with high stakes.....the risks of heart disease, diabetes and cancer are all increased significantly in the obese individual. Not to mention the mental pain and anguish that the fat person experiences inwardly every day.

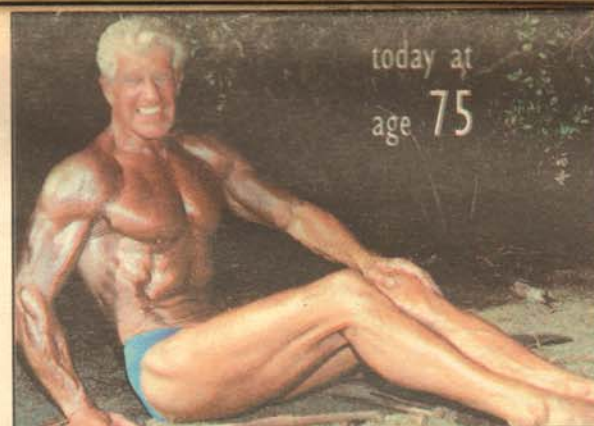
The battle of obesity often is a battle for life or death. And, it is about "quality of life" or even better, "The Miracle of Feeling Good." (The title of fitness and aging expert Bob Delmonte's upcoming book).

**Obese is defined as:  
"EXTREMELY  
FAT".**

Scientists have now determined that it is a fact that obesity is caused by four genes found in humans. This means that some men and women are born with a deck stacked genetically against them. (From Dr. Richard Atkinson, University of Minnesota). This also means that in reality, obesity, is in fact, a disease.

The old myths which have been passed down about obese people being fat just because they lack discipline have now been dispelled by these new scientific findings. However, it continues to be a simple and uncontested fact of life that if you consume more calories than you burn..... and you do this over an extended period of time..... you are going to become fat. End of story. But, not really...

Obesity is much more complicated than the simple



**Bob Delmonte - Super Senior  
Fit For Life - see page 19**

physiological facts. In other words, somewhere in the brain of an obese person lies the true and underlying reasons of why and how a person becomes fat.

Scientists have developed a new medication for obesity which will "shut-off" hunger. However, they also say this medicine will not be available until after the turn of the century. Many people cannot wait that long for a cure or solution. So, what continues to be the answer? You know it, I know it, but millions of Americans still have not learned it. The case study which follows should illuminate the so-

lution for anyone who will read it. This case study of one fat individual is about the mystery of obesity. And, it is about what this "FAT CITY BABY BOOMER" must do if he wishes to survive to live a long, healthy, happy and productive life.

### AN AMERICAN FAT CITY BABY BOOMER - CASE STUDY

This obese man began his history of weight problems when he was age 11 and in the 5th grade.

(See *Boomers* page 7)

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# THE INSIDER SPEAKS

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### Health Club Business Has Public Relations Challenge

By Norm Cates, Jr.

In the United States, the club business continues to be pummeled by the TV and the print media for the way it operates. The problem seems to be that the media does not realize or understand that the health club industry has improved what it does dramatically over the past 15 years. The

message has not gotten through, even though organizations like IHRSA (International Health, Racquet and Sports Clubs Association), ACE, IDEA, ACSM, numerous regional associations, various industry publications, and other groups are working day-in and day-out to professionalize and further legitimize our industry.

Good examples of this ongoing bashing are the recent *Consumer Reports Magazine*, January, 1996 edition and a recent

local TV multi-part series. It seems that these folks do not know about the good that is going on in our industry... if they do, they are not letting the public in on it.

Today, I want to call upon the leadership of all organizations in our industry that are dedicated to ongoing professionalization and I want to ask them to consider the following: Consider joining together as ONE UNIFIED GROUP which speaks out through a well planned PR and Advertising Cam-

paign to tout the GOOD THINGS that are going on in this great and still infant industry. Let's find a way to begin to reverse this tide of "bad press" by working together. Let's get the message out and as a part of all of this, let's be honest with the American public and acknowledge the mistakes of the past

and jointly vow to work to avoid future mistakes.

Together, this industry can muster the teamwork, the financial power and the energy necessary to move this huge PR mountain. And, together the industry will enjoy the benefits of the collective effort.

## Texas Bally Lawsuit Is B. S.

By Norm Cates, Jr.

Those of you who have subscribed and read *The CLUB INSIDER* News over our first two years of publication know that I have not spared the ink when it comes to providing in-depth reports on the legal battles being fought by the Bally Health Club chain (Now called, BALLY TOTAL FITNESS).

Last month, I reported brief details of a lawsuit in Texas which has recently been elevated to the status of a Class Action Lawsuit. I told you I would get the details and report to you later.

I obtained copies of all of the documents of the lawsuit and studied them. I have concluded, after what I have learned and after talking to both lawyers for the Plaintiffs and the Defense, that this is a bogus lawsuit which has no business being in court, much less being expanded to a class action lawsuit. I must state, however, that the legal world is a strange one and my opinion is worth zero.

Here is the reason why I believe that the lawsuit is bogus and inappropriate. This lawsuit was originally brought by a 23-year-old who had joined one of the Bally clubs in San Antonio, Texas. The Plaintiff, Keith Jackson, sued Bally and then settled the lawsuit OUT OF COURT when he accepted payment in full from Bally in the amount of \$3,000!

The lawyer for the original Plaintiff was the father of a friend of the Plaintiff. The Plaintiff ran into the lawyer when he was busing tables in a restaurant. During a brief conversation the Plaintiff told the lawyer about his prob-

lem with Bally. The Plaintiff's lawyer later teamed Keith Jackson with a person (apparently a Bally member in the same club) named Freddy Mack and they got together to file a new lawsuit for the same complaint, but this time seeking class action status against Bally. Recently, the Judge hearing the case granted the Plaintiff's Motion for Class Action status. Interestingly, there was a great deal of publicity and T.V. coverage about the case. Bally's Attorney, Mr. Thomas E. Kurth, has filed a Counterclaim on behalf of Bally. The counter-claim against Keith Jackson was filed due to the fact that Jackson had settled the first lawsuit for \$3,000, had dismissed the First Lawsuit and shortly thereafter, took a non-suit on all of his claims and because he had brought the case in bad faith or for the purpose of harassment.

Bally's attorney states in documents filed that Bally has incurred reasonable and necessary fees and expenses of at least \$125,000. A pleading by Bally's attorney states: "This case has no legitimate purpose. This groundless case was brought in bad faith in an attempt by Attorney Snell to wrongfully use the discovery process and the class action device to solicit clients for himself."

I could not agree more based upon the information in the court pleadings. Although this Texas judge has granted the case "class action" status, Bally is appealing the ruling. And, don't forget..... election time for judges is just right around the corner so this judge could have been influenced by the T.V. cameras and the enhanced opportunity to keep his job for another term.

December 20, 1995


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Dear Norm:

Congratulations on a second great year of "straight from the shoulder" communication. You have an enviable ability to create a high energy publication that communicates both passion and vision.

See you in San Diego!

  
 John McCarthy  
 IHRSA

P.S. Your 15th presidential successor, Frank Napolitano, is doing a brilliant job. He might make a wonderful interview for Club Insider! Also, thanks for sharing your thoughts on Chuck Leve. Very few people realize how enormous his contribution to IHRSA has been.

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# •NORM'S NOTES•

**T**he **CLUB INSIDER** News welcomes our 12,500 new monthly readers as we now expand our circulation to 25,000 locations each month. Just in case you haven't seen The **CLUB INSIDER** News before, let me give you some background. The **CLUB INSIDER** News is published by yours truly, **NORM CATES, JR.**, 20+ year veteran of the health, racquet and sports club industry. During my career, I have served as a Board Member and the last President of the National Court Club Association. And, I was a co-founder and the 1st President of IHRSA (the International Health, Racquet and Sports Club Association) in 1980/81. The **CLUB INSIDER** News was conceived and developed by myself and many of the same people that created IHRSA. The **CLUB INSIDER** News is dedicated to the publication of the industry news first and to the ongoing professionalization of the club industry. No matter what type of facility you own or operate, each month you will discover articles which will help you improve your operation. And, you will find something in The **CLUB INSIDER** News that you won't find in ANY other industry publication... candid, honest, from-the-heart reporting on the issues that impact health, racquet and sports club operators everywhere. We provide a voice for the club industry which heretofore has not existed. This "Nationwide Subscription" is sponsored by our advertisers and we ask you to support them! When you call be sure to let them know you noticed their ad in The **CLUB INSIDER** News!

**CARL PORTER**, the Chairman of IHRSA's Nominating Committee, informs me that three new candidates have been selected to be nominated to the membership for election to the Board of Directors at the IHRSA National Convention in San Diego in March. They are: **DAVID COHAN** of the Sports Club in Woodlyn, Pa.; **ANNBETH ESCHBACH** of Denver-based Club Sports International; and **MICHAEL MCPHEE** of Club Meadowvale, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada. Congratulations to these nominees and to IHRSA, The International Health, Racquet and Sports Club Association as it celebrates its 15th year! If YOUR club is not involved in IHRSA, you and your business are missing the single most significant learning and sharing opportunity in the club industry in the world today. Make plans to join IHRSA by calling (800)

228-4772. Oh - also, don't miss the 15th Annual IHRSA Convention and Trade Show in beautiful San Diego, California March 20-23rd, 1996!

**TRADE SHOW CUTBACKS** - The large number of industry trade shows have become a financial drag on many club industry equipment manufacturers and suppliers. This is causing manufacturers and other vendors to take a very close look at the continuation of their attendance at a lot of the trade shows which are not producing results which they previously had supported because of the necessity for their company to be there given that their competition was going to be there. For example, **KEN LUCAS**, the **CYBEX** National Sales Manager, told me that his company is going to drop out of 33% of the trade shows that they heretofore had been attending. He explains that the cost of attending the many shows has cut into Cybex profits. And, I might add, and Ken agrees..... these costs have had to be passed onto the end users, i.e. the club and facility owners and operators. So, with the club industry consolidation of trade shows such as this action by Cybex and the combining of the **GOLD'S GYMS** Trade Show into the IHRSA Shows, maybe all club buyers will benefit with more competitive prices and yes, better products in the long run as well. I can only say **CONGRATULATIONS** to Cybex for the decision they have made.

**MIKE ALPERT** has been appointed by the Northern California-based **LEISURE SPORTS, Inc.** as Club Manager of the \$20+ Million Sporting Club at Lakeshore Towers. Mike replaces club veteran, **LAURIE SMITH**, a vice president of Leisure Sports, who has been serving as club manager since May, 1995, when Leisure Sports took over the management contract of the three-year-old Sporting Club. Alpert served as a development partner and manager of the Athletic Club of Bend, Oregon and has also served on the Board of Directors of the Northwest Athletic Club Association. The Sporting Club at Lakeshore Towers is one of those several **MEGA-CLUBS** developed by the infamous **JACK NAIMAN**. A great real estate mind and apparently a hell of a salesman, Naiman pushed forward with the construction of this location using Japanese money even though **MIKE TALLA**, of the Sports Club Company, had already started construction and was soon to open his truly world class facility about a two-wood distance

across the expressway. Word is Naiman pushed on because he had "locked-in" development fees which he was guaranteed in his contract with the Japanese. And, he did it knowing full well that the facility would most likely never generate a profit. The Leisure Sports people are really good, as exemplified by the recent IHRSA selection of one of their ads as the Best Print Ad of the Year for 1995. Best of Luck to Mike and the club.

