# health club management

INSIDE
HEALTH CLUB SPA

FEBRUARY 2009 £4.00

INTERVIEW

## GEORGINA JUPP

the programme pioneer on forging closer ties with the broader wellness community

## DUNCAN BANNATYNE & JUSTIN MUSGROVE

on a new spa-hotel-fitness model for Bannatyne's

## a family affair

lifestyle programmes that engage the whole family

EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT...

## GP REFERRAL SCHEMES

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE SUCCESS RATES?

The official publication of the FIA

A Leisure Media Company publication

Read Health Club Management online
www.healthclubmanagement.co.uk/digital

pulse®

at the ***heart*** of every successful leisure facility

PULSESELECT.COM

CLUB-PULSE.COM

PULSESOCCER.COM

PULSEFITNESS.COM

Pulse, The Bromley Centre, Bromley Road, Congleton, Cheshire CW12 1PT
T: 01260 294610 F: 01260 299282 E: info@pulsefitness.com

FRONT COVER: WWW.ISTOCK.COM/CHRISTIAN WHEATLEY

**Subscriptions**
**Julie Albone**
**+44 (0)1462 471915**

**Circulation Manager**
**Michael Emmerson**
**+44 (0)1462 471932**

**Editor**
**Liz Terry**
**+44 (0)1462 431385**

**Managing Editor**
**Kate Cracknell**
**+44 (0)1462 471906**

**Assistant Editor**
**Katie Barnes**
**+44 (0)1462 471925**

**Journalist**
**Caroline Wilkinson**
**+44 (0)1462 471911**

**News Desk**
**Tom Walker**
**+44 (0)1462 471934**

**Sarah Todd**
**+44 (0)1462 471927**

**Caroline Wilkinson**
**+44 (0)1462 471911**

**Pete Hayman**
**+44 (0)1462 471938**

**Products Editor**
**Martin Nash**
**+44 (0)1462 471933**

**Mark Edmonds**
**+44 (0)1462 471933**

**Designers**
**Claire Toplis**
**+44 (0)1462 471910**

**Andy Bundy**
**+44 (0)1462 471924**

**Ed Gallagher**
**+44 (0)1905 20198**

**Website Team**
**Michael Paramore**
**+44 (0)1462 471926**

**Dean Fox**
**+44 (0)1462 471900**

**Tim Nash**
**+44 (0)1462 471917**

**Katie Eldridge**
**+44 (0)1462 471913**

**Publisher**
**Jan Williams**
**+44 (0)1462 471909**

**Sales**
**John Challinor**
**+44 (0)1582 607970**

**Tessa Alexander**
**+44 (0)1462 471903**

**Nadeem Shaikh**
**+44 (0)1462 471902**

**Julie Badrick**
**+44 (0)1462 471919**

**Nuzhat Hayat**
**01604 415414**

**Marketing Manager**
**Jennifer Todd**
**+61 3 9694 5213**

**Financial Controller**
**Sue Davis**
**+44 (0)1395 519398**

**Financial Administrator**
**Denise Gildea**
**+44 (0)1462 471930**

**Credit Controller**
**Shona Acford**
**+44 (0)1876 580347**

# Change4Life

The government's Change4Life programme launched on 3 January, prompting Alan Johnson, Secretary of State for Health, and Public Health Minster Dawn Primarolo to say: "Change4Life has a critical ambition. We are trying to create a lifestyle revolution on a huge scale – something no government has attempted before."

The initiative has a £275m budget to spend on encouraging people to alter their lifestyles by eating more healthily and 'moving' more. It's the most wide-ranging, radical government health change programme ever undertaken and offers our sector the chance to play a leading role by linking our campaigns and developments to the national programme.

In launching the initiative, Sir Liam Donaldson, chief medical officer, said: "If we carry on as we are, 90 per cent of today's children could be overweight or obese by 2050. Our goal is to create a sustainable, society-wide movement, designed to help parents understand the health risks of their children being overweight. It will point out the support that is available to them to help change behaviours around diet and activity. Change4Life will sit alongside and complement other healthy living initiatives, recognising the good work…already [being done]."

> The critical role our industry plays and the close contact we have with at-risk families puts us in a "unique position to help point people in the right direction for more support"

Change4Life is part of the government's new strategy as outlined in the policy document, *Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives: A Cross-Government Strategy for England*, which was published last year. There will be pathways and services to help those diagnosed as clinically obese or already suffering from a weight-related illness.

The initiative is bringing together a wide range of health and education professionals, voluntary organisations and community and fitness industry groups to tackle the challenges, with an initial focus on children's health. Donaldson said: "The extent of the obesity problem demands an ambitious and innovative approach that has not been tried before. We've adopted ideas from successful movements such as Make Poverty History and Comic Relief, which involves a wide range of partners, local organisations, commercial companies, charities and, of course, millions of people."

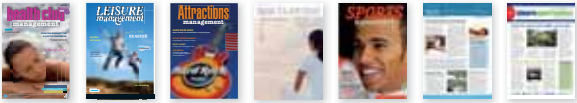
Change4Life was conceived as a result of feedback from clinicians to Lord Darzi's Next Stage Review, which made it clear to the Department of Health (DH) that a stronger focus on prevention was required. Linking up with Healthy Towns, Healthy Schools and other community initiatives, there will be free swimming, walking campaigns, cycling groups, breakfast clubs, healthy food promotions and recipes in supermarkets.

In June and August the FIA will launch MoreActive4Life, a campaign that will give people free access to health clubs and leisure centres. In addition, clubs are being invited to promote the campaign using free support materials available from the DH. This is all evidence-based to educate people who are at risk. They will also be offered personalised support and advice via the web and a dedicated telephone helpline.

Donaldson concluded: "The critical role you [as an industry] play and the close contact you have with at-risk families puts you in a unique position to help point people in the right direction for more support."

This is our chance to show just what we're capable of delivering. We're now entering a phase of intensive lobbying, as organisations and agencies work to establish new working relationships and arrangements in anticipation of announcements in the spring.

***Liz Terry, editor***
***email: healthclub@leisuremedia.com***




NEWS AND JOBS UPDATED DAILY ON THE INTERNET leisureopportunities.co.uk

CONTACT US The Leisure Media Company Ltd, Portmill House, Portmill Lane, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG5 1DJ UK
SUBS Tel: +44 (0)1462 471913 Fax: +44 (0)1462 433909
© Cybertrek Ltd 2009

# welcome to HEALTH CLUB MANAGEMENT

The elliptical cross-trainer market **p32**

Driffield's new £6.8m centre **p8**

## contents


**06 letters**
In a recession, we should be paying more attention to retaining existing members says Guy Griffiths

**08 news round-up**
Plans are revealed for a £26m leisure complex in Huddersfield, and Driffield Leisure Centre opens

**14 international news**
A kitesurfing gym in the Dominican Republic and énergie grants a master franchise licence for the Middle East

**16 fia update**
New and re-elected FIA directors are announced, plus an extra FLAME Award category is unveiled

**20 reps update**
An overhaul of fitness standards and skills gets underway

**22 people news**
Wallace joins Lifetime, and Farrant is set to leave Leisure Connection

PICTURE: WWW.ISTOCK.COM

New fitness standards **p20**

Bannatyne (right) with his wife – an increasing focus on spa **p46**


**24 competitive edge**
Charity events in the UK and abroad to motivate your staff and members

**25 diary dates**
Get ready for IHRSA and ForumClub

**26 everyone's talking about... gp referral**
With so much talk of working closely with the medical profession, why are there still so many stumbling blocks when it comes to GP referral?

**28 interview georgina jupp**
Independent operator and training expert Georgina Jupp talks about her various pioneering programmes in the broader world of wellness

**32 ahead of the curve?**
With a whole new generation of elliptical-inspired products launched in recent years, we find out more about the cross-trainer category

**36 shake, rattle & roll**
We take a closer look at some of the different vibration training technologies on the market

**40 a family affair**
Ian Wright's Fitter Families is one of a number of schemes that engage with the whole family to get kids active

**44 show preview professional beauty 2009**
This year's show and conference take place in London on 1–3 March

**45 health club spa spa news**
Extreme training in a sauna and a new spa facility in Huntingdon

**46 health club spa interview duncan bannatyne & justin musgrove**
We find out how Bannatyne's is developing its spa business

# FEBRUARY

Drive spa bookings via the high street and internet **p50**

Wright heads up fit family campaign **p40**

Anti-gym ad will no longer run **p16**

PICTURE: WWW.ISTOCK.COM


**50 health club spa never look a gift horse...**
We investigate how health club spas can sell their spare capacity through consumer marketing channels

**54 health club spa new identity**
We visit Gosling Sports Park to see how the new fitness and spa facility is performing as the site turns 50

**59 crm series technology's budget revolution**
Budget clubs rely heavily on CRM technology to deliver their low-cost business model. We report on who's using what, and why

**62 going undercover**
In the first of a two-part series, we reveal the results of this year's call-Focus survey and look at the value of mystery shopping as a business analysis tool

**66 peak performance**
We pay a visit to the newly-refurbished Peak Health Club in London's Jumeirah Carlton Tower

**70 mind games**
What type of activity, and how much of it, is necessary to improve mental health and relieve stress?

**71 fitness-kit special lockers & changing rooms**
Aqualisa's digital showers debut, and wet kit bags by Kingswood Leisure

**74 supplier profile tommy matthews, optimal life fitness**
From kettlebells supplier to education provider delivering 'real world' courses, Optimal has constantly evolved since its 2005 launch

**83 lightweights**
The art of 'rump reading' is revealed



fia FITNESS INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
The official publication of the Fitness Industry Association
**+44 (0)20 7420 8560**


## reader services

### digital magazine
See Health Club Management online
**healthclubmanagement.co.uk/digital**

### news & jobs
For jobs and news visit the Health Club Management website at
**healthclubmanagement.co.uk**

### attention buyers!
Use our search engine to find suppliers and get innovation updates
**fitness-kit.net**

### subscribe:
Sign up for Health Club Management at **leisuresubs.com**, or call:
**+44 (0)1462 471915**

### buyers' guide:
For suppliers of products and services in the health club and spa markets, turn to **p78**

# write to reply

Do you have a strong opinion or disagree with somebody else's views on the industry? If so, we'd love to hear from you – email: healthclub@leisuremedia.com

## clubs should focus more on retention to survive in 2009

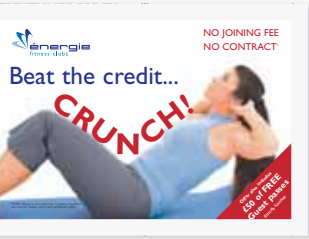
I was pleased to see the recent credit crunch article (*HCM* Nov-Dec 08), but disappointed to read so much about sales and so little about retention. It's a dull reflection of the industry that so many operators are focusing on new sales promotions when retention is just as, if not more, important during the financial crisis.

While new joining offers will encourage more people into the gym, and move towards Fred Turok's vision of one million more people exercising, I think these credit crunch deals are really trying to win over members from other clubs – and the more this happens, the more the industry will suffer. When times are tight, consumers find it much easier, and more cost-effective, to cut back on gym membership than utility bills; we must demonstrate value for money and really good service.

The only chain in the *HCM* article that mentioned a strategy for existing members, or soon to be ex-members, was énergie. Hooray for them. Your clients should always be your best sales channel, and you should do everything you can to retain them. It's important that all staff are involved in your retention policy, empowered to make decisions and measured on results.

2009 will be an evolutionary year in the industry. Many of us will be watching the development of the budget clubs closely, and I think that membership trends could look very different. I believe the successful clubs will be those that channel as much into retention as they do into sales.

**guy griffiths**
*director, gg fit*




**Should we focus more on retention?**

PICTURE: WWW.ISTOCK.COM/BOJAN TEZAK

**Robust measurement is needed when delivering government schemes**

### benchmarking necessary to monitor true performance

How do we know if our like-for-like figures are actually showing how well we're performing? In a downturn it's even harder to decipher. Our own figures are an indication, but far from absolute.

Most industries produce competitor benchmarking, which interprets industry figures and delivers data in the context of trading conditions. For us, comparison with other operators would provide an understanding of the market and our sector's trends.

This is why DLL fully supports The Leisure Database Company's new Fitness Market Monitor. But without the majority of operators participating, we're at risk of missing the opportunity to establish a benchmarking process and to focus on our performance.

As operators, we're a delivery channel for government initiatives such as free swimming and Change4Life, and with outside interest focused on us, we need to make strategic decisions to maximise our impact and potential. We also need data to support arguments for further investment into the sector.

The interest in benchmarking runs wide, with the US, Asia and key European countries keen to adopt the process.

In a highly competitive industry and climate, we must all work together, and I urge my industry colleagues to sign up and participate in the process.

**nick backhouse**
*coo, david lloyd leisure (dll)*

## the letter of the law

**Taking early legal advice can often prevent a problem becoming a dispute. The team at Croner Consulting answers readers' questions**

**Q** Is it correct that landlords of commercial property can no longer enter leased premises unannounced, and seize and sell goods, when the tenant owes rent?

**A** At present a commercial landlord still has this power. But the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007 – when it is brought into force, on a date yet to be announced – will abolish the old remedy of distraint and replace it with a new recovery procedure. Under the new law, so long as the lease is in writing, the landlord will be able to serve notice on the tenant, giving advance warning that goods may be seized – if need be by the use of reasonable force – by a certified agent. The remedy will only be available for rent arrears, not insurance premiums or unpaid service charges. It remains unclear when the new law will take effect, what form the notice will take or how much notice will need to be given, so for the moment commercial tenants can still have their goods seized without notice when they owe rent.

CRONER CONSULTING



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

## Introducing two new exciting strength lines from Precor

Precor's new Experience Strength lines build powerfully upon the biomechanics and aesthetic expertise of its cardiovascular range to deliver maximum engagement and interaction between user and equipment.

Simple to use, these machines are designed to move the way you do.

With enhanced durability and innovation, along with a sleek, sculptured appearance that has real gym presence, Precor provides the choice in strength experience – and the ultimate package for your club.

Tel: 0844 848 0105, E-mail: experience@precor.co.uk
**www.precor.com**

PRECOR®
*Move Beyond*

## in brief...

### broadened appeal at jubilee

Jubilee Hall Clubs has installed a range of new Nautilus strength kit at its club in Covent Garden, London, in a bid to broaden its appeal to the deconditioned market and to women, while at the same time retaining its heavy-lifting male users.

Equipment includes a full circuit of Nautilus ONE, as well as Nitro Plus and XPLOAD® strength kit and F3 free weights.

Jubilee operates four London facilities, including Westminster Gym at the House of Commons.

### shokk gym for newcastle

SHOKK® has launched its second gym in Newcastle, at the city council-operated Centre for Sport.

The 93sq m (1,000sq ft) gym boasts 18 stations of SHOKK's youth equipment plus 10 wireless dance mats in a dedicated studio. In addition to the CV kit, there is also a dual-use area with free weights and FLT Resistance products.

### swansea centre revamp

Vale of Neath Leisure Centre at Glynneath near Swansea in South Wales, has undergone a £300,000 redevelopment.

Funded by Alliance Leisure, the project includes a new 130sq m (1,399sq ft) fitness suite with 27 stations of Physique's remanufactured Life Fitness equipment. The existing 75sq m (807sq ft) 16-station gym has been converted into a free weights room.

### shokk launches franchise

Youth fitness expert SHOKK® has launched its first franchised kids' health club in England – a new £150,000 facility in Blackpool.

The 372sq m (4,000sq ft) site – the first club launched under the umbrella of the SHOKK-énergie franchise joint venture – offers a full range of equipment and training, as well as two studios, a chill-out zone and two therapy rooms. Former professional footballer Mickey Mellon will operate the franchise, together with his wife Jane.

# new complex for huddersfield

**Plans for the £26m centre include a 150-station fitness suite with a dance studio**

Kirklees Council has unveiled the initial designs for a proposed leisure complex in Huddersfield, West Yorkshire.

The £26m development will be built on the Spring Grove car park in Springwood. It will form part of a wider regeneration of the area, including the relocation of a Tesco supermarket to the site of the existing sports centre in Southgate.

Proposals for the centre, which is scheduled to open in early 2012, include a leisure water attraction incorporating a 'sidewinder' feature, as well as a flume, a beach, a wave machine and a lazy river.

The plans also include a 725sq m (7,800sq ft), 150-station fitness suite with a dance studio, a 25m eight-lane swimming pool, a teaching pool with moveable floor and a spectators' area.

A large sports hall, specialist sports hall, squash courts, martial arts room, 15m climbing wall, café, children's activity area and multi-purpose room will also be among the facilities on offer.

The designs, which have been developed by international architects Aedas and engineering firm Arup, were put on public display in December.

A planning application is expected to be submitted in March.

Liz Smaje, Kirklees Council's cabinet member for leisure, says: "There will be very few towns and cities anywhere in the country that will be able to offer the range and quality of sports and leisure facilities that will be available at the new centre.

"We've looked at many options for the mix of features at the leisure water centre. I think the ones proposed will make the new centre a regional attraction because of some of the unique features it will have."

The council-led regeneration scheme will also include a hotel, retail outlets and a housing development.

# work starts on gateshead rebuild

**The existing pool will be refurbished**

Gateshead Leisure Centre, a pre-training camp for the London 2012 Olympics near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, has closed to undergo a 12-month redevelopment.

The project is led by Gateshead Council as part of its £29m Building an Active Future programme. The programme will also provide new leisure centres in Blaydon and Heworth to replace existing facilities, and the redevelopment of two centres in Birtley and Dunston by 2012.

When complete, the centre will boast a new spectator and viewing area, a café, a 650sq m (7,000sq ft) gym and changing areas. The existing swimming pool will be refurbished and a teaching pool, a poolside sauna and steamroom and two fitness studios will be added.

The project has been designed by S&P Architects and the construction work is being undertaken by Wilmott Dixon.



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

edited by caroline wilkinson. email: carolinewilkinson@leisuremedia.com

PICTURE: SIMON KENCH

**The new centre offers a 25m main swimming pool as well as a learner pool**

# driffield leisure centre now open

A new £6.8m, 2,925sq m (31,480sq ft) leisure centre in Driffield, East Yorkshire, has opened its doors to the public.

Driffield Leisure Centre has a six-lane, 25m swimming pool, a learner pool and a spectator balcony. Manager Kevin Dunning says: "The learner pool will make a massive difference to new swimmers. It helps so much with confidence if they learn to swim in their depth."

The new 180sq m (1,940sq ft) Tone Zone fitness suite includes 50 pieces of Matrix CV equipment – including treadmills, bikes and cross-trainers – equipped with individual LCD TV screens. There is also a large free weights area and a Smith machine.

A four-court indoor sports hall and a floodlit outdoor multi-sport area provide space for activities such as hockey and football.

Driffield Secondary School, which is located on a neighbouring site, will have access to the new sports hall and four lanes of the swimming pool during term time, while a studio for exercise classes and two lanes of the pool will remain available to the general public.

Project manager P'nina Drye says: "The scheme has been extremely challenging in terms of its design and construction. I am hopeful that a scheme such as this will encourage people back into sports."

## £18m leisure centre proposed for bexhill

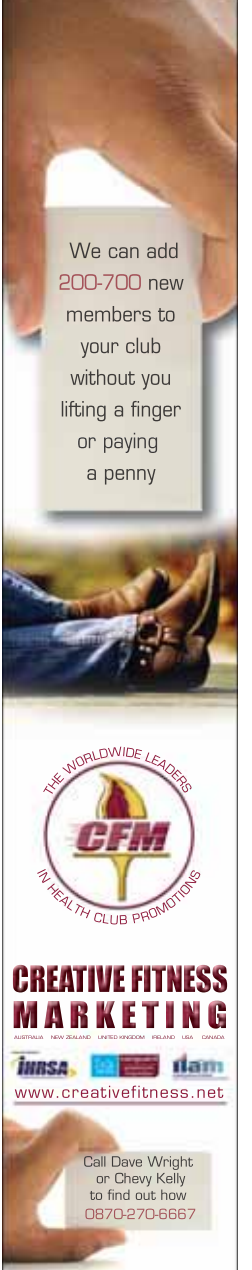
A new multi-million pound sports centre could be built in Bexhill, East Sussex, after Rother District Council agreed to appoint consultants to conduct a feasibility study.

The new centre, which is to be situated on the town's Down site and could cost up to £18m, will form part of the council's scheme to consolidate the town's two existing leisure facilities into one single site by 2016.

Included in the proposals for the centre is a four-court sports hall, a two-court ancillary hall, a play area and a 25m six-lane swimming pool, as well as a leisure pool, a climbing wall and a 100-station fitness suite.

A health suite, changing areas, a bar, a café and a social area are also earmarked as part of the project, as is an outdoor multi-use games area and a 10-lane, tenpin bowling facility.

S&P Architects has already been involved in developing initial options for a combined wet and dry leisure facility.



## in brief...

### blidworth centre opens

Blidworth Community Leisure Centre in Nottinghamshire has reopened after a £600,000 overhaul.

The village's existing community building now features a 75-station fitness suite, purpose-built group cycling and fitness studio, solarium and seating area.