**STEVE PATERSON** works for **Commercial Fitness Systems**, a division of **HEALTHLINE**, a leading commercial fitness equipment distribution company based in Southern California and owned by industry veteran **CHRIS CREIGHTON**. The Commercial Fitness Systems division specializes in buying and selling of used equipment. Steve produces a very interesting newsletter called the "RE-FURBISHED TIMES" which describes various maintenance procedures and techniques for all kinds of equipment. Beginning with our next edition, we will publish monthly installments on equipment maintenance from the **Refurbished Times**. If you want to call Steve to get on his personal **Refurbished Times** mailing list call (714) 957-1415

**JOE CIRULLI**, the owner of the Gainesville Health and Fitness Centers in Gainesville, Florida, tells me that he is near completion of his brand new 50,000 square-foot facility. The new facility will replace his 20-year-old facility located in a Gainesville, Florida shopping center. And, Joe has cut a really exciting deal for a joint venture with the **COLUMBIA HOSPITAL** for a 5,500 square-foot physical therapy and rehab cen-



*Norm Cates, Jr.*

ter. Cirulli has been in the physical therapy arena for over 8 years now and expects his new relationship to generate \$3 million per year in the 5,500 square-foot portion of the new club. He has teamed up with **ARTHUR JONES** and **JIM FLANAGAN** of **MED X Corporation** to build a truly amazing program for PT and rehab and Joe will also have about 100 of **MED X's** machines in the fitness center portion of his new club. Joe Cirulli does an awful lot of things in the club industry really well and provides a true model for aspiring greats to follow. Best of luck Joe with your new facility and in the future!

**OLYMPIC WATCH** - In less than 200 days, the world will descend on **ATLANTA, GEORGIA**, the **CROWN JEWEL** of the

South, for the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games. Next month we will begin an **OLYMPIC COUNTDOWN** with monthly coverage on the Atlanta Olympics designed to give you, our readers, the **INSIDE STORY** on what to do and where to go if you are attending the Olympics. Our coverage will feature details on tickets, transportation, where to eat, workout, party and yes, where to stay, if you haven't already made your reservations. (Every hotel within a 30-mile radius of Atlanta has been reserved for over a year now!) This 100th modern Olympic Games is expected to be the most significant sporting event in the history of the world. So, if you haven't made plans to attend, it is still **NOT TOO LATE!**

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# MICROFIT'S HEALTHCARE CONNECTION

## An Alternative To Traditional Health Care

By Neil Sol, Ph.D.

In the Summer of 1995, a front page story of "USA Today" indicated that in 1992, 34% of all health care expenditures (dollars) in U.S. were for Alternative Health Care Procedures such as: acupuncture, acupressure, massage, yoga, spa therapies, Tai Chi, Tae Kwon Do and other oriental forms, chiropractic, herbology, vitamin therapy and other forms of natural medicine.

In recent years the National Institute of Health established a division dedicated to the study of alternative health care, making

available grant monies for research evaluating the health care impact of alternative care.

It is apparent that there is a growing interest among Americans in non-traditional forms of health care that can lead to improvement of their health.

Simultaneously, there is a waning interest in the benefits associated with traditional health care and its orientation to rehabilitation or curing illness as opposed to prevention.

This market desire and willingness to spend one-third of their health care dollar for traditionally non-reimbursed health care procedures sends a loud and clear message to health care providers as to the interest of Ameri-

cans.

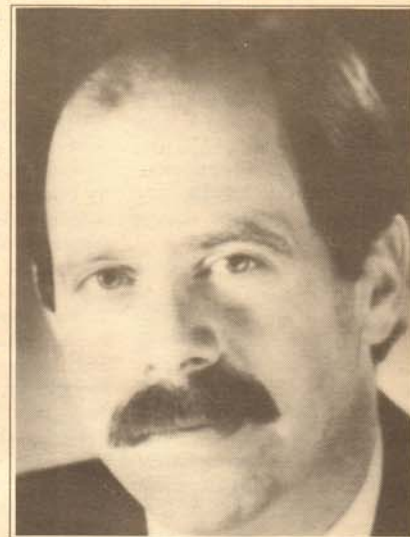
As a result, hospitals and other traditional health care providers are NOW motivated to consider the incorporation of Alternative Health Care procedures into their service mix.

This developing desire on the part of hospitals for alternative health care provides an opening for the health club. Why? Because clubs have always been providers of alternative health procedures and are adept at the delivery of many of these procedures. Exercise programs in their variety of forms are key components of alternative care. Yoga, Tai Chi, Pilates, Feldenkrais and general personal training are programs clubs typi-

cally offer and which are recognized today, as alternative care.

Clubs also offer a variety of massage and spa services that are also considered non-traditional health care. Typical wellness education inclusive of nutrition information such as the benefits of herbs, juice vitamins and simply proper nutrition is now considered alternative health care.

Some clubs are going so far as to offer services of chiropractors, biofeedback



Neil Sol, Ph. D.

technicians, acupuncturists and other non-traditional health care providers.

It is apparent that there is a booming interest in obtaining these procedures by the public and the future suggests that these procedures will be reimbursable.

Clubs have always been alternative health care providers. We just did not know it. We did not know that the health promoting procedures that we rendered would gain acceptance and a title within the health care continuum.

So, if your club offers many of the typical programs identified in this column; your club has become a provider of alternative health care in your community.

As a result, you can expect that what you offer will be an alternative to hospital and other institutional health care providers as they expand their services and can be your means to Connect With Health Care.

(Neil Sol, Ph.D. is the President of Health Vantage, Inc., a Houston, Texas - based club consulting firm. Neil is one of the industry's leading experts in the field of health care as it relates to clubs. Neil has recently been appointed as the new General Manager of the Sporting Club at Cherry Creek in Glendale, Colorado. He may be contacted at: (303) 399-3050 or Fax # (303) 388-7923.)

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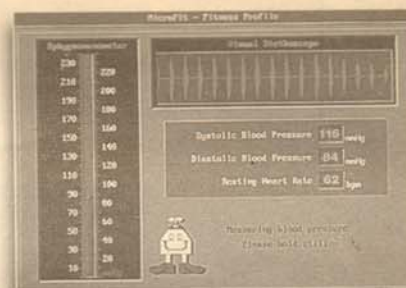
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# Personal Training: Cash Cow Or Money Pit?

By Ed Gaut

Not very long ago, a personal training program was the exception not the rule in most fitness facilities. You might be able to get the gym rat in the corner to give you a few tips if you caught him on a good day, but that was about it. Over the past several years, however, members have come to expect personal training when selecting a club, and having a personal training program has become a necessity, not an option, for many facilities.

While many club owners and fitness directors welcome this opportunity to provide members with personal trainers, they are also understandably concerned about the cost. This is especially true as the public demands well-qualified, certified personal trainers. A good personal training program, however, can be a profit center. The trick is to set up and manage it properly. Here are some tips on how to make the most of your personal training program.

## Hire The Best

A good personal training program starts with good personal trainers. It is that simple. This means hiring intelligent, well-edu-



Ed Gaut

cated people who have a knowledge of exercise and fitness and are certified by one of the major personal training certification programs.

The Houstonian Club in Houston, Texas, bills itself as the Ivy League of personal training. Like many facilities with successful personal training programs, the club requires all trainers to have minimum of a four-year degree in a fitness-related discipline. Also like many facilities with successful personal training programs, they support continuing education for their trainers.

When hiring, don't just look for college students or recent graduates. Consider trainers of a

variety of ages. Different members are comfortable with trainers of different ages. The right trainer for a thirty-five year old man might not be the right trainer for a seventy-five year old woman. More importantly, a mix of ages enables younger trainers to take advantage of the experience and wisdom of older trainers and so improves the quality of your program. The Houstonian, for example, tries to maintain diversity in their personal training team with ages which typically range from twenty-two to forty-five years old.

## Maintain A Separate Personal Training Staff

If you are serious about providing personal training in your facility, you must also have a separate personal training staff. Personal trainers should not be folding towels, checking people in at the front desk or repairing equipment; they should be training members. Top-notch trainers are not going to work for your club unless you guarantee them this. And since you have hired the best, you want to make the best use of their time and skill.

Ideally, the personal training staff should also be separate from the floor fitness staff who circulate through the club and help members with equipment and

fitness questions. Kati Ray, Corporate Fitness Director for the Sport & Health chain, notes that when Sport & Health first initiated a personal training program, they made the mistake of using the same staff for training as on the floor. The problem that Sport & Health encountered was that floor staff spent its time soliciting personal training clients rather than helping members. Now the club has a separate personal training staff.

Whatever you do, do not use your personal training staff for sales. "Some of the really big clubs make the mistake of having the fitness staff be involved with selling memberships," says Wendy Walters, Fitness Director of Rio Sport & Health in Gaithersburg, Maryland. "Our fitness staff has absolutely nothing to do with sales... The bottom line is people can tell when someone genuinely cares and when someone just wants a commission, and it makes a big difference at our club."

## Avoid Outside Trainers

If you have a fitness facility without an in-house personal training staff and you want to allow selected outside personal trainers to train clients in your club, by all means do so. If is a great way to provide your members with a service that you do not already provide and you can charge the trainers for the privilege.

If you have an in-house personal training staff, however, avoid outside trainers. You cannot pay your in-house staff what an outside personal trainer earns, nor would you want to. If you allow outside trainers to train clients in your facility, your in-house staff will have a pretty good idea what the outside trainers are making and they will resent it. Nothing will demoralize your personal training staff more.

You are building a personal training program. You want your members to build a relationship not only with an individual trainer, but with your program and your facility. An outside trainer does not promote your facility. This month he or she is using your club. Next month he or she may take his or her clients elsewhere.

## Concentrate On Retention

Member retention is particularly important to a successful personal training program. A

good personal training program cannot be built on single sessions. There is just too much overhead involved in bringing a new member into the program. A successful personal training program must retain members who train with the staff on a regular basis.

The key to retaining members is your personal training staff. "Staffing is probably the most important factor in the success rate of our members," says Ms. Walters of Rio Sport & Health. "If a new member feels intimidated, lost and never learns to use the equipment properly, chances are he or she will not enjoy the club and will terminate the membership without ever reaching (his or her) goals."

## Require Packages

One way to help the personal training program retention is to require members to purchase a package of training sessions. For example, after an initial session, members could be required to purchase sessions in groups of ten. This will turn away some members, but these are the members who would be least profitable anyway. Locking members into a group of sessions up front gives the member a chance to become accustomed to the trainer and the training process before making a decision whether or not to continue training. However, you, the club owner or GM must be sure the funds are held and distributed by the club.

## Promote Personal Training

Having a top-notch personal training program is not enough, however. A successful personal training program requires promotion. It is surprising how many gyms and health clubs offer personal training but do not promote it. At many facilities, the existence of personal training is one of the best kept secrets in the place. And, at those facilities where personal training is mentioned, members are often given little help or encouragement to take advantage of it.

Promoting personal training in your fitness facility does not have to be time consuming or expensive. If you regularly mail a newsletter or flyer to your member - and if you don't, you should - be sure to mention personal training. Include information about personal training on class schedules. And put up signs in your facility. (See Ed Gaut page 24)


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"People buy what they want, when they want it more than the money it costs" - Zig Ziglar

#### STRESS KEY ADVANTAGES OF YOUR CLUB!

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### ...Boomers

*continued from cover*

That was in 1957. It seemed to begin when his family moved to a home that was close to his elementary school. This location enabled the boy to go home for lunch everyday. And, waiting to serve lunch to this 5th grader everyday was his loving mother who always prepared hot soup and a sandwich for her son. And, sometimes two. In one school year, this growing boy not only grew in height - he grew significantly in weight - to 165 pounds! This extra weight was not muscle, but instead, fat. During the 5th grade..... he had moved to "FAT CITY." Since that time, for 40 years, he has lived in and out of "FAT CITY" in a painful lifetime battle with obesity.

In case you have never lived there, you should know that "FAT CITY" is a sad and unhappy place to live. This boy did not move to "FAT CITY" on purpose..... in fact, he, like millions of others, got there one day at a time by eating and drinking the wrong things and by not getting enough exercise. And, even though scientists say the disease is genetic, the truth still is in the caloric intake versus the caloric burn over time.

"FAT CITY" is a painfully agonizing place to live both as a kid and adult. The 5th grade boy was regularly verbally abused by some kids in his school.... they liked to call him "Wally the Walrus!" This verbal abuse hurt him deeply..... and it influenced his personality for life, he believes.

He grew to be a man. Along the way, he discovered a sport that he loved dearly. He discovered football. He fell in love with football because from that game he gained a bit of self-esteem which he greatly desired. This self-esteem came because he was good at football.... and his coach praised him for that. Praise was something he craved and it fueled a fire inside of him the first time he stepped onto a football field.

He continued to play football through the 6th - 9th grades. During his 9th grade season, he decided to quit playing because he had an early morning paper route which started his day at 4:30 a.m. and he had been offered the afternoon route as well. The day he told his coach he was quitting to take up a second paper route, his coach showed up at his home that night. His coach told him and his parents that he had a special talent as a football player and

if he would stick with the game there were colleges that would give him a full scholarship to attend and play football. He and his parents listened carefully and he then decided to come back and play on the team. He finished the 9th grade season as the top defensive player on the team.

While practicing football he lost the extra weight he had gained as a younger boy. He was a solid 170 pound, 9th grade linebacker and offensive guard. But then, his family moved again. This time from a beautiful Florida city to a town far away in a cold, cold climate. He arrived in the middle of the winter..... he knew no one..... it was cold and frozen outside. He went back to something he did best..... he ate and ate. By the spring, he had gained 25 pounds again! This was the second cycle of what has proved to be his lifetime "YO-YO" weight loss and gain syndrome.

However, something interesting happened to him this time. In the summer after 9th grade he went to a playground where he met an older fellow who taught him to lift weights. The fellow explained that by lifting weights he would become stronger, his muscles would grow and he would be able to lose some of the fat he had gained over winter. He began to work out with weights religiously.... and guess what.... he lost 20 pounds! By the beginning of the 10th grade, he weighed 175 and was in strong condition to start fall football drills. He went out for football at his new high school..... a school where he was a "new kid". Because the coaches did not know him and his football skills, he was placed on the "junior varsity" team. This was a big school with 3,600 students and over 150 kids went out for football. He did not remain as an "unknown" for long. One day the varsity was lined up to scrimmage the junior varsity. On the varsity was a great football player who was a senior, the team Captain and a "star" player. The "new kid" lined up throughout this practice game opposite this star until the "new kid" had broken out one of the "star's" front teeth early in the scrimmage, by the end of the practice the "new kid" sent the "star" to the sidelines a bloody mess with a flattened nose!

The "new kid" went on to become a starting offensive and defensive tackle on the varsity his junior year - his weight - 175 pounds. (The senior tackle playing on the opposite end of the line weighed 235.) He had a great year and moved into his senior year with

(See *Baby Boomers* page 8)

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## ...Boomers

continued from page 7

an even stronger dedication to his weight training program and to football. He was elected co-captain of his team his senior year. And, he earned All State Honors. And guess what? His coach was right..... he earned a full scholarship to a major university to attend and play football. That summer, the boy who had become a man, worked out six days a week on weights. His summer consisted of weight lifting, running and working as a life-guard during the day and a bartender at night.

He went to college a solid 185 pounds after a summer of intense weight training, distance running and sprints. He was elected as Co-Captain of his college football freshman team. But, for the positions he was recruited to play, the coaches told him he needed to gain weight to be able to compete. For two years, even though he had grown to be a solid 190 pounds, he was being bounced around like a toy by the bigger guys. In fact, he played second string for the first time in his life his sophomore and junior seasons.

But, he was determined to succeed in his college football

career. During the off-season from the fall of his junior year to the fall of his senior year, he gained 46 pounds through the intensification of his weight lifting program, going to multiple sets, low reps and a diet supplemented with Hoffman High Protein drinks mixed with raw eggs. He was promoted to first string offensive guard during spring practice. And, he arrived that fall of 1967 in excellent condition - 220 solid pounds. In fact, he had become quite an animal in the weight room. He scored the first total 100% score in the history of school's physical education department on a fitness test. He could also do over 50 one-armed push-ups, he ran the 40-yard dash in 4.9 seconds and a mile in under seven minutes. He earned 1st Team All Conference and Honorable Mention on the All American Team and his team finished with a great record of 9-2 for the year and won their post-season bowl game.

### NOT PREPARED FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE

The sad thing is that this was the end of the young man's football career and the beginning of the rest of his life..... a life in which a "health time bomb" had been set. This time bomb might

go off at any time now..... his family knows it, his friends know it and he knows it.

You see, through all of his preparation to be an outstanding college football player, this fellow failed to learn something which he needed to learn for life..... that was how to get his weight at a certain level and keep it there. This failure set the stage for many, many "Yo-Yo" cycles which have happened and continue today. But, since this last time his weight has gotten "up", he has become very discouraged due to an auto rear end collision. The constant back pain and weight gain have gotten him "down in the dumps" over it all. Overall, he has been on over 15 weight loss programs, losing an estimated 500 pounds and regaining it, off and on for 30 years. Each time he regains the weight, he goes to an all-time high. But, one thing is for sure..... he is NOT ALONE IN AMERICA!

This fellow is one of America's first "BABY BOOMERS", born on January 17, 1946. He is now 50 years old. Because of whatever has gone on in his head, he has allowed his latest "Yo-Yo" weight gain cycle to continue to the point where he is truly concerned about sudden death. He realizes that he is clearly staring death squarely in the eye. And, I

am sure he will go to heaven if and when he dies because he is a good man who loves people. His lifestyle has been bad. During his business career, he has been forced to deal with many stressful situations. And, foolishly, he has allowed a sedentary lifestyle, poor eating habits, too many adult beverages and stress to become the controlling factors in his life. The man's family and friends have begged him to change his ways, to get back onto a regular exercise program and to lose weight. He has listened, but he has not heard.

He has a psychological make-up which psychiatrists call "obsessive-compulsive". This make up of the mind causes people who have it to be intensively driven in one particular direction. Once the obsessive-compulsive person gets headed in a certain direction, it is very difficult to change that direction. But, this same drive can work miracles with his body once it has been reversed.

Due to the dilemma in which he has found himself, he had been examining himself inwardly during the past few years and he has come to some clear conclusions which will be necessary for him to save his own life.

### POTENTIAL LIFE SAVING CONCLUSIONS

(1) He acknowledges and admits in his own mind that the reflection that he now sees in the mirror everyday (and that others must suffer), is nothing short of a bad case of "EYE-POLLUTION" which must be cleared up. People formerly viewed him as handsome. Now, people view him as overweight and much less attractive.

(2) He has ventured beyond the "denial" stage in his own mind. He has not enjoyed, nor does he want to continue to live in "FAT CITY". He no longer denies that something must be done NOW or he may die. To the contrary, he now views premature death as a very high risk.

(3) He has concluded that immediate action is the logical and only next step to saving his life.

(4) He is angry and disgusted with himself. (He is not alone) Perhaps this is what he needs in order to break through his "obsessive-compulsive" psych.

The above conclusions have caused him to seek health/fitness advice so that he may take the correct LIFE SAVING ACTIONS. He calls this list of actions his NEW LIFE RESOLUTIONS.

(See Baby Boomers page 16)

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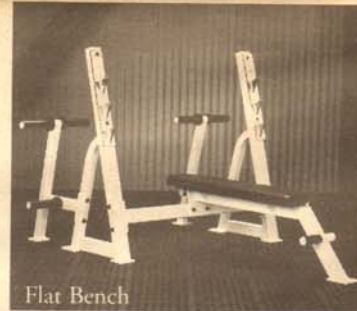
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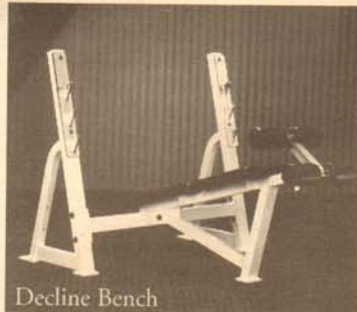
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Flat Bench

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Decline Bench

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# SALES FROM THE HEART

By Ben Midgley

What you are about to read may be difficult for many of you to swallow because it goes against what a lot of people have been taught. I am writing about how a sales transaction takes place.

Have you ever heard that doing any of the following will help you sell memberships?

(1) Never give rates over the phone. (2) Make your primary goal to close the sale on the first visit. (3) Don't take "no" for an answer. (4) Always try to sell the higher membership rate. (5) Stay in control (phone or tour). These approaches may have worked O.K. in the past, but the consumers of today are changing and they are much more informed.

In the club industry today, if you expect to be successful, feel good about yourself and be respected for what you do. You need to evolve into the 90's. The health club sales professional of today needs to be 100% focused on the success of the member, not only the success of his commission report.

To translate that in to a salesperson's language, have the

member's or prospect's best interest at heart! You need to be focused on developing a relationship with the prospect whether he joins or not. This approach will enable you to sell memberships to your club much more easy because the prospect will realize that you are concerned about him and his needs as opposed to just if he joins or not. If you look at the merit of this approach in comparison to the other type of approach, you will see we are talking about the difference between a **clever** or **smooth** salesperson and a **genuine** salesperson.

Now, I ask you, who would you rather do business with?

Of course, everyone would like to consider himself to be the **genuine** salesperson; however, if you are practicing any of those five actions covered previously, you may want to think about what motivates you to do your job and why.

Let me give you some alternative thinking that may help you make more sales each year:

(1) **PROVIDING MEMBERSHIP RATES OVER THE PHONE:** In respect to providing membership rates over the phone, I think that pro-

viding the consumer with more information before they even arrive at the facility is nothing but a benefit to you and to the prospect. I feel that way for three reasons: (a) It satisfies their need to turn speculation into fact. (b) The more information they receive over the phone, the less time you will need to spend covering it when they come in. (c) If the rates are clearly understood before they arrive, they are better prepared to make that investment when they arrive, if the facility meets their needs. There should be no worries about whether or not the prospect will come in after getting the rates over the phone. Your professionalism will be enough to encourage them to show up for the appointment.

(2) **FIRST VISIT CLOSING:** Closing the sale on the first contact should not be your primary goal. The first objective should be to develop a relationship with the prospect..... This does two things: (a) It is much easier for someone to buy from someone he knows and trusts. (b) The friendly relationship will position you for



Ben Midgley

future referrals which will eventually be your major source of business.

(3) **DON'T TAKE NO FOR AN ANSWER:** We are dealing with more educated and mature prospects and we should all take this into account when making sales presentations. The only thing I can say further relative to this policy is that it reminds me of the used car sales business.

(4) **SELLING THE HIGHER MEMBERSHIP**

**RATE:** Selling the higher membership rate is only appropriate if the prospect wants to utilize all of those services. I don't know about you, but if someone talked me into purchasing something I didn't need, I would not be very anxious to do business with him again.

(5) **CONTROL THE CONVERSATION:** Control of the conversation has no bearing on making the sale. The decision to buy should be a process that the prospect and sales person walk through together in order for the prospect to make the correct buying decision. Nobody likes to be sold but everybody likes to purchase something they want. This to me makes it obvious that the salesperson's responsibility is to help the prospect decide if membership at your club is what they want.

## THE PROFESSIONAL SALES MODEL

An example of a professionally conducted sales tour and presentation should look like this:

(See Midgley page 22)

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# UNFAIR COMPETITION IN COLORADO

By Larry N. Cline

In response to the encroachment of the special recreation districts into private businesses such as miniature golf & water parks, Bob Chado, owner of Funplex, which is located in southern Jefferson County, almost single handedly persuaded the Colorado legislature to place restrictions on special recreation districts in 1989. Unfortunately, the health club industry was not willing to put forth the effort to assist Mr. Chado in including health clubs in the special district legislation. The result has been we have been fighting special

recreation districts ever since.

In April, 1991, the proposed \$22 million bond issue by Foothills Park and Recreation District, which covers southern Jefferson County and part of Lakewood, revitalized the organization of private athletic clubs that is now known as the WAC. The result of the initial effort was that the bond issue was soundly defeated by a 2 to 1 vote.