The centre offers junior judo, low impact exercise classes, dance sessions and Dribblers football for the under-5s, while a Young People's Zone provides an area where children and parents can exercise together in a bid to encourage family activities.

### lanarkshire gyms re-open

The Tryst Sports Centre in Cumbernauld, Lanarkshire, has received a £400,000 facility upgrade.

The main gym was extended to increase the range of equipment and workout space available to customers. The new gym now features Technogym equipment, including CV units, conditioning kit and Kinesis.

Meanwhile, the Airdrie Leisure Centre, also in Lanarkshire, has benefitted from the installation of more than 40 stations of Technogym CV and resistance equipment, at a cost of £130,000.

**Ripped offers 73 pieces of strength kit**

## new ripped gym opens in harlow

A new £500,000 dedicated body-building gym has opened in Wych Elm Harlow, London, and has attracted more than 200 members in its first five weeks.

Ripped Gym, a family-owned and operated facility, offers 73 pieces of resistance kit, including Hammer Strength from Life Fitness and Cybex's VR3 Heavy Weight range.

There are also 26 pieces of CV equipment and a zone offering a boxing ring, a matted area and nine punch bags and speed balls. Equipped for amateur and pro-athletes, the gym also offers personal training.

The 1,533sq m (16,500sq ft) facility also includes a boxing and martial arts facility called Ripped Fight Club, catering services focused on sports nutrition, a juice bar, a diet supplement shop and a sports rehabilitation facility.

Owner Michelle Mead plans to open two more sites in the next 10 years.

## royal canoe club gets new gym

The Royal Canoe Club in Teddington, West London, has re-opened its gym following a complete refurbishment.

Fourteen new pieces of equipment provided by Matrix Fitness Systems have been specifically chosen to improve the performance of the club's athletes. The new kit includes a bench press unit, an Olympic bar, a back extension machine and a bicep curl station.

Sport England funded the project, with contributions from the British Canoe Union (£250,000) and the Amateur Rowing Association (£50,000). The club is home to the under-23 Team GB Canoeists, and also accommodates many of the Senior GB team when training.

Janet Evans, secretary at the club, says: "The new gym has made a real difference to our members. Before the new building and equipment, you very rarely saw anyone working out."

**Equipment at the gym was selected to improve the athletes' performance**

GET WITH THE PROGRAMME!

GRAVITY®
GROUP STRENGTH :: PILATES :: PERSONAL TRAINING :: POST-REHAB

There's no defying the law of **GRAVITY**. Four great programmes on one amazing piece of award-winning equipment. The GTS is your business differential with a guaranteed return on investment and full marketing support. Leasing options, training and in-club demos available now.

For more information call **0845 602 7485** or email **admin@gravityuk.net www.gravityuk.net**

**The facility was opened by Seb Coe (centre), who says it will inspire local youth**

# £9m coventry xcel centre opens

The £9m Xcel Leisure Centre in Canley, Coventry, has officially opened.

The centre – which was 12 years in the making and which had a soft opening in 2008 – boasts a fitness suite, a group exercise room, a 25m swimming pool with viewing gallery, and a health suite with a sauna and steamroom.

There is also a spa pool, a large sports hall, a bar and café, crèche, children's play and party area, and a community room.

Externally there are three full-size and three mini-football pitches, and two floodlit five-a-side football pitches. There are also tennis and netball courts, a cricket pitch and a children's play area.

Sebastian Coe, chair of the London Organising Committee for the London Olympic Games, opened the new site, which will be operated by Coventry Sports Foundation.

Coe believes that the centre could help Coventry attract international teams during the Olympics, saying: "It's not just about attracting a little bit of transient trade, it's about giving local youngsters the chance to see how world-class competitors train." Watching these competitors will, says Coe, "inspire and guide" the local youth.

The centre is part of a regeneration project of south-west Coventry.

# fitness network has launched

The UK Fitness Network, a strategic alliance between the UK's sports and leisure trusts, launched on 1 February.

The not-for-profit organisation will offer customers a membership that covers hundreds of gyms, pools and classes. It has been set up following the success of the London Fitness Network, which was established in 2004 as a collaboration between nine London sports trusts that worked together to link 94 of the capital's leisure centres and clubs.

# free passes for notts locals

Nottingham City Council and Nottingham City PCT have given away 2,000 three-month fitness passes to local residents in neighbourhoods considered to have poor health.

The passes went on offer at the beginning of January and include memberships for the council's Flexible Fitness scheme, as well as free swimming and one-day fitness passes to local leisure centres.

The application of sport science and nutrition should be based on well held principles, proven by research, that are adapted to an individual, their sport and/or exercise and the specific goals that they may have – for example gaining muscle mass or losing weight.

This is perhaps one of the most neglected aspects of programme design, but it is unlikely that most exercise programmes can reap all their intended benefits if this is not the case as there is certainly no 'one size fits all' strategy. This is why we use heart rate zones for endurance training, repetitions, sets and weight for resistance training and needstates like hydration, fuel and focus for nutrition.

However, beware! The world of exercise can be fraught with myths, and unproven fad related diets in the search for quick results. Such methods are not cutting edge or in fact tailored, and it remains the consensus that proven and sustained long-term benefits are best achieved by careful 'individual' application of well held scientific principles.

**Nick Morgan**
Head of Sport Science for Lucozade Sport

Nick drives the Lucozade Sport programme of applied research, sport science service provision and education within sport and exercise. He is a BASES accredited physiologist with vast experience working with elites in both a physiology and nutrition capacity.

**The LSSA draws on over 30 years of experience in sports nutrition research. www.thelssa.com**

Lucozade SPORT

## training news

### premier and pts merge

Premier Training International and Performance Training Solutions (PTS), the fitness training providers, have merged.

PTS, which is now a wholly-owned subsidiary of Premier Global, will take on Premier Training's name for future operations.

The merger is quite a coup for Premier Training, as PTS has the exclusive licence to deliver National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM) education in the UK and EU.

### shokk training for serco

SERCO Leisure, on behalf of Maidstone Leisure Trust, has joined forces with SHOKK to develop a training programme designed to get young people in Maidstone exercising for at least five hours a week.

The 10-week course will be available free of charge to pupils aged 14 and over, and will combine two REPs-accredited SHOKK workshops: X-treme and Kombat.

Participants showing the most promise will be offered a route into the industry, namely Level 1 and 2 Teaching Physical Activity to Children qualifications (governed by Active IQ). Once completed, they will be able to assist with fitness classes at local leisure centres, and to mentor younger children.

### ymca offers free course

Fitness provider Central YMCA has announced plans for a free training programme to transform London youngsters into qualified street dance instructors.

The YMCAFit Strictly Street Dance course targets young people aged between 16 and 18 in Camden, London. The 26-day programme will lead to a Level 2 Kids Fitness – Street Dance qualification, allowing them to plan and teach their own dance sessions and monitor changes to children's physical and mental health. Young people will learn how to choreograph dance routines and develop communication and teamworking skills.

## first ifi-accredited cross-trainer

Octane Fitness is the first supplier to have its elliptical cross-trainer accredited to Stage 2 by the Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI).

The company's self-powered Pro3700 IFI cross-trainer offers a natural converging arm action. By working closely with the IFI, Octane Fitness has also integrated a small step for improved access and a lock-out mechanism, which keeps the pedals stationary while a user climbs on and off the machine.

The trainer also features large text, colour-coded buttons and raised iconography to make it easier for customers to navigate the programming, while the black handles and pedals are designed to contrast with the silver frame, so users can better identify where they should position themselves.

Sue Catton, IFI national director, says: "Elliptical trainers have consistently proved challenging to make accessible for disabled people, yet are found in almost every gym. Octane has demonstrated how some of the inherent access challenges of the equipment can be overcome, offering this exercise to a much wider range of users.

**Octane's Pro3700 is IFI-accredited**

## zigzag to supply expresso bikes

**ZigZag is sole distributor for Expresso**

ZigZag, part of the PTE Group, has taken over distribution of Expresso exercise bikes from Instyle.

The interactive bike offers 30 virtual tours, pedal resistance (depending on terrain) and moveable handlebars to simulate the experience of outdoor cycling, in a bid to make exercising a more appealing activity. The children's version is power-assisted.

Fergus Ahern, managing director of ZigZag says: "Expresso recognised the close fit these bikes have with ZigZag's interactive range and, as the UK's leading distributor of interactive fitness solutions, approached us to exclusively distribute its product within the UK.

"The Expresso bikes will bring a new dimension to our range of interactive equipment, turning what can be a boring exercise into an exciting and compelling activity."

## physique wins contract for schelde sports

Physique, part of the PTE Group, has won the contract to exclusively distribute the Dutch-based, high-specification Schelde Sports equipment within the UK market.

Schelde Sports UK has supplied equipment for the Olympic Games and other major sporting events, as well as supplying athletics equipment to Sport England's regional high performance centres.

The contract means that Physique – consisting of the recently merged Physique Sports (sport hall and gym division) and its fitness equipment division – will now be able to target elite training venues, sports arenas and new facilities for the 2012 London Olympics.

Ron Brooks, PTE's general manager, says: "The Schelde product is one of the most respected within its field and is designed to maximise performance. This exclusive contract will enable Physique to supply equipment from primary school level to high performance centres."



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

# FOR BIG SPORTS DRINK SALES, YOU NEED A STRONG FRONT ROW.

This year Powerade is driving sales with the help of rugby's finest players. Not only is it the official sports drink of the RFU and the WRU, the facts show that sales soar around sporting events.[1] So with sales of Powerade up by 15%* versus the sports sector at 8%*, you can expect the brand to score even higher.

POWERADE.COM

'Rugby World Cup 2007 volumes sales. *AC Nielsen MAT volume to 27.12.08.
'Powerade' is a registered trade mark of The Coca-Cola Company.

POWERADE. INNERGEAR
SPORTS DRINK OF THE RFU & WRU

## in brief...

### wellness in warsaw

Holmes Place Poland opened its first Wellness Studio on 1 January.

The 40sq m Power Plate® studio is located in the centre of Warsaw, in the Warsaw Trade Tower office building, whose 43 floors are home to 45 companies – a captive audience of some 4,500 people.

With its sleek, modern design and colour scheme, the studio aims to attract time-poor business people who want to look and feel good, and to maximise productivity at the companies within the building.

Its intention is to help customers reduce stress, increase levels of energy, lose weight and keep fit. The vibration training is complemented by massages and nutritional consultations, with lifestyle and wellness packages on offer for individuals – both management and employees – and businesses.

### gwynnie launches gyms

Actress Gwyneth Paltrow is teaming up with her personal trainer, Tracy Anderson, to launch a worldwide chain of gyms.

Paltrow has previously produced and directed an exercise video for Anderson, who also trains Madonna, and appears in promotional material for Anderson's gyms in Los Angeles and New York. Now the duo are teaming up to build a chain of gyms across Europe, Asia and Australia.

### 222 sites for mrs sporty

Franchise company Mrs Sporty opened its 222nd club at the end of January, at a site in Germany, as well as a new club in St Pölten, Austria.

Mrs Sporty targets women aged 35+ seeking a healthier, more active and sporty lifestyle. Offering 30-minute circuit training on hydraulic units, complemented by nutritional advice, clubs range from 80–200sq m with fees starting at €32.

Mrs Sporty launched in 2005 and now has clubs in Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Italy. It is owned by former tennis pro Stefanie Graf, Niclas and Valerie Bönström, with Niclas Bönström also the CEO.

## énergie's middle east venture

The énergie Group has announced the grant of a master franchise licence to Qatar-based investment group Ghanim Bin Saad Al Saad & Sons Holding Group (GSSG). The license will see GSSG control six énergie brands under a 10-year licence across Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Egypt and Libya.

**énergie CEO Jan Spaticchia with GSSG MD Mohammed Al Hamadi**

GSSG is already a market leader in the Qatari fitness club sector, with four large sites in operation and two under construction. The first stage of the plan will see the four existing clubs in Doha, Qatar, relaunched under the énergie Fitness Clubs brand early this year.

GSSG, which has net assets of more than 1.8bn Qatari riyals (£338m) and interests across the Middle East and Europe, has agreed a development pipeline that will see the two groups open a minimum of 50 clubs over the first five years of the partnership.

This latest deal follows énergie's acquisition in 2008 of 23 Motorcise Healthy Living Centres, as well as fitness franchise Attiva. It now has 80 clubs – mainly in the UK and Ireland, with two in Latvia – and 25 in the pipeline for 2009.

## your health expands in holland

Dutch budget club operator Your Health opened its latest site, in the town of Ende, on 29 November.

The 1,000sq m site offers CV kit, weight training including free weights, circuit training, water rowers, a boxing ring, a sauna and showers. Equipment is provided by Life Fitness, although previous sites have been equipped by Precor. Membership costs €15.95/month, with a contract of a year.

The chain – which focuses on providing only the most popular services, but doing so to a high standard – opened its first club in September 2006. It currently has nine clubs in Holland, both owned and franchised, and aims to expand in Europe.

**Your Health has nine clubs in Holland**

## citizen fitness opens fifth moscow club

Citizen Fitness opened its fifth club in October 2008, located in the Balashikha area of Moscow.

Membership at the 2,500sq m club costs €1,000/month. Facilities consist of a gym with CV, resistance and indoor cycling kit, plus a wide range of group exercise classes covering mind-body, aerobics and martial arts sessions.

There is also a 25m pool and children's pools, a sun deck and a spa offering massage therapy. The club also offers a children's psychologist, pre-natal programmes and rehabilitation. It is a family club, targeting middle class men and women and their children.

Nautilus equipment is supplied by local distributor Planet Fitness, including StairMaster. Other suppliers include Eurosport, Ivanko Barbell and Star Trac.

The chain is owned by a private individual, with all five clubs in Moscow. Capital investment to date has been US$10m. There are plans to open up to three clubs over the coming months, all to be equipped by Nautilus.



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

edited by kate cracknell email: katecracknell@leisuremedia.com

**Mi Gym is housed in a character-filled building that used to be a hotel bar**

# escaping the rat race at mi gym

Mi Gym, a new independent health club on Kite Beach Cabarete in the Dominican Republic, had its grand opening on 1 December 2008.

The club, located on the five-mile beach, is housed in a character-filled former bar/restaurant within an older sports-focused hotel. The main gym measures 280sq m, with a 60sq m yoga loft overlooking the beach. There's also a fitness platform for group exercise, a swimming pool with aqua fitness stations, a skate ramp used for jujitsu classes as well as skateboarding, a beach volleyball court, kitesurfing school and a therapy studio. Members also have access to kayaks and snorkelling gear.

The club was set up by "fitness industry veterans who moved away from the rat race to live on the beach", says Mi Gym owner Steven Bowcutt.

The refit cost more than US$200,000, with strength equipment supplied by Hoist, racks and benches by Body Solid and CV from Vision Fitness and Life Fitness. Other equipment includes the TRX® Suspension Trainer® and bikes by Real Ryders and LeMond.

The target market consists of locals, foreigners in residence, tourists, kitesurfers, sailers and windsurfers. Instructors include a world class kitesurfer – the beach enjoys 240 'kiteable' days each year.

# vida fitness opens third site

US operator VIDA Fitness opened its third site last month, at the Renaissance Washington, DC Hotel.

VIDA-Renaissance was designed by Stoneking-von Storch Architects and the Hallock Design Group. The 930sq m club offers a full range of strength and CV kit, plus Kinesis, Real Ryder indoor cycling, circuit training, and nutrition and group wellness instruction.

The site is also home to the flagship site of Aura Spa – a 370sq m day spa offering relaxation and detoxification treatments in its four treatment rooms. It also offers a relaxation area featuring a steamroom, sauna and endless pool.

David von Storch, founder and owner of VIDA Fitness, says: "Many hotels include workout spaces, but do not offer a full venue of elite fitness and spa options that incorporate our concept of balancing mind, body and spirit."

Monthly memberships and guest day passes are available to the general public. Hotel guests have complimentary full access to the new fitness and spa facility.

All three of VIDA Fitness' locations are in Washington, DC.

V SERIES ROPE CLIMBERS

Attract and retain members with fun and versatile upper body cardio and strength workouts.

Help trainers diversify routines to engage and motivate clients.

Marpo KINETICS

Excitement. Not Equipment.

www.marpokinetics.com

1.925.606.6919

## from the board

### blane dodds

**chief executive • north lanarkshire leisure**

The market for health and fitness has changed markedly over the last few years. Boundaries are changing and the differences between private and public sectors diminishing as common objectives come to the foreground.

Every organisation providing health, fitness, leisure and sporting activities – whether 'for profit' or not – is nonetheless a commercial enterprise and needs to drive participation to survive.

Trusts have clear objectives to facilitate access to the broad range of communities they serve, which is often manifested through special discounted rates for target groups such as the unemployed and customers on incapacity benefit. They are also involved in sports development, working with local clubs and governing bodies to maximise opportunities for club participation and elite development.

There are now approximately 114 sport and leisure trusts operating within the membership of sporta, the representative body for culture and leisure trusts in the UK. With a combined annual turnover of approximately £600m, these trusts account for over 200 million customer visits each year. The leisure trusts sector is thus growing, developing and contributing towards the FIA and its national objectives of increased participation.

With sport's profile constantly improving, the future of our whole industry looks very positive.

# new category for flame 2009

**Olympian James Cracknell (second from left) presented the FLAME '08 awards**

As the fitness industry develops, there is a call for more awards to recognise excellence throughout the industry. With this in mind, the FIA has added a brand new category to the FLAME Awards 2009, which are run in partnership with Matrix Fitness Systems.

The inaugural Future of FLAME award will acknowledge an individual who has shown remarkable dedication and commitment to the fitness industry: someone who has made a difference.

David Stalker, FIA operations director, says: "It's vital that we recognise the people at the grassroots of this industry, as they're the ones who consistently help people to change their lives on a day-to-day basis."

The winner of the new accolade will be announced at the grand finale Ball of Fire event, part of the FIA FLAME conference, on 10 June.

The FIA Operator of the Year Award, which debuted at FLAME 2008, will be presented again in 2009, with a focus on incentivising the whole sector for success.

Having received this award in 2008, DC Leisure chief executive Steve Philpott says: "I'm incredibly proud of the company and everything that we have achieved."

DC Leisure's success stemmed from its many initiatives over the previous 12 months. Not only is it the first company to achieve the FIA's new Code of Practice certification, but it has also been a partner on community programmes such as Active at School, **go** and MEND. Last year it also hosted the Marie Curie Swimathon at 59 of its sites.

Who do you think is worthy of a 2009 FLAME award? Please email suggestions, with the name of the club, the award and your reasons, to flame@fia.org.uk

## new and re-elected board directors announced

Recent board elections saw Robin Johnson of Total Fitness and Tony Majakas of Technogym re-elected to the FIA board. Marc Moreso, of Sportsweb Recruitment, has also been co-opted onto the board as a training and recruitment advisor.

The FIA board of directors is elected by, and accountable to, the FIA membership. The board is non-executive, so does not have day-to-day functions within the association, but rather looks at strategic issues within the industry, acting in the interest of members and the industry as a whole. It is responsible for the overall direction and policies of the FIA, as well as monitoring and evaluating performance.

Meetings are held quarterly, culminating in an annual general meeting (AGM), to which all FIA members are invited. Fred Turok, founder and now chair of LA Fitness, is the current FIA chair.

Each newly-elected director commits to a three-year tenure. The election process starts every September, with results announced at the AGM in December. Board members retiring from office will have completed their three-year term.

The breadth of FIA membership is represented on the organisation's board, with ambassadors from multi-site and independent operators, education, local authorities, leisure trusts and suppliers.



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

edited by caroline wilkinson. email: carolinewilkinson@leisuremedia.com

The ad encouraged people to run outside rather than use a gym

PICTURE: WWW.ISTOCK.COM/MICHAEL KRINKE

# anti-gym tv advert withdrawn

A TV advertisement for a bank, which contained a negative reference to the indoor health and fitness sector, has been withdrawn following widespread criticism from the fitness industry of the message it communicated.

A large proportion of FIA members are customers of the bank in question and felt it was an unwarranted attack on the industry, particularly at a time when the nation faces an obesity crisis.

Dave Stalker, operations director at the FIA, says: "As the representative body, the FIA is committed to protecting and supporting the industry's interests in whichever way we can.

"We're delighted by this result and extend thanks to all who joined together to support the industry."

Andreé Deane, FIA CEO adds: "The bank should be congratulated on its swift and responsible action. Like us, it is a government delivery partner, and we hope that what started out as a rocky relationship will blossom and lead to closer ties in 2009."

# la fitness schemes engage youth

The FIA's **go** programme for 15- and 16-year-old girls has been taken on by schools in Wyre and Fylde, Lancashire.

The 10-week programme, funded by the DCMS, includes street dance, boxercise, step, aerobics and fitball classes, as well as gym-based workouts.

The scheme was chosen to help address the school's high PE drop-out rate. Robyn Mitchell, a 15-year-old participant, says: "The **go** scheme is a great idea to keep us girls occupied after school… and help us keep fit."

Once the students have completed the scheme, they each receive a Fylde Coast YMCA Racer Membership, so they can continue to benefit from fitness expertise and enjoy the facilities and classes at a local site at reduced rates.