Prior to 1991, it appears that private health clubs had lost most of the public-private battles. Boulder, Lafayette, Broomfield, Louisville, Durango, Sterling, Breckenridge and Idaho Springs all built lavish recreation centers that hurt, or in several cases, put out of business private athletic

facilities in those areas. For example, in 1990 there were three athletic clubs operating in Lafayette: Body By Effort, Sportech & Ironworks. That year, over the objections of those clubs, Lafayette opened a \$5-million, 43,000 square-foot facility. By 1991 Sportech & Ironworks had closed their doors; by 1992, the Idaho Springs Mountain Fitness Club was forced to close when the city opened a recreation center that directly competed with that business. The focus of both special recreation districts and municipalities has obviously shifted from outdoor parks, trails, and swimming pools to large, lavish recreation centers.

Against this backdrop, a number of health club owners joined forces with other industries affected by unfair government competition, including child care, landscaping, transportation, hearing aid, engineering consulting and restaurants. These associations, working closely with the Colorado Association of Commerce and Industry, introduced a bill to limit such unfair government competition. In both the 1992 and 1993 sessions of the Colorado legislature such legislation was introduced. In both ses-

sions we faced heavy opposition from the Special District Association, Municipal League and Colorado Counties, Inc. which resulted in the bills being defeated.

One positive aspect of our efforts was an agreement, signed by the City of Lakewood, which states that the private sector would be notified should the city propose providing some good or service that could compete with private sector. Although this agreement was prepared with the intention that other municipalities in Jefferson County would sign on, only Lakewood has done so.

Since the two failed legislative efforts, the real benefit of all these efforts has been the growth of the Western Association of Clubs. In addition, we assisted a citizen's group in Wheat Ridge to defeat a proposed recreation center there. On the negative side, Thornton has built an \$11.5 million mega recreation center; Golden has built a \$6 million recreation center that has injured Sunset Beach Racket and Fitness Club; Silverthorne built a large recreation center that closed the Breckenridge Athletic Club and Alamosa is proposing a recreation center that would severely injure the New Valley Athletic Club. In

addition, Foothills Park and Recreation District is proposing a bond issue that would in part renovate two of their recreation centers that directly compete with the Lakewood Athletic Club and Club USA.

On the non-profit side of unfair competition, the downtown YMCA has spent several million dollars refurbishing their fitness facilities; the Jewish Community Center has spent over \$8 million dollars renovating and building what they advertise as the finest athletic facility in the state, and the Denver Athletic Club is planning to spend several million dollars to upgrade their fitness facility. As can be seen, the battle is never over. Only through a strong association that can provide assistance to its members will we be able to continue to provide quality services to our members and remain in business in the face of unfair competition from government and non-profits.

*(This article is reprinted courtesy of Pat Pine, Executive Director of Western Association of Clubs. Larry Kline is co-owner of the Lakewood Athletic Club in Lakewood, Colorado.)*

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## TENNESSEE ATTORNEY GENERAL SUES CLUBS

**K**noxville, Tn. - The Attorney General of the State of Tennessee has filed lawsuits against four health clubs for failure to register with the Division of Consumer Affairs, according to the State Attorney General's office.

The lawsuits were filed because the clubs failed to respond to notice by the Attorney General's office that it was illegal to operate without registration. The Defendants in the lawsuits are: Dyna-Body Fitness Center,

Rhea County; Body Works II, Lawrence County; Fitness Demands, Hamilton County; and Gaines Fitness Center, Davidson County.

Twelve other clubs in the state had not been registered by March, 1995; but, responded to the notices and complied with the law by registering when they received the warning notices.

Under a 1989 law, for-profit health clubs must register with the state. As part of the registration process, the Consumer Affairs Division reviews the mem-

bership contracts and issues registration to clubs who comply with the act.

According to State Attorney General Charles W. Burson, a consumer who signed a contract with an unregistered club can cancel membership and receive a refund of services not yet delivered because the contract is not enforceable by law, Burson said.

*(Editor's Note: our thanks to Preston Fields of Knoxville, Tennessee for providing information on this situation.)*

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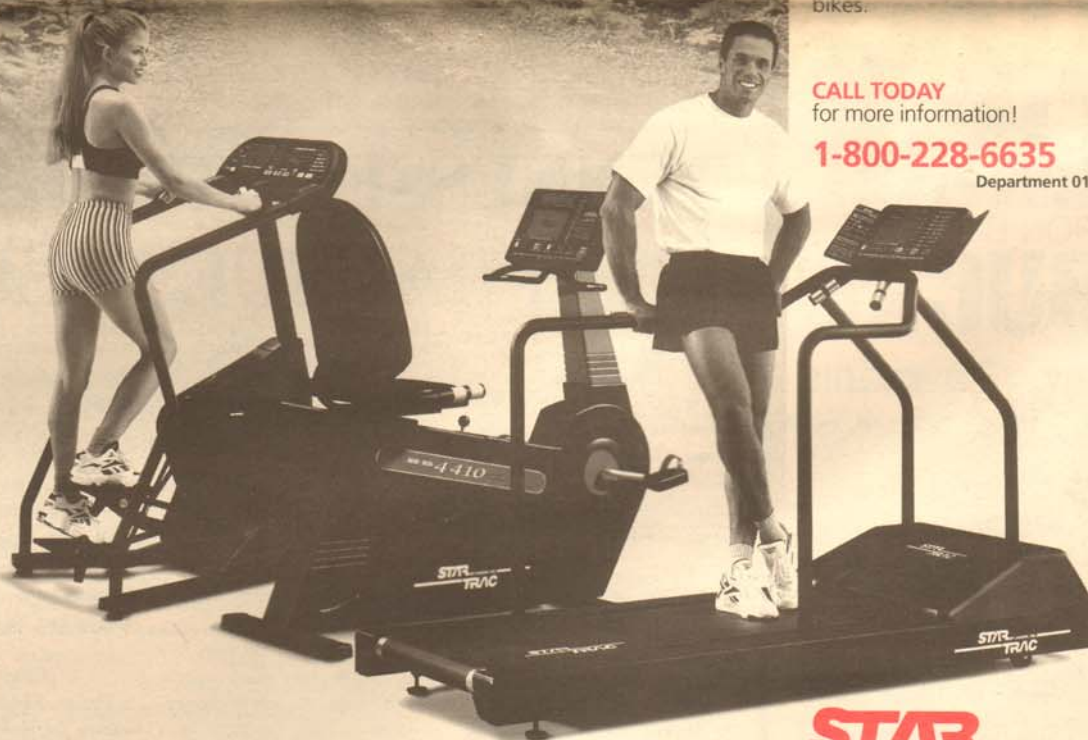
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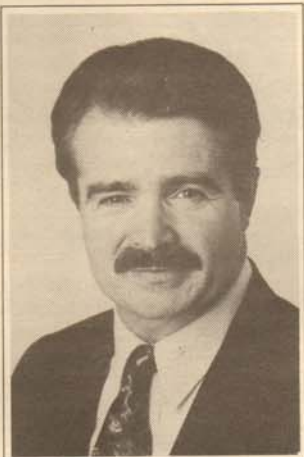


# Profits vs. Non-Profits: The Coming Armageddon

By James M. Evans

The battle has been brewing for years, and every day brings the prospect of a greater bloodbath between the profits and the non-profits of the health club industry closer to reality. There are constant skirmishes taking place across the country between commercial "profit making" clubs and YMCAs, community recreation centers and schools representing the non-profit sector. And lurking in the background are the hospitals and other healthcare facilities primed to enter the market under the guise of wellness and prevention.

According to Webster's Dictionary, "commercial" is defined as "done or acting for profit" while non-profit is defined as "not established for the purpose of making money." The latter is really a misnomer because every non-profit organization is just as interested in making a profit as any commercial health club. The real difference, of



**James Evans**

course, is that they do not play the game by the same rules.

The YMCA fired the first volley back in the seventies when it began to lose many of its adult members to the commercial health clubs. The Y philosophy has always been based on serving families, but the adult market was strongly attracted to greater sophistication and more refined facilities of the commercial health

clubs which had established themselves as a dominant force in the fitness arena. This eroded the membership base of the traditional Y which was left holding the bag in the role of baby-sitter for the kids while mom and dad worked out at the local fitness center. It wasn't long before the Y saw the writing on the wall and began to promote fund-raisers to upgrade its facilities to lure parents back into the fold. Its tax exempt status and benevolent reputation gave it the advantage of being able to attract tax deductible donations to supplement its declining membership revenues while, at the same time, not paying the same taxes as its commercial competition. Soon it was able to compete with the commercial clubs in terms of facilities and equipment. It also had the additional advantage of being able to discount its membership fees below the prevailing market value and, in many cases, drive the commercial clubs out of business. Only a few years ago a health club in Oakland, California, which had

been in business for more than 20 years was forced to close when the Y opened a new store in the same market area with discounted rates and sumptuous facilities.

Its newly enhanced image and "health club look" sometimes contradicted the charitable essence of the Y's non-profit status, but the Y was usually such a strong presence in the community that the contradiction was not strongly challenged in most cases. Protests from the commercial competition usually fell on deaf ears anyway.

The Y continued to exploit its advantage by expanding its influence in major markets where it can fill its coffers at the expense of the commercial clubs and get away with it. In fact, many of the same community leaders who are members of the local health club often serve on the local Y board, and in the spirit of community service, may unwittingly undermine their own club by supporting Y fund-raisers and activities.

Those communities not

served by the YMCA often turn to community development bonds to build recreation centers and fitness facilities for their residents even when such facilities might duplicate already existing commercial facilities in their area. To attract residents to utilize the facilities, the communities offer its residents low or subsidized rates which, again, undercut the commercial facilities and drive them out of business. In some cases communities have even turned against the Y and built competing facilities when it has been felt that the Y is not a strong enough presence to serve the needs of the populace.

High schools, community colleges and major universities, too, have jumped on the fitness bandwagon by opening their facilities to lure more patrons and increase revenues. Iowa State University in Ames, for example, opened a magnificent new recreation center just a few years ago for students and faculty and community residents over the protests of a local fitness center operator who

(See Evans page 18)