Hampton Sport and Fitness Centre in Richmond, London, is also implementing FIA programmes with local Year 5 students – aged nine to 10 years – by signing up to Active at School.

During the six-week programme, children will receive expert martial arts training, soccer skills from a Brentford FC youth development coach and choreography from an urban dance instructor at the centre.

Hampton's fitness instructor Tom Burgar says: "Active at School provides clubs with a great way of getting younger children to take part in activities they perhaps wouldn't otherwise experience.

"A number of the pupils from the programme have gone on to sign up for our karate and dance sessions."

## in brief...

### central ymca wins fia seal of approval

The central YMCA Club is celebrating having achieved the FIA's new Code of Practice.

Setting professional standards on health and safety, training and customer care, the Code gives gym users the confidence that they are in good hands.

The assessment covers areas such as exercise classes, swimming pool supervision and commitment to disability provision.

It has been a positive start to 2009 for Central YMCA, which has also recently completed a £2.6m revamp.

### fia board co-opts mark moreso

The FIA Board warmly welcomes Mark Moreso (see p16), who has been co-opted as an ambassador for skills and recruitment. Moreso's extensive knowledge in recruitment is intended to help drive FIA strategy in the industry's rapidly developing workforce.

### fit for the future areas announced

A pilot scheme of Fit for the Future – which offers gym subsidies to 16- to 22-year-olds – will launch in April in Manchester, Torbay, Bristol, Newcastle and Suffolk.

Torbay was chosen as it contains a large number of 16- to 22-year-olds. The other three cities offer a breadth of urban populations, while Suffolk brings a rural perspective.

The FIA has contacted its members in those areas to recruit 50 sites to take part in the pilot.

health club management

*Health Club Management* is the official magazine of the FIA.

To join the FIA call +44 (0)20 7420 8560 or go to www.fia.org.uk

# change4life: a revolution?

Steven Ward, the FIA's public affairs and policy manager, reports on the Change4Life campaign and the criticism that surrounds it

**Despite mixed responses to the campaign, the FIA is backing it to be a success**

"The revolution will not make you look 5lbs thinner, because the revolution will not be televised brother," advised Gil Scott-Heron, one of the leading cultural figures in the 50s and 60s American Civil Rights movement, in his famous song *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*.

Luckily, it was progress towards equality in America that was the subject of Scott-Heron's ire and not the latest public health 'revolution' to hit the UK – namely Change4Life.

Backed by a £275m investment, Change4Life captured the January headlines and has received substantial political support. The Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, is leading from the front, appearing on *GMTV* with the lycra-clad exercise enthusiast Mr Motivator, urging the country to get moving. The Conservative Party has also announced its support for the campaign.

## ranging responses

Change4Life comes as no surprise to the health and fitness industry, as the FIA has been working on the project since its inception back in 2007.

The FIA Vanguard Council was shown the TV ad that's now running to support the initiative in September 2008 and, in the same month, the FIA update in *Health Club Management* announced the campaign. We have seen it evolve and we are committed to ensuring its success.

Initial coverage of Change4Life has, however, been mixed. The Department of Health's desire to avoid appearing patronising has been well received by the general public, but some media commentators have been critical, with some sectors openly criticising the involvement of the giant food companies that are funding the campaign. They question whether sponsoring organisations such as Kellogg's, Pepsico, ASDA and Tesco are trying to stave off negative regulation by appearing to have a social conscience that extends beyond the generation of profit.

Tam Fry, spokesperson for the National Obesity Forum and the Child Growth Foundation, adds: "We fervently hope that Change4Life will succeed where other department campaigns have failed. Our optimism will be tempered until we see whether the food, advertising and fitness industries really do deliver the promised goods.

"We're tempted to think that [the food and advertising industries] are donating millions of pounds to the government as a way of heading it off from imposing the regulation it fears."

## food for thought

While we can be grateful that Fry spared the fitness industry from the brunt of his criticism, the reality is that the food and advertising brands touch people, at all levels, in a way that the government simply cannot do on its own. Their reach, as organisations, is vast and their expertise in influencing consumer behaviour certainly adds value to the Change4Life campaign.

For FIA members, the opportunity is also there to be seized. Every club can now contact their local branches of these corporate food giants on an equal footing. As an FIA member, site managers can contact supermarkets, doctor's surgeries and other partners to see how they can co-operate at a local level. This is an opportunity that has never presented itself before.

The government has laid down a framework for a campaign that we can all plug into. Working in unison with the campaign's other partners, we stand a far better chance of influencing activity levels and encouraging higher levels of participation.

For the FIA, the next step is bringing the plans of MoreActive4Life – the fitness industry's own sub-brand of Change4Life – to fruition. There has already been a great deal of progress since it was announced at the FIA Summit in November 2008.

What's more, with the launch of Fit for the Future, the Department of Health-backed subsidy programme, in April 2009, and a potential General Election to look forward to, we have an interesting year ahead of us.

leisureopportunities is the official recruitment magazine of the fia

# MINIMUM EFFORT
# MAXIMUM RESULTS

Exercise on a Power Plate® machine delivers a full body workout, with just three short sessions a week enough to produce visible results. When used regularly, as part of a healthy lifestyle, training on a Power Plate® machine can help users of any age or fitness level to benefit from:

- Improved fitness
- Increased muscle tone and strength
- Enhanced relaxation
- Reduced body fat and cellulite
- Better flexibility
- Improved balance and coordination

The Power Plate® pro5™ and pro5 AIRdaptive™ models are the only vibration training devices to have received Stage 2 Inclusive Fitness Initiative (IFI) accreditation, signifying that people with disabilities can enjoy independent use.

POWER PLATE®

my body, my time™

inclusive fitness accredited item 2007-2010

For more information call 020 7586 7200 or visit www.powerplate.com.

© Copyright 2008 Power Plate. All Rights Reserved.

## in brief...

### farewell our friend

Members of REPs and SkillsActive have bid a fond farewell to Allan Pilkington, who has retired after 35 years in the fitness industry.

Having begun his career as a PE teacher, Pilkington then moved into leisure consultancy and launched his own training company. Shortly after that he was seconded to SPRITO (now SkillsActive), where he worked on programmes that explored the training and skills development available in Europe.

In 2003, Pilkington helped establish the European Health and Fitness Association (EHFA) as its CEO, before moving on to the European Observatoire of Sport and Employment as European projects director in 2007.

### professionalising the welsh fitness industry

The Register has held its third convention in Wales.

Presentations were given by Mark Bennett, conditioning coach for the Welsh RFU, Dr Simon Williams from the University of Glamorgan, REPs registrar Jean-Ann Marnoch, the Welsh Assembly Government and the FIA.

Delegates took part in a variety of educational workshops, presented by training providers and partners, as well as three FIA sessions focused on management within the fitness industry.

### time to renew

With membership of the Register now written into the FIA's Code of Practice, it has never been more important to ensure annual membership is renewed.

Equally important is ensuring that adequate insurance cover is provided, which is why REPs has phased out its £2m cover and is now offering a minimum cover of £5m. At the same time, the price of the £5m policy has been reduced to only a little more than the cost of the old £2m cover.

ALL PICTURES WWW.ISTOCK.COM

**The new standards will better reflect what's happening in the workplace**

# fitness standards to be revised

New standards for those working in fitness are being created following a year-long consultation process led by SkillsActive and REPs.

The new standards will set out a clear division of skills and qualifications, and how these relate to job roles.

REPs registrar Jean-Ann Marnoch says: "The consultation involved REPs members, employers, training providers and awarding bodies, and is the widest consultation on standards in the industry to date. After asking our Level 2 and 3 members what their day-to-day activities included, we realised that the existing standards for qualifications needed updating in order to reflect what was happening in the workplace."

She adds: "Using this feedback we have agreed a new structure, and work is being carried out to revise the standards for qualifications. This is a fast-moving sector and we must ensure that the workforce continues to meet the needs of the industry – and, importantly, the needs of the public that uses its services. I want to ensure that REPs members are in the best position to gain and maintain work, and that their skills continue to be demanded and respected."

# cpr courses equal cpd points

A certificate in CPR is no a longer mandatory requirement for fitness professionals applying to join REPs – a move that came after some employers made the case that there was always a first aid and/or CPR-trained instructor on the gym floor, and that not all instructors needed these skills (see Talkback, *HCM* Sept 08).

Instructors are, however, expected to risk assess their circumstances and gain a CPR/first aid certification if this is considered necessary for their jobs. REPs members can now also receive continual professional development (CPD) points if they do the training through a REPs-approved provider.

The requirements of CPR/first aid have also been changed by the Technical Expert Group and SkillsActive Employers Group.

Please visit the REPs website – www.exerciseregister.org – to locate training providers and courses that have been approved by the government's Health and Safety Executive.

**A CPR course is no longer a must, but will count towards CPD**

visit the reps online: www.exerciseregister.org
leisureopportunities is the official recruitment service of reps

Special Reader Offer:
**£50 OFF!** *

professionalspa conference
1–3 March 2009 ExCeL London

# Revitalise your spa business!

## Fresh thinking for challenging times

High level networking and key insights for spa owners operators and hoteliers, designers and consultants. Expert contributions and insight on maximising operational efficiency, developing business acumen and the future of spa from speakers including:

- **Andrew Gibson,** Group Director - Spa, Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group
- **Richard Dusseau,** CEO, Spatality
- **Geraldine Howard,** President, Aromatherapy Associates
- **Anne McCall Wilson,** VP Spas, Fairmont Raffles Hotels International

**Conference Passes**

**Full Price 3 Day Pass:**
£445 + vat from 12 Jan – 27 Feb '09

**1 Day Pass:**
£195 + vat from 10 Nov '08 – 27 Feb '09

* Discount only applies to 3 Day Pass

**Book now for your £50 discount, by calling 0845 056 8839 and quoting discount code PSCHCM**

Your conference pass also gives you free entry into Professional Beauty 2009 exhibition, which runs alongside the Professional Spa Conference

**Wallace moves on from SIBEC**

## nigel wallace to join lifetime

Nigel Wallace, event director for the industry forums SIBEC and SPATEC, is moving on to a new role as director of training at Lifetime.

Wallace, who has been with McLean Events – organisers of SIBEC and SPATEC – for the past four years, previously worked as executive director of the FIA after his job as adidas academy director.

Lifetime, which was recently named the Centre of Excellence for Fitness for National Employers by the National Skills Academy, appointed Wallace to manage its curriculum and to develop new training schemes.

Wallace says: "This is a superb role that comes at a key time for training in our industry."

## leisure connection's ceo moves on

Graham Farrant, CEO of Leisure Connection, is set to leave the company and become the first CEO of management consultancy PMP.

Farrant will join PMP later this spring to manage the day-to-day operations of the company. He has been tasked with overseeing the consultancy's work on major national and regional projects.

PMP's executive chair, Peter Mann, says: "Graham's selection reflects our ambition to appoint a CEO who has an in-depth understanding of the public and commercial sectors and who has worked extensively with central government across a number of related areas.

"He is very highly respected throughout the leisure sector and will provide intellectual rigour and vision as an ambitious, strong, empathetic leader.

"Graham will also complement our existing strength in providing strategic leadership for local authorities, national sporting and governmental bodies and major sporting events."

**Farrant will be PMP's first CEO**

Farrant has spent more than four years at Leisure Connection – he took over the CEO role in October 2004.

## new uk general manager for pte

Ron Brook, former managing director of Physique Sports, has been appointed the new UK general manager of its parent company – the PTE Group – as part of the firm's consolidation and relocation.

The company recently moved its headquarters from Colne in Lancashire to Blackburn, where Brooks will run PTE's day-to-day operations.

As part of its plans for consolidation, PTE is also merging Physique Sports, its sports hall and gym division, with Physique Services to form one of the UK's largest independent suppliers of new, remanufactured and home-use kit.

Graham Bertrand, managing director of PTE, says: "Brook's new position and the merging of Physique [Services] and Physique Sports under one name and roof will allow us to work more smartly across our existing customer base, as well as to target new areas of business."

Other companies within the PTE group include operator Alliance Leisure, equipment supplier ZigZag and Home Fitness Direct.

## in brief...

### new liw marketing manager

Helen Beckett has been appointed to replace Adam Taylor as marketing manager for the trade show Leisure Industry Week (LIW).

Beckett has 15 years' experience in exhibition marketing and started her career with Reed Exhibitions. Taylor, meanwhile, is leaving LIW to emigrate to Australia.

Beckett says: "This is an important year for LIW as it not only celebrates its 21st anniversary, but also supports the leisure industry during testing times, I'm looking forward to working with those in the sector."

### dr paul bedford joins tldc

Dr Paul Bedford is joining The Leisure Database Company's (TLDC) board of directors, bringing with him background knowledge of his company, Re-Aim, which specialises in retention.

Bedford's PhD research on factors that affect membership retention in the fitness industry have helped increase the average membership length from seven to 13 months for many clubs.

Bedford says: "The synergies between Re-Aim and TLDC mean we can work more effectively to support the industry in the current challenging climate when retention is vital."

### new keiser sales manager

Equipment supplier Keiser UK has appointed a new sales manager to enhance its position in the marketplace and further develop vertical markets.

Steve Newell, appointed in November 2008, previously worked as a sales executive for Technogym, and before that as a health and fitness manager and personal training co-ordinator for operator Fitness First.

Keiser UK introduced the new role as a result of its recent growth, which has included the launch of products such as the M3 indoor cycle and the M5 group elliptical cross-trainer.



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

edited by caroline wilkinson. email: carolinewilkinson@leisuremedia.com

PEOPLE PROFILE

# bob jauncey

Low Energy Bob, as he's known to colleagues at Leisure Connection, is the company's energy and environmental manager, with a passion for steam trains and West Bromwich Albion

## Why do you care so much about energy saving?

I feel that working to help reduce our impact on the environment is a very good cause and I genuinely like seeing how much energy simple energy-saving techniques can save an organisation.

## How did you get into the field?

My background is in mechanical and electrical engineering, but it wasn't until 1989, when I started working for the WHSmith Group, that I started to work on making companies more energy-efficient. I was seconded to work for DIY company Do It All during the recession in the early 90s, and I started to look at saving energy to reduce a company's costs during a recession.

## What's your role at Leisure Connection?

My remit is to help reduce the company's and its clients' energy output, including delivering energy efficiency training.

Each Leisure Connection site has a nominated energy champion who I train every quarter, and who then passes on my teaching to their colleagues. To help incentivise staff, there are league tables of the best performing leisure centres.

We're also running a challenge, organised by the CIBSE (Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers), in which companies dedicate 100 days to saving energy. I won the challenge's Champion of Carbon Saving Champions Award in 2008, and I'm hoping the challenge will provide staff at Leisure Connection with the motivation to save energy too. Hopefully we'll win the award.

PICTURE: WWW.ISTOCK.COM

**A pool cover can save a centre up to 30 per cent on its gas bills each year**

## What are your top tips for centre managers on saving energy?

The most important advice I could give to a leisure centre manager on how to make the site more energy-efficient is to ensure that your swimming pool has a cover. This can save a centre up to 30 per cent on its gas bills each year.

It's also important that managers monitor their central heating and lighting controls – turn the heating down in the summer and make sure your external lights are not left on 24 hours a day by using a timer. Good housekeeping can also make a big difference: switching off lights and equipment at the end of the day is essential – it's a simple task but one that many centres fail to do.

## What frustrates you in your work?

The fact that some companies are still reluctant to spend money on energy-efficient products, even though it could save money in the long run. Even if only half of the people I train adopt energy saving techniques, that's still a success as it's more people than were saving energy previously.

## What do you do outside of work?

I'm 60 and currently live with my wife in Stourport on Severn, in Worcestershire. I'm an avid West Bromwich Albion fan and have been a season ticket holder for 30 years. I'm also a shareholder in the Severn Valley Railway. I've had steam train driving lessons and hope to volunteer on the railway in the future.



BRING FITNESS 2 LIFE

GAIN POUNDS WHILST THEY LOSE THEM

The Concept2 Model E elevates everything - workouts, fitness levels, even where your clients sit. We've raised the bar, added a sturdier frame and a nickel plated chain for even lower maintenance. And when it comes to tracking progress, the new PM4 monitor is bursting with performance data at the touch of a button. **Call us now to find out how Concept2 can help pull in your profits.**

bringfitness2life.co.uk

concept 2 INDOOR ROWER

0115 945 5522

# competitive edge

## 30–31 MAY 09

### oxfam's new trailtrekker

As if Trailwalker wasn't hard enough – to which our very own HCM team can attest (see HCM Sept 08, p23) – Oxfam has launched an even more difficult walking challenge. The Trailtrekker challenge still covers the same distance of 100km in under 30 hours, but the terrain across the Yorkshire Dales is much more strenuous. The challenge is for teams of four, plus a support crew. The entry fee is £200 per team and the minimum sponsorship is £1,500. Details: www.oxfam.org.uk

If Trailwalker (above) doesn't sound hard enough, try Trailtrekker!

PICTURE: KATE CRACKNELL

Nijmegen: Promoting exercise

## 21–24 JULY 09

### walk the walk – the nijmegen marches

Attracting 40,000 entrants, this challenge is hailed the world's largest walking event. It takes place in Nijmegen, a city in the east of the Netherlands, and is held every year as a means to promote sport and exercise. Each day, for four days, men and women complete 40km and 50km respectively. Older walkers can opt for 30km a day. Details: www.walkthewalk.org

## 6–16 AUGUST 09

### family masai volcano trek

Take the whole family on the trip of a lifetime – a trek that passes through the Crater Highland and Rift Valley landscapes of Tanzania, witnessing the traditional Masai way of life as the tribesmen tend to their cattle in this spectacular region, most of which is a conservation area. The trip is open to children over 14, provided they come with at least one parent or guardian – a fantastic way to introduce exercise into the family routine as you train together for the event. You can raise funds for the charity of your choice. Full costs can be found on: www.discoveradventure.com

Family trekking in Tanzania

Get back in your wedding dress

## 12 SEPTEMBER 09

### wear your wedding dress again – fun run and ball

This new event, to raise money for Cancer Research, is organised by personal training company Coach Me Slim & Trim. The idea is that women, and their husbands, use the year to slim back into their wedding dress/suit and show off their results in September. An optional one-mile fun run takes place at 11am and a ball at 7pm. Tickets cost £35, with no set minimum sponsorship. Details: www.wearyourweddingdressagain.co.uk



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

**ForumClub and ForumPiscine will be held in Verona, Italy, on 20–22 February**

## FEBRUARY

### 20–22 | ForumClub
**Venue** Verona, Italy
**Summary**
A congress and trade show for European health and fitness, wellness and aquatic clubs. Now in its 10th year, 2009 sees the launch of ForumPiscine, a congress and show for the international pool and spa sector, held alongside ForumClub.
**Tel** +39 0512 55360
**Email** info@ncforum.com
**Web** www.ncforum.com

### 26 february–1 march | Fitness IFEMA 2009
**Venue** Madrid, Spain
**Summary**
International fitness conference and show, with fitness clothes and accessories, gym equipment and technology, spa kit, plus access to consultancies and associations.
**Tel** +34 91 722 30 00
**Email** fitness@ifema.es
**Web** www.ifema.es

### 26 february–1 march | ECA World Fitness Show
**Venue** New York, US
**Summary**
Fitness and wellness convention and trade show. Register by February 14.
**Tel** +1 516 432 6877
**Email** mary@ecaworldfitness.com
**Web** www.ecaworldfitness.com

## MARCH

### 1–3 | Professional Beauty 2009 and Professional Spa International Conference
**Venue** ExCeL, London, UK
**Summary**
A trade show and conference for the international beauty and spa industry.
**Tel** +44 (0)20 7728 4291
**Email** info@professionalbeauty.co.uk
**Web** www.professionalbeauty.co.uk

### 7–8 | Mind Body Soul Exhibition
**Venue** Kempton Park Racecourse, Sunbury on Thames, UK
**Summary**
Stands, lectures, workshops and demonstrations focused on complementary therapies and practices.
**Tel** +44 (0)1787 224040
**Email** julie@primeimpact.co.uk
**Web** www.mbsevents.co.uk

### 16–19 | IHRSA 2009
**Venue** San Francisco, California, US
**Summary**
Representatives from the health club, fitness, wellness and health promotion industries can benefit from this event with its diverse training sessions, networking opportunities with operators from across the globe and world-class exhibition.
**Tel** +1 617 951 0055
**Email** info@ihrsa.org
**Web** www.ihrsa.org

### 25–28 | SPATEC UK & Europe
**Venue** Grand Real Santa Eulalia Resort & Hotel Spa, Albufeira, Portugal
**Summary**
A two-day forum of face-to-face meetings between UK and European spa owners, directors and senior personnel, with more than 70 leading international spa suppliers.
**Tel** +44 (0)20 8547 9830
**Email** events@mcleaneventsinternational.com
**Web** www.spateceu.com

### 27–29 | International Fitness Showcase
**Venue** Winter Gardens, Blackpool, UK
**Summary**
Showcases the latest exercise classes, along with workshops and lectures, for fitness instructors and enthusiasts.
**Tel** +44 (0)113 277 3885
**Email** ifs_enquiry@chrysalispromotions.com
**Web** www.chrysalispromotions.com



HUR®
AIR RESISTANCE FITNESS EQUIPMENT
*naturally different*

*because everybody is not the same*

www.huruk.co.uk
Tel: **01206 798864**

everyone's talking about . . .