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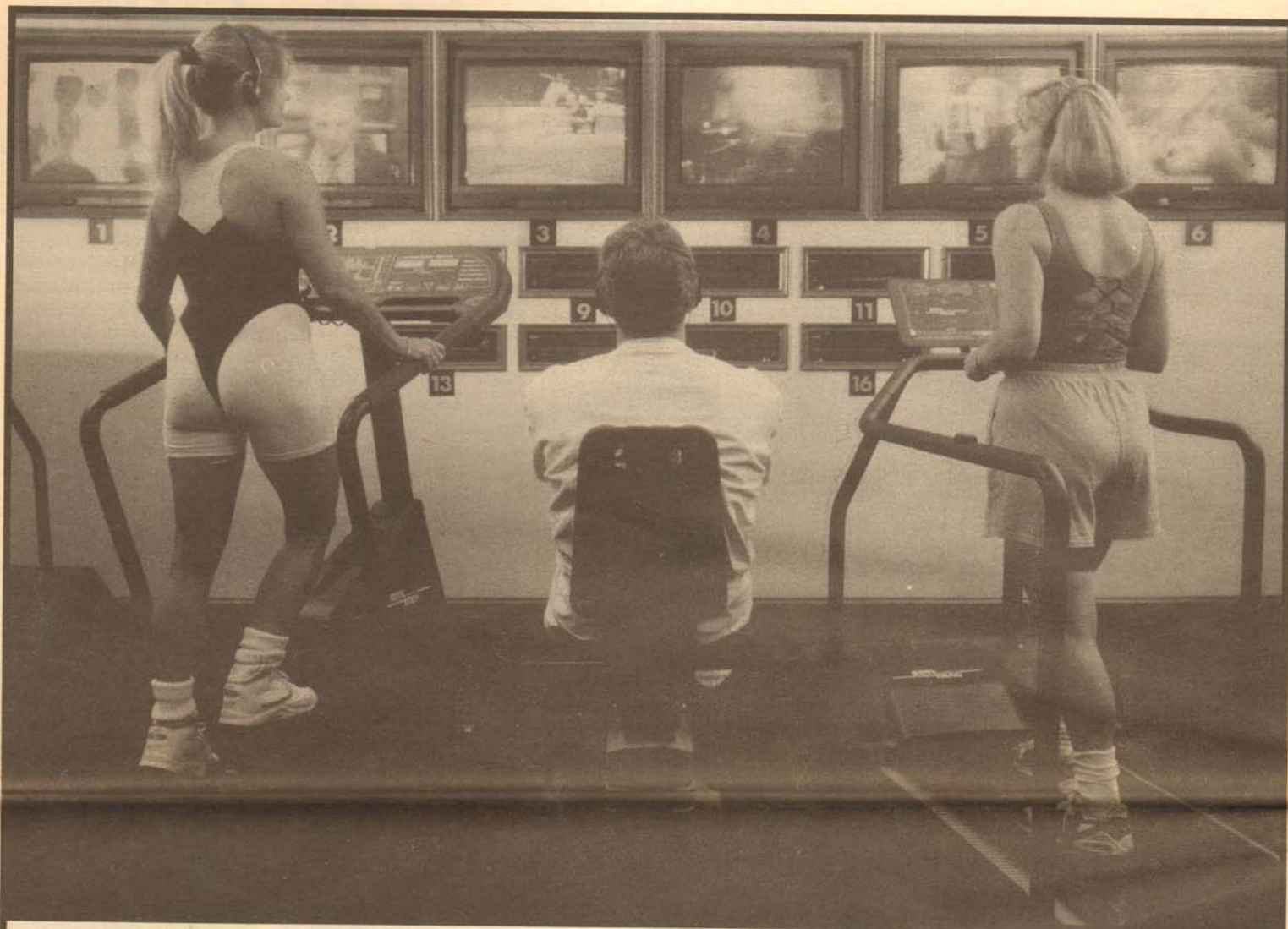
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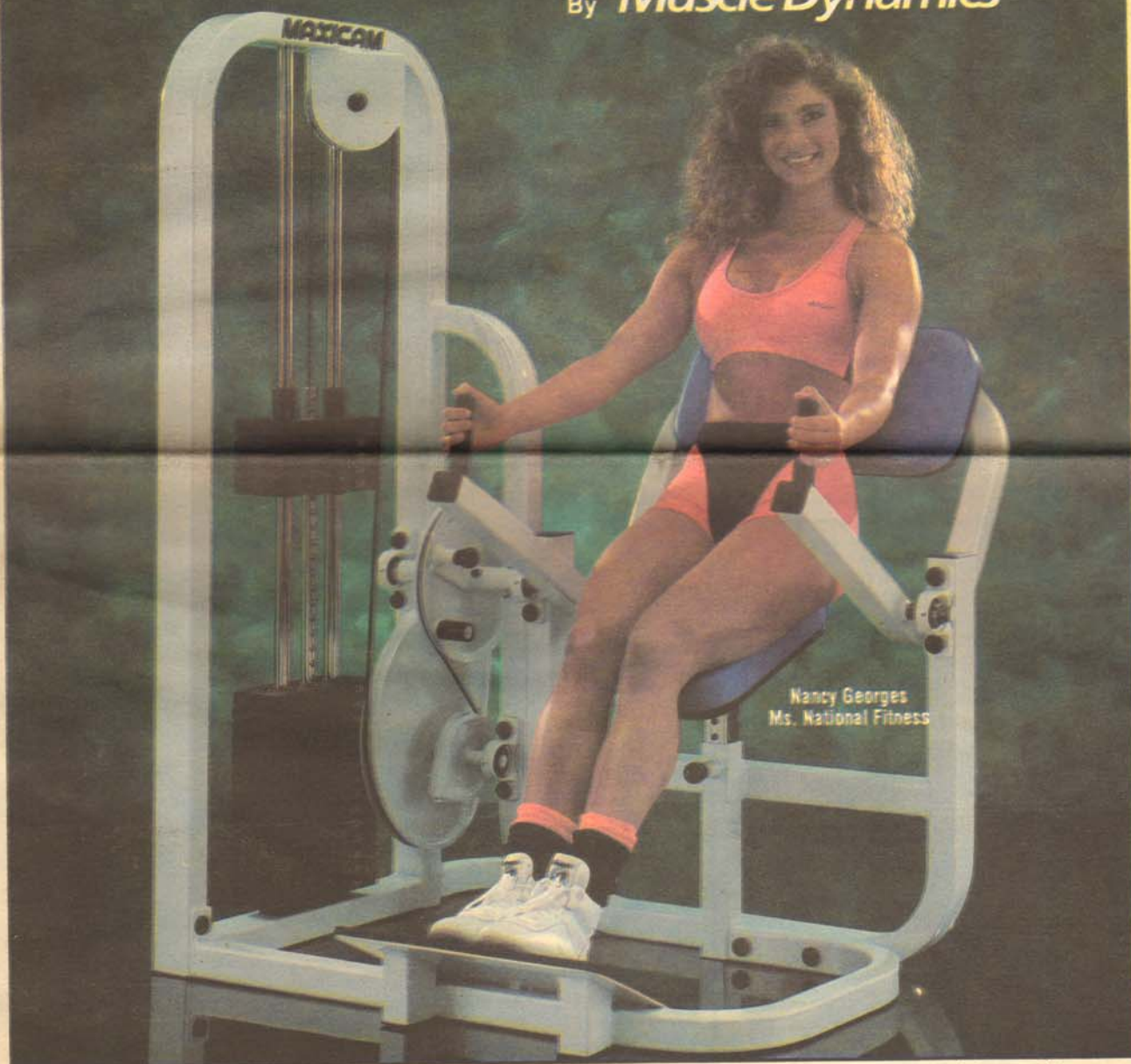
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# PR 101 - Is PR Really Free Advertising?

By Michael Hoffman,  
 Heart Communications

**Y**es, PR is very, very inexpensive compared to advertising. It's not free, but a PR newspaper story, radio show or TV coverage should cost about one tenth as much as an advertisement of the same size or air time. The real difference, though lies in the superior information content of a PR story, compared to your typical advertisement.

## Price Bargains - The Most Common Type of Advertising

**O**pen up the Saturday or Sunday LOS ANGELES TIMES, and you will find a half-dozen quarter- or half-page health club ads. The

graphics and copy content are almost always the same. They show a foxy younger woman or couple, and the copy pushes a pricing scheme. You hardly ever read anything about fitness programming, exercise equipment technology or staff education and qualifications.

Sure, shoppers are concerned about prices. However, if you're going to spend hundreds or even thousands of dollars on an ad, you could at least beef it up with some information about the quality of your staff, physical plant and services. Read a physical therapy office ad, and you will notice solid informational content, not price offering. If more clubs improved the content of their ads, people wouldn't just shop for price. You are actually making people think that price is the single best reason to join your club - just

because you want a quick cash fix.

## PR \$\$ vs Ad \$\$

**L**et's look at a hypothetical case comparing the cost of PR coverage vs the cost of advertising. A quarter page black-and-white ad in a hypothetical newspaper called the Anywhere, USA Sentinel sports section costs \$850. A one-eighth page ad costs \$425; a half-page \$1,700. A heavy ad budget could reach over \$40,000 a year.

The copy and visuals in that \$40,000 worth of ads can be educational or they can be weak on information. Too often, the pricing angle predominates, and the money you spend only makes your prospects aware of your pricing, nothing else.

## Advertising Equivalency

**O**n the flip side, a quarter-page news story in your local paper might talk about how your staff teaches senior citizens the proper use of treadmills. Accompanied by a live action candid photo of a senior and one of your trainers in action, this story has high information impact. It is certainly more credible and inspiring than a price-oriented ad of the same size.

You pay the graphic production costs of the ad, let's say \$150, and you pay for the space - \$850, for a \$1,000 total. The PR story, on the other hand, costs you nothing more than press release writing time and postage, a few phone calls and maybe a lunch for the reporter you host in your club. Let's call this total cost \$100. The PR story has an advertis-



**Michael Hoffman**

ing equivalency of \$850, because it is the same size as the quarter-page ad.

A comprehensive PR program that continually produces news stories of interest about your physical plant, personnel, community affairs programs and equipment, should generate at least \$20,000 in annual advertising equivalency for a cost of about \$3,750.

## Are You Getting What You Pay For?

**I** am not trying to be an ad-basher, but only to explain that it is more expensive and difficult to cram credible, valuable information into an advertisement than it is to pro-

duce meaningful PR stories. Do a content analysis of your current ad campaign. Do your ads tell a complete story about all the elements of your club? Or do they focus on a single type of information? Ask yourself these questions: "Do my ads educate and motivate prospects to join my club? Am I getting what I'm paying for?"

If you decide you are not getting a fair shake for your advertising budget, you should do two things: 1) expand your ad content to include more information on more diverse topics, and 2) cut the ad

budget by about 40 percent and devote those dollars to a PR campaign.

At the end of one year, compare the response impact of the ads versus the PR stories. You will discover that PR generates as much traffic as ads, if not more. This traffic generating power of PR is why established businesses in competitive markets all over the country supplement their advertising with PR. The bottom line is -strong PR is actually a cheaper, more powerful way to advertise the quality of your club.

(Michael Hoffman is the President of California-based Heart Communications and can be contacted at: (714) 831-7971; Fax: (714) 643-1891; e-mail: heartcomm@aol.com. This is #4 in the PR 101 Education Series from Heart Communications.)

## CLUB FOR SALE

### ...Boomers

continued from page 8

### NEW LIFE RESOLUTIONS

(1) PRIORITY FOR EXERCISE: Make regular cardiovascular and strength exercise at least four times a week his #1 PRIORITY IN LIFE.

(2) DIET MODIFICATION: Reduce red meat. Increase intake of fish, vegetables and fruit. Reduce intake of fatty and foods with sugar. Eat a lite-breakfast everyday. Stop eating after 9:00 p.m.

(3) REDUCE AND MODERATE consumption of "adult beverages."

(4) GO TO BED AND GET UP EARLIER.

(5) JUST DO IT!

(6) PRAY A LOT!  
 Even though his list is brief and simple, it represents a 180 degree reversal in direction. He seems to truly want to make these changes in his lifestyle. And, the TRUTH IS..... just like the truth is for literally millions of American Boomers and others in Fat City..... it won't happen by talking about it! It will only happen if he gets up off his fat butt and goes at it everyday!

(Next month we will report to you about one of the most successful fitness gurus in America when it comes to his own personal fitness results and the teaching of others. His name..... BOB DELMONTEQUE. Fitness teacher, author, speaker and expert on aging, this 75-year-old man is a truly amazing person. His photo is shown on our front page this month and the article entitled bob Delmonteque - Super Senior - Fit For Life is on page 19.)

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# CLUB MANAGERS: Let's Cast Out The Caste-System In Tennis!

By Spike Gonzales

**T**hose of us in the tennis field have become accustomed to lamenting the growth of golf and the apparent stagnation of tennis. "How can this be?", we ask, "when tennis provides more exercise and excitement, takes less time and is less expensive?"

**CONSIDER THIS:** Look at a golf clubhouse area when players are finishing their rounds. Compare it to a tennis clubhouse. At each table in the golf clubhouse you see a variety of playing ability levels. The person who has been playing his or her whole life is sitting and socializing with an intermediate player, another advanced player and a new member who has only been playing for 12 months.

In the tennis clubhouse you see a segmentation of the total field of players. At one table are those who've played most of their lives, at another you see a group of "4.0" team players, and at another a group of lower intermediates. It

would be surprising, in fact, to see a table of players who've recently taken up the game. Not only would the 4.0's not intermix with the lower intermediates, but newcomers to the game are almost personae non grata, people making it a little tougher for the veterans to get the number one court at the ideal time.

In tennis we're stratified! Every playing level has become a "clique", separating itself from the levels below it. (There is actually an incentive to avoid sitting with the lower level players. They might ask you to play!) Except at the most well-managed clubs (managing of the "tennis culture" that is), the playing strata reflect the segmentation of the social life.

What happens as a result? First, sooner or later players give up the game. They feel the pressure of competitiveness both on and off the court. Second, who knows how anyone ever gets started with the game! The beginner is the lowest of the caste system, virtually untouchable, and regarded as a burden to the rest of the membership.

Why the difference between golf and tennis? In golf players are handicapped! Players in a foursome of golf each get to start their match with a pre-designated number of strokes they can take off of their score, thereby ensuring the game of the day has an unpredictable outcome. Everyone has a chance to win, and everyone benefits from it in terms of the fun!

In tennis there has been no handicapping. Even with your favorite playing partners, you know who is going to win 80% of the time. In fact, quite often the better player actually "lets up" in order to produce a little excitement in the match outcome. Our lack of handicapping not only inhibits integration of the playing levels, but hurts the quality of play for the better players.

So let's get on the ball! While there is probably no way to make tennis enjoyable in matches of players of great differences of ability, there is a way to provide for fun tennis among players with



**Spike Gonzales**

NTRP differences up to a point. Players with a 4.0 rating, for instance, could enjoy matches with those as low as 3.0 or those as high as 5.0. For a club this means that each player increases his or her playing partner selection by at least 200%!

Those of us administering tennis programs should carefully look at the Tencap Tennis Handicapping System. It has been

developed for over two decades, actually since before the NTRP; and it is working to improve enjoyment of tennis. Perhaps the tennis governing bodies could bring resources to improve it even more, but let's at least get started with it!

Without developing a universal handicap system, tennis will be destined to pale forever with golf in providing fun in both its social and competitive arenas.

(SPIKE GONZALES is the owner of the Naples Racquet Club in Naples, Florida. An influential member of the USTA and USPTA, he was instrumental in developing senior tennis programming and in starting the National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP) in the late 1970's. He has initiated programs that have brought more than 150,000 people into tennis throughout the U.S. and Canada, and is presently helping develop the Tencap tennis handicapping system.)

## ...Jim Evans

continued from page 13

had been actively involved in the community, paid his taxes, and provided employment for dozens of people for more than a decade. In other words, he played by what he thought were the rules when, in fact, the rules were quite different when push came to shove. Again, the power and influence of the local college superseded the rights of the private business owner. In this case the local club owner was able to mandate certain stipulations with regard to membership rates charged at the recreation center which allowed him to salvage his business albeit not as profitably.

Hospitals may be the greatest threat of all to the commercial health club industry in the long run..... and to other non-profits as well..... because of their perceived credibility and vast medical resources. Most hospitals are still fairly naive when it comes to oper-

ating a successful health club venture in conjunction with their medical services. Their professional pride often causes them to make the classic mistake of trying to "re-write the book" their own way rather than acknowledge anything that the commercial industry might have already accomplished during the past forty years and learn from it. Nevertheless, more than 300 hospitals nationwide have already acquired or constructed wellness facilities and John Greene, Executive Director of the Association of Hospital Health and Fitness (AHHF) projects that more than 700 hospitals will enter the fitness market within the next five years.

Many physicians have been reluctant to accept the fitness lifestyle because it might conceivably reduce the number of patients available for them to treat. If people take better care of themselves, they don't have to visit the doctor as often. However, managed care and capitation in healthcare will mandate wellness

and prevention, and physicians are already beginning to fall in line with the new philosophy. The medical community has the wherewithal to take the fitness industry to new heights, but the commercial club industry will likely pay the price for its success.

Sooner or later the battle must be waged to even the playing field for all participants in the industry or the non-profits will eventually win all the marbles. It is inevitable. The commercial clubs are being battered on all fronts and cannot expect to survive in the end until and unless they can secure the same advantages as the non-profits or, conversely, force the non-profits to forfeit some of their advantages accordingly. Neither prospect is very likely. IHRSA has mounted the most serious offensive to bring things into line, but I fear the effort will be futile supporting the adage that sometimes you can be right and still lose.

In the meantime com-

mercial clubs are still fighting and scratching among themselves to survive, and the competition is fierce. A recent count of health clubs in San Francisco alone showed more than 70 different facilities-not counting the YMCA and community centers in town!

Other market areas are similarly saturated. Some of the larger companies such as Family Fitness and 24-Hour Nautilus have merged to present a larger, more formidable front and they, along with Bally, will soon go public to further strengthen their position and raise revenues for greater expansion. Some clubs have foreseen the future and have formed alliances with hospitals. Still others have been able to align themselves with the YMCA, community centers and schools but to a lesser degree. The majority of them will continue to forge their own identity while they still can.

A pessimistic forecast for the future? Yes, but only because the war will necessarily go

on for years, and there will be many casualties along the way on both sides until this whole thing begins to shake out. There will be mergers and joint ventures, new and larger facilities, advancements in equipment and technology, more innovative promotions, creative financing, more public offerings; in short, the industry will thrive in the midst of the bloodletting. In the end it will look quite different from what it is today, and every faction will have contributed to the final outcome. The amalgamation of the profits and the non-profits in the industry, in whatever the final form may be, will be able to better serve the health and fitness needs of people everywhere. I wish I could be around to see the finish, but it won't happen in my lifetime. It will be exciting to be part of the brawl in the meantime though.

(Jim Evans is Executive Director of Heartland Health Center in Boone, Iowa, and President of Evans & Associates Club Consultants in Des Moines.)



# Bob Delmonteque SUPER SENIOR... FIT FOR LIFE

When Bob Delmonteque talks about fitness, people listen. Maybe it's because he's been a physical trainer for stars ranging from Errol Flynn to Paul Newman. Maybe it's because Delmonteque, former owner of a chain of gyms in Texas, developed the first fitness program for the NASA astronauts back in the 1960s. Maybe it's because he first became a devotee of fitness and a healthy lifestyle at age 13 - and still, at age 75 has a traffic-stopping physique envied by men a third his age. It certainly has something to do with the vitality and positive outlook he brings to everything he does. Bob Delmonteque talks to MoreLife about his philosophy of personal fitness as a way of life.

## Bob Delmonteque... On Food and Nutrition

When I was a kid, we had great fresh fruits and vegetables, and the chickens used to run around instead of being force-fed and given steroids. A good diet means eating foods that are as close to nature as possible, with no preservatives, no additives. When a fruit or vegetable is picked green, then artificially ripened and covered with wax, a lot of the food value is lost. And what you eat today, you walk and talk tomorrow.

It's important to eat things in the proper proportions. Approximately 25 percent of what you eat should be protein, which burns fat and rebuilds cell tissue and muscle. Carbohydrates - watery vegetables and fresh fruits, breads, potatoes, pasta, rice, beans - are your source of energy; they should be about 50 to 60 percent of what you eat. Only about 15 to 20 percent of calories should come from fat. But most Americans get about 40 to 60 percent of their calories from fat. Instead of the traditional three meals a day, you should eat five smaller meals. "How can you do that?" people say. Well, I brown-bag it. For my "in-between" meals I put in some apples and pears, maybe low-fat cheese. The worst thing to do is not eat anything for five, six, seven hours. You have to keep that metabolic rate up. It's like throwing coal on a furnace to keep it burning. And you really need to stroke up in the morning. I try to eat like a king in the morning, like a prince in the afternoon, and like a pauper at night. Like the Europeans do. And drink a lot of water - if the muscle cells aren't full of water they become wrinkled and haggard, and then you look old; everything just hangs.

## On Exercise...

Back in the '70s, they laughed

at me when I was pushing aerobic training, because nobody knew anything about it. Aerobic training is the secret of longevity because you strengthen your heart and lungs. Aerobic means "oxygen-demanding," and the more oxygen you take in, the more stamina, endurance, energy you have.

Walking and hiking are the two best exercises you can do, and all they cost is shoe leather. Hippocrates, the old Greek patron of medicine, prescribed walking for all his patients whether they had heart conditions or weight problems or nervous disorders. He said you have two doctors: your right leg and your left leg. When your mind and body are out of whack, you call on these doctors and you get well. Walking is for everybody - and the chance of injury is almost nil, unlike jogging.

I haven't changed any of my exercise habits as I've gotten older. And I've never had a backache, because I do a lot of stretching exercises. Exercise has three parts: Weight training builds bone density and guards against osteoporosis, and gives you lean muscle mass. Aerobic exercise builds a strong cardiovascular and pulmonary system. And finally, stretching is crucial. As you grow older, your tendons, ligaments, and muscles tend to shorten - especially if you spend a lot of time just sitting in a rocking chair. Activity is life, stagnation is death. Action is the key to our well-being.

## On Keeping Up Appearances...

I give myself facials every morning and every night. When I was with Bernarr Macfadden [fitness guru and publisher of Physical Culture magazine, to which Delmonteque contributed], I took a course in Sweden called face-lifting without surgery. So every morning and night, I massage using a facial cream 100 times in the crevices of the eyes and forehead, then up the sides of the cheeks. To keep my hair healthy, Macfadden had me stand on my head for 15 minutes a day (I do about 5 to 7 minutes now). And I brush my hair 100 times down and 100 times back every morning and night.

## On the Power of Positive Thinking...

There are four main elements to a healthy lifestyle: proper diet, proper exercise, proper rest and the proper mental attitude. Let me tell you, that last one is very important: as the Bible says, "You are as you thinketh." I believe you've got to enjoy what you're doing, you've got to

(See Delmonteque page 24)

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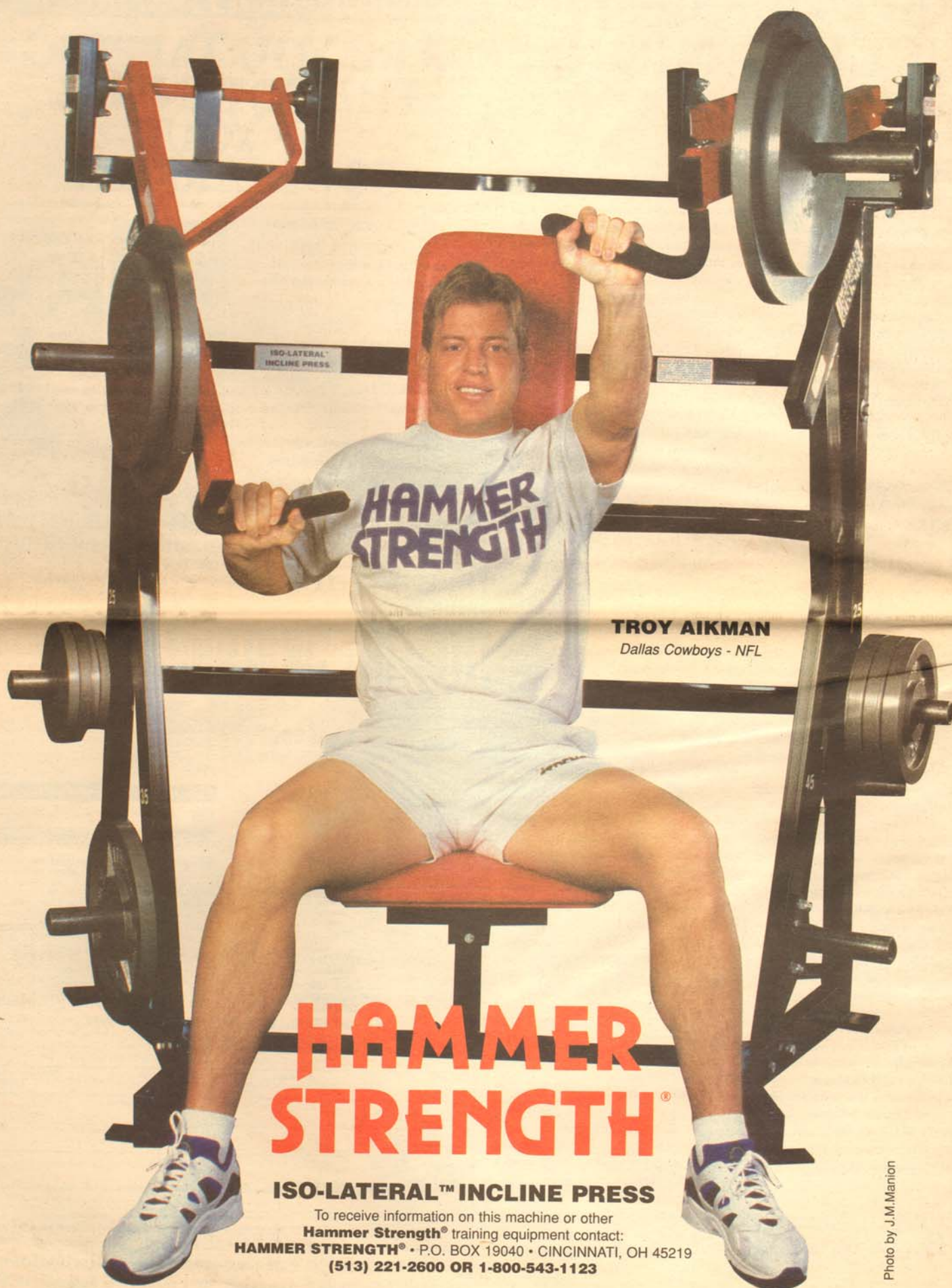
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Photo by J.M. Marion



## ...Hard Sell

continued from cover

illuminated.