# exercise referral

Encouraging people with health problems to exercise seems like an obvious solution – so why is it that, despite a willingness in the industry, exercise referral schemes have had limited success?

At the FIA's Industry Summit in November, Georgina Jupp, managing director of CK Academy, asserted that GPs are frequently reluctant to make exercise referrals because they don't consider health clubs to be "private, dignified environments" (see our interview on p28).

Jupp's opinions are based on extensive experience: CK Academy works with well-respected gyms, but nevertheless routinely battles with GPs who remain steadfast in their views of what they believe their patients will encounter if they venture into health clubs.

Given the ongoing efforts from operators keen to work with the public health sector, we have to ask why there hasn't been more success in turning these perceptions around. Does the industry need to make its clubs more welcoming to people with health issues? Should they invest more in staff training? Are the patients themselves intimidated by gyms, or is it the perception of GPs and other healthcare professionals that needs to change?

Perhaps it's a wider issue. Are GPs sceptical about making referrals because, in many areas, there's no clear route and not enough information? Jupp goes on to say that, after working with a number of stakeholders, opinion appears to be so diverse that what works for one practitioner or a PCT is dismissed by another.

The FIA is currently putting together an Exercise Referral Steering Group, calling on industry experts to brainstorm how to move the campaign forward. The Mental Health Foundation is also putting its weight behind the issue and there are rumours that the British Heart Foundation is showing an interest.

As Jupp says, there is unprecedented governmental support for getting the public active. We need to move quickly and seize the opportunities.

ARE GPS RESISTING REFERRING PATIENTS TO HEALTH CLUBS? EMAIL US: HEALTHCLUB@LEISUREMEDIA.COM

## georgina jupp

ck academy • managing director

"Many health clubs are keen to do business with the public health sector, but don't know how to move forward. CK Academy has received a large number of requests to drive dialogue, clarify routes forward, attract funding, identify commissioners and increase awareness of services.

Unfortunately, there is no step-by-step guide. There is often no strategic plan in place for local communities, so we find pockets of good practice – in some areas, initiatives that are proven to work are withdrawn due to lack of funding, while in other instances patient choice is extensive and plans are in place to ensure ongoing funding.

I'm confident the FIA's Exercise Referral Steering Group represents a strategic way forward, which is essential. A 'one size fits all' approach will stifle our industry: we must focus on an easy to understand, accessible range of programmes, designed to focus on prevention, general wellbeing and, of course, rehabilitation. I think our industry is to be congratulated on how we've listened and responded to criticisms: barriers are coming down and now is the time to pull together, involve all those out there delivering, and learn from best practice."

## mark harmer

nhs norfolk • exercise referral co-ordinator

"Most of our clients start our programmes with preconceived images of the gym being full of sweaty bodybuilder types and glamorous, super-fit ladies. They also assume that the staff won't be interested in working with them and that they'll be made to do horrible exercises with fit people looking on. Many of these views are mirrored by healthcare professionals.

It's vital that GPs use the state of behaviour change model and refer only patients at the contemplation stage. Successful schemes result from good communication and involvement between the instructors and the medical practices.

I believe the industry focuses too heavily on the physically active. If clubs had more staff qualified in exercise referral, and health club owners and district councils worked more closely with their local medical centres, they would have the pickings of the 60 per cent of men and 70 per cent of women who aren't achieving the recommended levels of exercise.

The industry needs to change its image so more people see gyms as amenable places, with staff who care about their clients and not just their monthly membership targets!"



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

PICTURE: WWW.CLARETOPIUS.COM

**Jupp says many GPs will not refer patients to health clubs because they do not see them as 'dignified' environments**

## dr rowan myron

the mental health foundation • associate head of research

"Research has shown the benefits of exercise for people with mental health problems for some time [see p70]. In 2004, NICE recommended that people being treated for depression should be advised to engage in regular and structured exercise. However, in 2005, The Mental Health Foundation found only around 5 per cent of GPs were using it as one of their top three treatment options for depression. We published a report, *Up and Running*, which made the case for exercise as a treatment for depression. Since then, there has been a notable improvement.

As of January 2008, the proportion of GPs using exercise as one of their top three treatments has increased fourfold to more than 20 per cent. There's a long way to go, however, as the same survey found that less than half of GPs had access, or thought they had access, to an exercise referral scheme.

We're currently researching the experience of local exercise referral schemes and the results will be out soon. What is clear already is that there's a potential for far greater use of exercise as therapy for mental health problems, and the public, voluntary and private sectors all have roles to play."

## maggie hackney

first response • clinical exercise practitioner

"I fully support GP referrals but we need to work within the guidelines of the National Quality Assurance Framework. Working in the fitness industry and for the NHS, I have experience from both sides. There's evidence to show GP referrals are working very well in some areas, but I'm concerned about those that fail.

Some telephone and internet research proved that many gyms claim to do GP referrals when they don't, and that recognised referral pathways are not always in place.

Each client should have a proper evaluation, adherence rates should be monitored and there should be follow-ups. Patients should be monitored to see how often they attend and their commitment tested – they have to be ready for change.

There should also be a diverse range of exit routes, not just a concessional rate at the same gym. The exercise programme should always be delivered by suitably qualified professionals and frequently they're not. Often individuals are sent back to their GP because of their blood pressure or orthopaedic limitations, whereas a suitably trained fitness professional could devise a safe programme around most problems."

Georgina Jupp (far left) began her fitness career at Club Kingswood in Basildon, Essex

# GEORGINA JUPP

Neena Dhillon talks to the independent operator turned programming pioneer about the opportunities for the industry to work in co-operation with the broader health sector

Having served the UK health and fitness industry for close to 25 years, and collected a cabinet full of awards along the way, Georgina Jupp would surely be forgiven were she to ease her foot off the work pedal. However, her energy and enthusiasm for the industry is as strong as ever, as is her advocacy of long-lasting, mutually beneficial partnerships between primary care professionals and the health and fitness industry.

Jupp's fitness career began at Club Kingswood in Basildon, Essex, in 1984. Wanting to get active after the birth of her daughter, she visited the local 19-court squash club, where she was able to work out and nurture her competitive streak. Inspired by her surroundings and the trend for aerobics, she spotted an opportunity, trained as an exercise-to-music instructor and was soon teaching a weekly class at the family-run Essex club.

Before long, enough women were pitching up to justify increasing the aerobics schedule from one to two classes, and so it progressed from there. Spearheading its development from a male-orientated squash club to a comprehensive fitness facility, Jupp became director of health and fitness in the early 1990s. She remains proud of the guest ethos and programmes that characterise the award-winning club, which boasts a healthy annual retention rate of 76 per cent. "The club feel and flexible attitude towards contracts mean we've been able to attract a broad membership," reflects Jupp. "As a single site, we're able to respond very quickly to industry trends and member needs, plus we believe in continually analysing the guest experience."

No longer in an operational role, Jupp has moved on to the strategic position of director of development, a position she clearly relishes. "I'm responsible for questioning where we're going as an industry in response to the Department of Health's agenda, and assessing our local community access," she explains. "Also to ensure the club never loses sight of what it feels like to be new to the fitness environment, overweight or self-conscious."

## driving change

But the majority of Jupp's time is taken up as managing director of CK Academy, a consultancy initially established in 2003 at Club Kingswood to offer a range of CYQ and Active IQ qualifications. The REPs-endorsed training provider has earned respect thanks, in part, to the team's dedication to championing



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

**Jupp is proud of the guest ethos at the award-winning Club Kingswood, which has a retention rate of 76 per cent**

fit-for-purpose qualifications. Jupp serves as chair of SkillsActive's Technical Expert Group, alongside the academy's technical director Nichola Curran, and sits on the organisation's Sport and Fitness Employers Group, as well as being a member of the review panel of CYQ. In addition, Jupp is currently overseeing a tender for CK Academy to become a Centre of Excellence for the National Skills Academy in the eastern region.

Training will always be a top priority, but it is the academy's comprehensive understanding of the industry that sets it apart, according to Jupp. She says: "It's unusual to have an organisation that has a wealth of experience in training, operations and programming; this combination is not typically seen. Our team [seven administrative staff and 35 facilitators, including tutors and personal trainers] comprises people who have been involved in the operational aspects of the industry since the early 1980s, while our programming expertise is based on technical know-how, creativity and understanding of client needs."

A short time in Jupp's company leaves little doubt as to where her real passion lies. It is an inherent love of programming that continues to motivate her, and in CK Academy she has found the perfect vehicle through which to provide lifestyle-change services, both to the public and the private sectors.

Enthused by the prospect of delivering lifestyle programmes to those most in need, Jupp was asked four years ago to consult on an Essex-based Condition Management Programme (CMP) provided by Jobcentre Plus and funded by the NHS through a Pathways to Work initiative. The aim was to encourage people on Incapacity Benefit to return to work or to retrain for a new career through participation in a Lifestyle Programme, run by CK Academy, in a Musculoskeletal Programme, partly involving the academy, or in a Mental Health Programme.

The six-week Lifestyle option involved regular educational seminars, one-to-one personal training sessions and 10-week membership at a local fitness facility – including Club Kingswood, Fitness First in Southend and Impulse Leisure Centre in Thurrock – all designed to positively impact on stress, diet, physical activity, sleeping patterns and personal development.

A total of six co-ordinators and 30 trainers were employed to run the programme, with the academy taking payment via CMP through contracts signed on the basis of proposed number of clients. Over the past four years, between 400 and 600 CMP clients have participated in CK Academy's Lifestyle Programme annually, with approximately 30 per cent returning to work.

## GEORGINA JUPP – INDUSTRY ACCOLADES

**2004**: Winner of the REPs Lifetime Achievement Award
**2003**: Winner of FIA's Spirit of Flame Award, which recognises excellent and best practice
**1998**: Under Jupp's leadership as director of health and fitness, Club Kingswood is voted UK Club of the Year by the FIA
**1997**: Named UK Personality of the Year by the FIA

"Many of our clients felt they were stuck between a rock and a hard place, so guiding them towards change has been the real success," comments Jupp. "But if you think about the 30 per cent no longer on Incapacity Benefit, this is a significant reduction in costs to the Department for Work and Pensions."

### groundbreaking results

On the back of this success, the academy was also asked to pilot a 12-week course between September and November 2008 that integrated aspects of the Lifestyle Programme with mental health. "What had become clear from our previous experience – and this was something identified by primary care professionals ▶

**Up to 600 clients participate in the Lifestyle Programme annually, 30 per cent of whom have returned to work**

working as part of CMP – was that those individuals who took Lifestyle before moving onto the Mental Health Programme achieved much better results through this combination," explains Jupp. "Out of the 12 local patients with mental health conditions that we worked with, seven are retraining, two are back in work and one has sought the correct professional help that she needed. These results are unheard of up until now."

CK Academy is now looking at how it can adapt its programming in response to the current economic climate and the shift from Incapacity Benefit to Employment and Support Allowance. What the CMP results have proved to date, however, is that the fitness industry can be involved in delivering lifestyle solutions as part of a broad-reaching government health agenda.

"Underpinning the success is the continuity of care," Jupp comments. "So if your club is going to get involved, then everybody from reception onwards has to be ready to welcome these clients."

Participating clubs not only benefit from membership fees per patient and venue fees, but there are also accompanying promotional opportunities. Indeed, Club Kingswood general manager Alex Owen points out: "For some clients coming through the doors on these programmes, the experience has become a stepping stone to full membership."

Making further inroads into primary care, Jupp has also forged close partnerships with 22 GPs locally, including the Beacon Cluster of GPs in Basildon, which commissioned the academy's services. In what can be considered a 'first', CK Academy lifestyle advisers with CYQ Level 3 certification in exercise referral have worked as integral members of a primary care team to provide lifestyle modification programmes that integrate surgery-based assessments with seminars and group physical activities in local community facilities. A total of 400 patients with conditions varying from diabetes to depression will have completed the programme between April 2008 and March 2009, helping to free up clinicians' time, reduce prescription costs and bring about improved quality of life.

**Health clubs can be "private, dignified environments", insists Jupp, who's pushing back against GPs' objections**

But the journey has not been without its major frustrations, as Jupp points out: "We're regularly getting calls from patients wanting to participate, but who can't because their GPs won't commission us. The problem is that you're at the mercy of individual GPs and their perception of the importance of promoting lifestyle change. This, and the fact that GPs don't often have time to explain these more pioneering alternatives to traditional prescribing, means that uptake is slower than we'd like." For this reason, Jupp and her team are keen to develop programmes that are driven through PCTs, with more user-friendly methods of engaging patients, healthcare practitioners and commissioners.

## seizing the day

Another obstacle that Jupp has had to contend with is the perception that health clubs aren't the best environments in which to instigate lifestyle change because they are neither private nor dignified (see Talkback, p26). "There's a myth that patients who are referred won't be comfortable in health clubs, preferring community facilities such as school halls instead," says Jupp. "But 80 per cent of those we've trained through the academy have ended up joining private or local authority fitness centres."

Still, if the fitness industry is to grab hold of the golden but finite opportunity of becoming a valued partner in the government's bid to improve the nation's health, Jupp says it must show that it deserves this role. "We have to understand the government's agenda, learn the jargon, attend health conferences and accept that slow change across health authorities and PCTs means perseverance is required," she comments. "We have to be mindful of appealing to a broad spectrum of people and work in our local communities. There's no set model, so we need to be creative and adaptable, but never undersell our product. Finally, we need to appropriately reward staff who drive forward these initiatives."

Jupp believes these changes can be advanced through clear strategy and direction from the FIA, with the suggested appointment of an industry ambassador who can act as a bridge between the Department of Health and club operators.

In the meantime, Jupp has plenty to keep her awake at night, working out how to scale up CK Academy's business now that its range of programmes is being recognised across different regions. "Could we link with a chain that's prepared to become the industry's 'wellness' provider in terms of these services?" she ponders.

There's also her new focus on the private sector, with City Life programming for corporate clients and boot camps for private organisations in development. Indeed, one of the academy's latest wins is a contract to provide a lifestyle boot camp along with traditional fitness programmes and subsidised community outreach work to a new health and spa facility due to open in September at the Lords Golf & Country Club in Rayleigh, Essex.

It seems there's no resting on laurels where Jupp is concerned and, with her bags of energy and unfailing dedication to the industry, there's little doubt that she will be responsible for many more industry innovations to come.

***neena dhillon***
*healthclub@leisuremedia.com*



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

# Engage new users.
# Energize your cardio floor.

*Menu View*

*Master Instructor*

*Monitor Intensity*

*TV Tuner / iPod®*

## Introducing eSpinner™

The most exciting addition to your cardio floor in 10 years!

From its embedded touch screen to its virtual Spin® instructor - It is the newest level in cardio. Now users of all levels can experience the coaching, motivation and intensity of music, video and a virtual Spinning® class whenever they want.

To electrify your club visit

www.startrac.com/espinner/uk or call 44 (0) 1494 688 260.

©2008 Star Trac. All rights reserved. Star Trac and the Star Trac logo are registered trademarks of Unisen, Inc. Energy Zone and eSpinner is a trademark of Mad Dogg Athletics, Inc. SPIN, Spinning, Spinner and the Spinning logo are registered trademarks of Mad Dogg Athletics, Inc. iPod is a registered trademark of Apple, Inc. EDP is a registered trademark of Shimano, Inc. Smart Release is a trademark of Nautilus, Inc.

Made for iPod

SPINNING®

STAR TRAC

expect different.

# AHEAD OF THE CURVE

Will the ellipticals category continue to hold strong, or will it be cannibalised by the 'new movement CV' products? Nick Ryan investigates

For the past decade or more, the face of almost every gym has been transformed by ellipticals. Since Precor launched the first model – the EFX – in 1995, they have become standard in most health clubs, with an almost endless list of advanced features available on today's machines: front, centre and rear drive, resistance systems, programmable strides, integrated entertainment 'theatres'.

Innovations over the last few years include the Octane 3700 and Keiser's M5, which is the size of a studio cycle and designed to be used in group exercise classes. The technology has also spawned a new generation of equipment – including Precor's AMT, Nautilus' TreadClimber and Technogym's Cardio Wave – which, while not strictly ellipticals, have been inspired by this category.

## popularity

In research published last summer, the IDEA Health and Fitness Association in the US said that elliptical trainers tied for third place – along with foam rollers and small balls, and pilates equipment – in its Top 10 list of equipment predicted to grow. Seventy per cent of IDEA member respondents offered elliptical trainers in their facilities and, of those 70 per cent, 61 per cent believed usage would grow.

Sandy Todd Webster, editor in chief of IDEA Publications, says such growth could be put down to the "excellent cardiovascular workout without the joint stress" that elliptical trainers provide, as well as the opportunity to burn a large amount of calories in a short time.

"Ellipticals are definitely the most popular piece of equipment in our gyms," says David Coulthard, regional manager of Harpers Fitness, Leisure Connection's health club brand. "To prove it, you can take them out of your local Harper's club and I'll give the members your phone number to feed back any complaints – then you'll see how popular they are!

"In all seriousness, ellipticals are popular because they're so versatile. They're a great piece of kit for older or overweight people, and for people with conditions such as osteoporosis, as they're proven to increase bone density."

Meanwhile Nicola Day, wellness manager at The Club Company – which uses Technogym's Excite Synchro – feels the popularity of ellipticals is due to them "being different" from run-of-the-mill treadmills. She continues: "Initially

**Full body workout** The Octane 3700 allows users to work upper and lower body

**Moving on** Nautilus' Warsop believes sales of ellipticals (above left) will fall in favour of elliptical-inspired products



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

**Biomechanics are important, says Technogym's Fearon, but AV add-ons will also differentiate ellipticals**

they were very hard to use: now the industry as a whole is moving towards a low-impact, joint-friendly, user-friendly experience. Everyone can use them."

However, from figures available in six of the 10 sites it operates, Day says only three had seen an increase in elliptical usage year-on-year, with a slight drop in the other three centres. "I'm surprised, actually, to see a drop in the figures," she adds. "In general I find they're very popular. This is the first fall in two years of collecting these stats."

## innovation is key

Kate Fearon, Technogym's product manager, says: "Virtually every operator these days has some form of cross-trainer. The big challenge is to create an environment where people keep coming back. Product innovation is key to this.

"If you don't feel comfortable, you lose motivation – we believe that's the main reason people give up the gym. Whenever we develop new equipment, we look at whether it will make clients want to return."

She adds that, while ellipticals don't deliver the most efficient workout compared with some other cardiovascular machines, they are easy to use and intuitive. "People perceive them as less hard, so they're more likely to spend longer on them. That's what killed off steppers – they're hard work, even if they are more efficient for a workout."

Fearon believes that audio-visual innovations have added to this – people are happier spending longer on a piece of equipment that feels easier, particularly if they can watch *EastEnders* at the same time, even if it means a less efficient workout. She therefore feels that, although manufacturers invest heavily in R&D on the equipment itself, the entertainment systems on offer will also be key in differentiating a piece of kit and in driving demand.

Nautilus' Alex Warsop agrees. "Ellipticals have been out for 10 years now, and members and club operators are demanding new innovation," she says. She adds that research from Nautilus has shown that users "want an effective workout but with a low perceived exertion – results without the burn – which is driving innovation and why we developed the TreadClimber". Nautilus is currently developing a new model of this popular machine, originally launched in 2006. ▸

**Old school Precor produced its first ever EFX elliptical (above) in 1995; the category has exploded since then**


"In Wattbike we have the perfect partner"

Endorsed by BRITISH CYCLING

THEY SAID IT COULDN'T BE DONE. SO WE DID IT.

Wattbike is the first exercise bike to be endorsed by British Cycling because it gives accurate and comparable measurements of power output in watts, can be used by anyone and feels as realistic as indoor cycling gets. And it's affordable too.

Wattbike, the result of seven years work and a brief British Cycling said would be impossible, is already helping them take cycling to the next level.

wattbike®

www.wattbike.com
08448 759 547

WHERE WILL WATTBIKE TAKE YOU?

## "UNIT SALES OF ELLIPTICALS IN THE YEAR TO SEPTEMBER 2008 TOTALLED 3,834; 'NEW MOVEMENT CV' SOLD 1,130 UNITS"

### biomechanics

Among manufacturers, there is a keenness to stress the health benefits of the elliptical machines.

"Compared to running and stair-climbing, research shows that elliptical training is at least, and possibly more, effective for improving cardiovascular fitness," says Precor's head of marketing Miles Rimell. With five machines in its current EFX range, Rimell highlights the importance of Precor's biomechanical research. "A user's workout is so smooth it doesn't feel like they're working as hard as they are, which in turns means they'll be able to carry on their workout for longer."

However, although most manufacturers focus on the importance of the biomechanical research behind their products, some experts remain doubtful about the benefits of using an elliptical trainer.

According to Paul M Juris, executive director of the Cybex Institute in the US: "The patterns do not actually simulate real foot trajectories during gait. Additionally, the upper extremity patterns evoke a level of trunk rotation that's significantly greater than that which would occur during natural gait. This increases spine stress.