From a consumer point of view, this is an excellent article which truly "tells it like it is." From a club operator's point of view, the *Consumer Reports* article is a PR disaster! For example: The first paragraph in the article gives the details of a membership purchase by two women who fall victim to a health club chain's "Bait and Switch" tactics. Citing the fact that they had responded to an ad touting membership for only \$10 per month, the writer then describes the "Hard Sell" tactics and the fact that the two women departed with memberships costing \$70 down and \$30 per month. The article goes on to explain their disappointment with the lack of service that they were promised. Then, the article explains that when the women decided they no longer wanted to be members due to the lack of service, they were harassed by the finance company to whom the contract had been sold.

A classic quote by the reporter on this first page of the *Consumer Reports* piece was: "As the *Illsleys* discovered, joining a health club can be as tricky as buying a used car." And, it is this quote about our industry..... published in what is probably the most reputable and "consumer friendly" publication in the country, that bothers me so much. I mean, after 50 years..... our infant industry is still compared to the "used car" business. Don't get me wrong..... I've got nothing against used cars or used car salesmen. In fact, I drive a "used car." But, you get my drift.

Then, the article went on to chronicle the health club shopping experiences the reporter had when she "shopped" 20 clubs in New York City, Seattle and Chicago.

The article read: "WHAT THEY'LL TELL YOU" - "The ads make it sound as if joining a health club is simple, fun and inexpensive. But once you walk in the door, things can change. While posing as a potential customer, our reporter encountered: (1) Prices that won't stand still. (2) The Special. (3) The Stonewall. (4) The Snub. In these paragraphs she explained the high interest rates clubs charge, the "coincidence" that clubs just happen to have a "one-day" special if you join that day only, that some clubs would

not let her take a contract home and read it before she signed it, and how one club "snubbed" her and spoke with sarcasm to her when she would not sign on the spot.

### THE "EDUCATED" CONSUMER HEALTH CLUB SHOPPER

The reporter then provided her readers with a list of things that all health club shoppers should know and use in their selection process. These were: (1) Join near home. (2) Check the atmosphere. (3) Check the price. (4) Check payment options. (5) Check membership types. (6) Do a trial workout. (7) Check the classes. (8) Check equipment. (9) Check other features. (10) Check the crowds. (11) Check the employees. (12) Check the contract.

The message for smart club operators here is simple. Consumers everywhere are being trained about how to shop for a health club. They know more now than ever before. They are in a position to sniff out and avoid the "HARD SELL". And, they are more likely now, than ever in our industry's history, to walk out the door when they experience a "schlock" operation. So, what can you, as a club operator do? You can study and come to clearly understand what the consumers now know, what they want and what they expect. And, remember what they want and expect may not be what you want or believe is right from your past experience. Once you begin to break through the "denial" of what you want vs what they want, you can then modify your operation to address those issues "head on."

### HEALTH CLUB DINOSAUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

I think it might be kind of like how dinosaurs became extinct..... somehow, over the thousands of years on our planet, the dinosaurs did not evolve and respond to the changes in the world around them..... and what happened? They disappeared from the face of the earth! The same is going on in the health club industry..... some of you know and understand it. Some of you do not.

Some of the "health club dinosaurs" that I see as a threat to

those who continue to operate in this manner are: (1) "Bait and switch" advertising. (2) High pressure sales techniques and the use of "closing rooms" and the infamous "turn-over." (3) Contracts with high interest rates which are sold to financial institutions for cash up front..... leaving the buyer high and dry with respect to his/her relationship with the club. (4) TODAY-ONLY closes..... i.e. using the "threat" that this "great deal" is good today and today only. (5) "Long Term (two or three years) - Locked in contract terms" where the person has no choice but to continue paying his/her dues or get sued and have his/her credit damaged. (6) All-cash lifetime membership deals providing two or three years worth of membership for large up-front cash payments. These deals are even more risky for clubs who guarantee future low renewal rates for those who "cashout." (7) Ignoring or failing to respond to the consumers right to cancel during the "cooling off" period required by law in most states.

The club operators who have crafted their businesses to be truly "Consumer Friendly" for the most part avoid the DINOSAUR Policies and Procedures. In some cases, a change in club policy to avoid the Dinosaur list above is difficult and painful for the club owner. Nonetheless, if you examine the list and carefully study alternative plans, you can do it. For example, one of the very toughest bad dinosaur habits to break is the "selling of contract paper" for cash and the selling of multiple years at discount for cash up front. Everytime a club owner in this drill on a regular basis contemplates change, the same question emerges..... and it is a tough question indeed..... where do I get the cash to continue operations when I switch to monthly dues? And, unfortunately, in some cases, there is no answer. Except maybe either inheritance or borrowing of cash to bridge the "cash gap" created when selling paper and/or "cash deals" is reduced or eliminated. But, I can tell you one thing..... prolonged continuation of both the "selling of paper" and of "cash deals" which are deeply discounted with low future renewals are sure formulas for dinosaurism!

The *Consumer Reports*

article continued to describe some of the "bad apples" that are still in the health club industry and what has been done by various governmental agencies to stop them.

Last, the article included a section entitled: "OTHER OPTIONS" and I quote: "The U.S. has more than 2000 YMCAs and YWCAs; about 250 YMHA's, YWHAs and Jewish Community Centers; and countless spas, university gyms, and workout rooms in apartment buildings. Some are a good, affordable alternative to commercial health clubs."

Interestingly, this reporter ended her article with a listing of "other options" to commercial health clubs. Unfortunately, this is the exact same way the Atlanta TV special report entitled: "Health Club Hard Sell" was wrapped up..... with the reporter

standing inside an upscale Atlanta area YMCA touting their facilities, equipment and services and explaining that the YMCA provides "monthly dues" membership plans which dramatically contrast the membership plans of many of the Atlanta area health clubs.

Next month, we will report in detail on the WSB-TV Report entitled: "HEALTH CLUB HARD SELL."

(Norm Cates, Jr. is the Publisher and Editor of *The CLUB INSIDER* News. Cates is a 20+ year veteran of the club industry and was a co-founder and the first President of (IHRSA) The International Health, Racquet and Sports Club Association. Cates can be reached at (800) 700-2120 or Fax: (770) 933-9698.)



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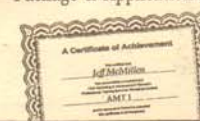
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• An industry legend & president of Club Marketing and Management Services, Mike is one of the leading club marketers in the U.S. He is a contributing author to numerous fitness journals, and is the guest lecturer for such organizations as IHRSA, Club Industry and BodyLife. Mike has been in the club business since 1965, during which time he has been involved in every level of the club operations, including a prestigious stay at the Los Angeles Athletic Club. Along the way he has owned and operated his own clubs. As a consultant, Mike has been involved in the development or management of over 1500 different clubs worldwide. He is quite simply the supreme educator who will transform your approach to club marketing and management.

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# Star Trac Discontinues Skywalker Representation

**T**ustin, California - Jim McPartland, Chief Operating Officer of Star Trac by Unisen, a world-wide manufacturer and distributor of cardiovascular exercise equipment, announced that, effective January 1, 1996, the company will no longer be representing the Reebok Skywalker line of aerobic trainers, manufactured by Sports Specific of America, a Dallas-based

company.

"It was an amicable parting of the ways," said McPartland. "We believe in the viability of the Skywalker product and in its potential in the market. It's just that we found that distributing this product did not fit into Star Trac's overall business strategy for 1996 and beyond. We successfully expanded our own product line in 1995 and will continue the growth

of our own product line in the future. That is where we will focus our resources."

Star Trac and Sports Specific of America will continue to work together to ensure that customers who purchased the Skywalker product through Star Trac enjoy the same level of service they have come to expect from Star Trac. "Our customers are foremost in our mind, and

we'll be there to represent them through this transition," said McPartland. "We are working closely with SSA to fulfill orders for the Skywalker product, and keep the changeover as transparent as possible to our customers."

Star Trac is a leading manufacturer of health club treadmills world-wide and recently experienced a surge in sales generated by its introduction in Oc-

tober, 1995, of the new 4000 series of treadmills, stairclimbers, upright and recumbent bikes, all of which feature its patented contact heart rate monitoring system.

For information on Star Trac products, call: 1-800-228-6635. World headquarters for Star Trac by Unisen, Inc. is: 14352 Chambers Road, Tustin, Ca. 92860. Telephone 714-669-1660 or fax: 714-838-6286.

## ...Midgley

continued from page 10

**STEP #1- Prospect enters the club on appointment or as a "walk-in".** He/she should always receive a warm, friendly and sincere greeting and welcome to the club. The professionalism and dedication of your reception staff to providing everyone who enters the club with the same warm, friendly and sincere greeting is crucial to the club at all times. You should always convey this same feeling when you meet the prospect.

**STEP #2- QUESTION -** Begin the relationship with the prospect by asking him what he is seeking in the club.

**STEP #3 - LISTEN CAREFULLY -** Listen very carefully to what the person tells you.

**STEP #4 - DETERMINE INTERESTS -** As you begin the tour, the salesperson and the prospect determine together if the club can offer what the prospect is looking for. If yes, explain the service(s). If no, explain why and offer alternatives. (Remember during the tour only cover his area of interest; i.e. if they are not interested in aerobics, don't go to the aerobics room).

**STEP #5 - DISCUSS ADVANTAGES OF MEMBERSHIP -** The salesperson and the prospect discuss the advantages and disadvantages (if any) of a membership.

**STEP #6 - ASK THE PROSPECT** if he would like to

review the cost.

**STEP #7 - IF YES,** cover the cost with sensitivity.

**STEP #8 - CLOSE THE SALE -** If the cost works and needs are met the prospect will join. If the cost does not work and needs are not met the prospect will not join today. A sincere thank you and your business card will allow them to leave with a good impression.

This is a very easy and pleasant sales process for someone to experience. Now, understandably, many of you are dwelling on, "what if they didn't join?" Let's look at that. A prospect comes in, goes through all the appropriate steps, decides membership is not for him, yet the salesperson continually attempts a close. Even if the prospect gets a

thank you from the salesperson before they leave, they know, due to all the attempts to close the sale - the primary goal was their money and they will then tell their friends! On the other hand, if someone decides not to join after being asked by the salesperson and then immediately receives a sincere show of appreciation for coming in and your business card, they will leave knowing your primary goal was helping them get what they want and they will tell their friends. The chances are also in your favor that they will be back, especially, if they compare you to another club salesperson that treats them like a dollar sign. People will always end up where they feel respected and appreciated.