"[Ellipticals] become very uncomfortable at high workloads, and thus people tend to exercise on them at lower intensity levels. This may mitigate shear stress and discomfort, but it significantly reduces the training effect. In other words, ellipticals deliver substandard results." Consequently, Cybex does not manufacture an elliptical trainer.

No one wanted to be directly quoted, but one supplier dismissed this statement. "As all elliptical machines are different, there are some hugely sweeping statements here. However, when virtually every major manufacturer supplies an elliptical machine and one company does not, it has to produce a good reason why it does not do so. There are numerous distributors for this company outside of the US who have to supply another company's products so they can fulfil a demand for ellipticals."

**Space-efficient** **Keiser's M5 has the same size footprint as a Spin bike, making it ideal for group exercise classes**

### coming soon

Neil Campbell, general manager of Octane Fitness UK – a company that only makes elliptical trainers – stresses that the Octane Fitness Pro 3700 is the only elliptical accredited by the Inclusive Fitness Initiative. The other accredited cross-trainer is the Cybex Arc, which is not an elliptical.

"The next big thing will be the seated elliptical machines," says Campbell. "Octane Fitness is soon to launch the Octane Fitness xR6000 which, as a seated elliptical, will offer a variety of forward and reverse motions for the lower body while also providing a very tough upper body workout."

When asked about the effects of the recession on the sector, he was circumspect: "I see the recession as positive so far. Some companies have been spending more wisely, by adding something new – different machines – to their gym offering, rather than just replacing an older version of a machine with a newer version."

According to some of the latest figures in the STRETCH report – CV and strength sales figures from Cybex International, Escape Fitness, Matrix Fitness Systems, Keiser UK, Life Fitness UK, Nautilus, Precor Products, Pulse Fitness, Star Trac UK and Technogym UK – overall unit sales of ellipticals fell 5 per cent over the year to September 2008, while unit sales of ellipticals with screens rose by 11 per cent during the same period. Combined sales totalled 3,834 units.

**Moving in an Arc** **Cybex does not produce an elliptical as it believes they do not allow for a natural movement**

Importantly, however, these figures do not include the recent innovations referenced in this feature. Warsop explains: "STRETCH actually created a new category in the middle of last year to accommodate new innovation products. This includes the Nautilus TreadClimber, Matrix Ascent, Life Fitness Summit Trainer, Precor AMT and Technogym Cardio Wave. Most of these new products offer a completely new motion but still have the look of an elliptical."

So how important is this new generation of elliptical-inspired products? Precor says it remains committed to its EFX range, but the expertise and research it has gained through developing its ellipticals has led to the development of its award-winning Adaptive Motion Trainer – a piece of equipment that currently lies at the heart of the company's marketing strategy.

And it's certainly true that this 'new movement CV' category, which accounted for 1,130 unit sales in the STRETCH period noted above, has cannibalised elliptical sales. Warsop concludes: "I would expect to see this category growing and ellipticals decreasing. I think ellipticals will always be around, but new innovations will eat into their sales and space on the gym floor."

***nick ryan***
*healthclub@leisuremedia.com*



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

KEISER®
THE POWER IN HUMAN PERFORMANCE

# M5 STRIDER STEP IT UP

A new group exercise concept to entice new members and excite existing ones.

- innovative low maintenance design
- compact and portable
- intuitive computer
- comprehensive education and marketing programmes

m5 STRIDER

Please contact our sales team for more information.

T 0845 612 1102
E info@keiseruk.com

www.keiseruk.com

# shake, rattle & roll

Kate Cracknell delves into the science behind some of the different types of vibration training machine on the market

Vibration training machines might be one of the newer categories of fitness kit to appear in health clubs, but vibration technology has been used to improve the body's performance for a surprisingly long time.

In ancient Greece, a saw covered in cotton was used to transmit mechanical vibrations to parts of the body that were not functioning properly, while in the late 1800s, Dr John Harvey Kellogg used vibrating chairs, platforms and bars as part of the wellness strategies for patients at his Michigan sanitarium.

However, the research into Whole Body Vibration (WBV) technology really began in the late 1970s with the development of a vibration system by one of Russia's top sports scientists, Dr Vladimir Nazarov, who introduced the technology to competitive sports, ballet and medicine in the former USSR. It was also adopted by the Russian Space Programme, and more recently the European Space Agency and NASA, as a way of countering muscle and bone wastage caused by weightlessness in space – training with vibration platforms in advance of space missions was found to improve bone density and muscle strength, better preparing the body for the predicted wastage.

Nowadays, WBV is used in a wide range of settings, from hospitals and rehab clinics to health clubs – hardly surprising given the 100-plus research papers, from independent universities and scientists, that list benefits such as: increased muscular strength, endurance and power; increased bone mineral density and joint stability; improved balance and posture; improved flexibility; an improved hormone profile; and reduced pain and fatigue.

But how much do we know about the science behind it? We take a look at some of the machines on the market to find out how each works and the different benefits they offer.

**Moving on up**
**Power Plate's vertical movement can work almost every muscle fibre**

## POWER PLATE

The variables for training with vibration are frequency (the speed the platform moves per second), amplitude (degree of movement/displacement), plane of movement, and duration and variety of exercise.

Power Plate® creates a predominantly vertical movement – also known as displacement – which has an instant effect on the muscles, bones and neuromuscular, hormonal and vascular systems. It also creates some side-to-side and front-to-back movement to develop stability and co-ordination.

The principle is simple: when you're in contact with the machine, the body subconsciously thinks the floor is unstable or dropping away, and reacts by recruiting all the available muscle fibres to keep you upright/in certain positions.

Power Plate training is often referred to as Acceleration Training, due both to its rapid training effect and to its use of acceleration to create more G-force; conventional resistance equipment uses mass to increase force. Sessions last a maximum of 25–30 minutes, during which time the body is challenged by 25–50 very small movements every second (a frequency of 25–50Hz), which is said to have the potential to activate up to 97 per cent of muscle fibres – this compared with 40–60 per cent in a standard gym session.

Power Plate is IFI Stage 2 accredited and has a wide range of applications, with the frequency adjustable in 1Hz intervals depending on the needs of the user – the elderly for balance, deconditioned athletes to enhance performance, regular people to complement a fitness regime or medical experts to enhance rehabilitation.

Selecting just a couple of the studies published, reported benefits include:

- Increased bone mineral density in post-menopausal women (Verschueren et al, 2004) – important in helping prevent osteoporosis, which affects one in three women. The study also noted improved muscle strength and postural control, which aid fall prevention.
- The same or better increases in strength after WBV compared with resistance training, but in a shorter time, without the dangers of heavy loading and with an appeal even to those who do not want to lift weights (Delecluse et al, 2003, conducted among young women).

There are also between 15 and 20 new studies currently being conducted on the use of Power Plate with conditions such as multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's Disease and juvenile obesity.



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

## GALILEO

The Galileo Side Alternating System was created in the early 1980s as a prototype for pilot studies exploring the applications and effects of WBV therapy. Initially used mainly to increase muscle power and force in the elderly and for rehab, it then found its way into commercial environments and has been produced commercially since 1995.

Simply put, it delivers vibration via a rapid, side-to-side 'see-saw' type movement – a functional movement with which the human body is familiar. When you walk or run, muscle contractions automatically occur in the feet, legs, pelvis and the paravertebral musculature up to the head. These enable you to walk and run with fluidity, without losing your balance and falling over every time you take a step. Galileo's platform induces the physiological movement patterns that occur when walking or running. The tilting platform simulates the up/compression phase of walking where one hip is up – the leg raised off the ground before swinging to take a forward step – while the other foot is down on the ground.

Galileo is therefore different from other vibration machines as both feet are not displaced at the same time. This is said to ensure that the back and abdominals are trained to maximum effectiveness without transferring significant vibration to the head. Although its frequency range is adjustable in 0.5Hz increments from 5–30Hz, Galileo's research shows that the best muscle response to vibration takes place between 25 and 27Hz – high frequencies the user is able to tolerate due to this lack of jarring and/or significant head vibration.

**Taking sides** **Galileo machines vibrate in a side-to-side 'see-saw' type movement, which eliminates jarring of the joints and vibrations being transferred to the head**

The amount of movement induced in the muscles is dependent on the displacement of the platform (the depth of its see-saw movement). Also known as amplitude, this is measured in millimetres. At the furthest point on a Galileo platform, the amplitude varies from 7mm–12.8mm depending on the machine used. The centre point (central axis) on all Galileo platforms is marked with a zero. The amplitude can therefore be adjusted simply by altering the foot or hand position relative to the central axis point: the closer you are to this, the smaller the amplitude and vibration.

The Galileo range is Type IIa MDD (Medical Device Directive) certified – a certification recognised throughout Europe – and each machine is hand-made to meet ISO (International Organisation for Standardisation) requirements.

As with Power Plate, a wide range of independent research has been conducted into the usage of Galileo. The Berlin Bed Rest Study, for example – carried out by Dieter Felsenberg et al – demonstrated the efficacy of Galileo in the prevention of bone loss in healthy young men.

Typically Galileo machines are used in health clubs and general rehab clinics, as well as in paediatrics and fall prevention. They can also be used to help treat conditions such as cystic fibrosis and to deliver neuro-rehab for neuromuscular diseases such as stroke, Parkinson's Disease and multiple sclerosis. An additional niche area is servicing full paraplegics or people with paralysis who do not have full use of upper and/or lower extremities. ▶

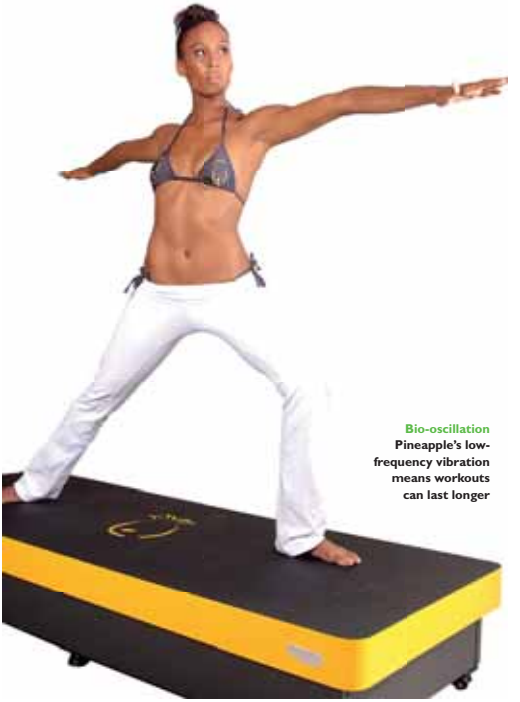
THE BODY THINKS THE FLOOR IS DROPPING AWAY, SO IT RECRUITS ALL THE AVAILABLE MUSCLES TO KEEP YOU UPRIGHT

## PINEAPPLE

Pineapple, a new entrant to the UK market, has been developed off the back of seven years' evaluation of existing WBV equipment and research. It differs from other vibration training machines in two main ways: movement is only in the vertical plane, and the frequency is much lower.

Using a methodology called bio-oscillation – low-frequency, vertical vibration said to be the most effective way to transfer vibration energy into the human body – it allows for an accelerated full body workout at frequencies not exceeding 20Hz. Cross-reference studies, looking at the increase in leg muscle activity when using Pineapple and comparing this with results from other WBV machines in previous like-for-like studies, have shown pure bio-oscillation to increase electromyography (EMG) activation of muscles between 8 and 13 per cent more than conventional WBV systems.

Pineapple bio-oscillation has three key principles. The first is a G-force of less than 1G – an ultra-low impact that provides a smooth effect without reducing the transfer of stimulation to the muscles. Amplitude varies from 1mm–30mm and frequencies vary from 1–20Hz, and the resulting low G-force effect – a maximum of 0.9G – means longer durations can be safely endured. This allows Pineapple to offer training options with enhanced possibilities, applications and results – for example, working at frequencies below 15Hz, Pineapple can be used to help enhance relaxation, meditation, yoga and pilates, as well as to provide pain relief, remove lactic acid and aid digestion.



**Bio-oscillation**
**Pineapple's low-frequency vibration means workouts can last longer**

From a safety angle, Pineapple is in tune with International Safety Organisation (ISO) and US Occupational Safety & Health Administration guidelines. These recommend working at under 0.8G for the majority of the time to avoid the potential long-term risk of, for example, joint/lower back pain and circulatory disorders. Pineapple also cites a study (Med Sport, 2003:56, 287-92 Cardinale, M & LIM, J) that compares the acute effects of two different WBV frequencies on performance – 40Hz and 20Hz. The conclusions indicate that working at lower frequencies is more effective and safer.

The second Pineapple principle is total vertical movement. This, combined with the low frequency, virtually eliminates the shearing (parallel) forces associated with the multi-directional movement of some machines, reducing risk of shearing injuries to the soft tissue and connective tissues.

The third principle is functional design. All Pineapple platforms feature an open platform design with no central console mast, which enables a broad range of exercises and activities to be performed. The model with the full-length bed allows for multiple training options – incorporating pilates and yoga moves, for example – while the entry-level model can withstand weights in excess of 350kg, but has a small footprint for space-efficient workouts.

## COMPARISON TABLE

| | POWER PLATE | GALILEO | PINEAPPLE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Frequency | 25–50Hz (adjustable in increments of 1Hz) | 5–30Hz (adjustable in increments of 0.5Hz) | 1–20Hz (adjustable in increments of 0.5Hz) |
| Amplitude | Two settings – 2mm (low) or 4mm (high) – depending on body weight | 7–12.8mm at the outer edge; zero at the central axis in the middle of the platform | Varies from 1mm–30mm |
| Plane of motion | Mainly vertical, with some side-to-side and front-to-back movement | Side alternating (side-to-side 'see-saw') | Vertical only |
| Duration | Maximum workout 25–30 minutes | Recommended 15–20 minutes three times a week, increasing as progress is made | Lower G-force means longer durations are possible |

***kate cracknell***
*healthclub@leisuremedia.com*



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

# We're here for music.

## The Performing Right Society (PRS) is now PRS for Music.

It's easy to take great music for granted. We're so used to having it around, sometimes we don't even think about it. We forget that, at some point, a songwriter has put serious effort into creating something special.

Here at PRS for Music, we never forget. We're here for music. The music creators we represent create the world's music and we're here to help you experience the benefits of it.

You might not know that you need a licence. We want to make it easy for you to get the legal permission you need to use music in your business. Playing music enhances the environment for customers and staff, can improve productivity and increase profits. Whether it's for background music, exercise classes or a TV, we're here to help you.

Covering more than 10 million songs and 60,000 music creators, our Music Licence will give you unrivalled choice and the reassurance that your company complies with the law.*

You get fast, easy access to all the music you want at great value.

Let's help the creators keep on creating.

For more information or to buy a Music Licence
call us on 0800 068 4828 or visit www.prsformusic.com

PRS for MUSIC

PLAY | PERFORM | REPRODUCE

Your performing and mechanical rights service
To find out more, visit www.prsformusic.com

PRS for Music is the trading name for Performing Right Society Limited.

*Applies to copyright music controlled by PRS for Music. Other licences may also be required.

# A FAMILY AFFAIR

Vicky Kiernander reports on the new Fitter Families initiative from Fit For Sport, the latest in a series of health and fitness programmes that target the whole family for maximum results

In 2006, a group of overweight children were filmed as they took part in a 20-week activity programme in Ian Wright's *Unfit Kids* documentary. The public watched as the eight 13-year-olds steadily made progress with the help of the former England footballer. What they didn't see was how the kids gradually slipped back into their bad habits once they returned home, undoing all their good work.

Fit for Sport acted as fitness consultants on the documentary. CEO Dean Horridge says seeing the children slide back into their old ways taught them a valuable lesson. "It showed us that we had to engage the family as a whole if we were to have any real success in getting children fitter." The seeds of the Fitter Families initiative were sown.

Horridge, a former head of PE, launched Fit for Sport in 1991 after noting the demand for out-of-school activities. A children's camp held during an Easter holiday marked the start of the organisation, which today works with more than 40 schools across London,

**Ian Wright (left) is spearheading the new Fitter Families initiative in a bid to get whole families more active (below)**

february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

## FAMILY PROGRAMMES **MEND**

The MEND Programme (Mind, Exercise, Nutrition…Do it!) offers free local healthy living programmes to families with overweight children aged seven to 13 years old. These consist of 20 two-hour sessions, which run twice a week, after school, over 10 weeks.

Devised by Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children and the University College London Institute of Child Health, the social enterprise works with partners from the private, public and not-for-profit sectors to offer more than 300 UK programmes. DC Leisure Management is the largest provider, currently running MEND at 17 of its sites.

The sessions include education on healthy eating, fun games to stimulate an interest in physical activity, and behaviour modification techniques to boost self-confidence. Measurements are taken before and after the scheme and follow-up includes newsletters, reunions and phone support.

Mini-MEND now caters for two to 4-year-olds. MEND is also working in other countries including Australia, Denmark and the US.

promoting the healthy lifestyle message to over 32,000 children.

In 2007, it launched the Fitter Schools UK Challenge with Ian Wright and Next Generation Health Clubs, which was designed to help re-engage children of all fitness levels in sport and exercise. In 2008, 3,500 schools took part in the national initiative, with more than one million children increasing their fitness levels by 12.8 per cent.

The Fitter Families initiative is the latest offering to arise from the Horridge-Wright partnership. Launched last month, the multi-dimensional campaign includes Ian Wright's *Fitter Families* book, a roadshow taking in 10 cities, the Fitter Families Challenge, and a documentary following two families through their Fitter Families journey. Funded by various sponsors and partners of which ASDA is the largest, the Fitter Families campaign will run for at least five years, targeting 100,000 families in the first 12 months.

Wright is the face of the campaign and refuses to take any payment for his contribution to what he considers a powerful force in improving the nation's fitness. His book, which was launched in January, will be followed by the roadshow in February and March, and the start of the three-month Fitter Families Challenge in April.

**Fit for Sport works with more than 40 schools, promoting healthy lifestyles to over 32,000 kids**

## THE CHALLENGE

The aim of the challenge is to find the UK's fittest family as well as the family with the most improved fitness. Any family that has committed to change by signing up to the website – www.fitterfamilies.com – is eligible to register for the challenge, which follows the Fitter Families SAS (Simple, Achievable and Sustainable) philosophy. The idea is that, by exercising together and making simple, achievable and sustainable changes, families can make life-long improvements to their health and fitness.

Families will perform one set of simple exercises at the start of the challenge and the same again 12 weeks later. The family that achieves the greatest improvement will be deemed the fitter family, while the family that achieves the largest aggregate score will be the fittest family.

The exercises will be unveiled when the challenge goes live. They will be simple yet require a combination of

## FAMILY PROGRAMMES **GOALS**

Goals (Getting Our Active Lifestyles Started) is a partnership between Liverpool John Moores University, Liverpool City Council, Liverpool PCT, Alder Hey Children's Hospital and the University of Salford.

Over the past five years, the project has brought together research and practice to develop a sustainable, community-based lifestyle intervention for obese children and their families. Funded by the Working Neighbourhood Fund, the 18-session intervention aims to support families in making gradual, sustainable changes to their physical activity and eating behaviours. Research conducted with over 80 families suggests it's the non-judgemental rapport with staff, the fun and inclusive family activities, and the gradual goal-setting that contributes to its success.

The first GOALS pilot outside of Liverpool took place last year in Sandwell PCT.

**Carnegie Weight Management clubs help families take part in fun exercise**

## FAMILY PROGRAMMES **CARNEGIE**

Carnegie Weight Management runs weight-loss programmes for eight- to 17-year-olds. Founded on 10 years of research, the programmes help families to work as a team to make small changes to daily routines that can lead to healthier lifestyles. The programmes include:

- Carnegie Clubs: 12-week community programmes running for three and a half hours a week throughout the year. Here, families learn the basics of healthy lifestyles, take part in fun exercise and share experiences with like-minded people. Children's services or public health organisations fund the programme, so the clubs are free for local people.
- Residential Weight Loss Camps: Lasting two to eight weeks, these provide 24-hour support, helping attendees to lose the pounds and giving them the knowledge and skills to manage their weight when they return home. Research shows that 75 per cent of attendees continue to lose weight or maintain their weight after three years. Costs start at £1,300 for a two-week stay based on 2008 prices.
- Day Camps: Running from Monday to Friday during the summer holidays. Prices start at £195 for one week.

► skill and physical fitness, and the challenge winners will receive prizes donated by partners. These prizes will be on top of a series of rewards available throughout the campaign – ranging from vouchers and gym memberships to weekends away and family activity holidays – to incentivise ongoing participation.

Health clubs will be an important component of both the challenge and the campaign. Acting as partners, they can offer a free, pre-exercise SAS health check for families that have not exercised for a long time, or indeed ever. They are also places where families can perform their assessment challenge exercises, the results of which will then be logged on to the website.

But the challenge is only intended to be an engagement tool, explains Eugene Gilkes, commercial director of Fit for Sport: "It's what happens between the two tests and following the second test that's key. The sustainability of the changes made as a result of the initiative will be the measure of its success.