## WHICH REPUTATION WOULD YOU RATHER YOUR CLUB HAVE?

(Editor's Note : Ben Midgley is the Fitness Director and Corporate Sales Director at the Saco Sport and Fitness Club, in Saco, Maine. Last month, Ben was awarded the IHRSA Salesperson of the Year Trophy for his efforts during the last year which included personally selling over 900 memberships. This is the first article in a series intended to help retrain the club industry on the value of honesty, care and concern for the people who patronize your business. Ben may be contacted at: (207) 284-5953 and welcomes anyone seeking help in sales to give him a call.)

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## ...Delmonteque

continued from page 19

have goals and dreams, you've got to have a burning desire, a mental image of who you want to be and what you want to do. Then you have to have faith, enthusiasm, hope, a blazing determination - and you have to persist until you succeed. Mental attitude is everything. Your brain is kind of an apothecary: if you're positive and smiling and laughing, you release these positive juices, endorphines and other chemicals with healing properties.

So if you want to look good and feel good and live life to the fullest, I think you can do so by tapping the power of the mind.

You know, there are 50,000 people in America over 100 years old. I think that number will double in the next 10 years because people are becoming more positive and health-conscious.

### On Stress and Setbacks...

Getting under the gun, getting stressed out is the worst

thing you can do. You can't have this negativity. Life's a game: You either win or you lose. But you can't win all the time. I've never been stressed out a day in my life. I've gone broke twice - really gone broke, where I lost millions of dollars. I'd lose it on a Tuesday, and the next Monday I'm back out there making it back, just as if nothing had happened.

You can't get anywhere or be anybody unless you've been knocked down once or twice. Going through a divorce, losing loved ones, being defeated in

whatever you're attempting - there are lots of traumas. But you have to pick yourself up and keep trying. Enjoy life, laugh and be happy.

### On Staying Young...

You know, I don't think of myself as 75. I think I'm a teenager - I really do. Sometimes I dress up in my teenage attire, the oversize shirt and tight pants just like what my grandkids wear. And my grandkids don't call me

Granddad, they call me Bob.

It's incredible what the mind can do. What ever the mind can conceive, the body can achieve. I believe you can do whatever you want to do in life, be whatever you want to be, and go wherever you want to go if you want it bad enough.

(Reprinted from *MoreLife Magazine*, A Cigna HealthCare pub. To order Bob Delmonteque's book *Lifelong Fitness: How To Look Great At Any Age*, send a check for \$19.95 (includes shipping and personal autograph) to: *Lifelong Fitness*, 23916 Deville Way, Malibu, CA 90265.)

## ...Ed Gaut

continued from page 6

cility about personal training with profiles of your personal training staff.

Also consider having your personal training staff offer an occasional free group seminar

on some aspect of fitness training. This is a great way for your members to meet your

training staff and to consider the option of one-on-one training. Sport & Health, for example, offers free fitness clinics in its clubs. Ms. Ray explains that these clinics are targeted at specific audiences who might be most receptive to personal training, such as seniors, and serve as an opportunity for the clubs to introduce members to the concept of personal training.

### Automate Personal Training

Running a successful personal training program in your facility requires scheduling member training sessions, rescheduling member training sessions, billing members, keeping track of member payments, scheduling trainers and keeping track of trainer income. There is now software available to automate these tasks. Take advantage of it. Not only will it save you and your staff time and effort. It will enable you to manage your personal training program better by giving you the information you need to make smart decisions.

### Treat Personal Training As A Business

Finally, treat your personal training program as a business unto itself. It should and can be profitable. The days of throwing a few college students out onto the floor, giving them shirts which say "personal trainer," paying them as little as possible and hoping for the best, are over. Members expect and deserve experienced, well-trained personal trainers. How you hire and manage your trainers can mean the difference between a personal training program which is a cash cow and one that is a money pit.

(Ed Gaut is a Vice President of Willow Creek Publications and a nationally known personal trainer and fitness author. Next Month: *Certifiably Fit*. Willow Creek Publications produces and sells *The Personal Trainer and Fitness Class Scheduler* for windows shown on the next page.)

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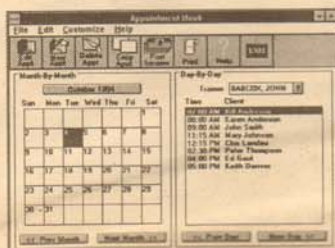
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# TWO EASY WAYS TO MANAGE YOUR FITNESS INSTRUCTORS

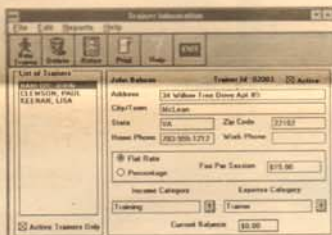
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- ◆ Print trainer schedules for a day, week, or month
- ◆ Quickly find a training session



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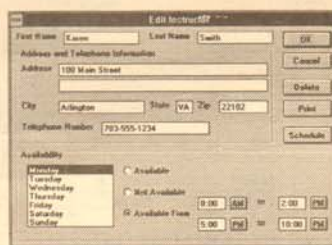
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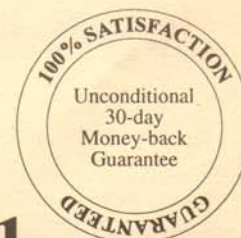
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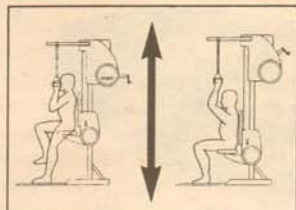
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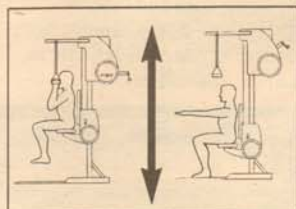


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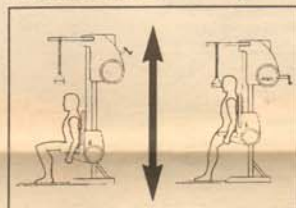
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# O.K., What Is The Body Pump?

By Peter Zapel

The BODY PUMP never fails to attract attention. Whether in a club or at a physical therapy conference, everybody wants to try it out. Not surprising, since it's so different. These days, when it comes to health and fitness, people seem to be on an endless quest to try new things.

One of the most satisfying aspects of my job at Aerex is teaching people about the BODY PUMP. It's an eye opener for people. Club operators, physical therapists, trainers, everybody is interested who is aware of the dramatic changes taking place in the market: 75% growth in the 50+ market and 1% growth in

the under-50 segment is projected over the next 30 years. With two years of testing, a clinical study and use in clubs, physical therapy clinics, retirement communities and a pro football team, the BODY PUMP signals an opportunity for the club industry. The purpose of this article is to answer questions, give the scientific background and shed some light on how clubs can use the BODY PUMP profitably by offering people some new and exciting..... more than just the expected equipment.

## LOW STRESS WHOLE BODY AEROBICS

The BODY PUMP provides whole-body aerobic ex-

ercise and strength training in unequaled range of motion and under reduced gravitational load. This lowers stress. The user adjusts the machine to support anywhere from 5 to 250 pounds of body weight, reducing load on joints and tissues (especially valuable for back, knee or foot problems). For example, a 200-pound person can exercise as if he were only 150 pounds by adjusting the equipment to support 50 pounds, and so on. Under this reduced body weight, the user can perform a variety of exercises including squats, stepping, leg lifts, pull ups, lat pulls and more, all without stopping to readjust the machine.

The BODY PUMP uses a patented weight support system which eliminates weight stack inertia and allows a constant fluid motion simulating the buoyancy of swimming. Its gentle feeling is what people respond to. Because the torso is in constant motion, arms and legs are unrestricted and can be moved in a variety of positions during exercise. The cardiovascular system and all major upper, lower and abdominal muscle groups are conditioned simultaneously.

## FILLS MANY NEEDS

By integrating controlled weight support and wide range of motion with a functional vertical body position, the BODY PUMP fills needs for average people and those with a variety of limitations interfering with physical activity. The more weight supported, the easier the exercise. By supporting only a small fraction of weight, a very high intensity workout, challenging even the strongest person is possible. The technique of "unloading" patients during rehab (supporting a high percentage of body weight) has been used by physical therapists for years to speed up recovery. The BODY PUMP incorporates this method into a machine most anyone can use without assistance.

The user first sets the seat height. Then, to adjust exercise intensity (the amount of weight supported), the user dials in the recommendation from the chart. Handgrips are independently height-adjustable. The computer is set to count repetitions, time exercised, etc. to assist in tracking progress and maintaining consistency. With feet flat

on the base, back flat against the backrest and hands holding the grips, the user is ready to begin. There is virtually no learning curve as the basic squat-pull motion is instinctive and requires no coordination. The user can readjust the intensity by dialing in any level from 1 through 10 on the scale. The weight support settings are non-incremented for precise control and maximum flexibility.

## AN EFFECTIVE SALES TOOL

The BODY PUMP'S biggest virtue for clubs is as a sales tool. Since the advantages can be immediately experienced by the prospect, the salesperson is demonstrating tangible benefits helping people visualize meeting their fitness goals. This is important at a time when most people are well acquainted with conventional exercise machines. One of the top selling new exercise machines in history is completely different from standard fitness club aerobic machines. People respond to new options and expect to be impressed. And giving sales people new sales tools enhances their performance.

In the future more and more people will be seeking lower stress exercise alternatives. For instance, orthopedic problems interfering with physical fitness are a growing concern. Low back, knee and foot problems are most common. Reported in the Journal of Physiological and Manipulative Therapeutics, 60% to 80% of adults age 35 to 65 experience chronic or episodic lower back pain. According to the New England Journal of Medicine (Vol. 318, No.5), low back pain costs at least \$16 billion each year and disables 5.4 million Americans.

Exercise physiologists believe that supportive gravity reduction, or buoyancy, is one of the most effective tools used for reducing orthopedic stress and eliminating weight impact during exercise. This is why swimming is so often recommended. Recently, after using the machine at a club, someone said, "It's like swimming in air!" I said, "What a great advertising slogan!"

How your club integrates the BODY PUMP with effective programs and new advertising strategies is limited only by your imagination. As our society ages, successful club operators will be developing new business

models to address changing needs.

(Peter Zapel is the President of Aerex Corporation, a California-based research and development corporation and manufacturer of The BODY PUMP. The BODY PUMP will be displayed at John Rude and Associates' MIND-BODY-SPIRIT Seminar at Joe Cirulli's new Gainesville (Florida) Health and Fitness Center on March 8 - 10th, 1996, and at the IHRSA Trade Show in San Diego, California on March 21 - 23, 1996.)

## SCIENTIFIC CONCEPTS UNDERLYING THE BODY PUMP:

- **FUNCTIONAL-UNLOADING** - The incremental reduction of gravitational load on the body during exercise. This results in lower overall physical and psychological stress.
- **CONTROLLED-BUOYANCY** - The smooth, non-impact motion possible with the BODY PUMP'S biomechanically correct weight support system. This allows fluid, high repetition training without weight stack inertia.
- **WIDE RANGE-OF-MOTION** - The ability to engage a wide variety of muscle groups with a single equipment modality. This allows the user to change position without stopping to readjust the machine.
- **CLOSED-KINETIC-CHAIN** - Today's most widely used principle in physical therapy because of its proven rehabilitative effectiveness which integrates treatment of specific injuries or orthopedic conditions with overall musculoskeletal function.
- **EXERTION-BIAS-CONTROL** - The ability to precisely control and bias exertion from one part of the body to another during the whole-body exercise, thus compensating for deconditioned, weak or painful orthopedic conditions. This allows patients undergoing rehab to effectively control pain.
- **FUNCTIONAL-STABILITY** - The ability of the user to maintain a safe and stable position for a prolonged time. The BODY PUMP assures safety and stability by requiring no coordination or special skill.
- **EFFORT-DISPERSION** - The spreading out of sustained muscular effort over a large and varied number of muscle groups. Swimming is a good example.

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