"We'll be asking health clubs to offer a range of fun, family-friendly sessions for Fitter Family members between the two tests. The three-month challenge will be followed by regular activities and events to keep families motivated, with regular tips on how to improve their diet and fitness."

Partner clubs will be expected to promote the Fitter Families SAS message to staff, members and suppliers. They will be supported in doing so via the Fitter Families website, which will also link to the club's own website, detailing everything they're doing to support the campaign and the facilities available to Fitter Families' members.

It's a great opportunity for clubs, says Gilkes: "Clubs must do something different to attract the large segment of population who want to change, but don't know how. We believe Fitter Families is that 'something'. Our challenge gives clubs 12 weeks to engage people for free – people who may never have visited a health club before – which is something they currently spend a lot of money trying to do."

The challenge will be supported by a national three-month marketing and promotional push in health clubs, schools, PCTs and GP surgeries, and through multiple community partners. *The Sun* newspaper is also following the campaign.

The two-day roadshows will include a corporate charity fundraising event – a Spin Bike Challenge, hosted by partners Star Trac – and a healthy fun-day. Local health clubs and leisure centres can participate by hosting demonstrations or taking a stand at the events.

## INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Gilkes is under no illusions regarding the scale of the task in hand, and is looking to the health and fitness sector for sustained support. The ongoing delivery of Fitter

**On the GymBoy kids' strength range, exercises are performed standing up**

## KIDS' FITNESS PRODUCT ROUND-UP

### SHOKK SENSATION IN KENT

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council has installed SHOKK's dance mats and target walls for junior members at the Angel and Larkwood Leisure Centres. The interactive products, acquired with funding from the local PCT, form part of the centres' Excel Fitness programme for 11- to 15-year-olds. The inclusive schedule of activities includes gym sessions, exercise classes and now group sessions for the target wall and dance mats, both of which are have been fully booked. www.shokk.co.uk

### CYBER COACH NOMINATION

The interactive coaching and dance mat solution, Cyber Coach, is currently used in more than 100 UK schools and is the first leisure product to have been short-listed for a BETT Award. Recognising exemplary digital products in the education market, the awards are judged by the government agency Becta. It was not the eventual winner but, says Ron Jones, CEO of Quick Holdings, owner of the product: "We hope this nomination means the product goes from strength to strength." www.cyber-coach.co.uk

Carnegie's camps and clubs bring like-minded people together, teaching them to make small changes towards a healthier lifestyle

Families-branded activities that participants can attend, and discounted memberships that go far beyond the end of the 2009 challenge, are just some of the ways clubs can lend their support to the campaign.

Since it's a free initiative, Gilkes would also like some of this support to yield income: "Any activity that enables this would be very welcome – for example, a donation to the campaign by clubs if memberships are sold on the back of it."

Partner clubs will receive Fitter Families support packs showing them how to offer activities in line with the SAS philosophy and how to work with schools and communities more effectively – something Fit For Sport has done since 1991. They will also have the right to display the Fitter Families logo in their premises, on their website and in their literature.

Clubs can register as a partner on the website for free, says Gilkes. "The cost to a health club is the commitment to want to help affect change in the population and a willingness to look at the most effective ways to make it happen."

Additional costs will depend on just how involved clubs wish to become in the initiative, and will vary based on the size of club and resources required to support that involvement. However Gilkes believes that, for many clubs in the current climate, the cost to the business of not getting involved may be considerably higher.

"Fitter Families offers clubs the opportunity to engage directly with a proportion of the population that, until now, they've failed to touch. It's an opportunity not only to bring them into their facilities, but also to venture out into the community as a welcome part of a campaign that's going to be huge, both in terms of participation and results. Finally, it's a chance for change."

***vicky kiernander***
*healthclub@leisuremedia.com*

**ON SITE FITNESS LAUNCHES GYMBOY**

GymBoy is a new line of strength equipment from On Site Fitness, which has been designed specifically for use by children. Easy to use, the 10 machines provide a safe, fast and effective full body workout. Exercises are performed in the standing position, preserving the body's natural posture and strengthening the core stabilising muscles. Each machine can be used individually or combined to form a circuit for classes. For more details, visit www.onsitefitness.co.uk

**THRILL OF THE OUTDOORS FROM ZIGZAG**

ZigZag has taken on the UK distribution of Expresso's interactive bikes, which capture the adventure of cycling outdoors (see supplier news, p12). Available in adult and child sizes, they allow kids to pedal to play a range of games, while adults can build stamina by steering to negotiate winding curves and steep hills. Riders can race in more than 30 virtual tours and the resistance changes for uphill climbs and downhill runs. The children's bike is power-assisted. www.zigzaguk.com

# professional beauty london 2009

## EMAP's show offers new product launches, expert advice and conference sessions

EMAP's Professional Beauty London 2009 offers a highly effective blend of top brands, inspiring ideas and great networking.

A strict new entrance policy means the aisles will no longer be packed with thousands of non-trade visitors; beauty professionals will find the time and space they need to have the right conversations with the right people. Fast track entry spells the end to queuing and, with a free show catalogue and MyPB, the personalised route planner, visitors will be able to head straight to the stands that they want to see. Only uniformed Levels 1, 2 and 3 students will be admitted – no uniform, no entry.

**Visitors to the trade show will meet more than 200 leading beauty suppliers**

### professional beauty – trade show

Visitors will meet more than 200 of the leading suppliers from every sector of the business – covering skincare, nails, body treatments, tanning, equipment and education – with internationally renowned experts on-hand to offer technical advice. There will also be exclusive show-only offers and new product launches from the likes of Fake Bake, Elemis, Dermalogica and Jessica.

Two show floor theatres will stage nail, beauty and business masterclasses, which will also be available after the show as podcasts.

The 2009 Nail Competitions offer 14 different categories to nail professionals of all disciplines of nail art. The entry deadline is 13 February.

### professional spa international conference

This year's programme provides spa owners, investors, retailers, hoteliers, designers, architects and consultants with the information they need to drive profits and sustainable success in the current economic climate.

Each day has a specific, practical focus. Day one addresses day-to-day concerns. Chaired by Berni Hawkins of Hawkins Muiderman and Fran Hayter, Dove Spa's international development director, delegates will learn how to recognise and create a successful, profitable spa.

On day two, delegates will gain the commercial skills and marketing know-how critical to survival in today's spa industry. Chaired by Richard Dusseau, Spatality's CEO, speakers include Andrew Stembridge, MD of Chewton Glen, Anne McCall Wilson, VP Spas at Fairmont Raffles Hotels, Elizabeth Randall, director at STR Global and Jeremy Taylor, co-founder of LA Fitness.

On the final day, The Future of Spa session will help delegates explore up and coming spa trends and innovations and get ahead of the game. Themes include likely market developments in the UK and overseas, spa design and incorporating sustainability into creativity, the holistic approach to spas, new investment opportunities and accessing the international market.

### DETAILS

DATES 1–3 March 2009
VENUE ExCeL Centre, London Docklands
OPENING TIMES 10am–6pm

TRADE SHOW TICKETS
Pre-registration is essential. Tickets cost £20 from 1 January and £40 on the door, while student places are priced at £10 and must be registered by their colleges. Tickets are available at www.professionalbeauty.co.uk/london

SPA CONFERENCE PASSES
Three-day pass £445 + VAT; single day £195 + VAT. All delegates must book before 28 February. To register, visit www.professionalspa.com/conference or call 0870 314 6211 (UK only)/ +44 20 7554 5800 (international)

**Christian Schiester's training heats up in preparation for 'Racing the Planet'**

# pre-race training... in a sauna

This may look like a quirky new gym class, but using this state-of-the-art Precor treadmill in a sauna forms an essential part of training for Christian Schiester, an extreme runner from Austria who is currently preparing for one of the biggest challenges of his life.

Over the next 18 months, Schiester will compete in the 'Racing the Planet' competition. This extreme challenge will see him covering four of the hottest and driest deserts in the world – the Atacama in South America (March 2009), the Sahara in Africa (October 2009), the Australian Outback (April 2010) and the Gobi in Asia (June 2010). Each race comprises 250 kilometres (153 miles), which adds up to a gruelling 1,000 kilometres (612 miles) through some of the most hostile terrain on the planet.

The 41-year-old runner's intensive training schedule includes exercising on a Precor treadmill and an indoor cycling bike in a 70-degree Celsius sauna as a way of getting used to the soaring temperatures he will experience during the challenge.

Mark Fest, senior sales director at Precor, says: "We're delighted to support Christian in this extreme challenge. Precor is a brand that enables people to 'Move Beyond' their limits and live the fullest life possible."

## new heat experience spa for huntingdon

Huntingdon Leisure Centre is undergoing a £1.5m redevelopment, including a new heat experience spa.

The work, which is being managed by Alliance Leisure and the design and build contractor Createability, is due to be completed this month.

The spa will include a crystal steamroom, a floral steamroom, a herb sauna and a relaxation area. Also new are two treatment rooms offering a range of holistic therapies. The new spa facilities are located together in one area, which comes with its own membership option as well as being included in the gym membership.

The full £1.5m project includes a remodelling of the centre's sports hall to create a new fitness suite, soft play centre and ZigZag interactive zone.

Stephen Parker, Alliance Leisure's project manager, says: "It's hoped this redevelopment, which increases the centre's mix of facilities, will in turn increase participation and help the centre achieve its true income potential."

## in brief...

### bannatyne's new treatment

Bannatyne Fitness Group has launched a new detox treatment in 13 of its Sensory Spas, including Dumfermline, Carlisle, Tamworth, Hastings, Milton Keynes and Perth.

The clinically-proven, 60-minute Ionithermie treatment – designed to help detox the body, battle cellulite and encourage contouring and firming – is non-invasive and can be targeted to treat most areas of the body.

Bannatyne's spas offer a range of treatments designed to invigorate and relax, including massage, facials, pedicures and self-tanning. Many also offer dual-treatment rooms, allowing couples to enjoy their spa treatments simultaneously. The facilities are open to all.

### cuisinart re-opens spa

The CuisinArt Resort and Spa in Anguilla has re-opened its Venus Spa & Fitness Center following a US$10m, 1,765sq m expansion.

The redevelopment added 16 new treatment rooms, which include wet rooms, massage and facial rooms, a VIP suite, two couple's suites with speciality showers, and men's and women's hammams.

There is also an aqua-therapy pool, a relaxation room with views of the Caribbean Sea, and a Men's Club Room dedicated to delivering male treatments.

In addition, a new fitness centre – equipped by Technogym, including Kinesis – is almost double the size of the resort's previous gym.

CuisinArt is built beside a white-sand beach at Rendezvous Bay.

### klafs opens UK showroom

German sauna and steamroom supplier Klafs has recently opened its first UK showroom, with the aim of further developing its business in the UK market.

Located in the dockside area of Liverpool, the two-storey building houses the Klafs team on the ground floor and a 200sq m showroom on the first floor, featuring the full range of the company's sauna and steamroom products.

HEALTH CLUB SPA

# *spa* bannatyne

Duncan Bannatyne dismissed spas as not worth bothering with – until he bought some LivingWell clubs with spas from Hilton. Now his focus has shifted from health clubs to spas. Liz Terry reports

**Duncan Bannatyne runs spas, hotels, health clubs and bars**

Duncan Bannatyne is talking spas: "Before we bought the 24 LivingWell clubs, we didn't make any money from them," he says. "So we wrote them off, as most operators have done. But when we looked at LivingWell, I couldn't believe how much the spas were making – I thought 'somebody's counted this wrong!'"

Group spa director Justin Musgrove agrees: "Before the LivingWell acquisition, we had a number of spas and only one was profitable – the conclusion was that spas weren't viable and, as a result, those we had were put out to lease.

"However, Hilton had been very energetic in researching and developing the spa experience within both its hotels and its health clubs, and had found the formula to make spas profitable on a standalone basis within a club."

Although both Bannatyne and Musgrove say Hilton spent more on design and fit-out than they'd been doing, they agree the main difference in terms of profitability has been the use of a call centre to handle bookings – a system they inherited from Hilton. "We came into this business with a lot of receptionists," says Musgrove. "With the greatest respect, paying them is dead money. Our small number of receptionists have been trained to be multi-skilled, so they can generate income – by delivering spray tanning, for example.

"Since the Hilton deal, we've had a dedicated call centre for appointment making. If there's a therapist free in the spa, they'll be behind the desk. But if they're doing treatments, there'll be a sign on the desk with a number to ring. People get on their mobiles and the staff they speak to are trained and incentivised to optimise the call" – staff receive monthly incentives from Elemis and Wella.

"They make sure clients get what they need and sell special offers. They also bundle the spa with hairdressing to grow the business. They have information about contra-indications at their fingertips and they've had treatments, so they can talk knowledgeably. They're dedicated to taking calls and don't do anything else."

Bannatyne is excited about the potential of the model: "We moved the call centre from Milton Keynes to Darlington, so it's at our head office," he says. "All spa and hotel reservations are handled by the call centre. On our best day, we sold £28,000-worth of spa breaks on lastminute.com."

The company has had great successes selling through lastminute.com, as Musgrove explains. "They're refreshing work with," he says. "They act quickly and get things online within 24 hours. They give good, constructive advice as to what works and what doesn't, and their commission rates are favourable. We've been trying a whole range of full-price offers and two-for-one offers with them.

"lastminute.com was 10 years old in 2008 and, to celebrate, they launched something called 'When it's gone it's gone' or WIGIG. They asked us if we'd do a £10 spa day to tie in with their 10-year anniversary. As you can imagine, we weren't too keen on the idea at first, but we decided to go for it because it gave us massive publicity and exposure through the newspapers and the internet.

"We limited it to 500 packages and they sold out in six minutes! The big upside was that we went on to sell tens of thousands of pounds worth of full-price spa day vouchers because of the publicity. The day we made our £10 spa day offer, lastminute.com had its most successful spa day ever in terms of sales.

"We've just put the hotels on the web – we're doing an overnight break that gives us a return and customers a great experience at a very reasonable price. One of the cheapest, for example, is a one-night break for two – both have a spa treatment and the price is £150. There's nothing on lastminute.com that comes

**Booking up Spa packages which include overnight hotel stays and a choice of spa treatments are selling well**

"LAST YEAR, ON OUR BEST DAY WITH LASTMINUTE.COM, WE SOLD £28K-WORTH OF SPA BREAKS AND TREATMENTS"



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

**Justin Musgrove joined Bannatyne's from Center Parcs**

near it. We take the view that it's better to have a hotel full rather than half-full at the expense of yield," says Musgrove.

Spa experiences are also sold from the Bannatyne's website and these sales can represent up to 20 per cent of business – mostly from non-health club members. "We sell around 40 spa breaks a week at the moment," says Bannatyne.

The latest addition to the company's portfolio is a new spa at the Bannatyne's health club in Hastings. The company built the club in the grounds of the Beauport Park Hotel in 2004 and established a good rapport with the hotel owners. When they retired and were looking to sell up, Bannatyne was an obvious first port of call for the disposal of the hotel business.

In addition to building the new spa onto the health club, the 41-room hotel has been totally refurbished and will offer in-room massage to guests.

Bannatyne is clearly relishing his role as host: "Our first hotel opened over 10 years ago in Darlington, and our second, two years ago in Durham. Buying this site has been our biggest investment to date.

"It's been quite a journey, buying the hotel, changing it, turning it round and making it fantastic, but I'm very pleased with how it's turned out," he says.

Although he claims not to be a manager, Bannatyne seems to have been very hands-on with the project: "I've got a pass key and I've been going around checking the bedrooms to make sure they're all done right – one doesn't have an ironing board or iron, another has two pillows too many... It's great, I love it!" he laughs.

With only hours to go until the opening, he's still fine-tuning the operation: "The bar wasn't going to have a restaurant," he says, "but I decided to include one.

**Treatment menu All Bannatyne's spas use Elemis products, and the range is also offered for sale on the company's website**

We put it in over the last three days." Workmen are still putting the finishing touches to the décor in preparation for the launch party which has been planned to welcome local people. Celebrity guests – friends of Bannatyne – are also expected for the occasion.

The new spa is selling well: "We've got five treatments rooms and one's a double," says Bannatyne. "We can have six therapists working, as well as nail technicians. "Last Saturday we sold out, so we've just recruited a new therapist. Hopefully we'll eventually need more therapy rooms, then more hotel rooms!"

Musgrove says the aim is to offer upmarket spas for everybody: "We're not cheap," he says, "but the pricing's competitive, as Duncan has a reputation for offering value for money. This ties in well with the aim of our spas.

"We invite clients to unwind before their treatment. If they have a massage, they can have up to four hours' relaxation, which is very good value. They can use the pool, sauna and steamrooms, the relaxation room and outdoor spa pools.

"Spas have been overpriced and targeted at more affluent people. I believe the biggest opportunity will come in hitting the mass market and that, with reasonable prices, there's a great opportunity out there. We're achieving over 80 per cent occupancy in the spa, with hairdressing running at about 55 per cent in the available time slots."

All Bannatyne's spas use Elemis products: "We inherited Elemis from LivingWell," says Musgrove, "but we would have gone with Elemis anyway. It's a prestigious name – it's aspirational, it's affordable and there are a lot of good people behind the brand.

"We now have it across the estate and we've rationalised from having a range of suppliers. Having one line helps with training and gives us more purchasing power." The company is also about to take on Leighton Denny nails and offers St Tropez tanning and i.d.bareminerals make-up.

Product sales create a good income stream: "Our target is 35 per cent," says Musgrove. "If a treatment costs £50, we aim to get an extra 35 per cent in retail sales. Customers can also buy online."

## entrepreneurial style

Bannatyne's entrepreneurial style means the business buzzes along, according to Musgrove: "It's a business that can spin on a sixpence. We make a decision today and tomorrow it's in place. In some companies, decisions take months and procedures slow you down."

There was some debate about where to locate the new spa on the Hastings site, but ultimately, as Musgrove explains, Bannatyne was adamant it should be attached to the health club: "His view was that we have 4,000 members walking past the door of the health club, but only a few hundred in the hotel at any one time."

Future plans for the site include a convention centre, which could be used to bridge the gap between the spa/health club and the hotel. Musgrove can see the company graduating to full-blown, new-build resorts in the future.

More developments are on the way, with new spas lined up for Broadstairs and Banbury. A new spa in Darlington has just opened, with refurbishments completed in Manchester and Mansfield. Musgrove says the team is looking at the whole estate to identify opportunities for growth. "Milton Keynes is the one that excites me the most," he says. "It has the potential to be a full-service thermal spa with 20 treatment rooms. People will come for the day and there will be spin-offs for the Milton Keynes health club as well."

He agrees there's a direct correlation between the calibre of the manager and the profitability of the spa: "When you have a bigger operation, you can afford a more experienced manager with more expertise and commercial acumen.

"But you don't always get there through recruitment. You sometimes have to get there through training and mentoring. Take the Hastings spa as an example. The manager was a senior therapist at Ashford – why did we appoint her, rather than recruiting an experienced spa manager? Mainly because she's of the Bannatyne's mindset and she knows how the business works. We believe we can work with her and support her: we believe if people have core talent, we'll get them there – if that takes six months or 12 months, then so be it.

"I have a team of three people who go round the country mentoring managers. They sit down with them every month and look at KPIs, review training and recruitment, examine the stats and give advice to develop managers' skills.

## brand development

The team is doing a review to establish the value of 'The Sensory' – the brand bought from Hilton. New spas are simply being called 'The Spa' and one outcome could be a rebranding to change the portfolio to Spa Bannatyne. "There'll be a period of pain when we have multi-branding," says Musgrove, "but when we've evaluated it, we'll move to one name." To date the performance of both brands is very similar.

**Last-minute changes** **Bannatyne put a restaurant into the hotel three days before the official opening**

**Value for money** **Spa customers can use the health club facilities, including the outdoor spa pools**

## health club development

So where does the health club operation fit into the company structure? "We plan to keep expanding," says Bannatyne. "More hotels and spas. I don't know about more health clubs – we might look at building if we can get the land, but there aren't many places in Britain open to development."

When it comes to acquisitions, he's scathing about what's available: "I don't think there are any quality clubs up for sale," he says, "and the rubbish will go bust first in the recession."

Can failing clubs be turned round? Bannatyne thinks not in many cases. "It depends on how much you spend on them, as a lot of health clubs have been badly designed," he says. "We looked at one last week and the design was a nightmare, so you've got to spend money to get them right before you can start running them effectively. If you've got competition locally, or competition to buy them, there's no point.

"I spend very little time on the health and fitness business. I'm not a manager and never have been – other people manage. However, I'm in touch with the business 24/7 on my Blackberry and I still feel immensely passionate about it – I think it's a tremendous business.



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

**Total refurbishment** **Bannatyne's wife, who has her own retail business, was involved with the new hotel interiors**

"OUR CLUBS ATTRACT A MATURE AUDIENCE AND THIS IS A MORE ROBUST MARKET WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH"

"We're chuffed to bits 2008 trading was up on 2007. I know how great that is because I've been looking at another company – I can't mention their name because of a confidentiality agreement – and their direct debits went down every month in 2008. They're sinking."

So how is the company dealing with the economic situation? Musgrove says customer attitudes will see them through: "The difference between now and the recession of the 90s is that lifestyle is more important," he says. "While you should never get complacent, we're finding people's gym membership is one of the last things to go; they'll make other economies, like dropping down to a cheaper supermarket, in favour of keeping certain things alive in terms of lifestyle.

"Some operators offer a cut-price product attract younger customers. Our clubs attract a more mature audience and this is a more robust market when the going gets tough," he adds.

"In Inverness and Mansfield, where JJB has opened competitor clubs in the last 12 months, we lost members. However, almost everybody we lost we've got back. It seems to be the social bonds as well as the service that create the loyalty.

"Our ethos is all about the basics," Musgrove continues. "Good staff and clean, excellent facilities. If we focus on these things, we believe business will take care of itself: it's important to keep focused on what got you where you are."

Bannatyne is quick to react when asked about industry politics: "I dislike the Fitness Industry Association," he says, "About five years ago I was paying a lot of money as a member and I asked if I could approach the board about some projects. After months of consultation, they refused to see me. I said that, if the board isn't open to a member coming along to speak with them, I'm not going to pay to be a member and I've never paid anything since. We're no longer a member.

"I'd worked out a plan of tax breaks for the industry with the government, to encourage employers to pay for employees to use a health club. The only problem with this is that the employee could be taxed as a benefit in kind.

"The government was willing to consider stopping this tax on the condition that the industry would monitor employees and feed information back to employers, so they would know who was using the clubs and who wasn't.

"The Minister for Health, Alan Milburn, said: "If we give this concession, the industry needs to give something back to the government. He said there was a big problem with a lack of blood donors, so I suggested setting up blood banks in health club car parks – we trialled it, I gave blood and 80 of our members gave blood.

"No one else in the industry got involved and the reason it didn't happen was that the FIA refused to let me talk with them. If other operators and the FIA had got behind it, we could have established a rapport with government.

"That deal is still on the table," adds Bannatyne. "I'm going to Chequers for lunch next week, to meet with the Prime Minister. The FIA would be best placed listening to me, but they won't – why?"

We asked the FIA to comment on Bannatyne's remarks and chair Fred Turok responded warmly, saying: "Every executive meeting is open to any member and we welcome all input which benefits the sector. Ideas are debated openly to ensure the views and interests of every group in the industry are heard. I'd be delighted to welcome Duncan to our next board meeting to present his thoughts.

"I know everyone on the board would welcome Duncan and Bannatyne's back to the FIA with open arms, and the industry would be the stronger for it."

***liz terry***
*healthclub@leisuremedia.com*

HEALTH CLUB SPA

# never look a gift horse...

Health club operators can drive business to their spa facilities via gift package offers. Tina Milton talks to three consumer 'experience' providers about the potential for partnerships

In an economic downturn, keeping your spa busy and attracting new business might feel like an uphill struggle. But using consumer marketing channels to offer health club spa packages via the high street and the web can boost capacity levels and revenues.

Not only is it a strategy that can help fill the spa, it's also an approach that could convert spa visitors into health club members. We examine the rates and services offered by three well-known consumer 'experience' providers and look at their formulas for success.

## SPAFINDER EUROPE

**cassandra cavanah**, executive director

Spa marketing and gifting company SpaFinder drives business to health club spa facilities by selling spa gift vouchers and cards at 6,000 retailers across the UK – including WHSmith, Sainsbury's and Clinton Cards – and through its international website, spafinder.com

The vouchers are redeemable at its 5,000 partner spas worldwide, 250 of which are in the UK, and gift card users can search for their nearest location and view facilities online.

Cassandra Cavanah, executive director of SpaFinder Europe, says: "All our spas have a presence on the high street, because consumers can use the vouchers in any one of our global partner spas.

"There's nothing a health club has to do differently in terms of running its spa business to work with us, which I think makes it quite convenient. Plus lots of first-time spa-goers receive our vouchers as gifts, so we generate new business for health clubs."

Fitness Express, Cannons Group and most recently Esporta, which lists 30 locations, are among the health club chains to have partnered with SpaFinder. To qualify as a partner, a health club needs to offer spa treatments such as massages – SpaFinder's most sought-after treatment – and facials, but they do not have to provide a full-day spa package.

Cavanah is keen to increase the geographical coverage of SpaFinder's partner spa locations so consumers have plenty of choice locally.

Health club operators can promote their spa packages on SpaFinder's website by taking a basic free directory listing, with an enhanced listing costing £30 a month. The latter offers extra space on the site to include more images and a longer description of a club's spa facilities and services, as well as room for its direct website and email addresses.

Once a booking is received, SpaFinder charges a marketing fee of 17 per cent of the voucher price. "The spa receives the voucher or the card from the customer and sends it to us and, within no more than 10 working days, they receive payment," says Cavanah.

SpaFinder partners are encouraged to offer customer discounts, and special offers are publicised on the website or through the company's e-newsletter, *Club Spa*, for no extra charge. Cavanah advises clubs to invite gift card or voucher holders to use the spa at off-peak times and to highlight mid-week deals, when business may be less brisk, to minimise the impact on members.

**SpaFinder has 5,000 global spa partners in its gift voucher scheme**

## LASTMINUTE.COM

With a customer base of more than three million, experience website lastminute.com has the potential to attract a wide demographic of online shoppers. In the last six months, health clubs have increased their spa presence on the site; recent offers such as the £10 spa day at Bannatyne's Sensory Spas to mark lastminute.com's 10th birthday and the £20 Christmas mini-treatment packages from Spirit Health Clubs have been particularly successful (see interview p46).

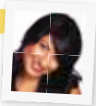
lastminute.com head of spa Koulla Joannou explains: "Our customers are not hardcore health farm users or spa experts, but they are looking for a good deal and they want to find somewhere to relax. Health clubs fit



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

Spirit Health Clubs and Bannatyne's use lastminute.com to drive business to their spa facilities

**koulla joannou**, head of spa



in really well with these criteria because their spa deals are competitively priced and their locations are accessible, so lots of people buy our spa vouchers as gifts. To complement the spa voucher system, health clubs can also sell their spa experiences by date allocation."

There are no hard and fast rules about the content of the spa packages on the website, as long as they include treatments. The company is flexible about other spa elements and Joannou insists that a swimming pool isn't an essential, although she expects most clubs to have standard facilities such as a sauna, steamroom and spa pool.

She adds: "We generally stick to basic treatments and offer packages with a back, neck and shoulder massage, facials and manicures or pedicures. Deals tend to work better with mini-treatments as they keep the price down."

Discounted spa packages are used to attract consumers to the website, and the most successful deal to date is the two-for-one offer. "It's great for the health clubs as they get two people at the club's spa, with the opportunity to upsell products or memberships to both," says Joannou.

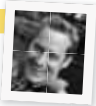
The company supports offers listed on the website by sending out email newsletters to its customer database, according to their personal data such as their gender, location and age bracket. This is a free service, but not guaranteed: only the most impressive, strongest promotions are likely to be picked for marketing campaigns and granted this extra advertising exposure.

lastminute.com takes a commission on any spa package it sells, but does not charge operators a listings or promotional fee. Joannou was reluctant to disclose the commission rate but is happy to discuss charges with interested partners.

Health clubs should be willing to work with lastminute.com to produce the marketing and PR information to support their spa deals. However, certain aspects of the sales process need to be fulfilled by the health club, as lastminute.com is just a third party supplier. For example, once a spa package has been purchased, operators must supply spa vouchers to the consumer themselves as they will not be branded by lastminute.com ▶

**Health clubs that can offer exclusive deals and high-quality, bespoke images for use in marketing will receive more exposure on the Red Letter Days website**

RED LETTER DAYS **andy ling**, head of new product development



Red Letter Days describes 'experiences' as memorable gifts, and the company is keen to build long-term partnerships with health club operators that can offer spa packages at a discount.

Andy Ling, head of new product development, emphasises that the company is not a supplier or a booking agent and that it builds far softer relationships with its clients, which include Bannatyne's and its top 35 Sensory Spas. "We're far more consultative," he says. "At the moment we're not a brand that can get involved in short-term promotions, as Red Letter Days are gifts that are redeemable for up to 18 months."

Even though its experiences are widely available on the high street – its gift cards are sold in more than 1,600 stores around the UK, with gift boxes also available – the larger volumes are sold through its website, redletterdays.co.uk, and that's where the focus of the company's marketing strategy lies.

There are very few restrictions on the content of the spa experiences, as long as a health club can offer value for money and a pampering element. Full or mini-treatments can be included as part of the package and Ling reveals that manicures and pedicures are growing in popularity.

Red Letter Days is, however, careful to avoid experiences that involve upselling. Ling warns: "We have a policy where anyone who receives a Red Letter Day doesn't spend a penny on the day. So it's about coming up with a concept that works really well as a gift and that isn't construed as a transparent way of hooking new members."

This links in with the company's real USP – its customer support regime from the start of an experience to the finish. It offers insurance, packaging, booking services, gift exchange and even has a dedicated call centre.

Prices have to be offered at a discount compared with the health club's usual spa rates. "We do the marketing in advance and, as the experiences are sold, we pay a discounted rate to the health club for each individual booking," says Ling. The company then makes a minimum margin on each booking, which Ling was reluctant to disclose.

The potential profit margin can, however, dictate whether a spa experience reaches the high street sales channels. Ling explains: "When we put our boxes in supermarkets and department stores, they take 30 per cent of the margin. That's a lot; our margins aren't much more than that in the first place and we have point of sale material to pay for. We therefore have a minimum margin we have to hit before we can put a club's product on the high street."

All clients are guaranteed some form of marketing support, but if a club can offer an exclusive it will naturally receive more exposure on the website. In addition, providing bespoke, high-quality images can also give a club the edge, especially experiential shots featuring couples to complement and draw attention to experiences for two.

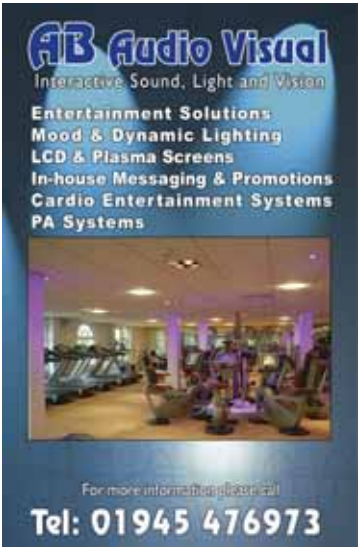
**Red Letter Days' packages (above) can be redeemed for up to 18 months and are mostly sold online**

*tina milton*
*healthclub@leisuremedia.com*



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

DALESAUNA
WELLBEING, WELL DESIGNED, WELL LOOKED AFTER
GRIMBALD CRAG CLOSE, ST JAMES BUSINESS PARK,
KNARESBOROUGH, NORTH YORKSHIRE, HG5 8PJ
T: +44(0)1423 798630 F: +44(0)1423 798670
E: sales@dalesauna.co.uk
W: dalesauna.co.uk
SAUNAS
STEAM ROOMS
AROMATHERAPY ROOMS
ICE ROOMS
FEATURE SHOWERS
SPA AND HYDRO POOLS
RASUL MUD ROOMS
SALT INHALATION ROOMS
INFRARED TREATMENT ROOMS


AB Audio Visual
Interactive Sound, Light and Vision
Entertainment Solutions
Mood & Dynamic Lighting
LCD & Plasma Screens
In-house Messaging & Promotions
Cardio Entertainment Systems
PA Systems
For more information please call
Tel: 01945 476973

Original Changing Room
WET KIT
BAGS
All our bags are degradable and can be RECYCLED
We can now print your own logo on as few as 10,000 bags
visit www.kingswoodleisuredirect.co.uk
or call 01268-548987 for more details
KLS
KINGSWOOD
Leisure Services
supplier to the leisure industry since 1984

# new identity

Located in a former bowls hall, Gosling Sports Park's Lifestyle building encompasses a health club and spa that have helped the park reinvent itself. Emilie Filou pays a visit

Walking into the new Lifestyle building at Gosling Sports Park in Welwyn Garden City, you could be forgiven for thinking you've entered the flagship establishment of a top-end chain. But this is no exclusive club: Gosling is a leisure trust and, at £47 a month for gym and spa membership, could be labelled 'Hertfordshire's most inclusive club'.

## spa model

Five years in the pipeline, the new Lifestyle area opened on 1 September last year – a £4.7m refurbishment offering a state-of-the-art gym and glistening spa – to complement Gosling Sports Park's already comprehensive list of facilities (see information box, p48).

The site also has an established reputation as one of the country's top tennis coaching venues.

First opened in 1959, Gosling had grown steadily over the years, accruing pitches, acreage and disciplines, but little in the way of aesthetics or renovations. The result, in the early noughties, was a sprawling, multi-discipline sports park with a collection of ageing facilities. In the words of Duncan Kerr, CEO throughout the majority of the project: "We had to reinvent ourselves."

Gosling's unique status as a financially independent trust shaped much of the refurbishment's rationale: the trust has received no funding from local authorities since 2001 and is responsible for its own asset, hence the need for a profitable, sustainable, long-term plan.

The idea of having a swimming pool was mooted early on. It would be popular with clients and boost cash flow in the short-term. But that argument had not escaped local competitors and there were already a number of competition pools in Hatfield and Stevenage, so Gosling had to go about it differently.

"The demographics of Hertfordshire and Welwyn Garden City directed us towards a pool and spa. It was the way the industry was going and a viable commercial option," says Kerr. "But we put a lot of thought into how we'd do it – we wanted to take this exclusive concept to the community and make it accessible to people who would not normally have considered it part of their life."

The argument chimes in well with Gosling's charitable objectives of health

## A MOMENTOUS BIRTHDAY

**Quality facilities for all: Gosling celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2009**

Gosling Stadium opened in 1959 and, in 1962, the Welwyn Gosling Stadium Athletic and Sports Association was set up and granted a 99-year lease. Squash courts and a ski slope were added in 1968–9, and Welwyn and Hatfield Sports Centre Trust became incorporated. The football pitches and golf driving range soon followed. In 1989, after a huge expansion that saw tennis, bowls, football, hockey, fitness and a number of team sports added to the centre's list of activities, the trust was renamed Gosling Sports Park. During the 1990s, tennis grew in importance and, in 2000, the Lawn Tennis Association financed the first four indoor clay courts in the UK there.

Throughout much of its history, Welwyn and Hatfield Borough Council provided Gosling with annual funding and significant administrative, legal, managerial and secretarial support in exchange for the provision of community services. Councillors sat on the board and, by the early 90s, plans had been drawn for Gosling to take over the running of all council leisure facilities. But a change in legislation and a change of government jeopardised the plans and councillors were no longer able to stand as board members. Funding continued throughout the 90s but ended in 2001.

Gosling and the council are now working on ways to achieve the council's health target. Renata Drinkwater, a director in the sport, leisure and culture division at Capita Symonds, says that although the delivery of local authority leisure services by trusts has become a feature of the industry in recent years, we shouldn't forget that this approach was a rarity when Gosling was set up. "Its 50th anniversary is truly an industry milestone," she concludes.



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

The Retreat spa includes six treatments rooms offering the gamut of pampering options

promotion, but also links back to spas' very origin of being venues where the whole community can 'take to the waters'.

## bowled over

The facility earmarked for redevelopment was an old bowls hall, as it was felt that there was great potential to improve the revenue from the floorspace it occupied. Kerr's team, helped from an early stage by consultants Alliance Leisure Services and architects Widdup Amer, came up with five refurbishment options corresponding to various levels of restructuring. Sarah Watts, MD of Alliance Leisure, says the objective was "to give Gosling a shot in the arm and turn it into a 21st century sports facility". What is now Gosling Lifestyle was option four; option five included the redevelopment of the current sports hall, but was deemed too costly.

At £4.7m, option four was already an audacious development. "Borrowing that amount of money was going to be quite demanding on the trust, but we felt the repayment was something the business model stood up to," says Kerr. "We decided that, if we were going to do this, we should do it the best we could."

Looking around Lifestyle, you can see that no expense has been spared. The spa features a 17m pool with a swimming lane and five hydrotherapy stations, four heat rooms (Finnish sauna, laconium,

**The new 100-station gym is equipped by Technogym, while three studios offer a range of group exercise classes**

Japanese salt room and Indian blossom steamroom) supplied by Schletterer Solutions and six treatment rooms (The Retreat) offering the gamut of pampering options by the well-established aromatheraphy skincare brand Decléor. On the fitness side, a 100-station gym equipped by Technogym complements a comprehensive timetable of classes spread across three studios.

The trust didn't take any chances on the delivery: along with the project ▸

**The spa area includes a 17m pool with a swimming lane and five hydrotherapy stations**

The spa features a "daring, but spot on" muted, earthy colour scheme

> **If local authorities can provide plush facilities for £47 a month, people will stop using the big chains**

management services of Savernake Property Consultants (commissioned by Alliance Leisure), Gosling appointed Pellikaan Construction, a company reputed for its experience in designing, building and operating leisure facilities.

The only hiccup was obtaining a new lease from the council. Negotiations for a new 125-year lease that would justify going ahead with planned investments took nearly two years.

## finishing touches

The arrival of a new CEO just three months before the opening of Lifestyle also worked out well. Penny Arnold joined in June 2008 and brought the same exacting standards and attention to detail to the finishing touches that Kerr had demanded throughout the redevelopment. Arnold commissioned interior designers to decorate the spa, and the result – a muted, earthy colour scheme with textured wallpaper – is a resounding success. "We would not have chosen the schemes ourselves; they did something very daring and it is spot on," she says.

Arnold also worked on a complete rebranding of the facilities to reflect its 21st century facelift. The old branding, all bright colours and slogans, looked dated. The new material, including a new website launched last month, cleverly builds on The Retreat's colour schemes.

Also high on Arnold's list of priorities was training: "We had to make sure [our staff] understood what was coming, both in terms of sports facilities and the new spa. We ran sales training early on so that they could boost customer confidence."

This last aspect was particularly important: being a community facility, Gosling has a relatively high proportion of senior users, a population that tends not to favour change, let alone of the hi-tech variety. Many had already been affected by the closure of the old bowls hall, so it was crucial they felt the new gym was 'for them' too. Gosling Sports Park has some 9,000 members in total, so this was a chance to cross-sell and renew people's interest in the Park. "We've been trying to keep in touch with our existing audience while still trying to appeal to new members. We don't want them to feel as though they're history and that we don't value them any more," Arnold explains.

These finishing touches played a big part in ensuring early success: Gosling's gym had 1,300 members in April 2008 and planned to increase this to 2,600 over 18 months – but by the end of 2008, just four months after its opening, Gosling Lifestyle already had 2,200 members and increased its target to 3,000. The Retreat is also performing well, with a 65 per cent occupancy rate – an achievement in these credit crunch times.

The reason for success is obvious: facilities that rival private operators at a fraction of the cost, a happy outcome born out of the necessity to survive and the obligation to share. Its accessibility is also its strength: pay-as-you-play and non-members can use all facilities. This, of course, is a by-product of Gosling's charitable status – the public at large must benefit from its facilities – but, as Watts points out: "Local authorities should take stock. In these tight economic times, people are looking for value for money. If local authorities can provide plush, accessible facilities for £47 a month, people will no longer use the big chains."

***emilie filou***
*healthclub@leisuremedia.com*

## GOSLING SPORTS PARK

Lifestyle, the new fitness and spa facility, may be stealing the show at the moment, but Gosling Sports Park is much more than just a gym and spa. Spreading over 50 acres, with some 250 staff, there are more than a dozen sports on offer. Facilities include:

- A five-court sports hall
- A multi-purpose hall
- An outdoor athletics track
- A 160m outdoor cycling track
- Synthetic football pitches (standard and floodlit)
- 25 indoor and outdoor tennis courts (clay, synthetic and acrylic)
- A 160m dry ski slope
- A golf driving range
- Five squash courts

Other services include a physiotherapy clinic, an over 50s club, a kids' soft play area, conference facilities, a crèche, a retail outlet and a bistro bar.

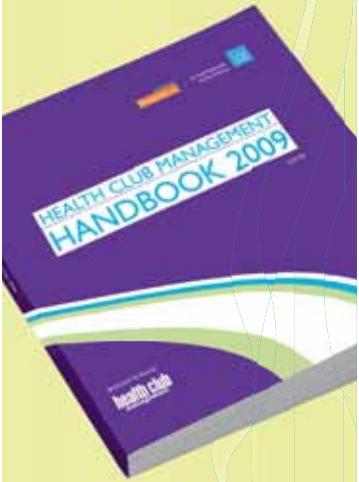
Work is also already underway on an new all-weather 'tennis bubble', in association with the Lawn Tennis Association, which will provide four extra indoor courts and consolidate its status as one of the country's High Performance Centres.



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

also online from 2009

# HEALTH CLUB MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK 2009




The 5th edition of the Health Club Management Handbook, published in association with the Fitness Industry Association (FIA), is being distributed in January 2009. The handbook is a comprehensive guide and reference tool for operators and suppliers working in the health and fitness industry.

## ORDER YOUR COPY NOW

Call: **+44 (0)1462 431385** or email:
**displaysales@leisuremedia.com**

ez runner

EXPERTS IN LEISURE SOFTWARE

MAXIMISE YOUR YIELD AND RETAIN MORE MEMBERS

EZ-RUNNER MODULES INCLUDE:

- Membership
- Online sign-up
- EPOS
- Bookings
- Prospecting
- Retention
- Spa

Tim Harding,
MD Nirvana Health Club & Spa:
"Since we have been using Ez-Book by Ez-Systems, our revenue has significantly increased, our staff are happier as their days are structured better and this has ultimately resulted in an even better overall experience for our customers."

# FAST FLEXIBLE EFFECTIVE

## ONLINE DIRECT DEBIT

**The secure, flexible and effective way for your customers to make regular payments by Direct Debit via YOUR WEB SITE**

- Easily integrated into your organisations existing website.
- Fully branded with your logo keeping an important company image
- An enhanced service from that of traditional direct debits.
- Streamlines administration by eliminating unnecessary paperwork.
- Automatic bank account verification, therefore, reducing delays.
- Postcode identification.
- Easy navigation allowing for a greater customer experience.
- Allows your company to meet your customer's expectations.
- Assist in e-government targets.
- Can be set up either face to face or at home.
- A 24 hour Sales Aid to increase your monthly sales via Direct Debit.

**FASTDD** offer your customers a simple and more importantly a FAST way to set up direct debits.

FASTDD

T: 01908 422 000
E: sales@dcfinance.co.uk
Part of the Leisure Finance Group

dfc
Direct Finance Collections



## prof•it•opia *n.*

A state in which everything is perfect because revenue is in excess of expenses resulting in extremely happy owners and ecstatic, jubilant club managers.

**Clubs of all sizes rely on the proven value and flexibility of our complete solutions approach to acquire members, grow revenues, manage costs and improve loyalty at every opportunity.**

**CheckFree Compete™ is a membership performance management solution that enables you to optimise resources and simplify management for improved financial performance.**

**Visit us at www.checkfreecompete.co.uk**

***CheckFree Compete*™ – complete membership performance management.**

© Copyright 2008 CheckFree Corporation. All rights reserved.

CheckFree®
is now part of Fiserv.

**www.checkfreecompete.co.uk**
**+44 (0) 118 977 3889**

# TECHNOLOGY'S BUDGET **REVOLUTION**

Budget clubs take full advantage of information technology to reduce administration, staffing and other overheads – indeed, as Guy Brown reports, they couldn't exist without it

Information technology (IT) is at the heart of the budget club model, whether it's online joining, pin number or swipe card entry, CCTV for security or fully automated back office systems.

IT enables budget clubs to dramatically reduce administration and staffing costs, which in turn opens up opportunities to target different types of location and customer. Josh Bicknell, director at independent operator Time Fitness, says its clubs are based on "convenience and location", adding: "We're dropping clubs into small towns where there isn't any quality provision. This attracts people who previously found health clubs inconvenient to reach or unaffordable." Consequently, Time Fitness gets a high proportion of first time gym members.

**Online joining takes all the hassle out of setting up a gym membership**

PICTURE:WWW.ISTOCK.COM/YURI ARCURS

## SIGNING UP

Online joining is especially prevalent. Harlands Group's Snap membership system, for example, enables someone to join a health club and set up the direct debit – all online.

"We become the total back office for a club chain," says Kevin Scott, Harlands Group director. This can include membership collection support and credit control when required.

At Time Fitness, Snap is integrated into the CheckFree club management system. As soon as the data is entered into Snap, it instantly populates the CheckFree database, adding the new member to the club's membership database and henceforth automatically updating the member's details. "This provides a good control system, particularly when the club is unmanned," says Scott.

A further benefit of online joining is a "hugely successful sales system". For example, budget club operator The Gym Group has, at peak times, sold "hundreds of memberships every day, all online".

Andrew Forsyth of mifit, the budget club offering from operator JJB, notes the ability for members to join within minutes of entering the club. "We've installed 'join online' kiosks at mifit clubs and [JJB] superstores, allowing the member to pay their activation fee, pro rata payments and also set up their direct debit mandate online." He also notes the mi.training room, which allows members to view their workout sessions from the comfort of their home, which he sees as a "perfect retention tool".

David Beattie, brand and marketing director for The énergie Group, including its budget club brand Fitless, says: "With all our franchise products, we aim to maximise the use of technology so our club owners can focus on their members and not on the administration. The Fitless concept takes that one stage further by only allowing online joining to additionally minimise membership administration."

An additional key requirement for Fitless was for a high level of integration between the various club systems. "Everyone in the club – whether the ▶

The Gym Group uses online joining and has, at peak times, seen hundreds of memberships sold online on a daily basis

instructor, owner or receptionist – uses the same system for all club activity," says Beattie. "As a result, we have arguably the most comprehensive KPI reports in the sector."

John Treharne, CEO of The Gym Group, says simplicity is key for online joining to work. "Like the budget airline flight booking process, it only works if you have a simple, straightforward process." He says full-service clubs may introduce some of these functions, "but only with simplification of operational systems, and in the current market it is difficult to see how businesses would do that."

## ACCESS TOOLS

Members access Time Fitness clubs using a pin code. "This avoids the need to administer cards," says Bicknell, and it "generally makes for a faster membership journey from joining to utilisation."

The Gym Group also uses a pin code access system and Treharne notes similar benefits of cutting administration, while the pin can also be used for booking inductions. There are health and safety gains too: by having to pin in and out, there's a clear indication who's in the facility, plus a wealth of usage pattern data.

Meanwhile Snap Fitness, the US operator aiming to enter the UK market (see HCM Nov-Dec08 p31), gives its members 24/7 access to its clubs via electronic swipe card, which can also be used to purchase value-added services. "Our business model relies on the ability of members to access any Snap Fitness location worldwide, even if the club is unstaffed," says CEO Peter Taunton. "This allows owners to operate a successful business without staffing 24/7."

## TECHNOLOGY ESSENTIAL

Clearly, budget clubs are highly dependent on IT. Forsyth says the "mifit concept is 100 per cent reliant on software". To succeed, low membership prices must coincide with reduced overheads. "There's no other way," says Scott.

But how well do IT companies cater for the budget club sector? mifit, for example, found only a limited number of suppliers who could meet its budget club IT needs. Forsyth says they spent months researching potential new partners – in the end, they opted for EZ-Runner. mifit clubs also use the Technogym Wellness System, with the

Snap Fitness uses swipe card access, so members can access any club in the world, at any time of the day or night

THE ORIGINAL AND THE BEST ONLINE JOINING SYSTEM JUST GOT BETTER

3rd Generation Snap with its easy navigation offers you the complete on-line and in-club membership sign-up system. New features include:

- NEW - Include monthly add-ons or one-off sales to your membership packages, such as classes, PT, welcome packs, or t-shirts
- NEW - Integrated function to allow instant print out of member contracts for in-club sales. No more posting /ordering paper contracts!
- NEW - Credit / Debit card payment function to allow instant payment of your joining, first month, or any other up-front fees
- NEW - Promotional code option to allow discounted or special rates to certain groups. Ensures your marketing has greater targeted impact

Contact Harlands Group for all your membership collection and direct debit requirements

NOBODY DOES IT BETTER...

0845 230 16 36 www.harlandsgroup.co.uk sales@harlandsgroup.co.uk

Snap
www.snapfitness.co.uk

Specialists in Systems for Budget Clubs

HARLANDS GROUP

hg

**Anytime Fitness uses a central CRM system at its headquarters to manage its franchisees**

## ANYTIME FITNESS: CORPORATE LEVEL CRM

Besides the impact on club operations, CRM systems are being used by budget club chains at a corporate level. For Anytime Fitness, CRM is a tool that enables the headquarters to manage the company's franchisees.

Anytime Fitness opted to use Microsoft CRM. "We liked the idea of customising screens and fields to meet our needs, and the canned reports and advanced find features have been effective in analysing different areas of our business," says Jennifer Yiangou, vice president of operations. "We needed a system that would handle the volume we've experienced over the years. We like the account feature to track business information on our franchisees, and the added club feature to track every detail on each club."

The affiliates are linked into headquarters (HQ) through a special online interface. "We recently rolled out a dashboard programme for our franchisees where they log in, access our operations manual and a blog site with other franchisees, and receive continuous communication from the corporate headquarters."

Efficient ways to track what clubs are doing is vital with nearly one new club opening every day. "Tracking where clubs are in the process is a daunting task, but CRM for the most part solves this challenge. Our franchise consultants know where each of their clubs is in more than 100 different metrics."

Yiangou adds that the best-performing feature of their HQ CRM system is the activities log, where all employees log their conversations, emails and any other correspondence with the clients. "Every bit of information is documented, so there's no need to call another employee and ask for a long-winded story. They simply log into the account history to get up to speed on the status."

key also used to provide members with access to their local club.

The Gym Group devised its own IT system with web design agency White Hat Media, and then used Harlands Group for the direct debit collection process. Treharne says they found a problem with off-the-shelf programmes in that they "provide a lot of complication that we don't need and therefore don't need to pay for, and there are other aspects we need that they can't provide". For Treharne, overly complicated elements for a budget club would include stock control and cash handling, which he says are redundant in a paperless, cashless environment. "Conversely, we need certain reporting functions that standard reporting systems don't provide, such as monitoring 24/7 usage."

Snap Fitness uses CheckFree for its club management software because, says Taunton, "it was the only software available at the time that combined the ability to profile members, enable financial transactions via EFT [electronic funds transfer] and other drafts, and integrate with a 24/7 door access system".

Expediency came with trade-offs. "Whenever you are working with an application that you didn't create based on your specific needs, you're going to be confined within the limitations of the software package," says Taunton. "While our current system offers several great features, there are also unnecessary features that limit the flexibility of the software."

***guy brown***
*healthclub@leisuremedia.com*




# The Key to Retention: Choose the Right Retention Programme

***We do for you*** what you want to do but don't have the time or resources.

RETENTION® MANAGEMENT .COM

*There is a Difference !*

| | Us | The Other Guys |
|---|---|---|
| Hundreds of satisfied clubs and millions of satisfied members | ✓ | |
| Easy to implement | ✓ | |
| Large up-front cost | | X |
| High monthly service fee | | X |
| Significant investment in new hardware | | X |
| No changes to operating procedures | ✓ | |
| Low impact on staff time | ✓ | |
| No contract tie-ins | ✓ | |
| Automated new member integration programme | ✓ | |
| No added cost to market member services | ✓ | |
| Drive secondary spending | ✓ | |
| Promote referral sales | ✓ | |
| Prospect marketing functionality ***New for 2009!*** | ✓ | |
| High risk members automatically targeted | ✓ | |
| Support not dependent on the member entering the club | ✓ | |

Our patent pending communication programme automatically supports each member based on their individual usage patterns.
And much, much more!

Call for a Complimentary Retention Analysis Today

01527 870875
UKSales@RetentionManagement.com

RETENTION® MANAGEMENT .COM

# GOING *undercover*

Mystery shopping can help companies understand how their staff interact with existing and potential new customers. Abigail Harris reports on the key findings from this year's call-Focus™ survey, and takes a look at the pros and cons of mystery shopping as a business analysis tool

The National call-Focus™ Survey, which tests and scores all aspects of a telephone membership enquiry against industry standards, was set up in 2007 by Leisure-net Solutions as a way of helping operators gauge the success of their telephone enquiry handling.

Mike Hill, managing director of Leisure-net, explains: "Learning what we're doing right and wrong in the telephone element of our service, and how we can do it better, is crucial to business success."

Around a quarter of all enquiries could be lost at the initial call answering stage, for example – because the phone isn't answered in time, in a professional manner, or because the call isn't passed on to a person trained to handle the enquiry. And staff not asking whether enquirers would like to tour the facilities could be losing around half of potential sales.

## assessment criteria

Using mystery shopper phone calls, the clubs contacted are given ratings in two key areas: brand conformity and subjective assessment.

Although operators have slightly different call handling procedures and protocols, most include common elements that contribute to the brand conformity score, which accounts for 70 per cent of a club's overall call-Focus score. These common elements include:

- Answering calls in three to five rings
- Using a standardised greeting, including the name of club/centre and the person answering the phone
- Taking the caller's details to pass on to a membership adviser/offering to call back
- Asking probing/empathy-building questions about the caller's lifestyle aims and/or facilities they want to use
- Talking through the club's facilities and membership options
- Encouraging a tour as soon as possible
- Deflecting direct questions about price at least once
- Taking basic marketing information, eg how the caller heard about the club

However, subjective assessment – people skills such as phone manner and tone of voice – are also crucial and make up a further 30 per cent of the total score.

## key findings

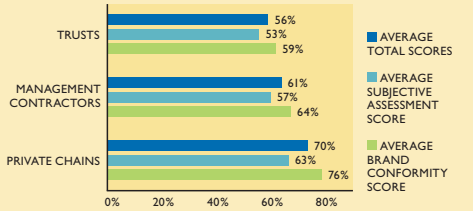
The latest research, carried out in October 2008, showed that the average score for the 40 health clubs and leisure centres surveyed across the private, trust and local authority sectors was down to just 62 per cent compared with 73 per cent in 2007 (see table 2, p64).

"Sample sizes and mixes were very comparable to the 2007 survey," says Hill, "so it's reasonable to assume we've actually got worse at handling membership enquiries by phone."

Scores for answering the phone were promising: 75 per cent answered in five

**Mystery shopping among your customers can be a good way to find out how they feel about the club**

**TABLE 1: NATIONAL AVERAGE SCORES BY SECTOR**






february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

**75 per cent of calls were answered within five rings, but the club's facilities were discussed in less than 40 per cent of the researchers' calls**

ALL PICTURES: WWW.ISTOCK.COM

rings or less; 94 per cent used a standard greeting such as 'good morning/afternoon' and the name of the club/centre; and 86 per cent also gave their name.

However, the private sector answered calls significantly quicker on a regular basis than the management contractors and leisure trusts, probably reflecting their more dedicated sales focus and set-up.

Although questions about becoming a member were answered 'confidently and knowledgeably' in 83 per cent of cases, disappointingly the receptionist/adviser only asked the researchers about their goals or the services that interested them in 36 per cent of calls, while only 44 per cent told the caller about their facilities.

Worse still, in closing the enquiries, almost a third gave out prices before discussing individual requirements – this in spite of the fact that most operators have a policy of not giving membership prices over the phone too easily – and the researchers were only asked if they ▶

**Researchers were asked about their goals and interests in only 36 per cent of the calls**

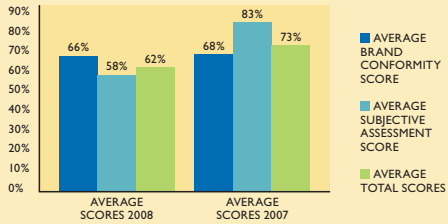
## BETTER CALL HANDLING

Across the industry, and even sectors, there's a huge difference between operators in terms of putting good staff into place to answer calls with excellent systems, support and training (see table 3, p64). These are aspects that don't cost a lot of money – simply time and effort – but do make a huge difference to front line sales.

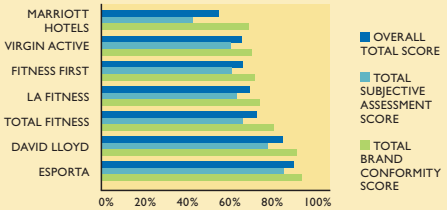
Suggestions to improve call handling systems include:

- Diverting some marketing spend to ensure staff and systems are in place to answer enquiries quickly and efficiently
- Developing more sophisticated, subtle strategies to deal with the price issue and ensuring all staff are clear about how to handle it. While operators don't like to give prices out too easily, protocols are often too inflexible and therefore not followed by staff – the price was given out immediately in almost half the survey calls. In another 10 per cent some staff refused to give prices at all, despite repeated requests. Price is key information requested by phone enquirers, and research shows it's generally better dealt with by membership advisers, reinforcing the need to transfer calls to the nominated staff 100 per cent of the time
- Investing in more telesales training and ensuring back-up procedures are in place if calls can't be transferred to the nominated member of staff. Regular mystery calls can be used to monitor standards and give feedback to staff
- Setting KPIs on gathering lead information – where the caller heard about the club – and ensuring the team produces a daily/weekly report to monitor and manage the source of the leads

## TABLE 2: 2007 vs 2008 NATIONAL AVERAGES




## TABLE 3: HEALTH & FITNESS CHAIN AVERAGE SCORES




would like to come in for a tour in 58 per cent of the calls.

In addition, fewer than 20 per cent of callers were asked where they had heard about the club/centre, suggesting that there is little understanding of the importance of feedback and data collection on marketing awareness levels.

Hill continues: "The industry as a whole is much better at brand conformity than subjective assessment, which shows we're better at training our staff in 'what to do' than in 'how to do it'.

"Overall, though, it appears the private chains are better at trying to build rapport over the phone than the trusts or management contractors (see table 1, p62). Their product knowledge is also generally greater and more detailed. However, this does not compare like with like, as leisure centres are much less focused on sales and need to have a wider offering and knowledge base."

### dropping in

So if things are getting worse on the phone, how are we performing face-to-face at this busy time of the year? Our mystery shoppers visited the highest- and lowest-scoring private and public sites from the call-Focus survey to see how this in-person experience compared with the phone results.

Under scrutiny were a number of elements: the original phone call to book an appointment, the facility itself, the tour and interaction, and the close and follow-up. The results of these mystery shopper visits, and a look at how they compare with the sites' call-Focus results, will be revealed in the next issue of the magazine (*HCM* March 09).

"Customer insight is all about understanding your current and potential customers – their attitudes, perceptions and experiences," says Hill. "Many of the user surveys in our industry give very standardised, quantifiable results, not focused on the detail of a company's operating procedures. Mystery shops and calls can complement these surveys and show the other side of the equation." (see information box, left)

He continues: "If you want to uncover the truth about how your business handles customers on the phone and how they treat customers in your club or centre, mystery shopping can form an important part of the equation."

***abigail harris***
*healthclub@leisuremedia.com*

## MYSTERY SHOPPING – A USEFUL TOOL?

As with customer surveys, mystery shopping has pros and cons, and many businesses invest in a combination of both

MYSTERY SHOPPER STRENGTHS:

- Can be tailored to test specific operating procedures and practices
- Gives detailed feedback on key interactions between customers and staff
- Focuses on qualitative feelings and experiences – how the shopper felt
- Provides direct and actionable feedback to managers and front line staff

MYSTERY SHOPPER WEAKNESSES:

- Can be too subjective and dependent on the shopper's analysis and judgement
- Can be a measure of specific customer interaction, rather than customer satisfaction
- Is not effective for longitudinal analysis – ie comparing scores over time

KEY ELEMENTS INCLUDE:

- A mixture of calls (focusing on the sales enquiry) and visits (focusing on the sales/visit experience)
- A bespoke script and scoring matrix focusing on key brand non-negotiables
- Experienced shoppers who work in other service industries (industry experts tend to give a different view and perspective from typical customers)
- Results within seven days, which can be web-based and include digital recordings of calls and possibly videos of visits



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

# TRANSPONDER LOCK OTS

THE SIMPLE AND EFFECTIVE SOLUTION FOR YOUR CLOAKROOM LOCKERS

LOCKS. UNLOCKS
INSIDE. OUTSIDE
IS IT BECAUSE OF ITS STYLISH SIMPLICITY OR PERHAPS BECAUSE ITS STAND ALONE OPERATION IS MAINTENANCE FREE?
IS IT INTUITIVE ONE STEP OPERATION, OR SIMPLICITY OF INTEGRATION WITH ACCESS CONTROL, MEMBERSHIP & E-PURSE SYSTEMS ?
IS IT BECAUSE IT IS COMPLETELY COMPATIBLE WITH THE TECHNOGYM WELLNESS KEY?
IS IT THE ADDITIONAL SECURITY AND PEACE OF MIND THE SYSTEM WILL BRING?

At Ojmar we can not tell you which of these reasons will make you choose this exceptional system or which reasons convinced sites all over Europe to use OTS. What we can guarantee is that OTS will exceed your expectations and be a pleasure for your customers to use.

**Examples of current OTS users:**
SANDON SCHOOL LEISURE UK, FISICO SPAIN, BAD GLEICHENBERG AUSTRIA, OLYMPIC SWIMMING POOL LATVIA, CENTER PRAZACKA PRAGUE CZECH REPUBLIC, NOVARTIS BASEL SWITZERLAND, ATLANTHAL THALASSO BIARRITZ FRANCE.

**For further information:**
Ojmar, S.A.
Pol. Ind. de Lerun, s/n
20870 Elgoibar (Gipuzkoa) · Spain
T.: + 34 943 748 484 · F.: +34 943 748 490
info@ojmar.es · www.ojmar.es

**UK Agency -** Stockfit Ltd
Cockridden farm - Brentwood Road
Herongate-Brentwood
ESSEX CM13 3LH
Phone: 01277 812323
Fax: 01277 812333
colin@stockfit.co.uk
www.stockfit.co.uk

ojmar

The Peak Health Club & Spa, at the Jumeirah Carlton Tower in London, recently underwent a thorough refurbishment. We take a look at the results and provide an overview of the company's upcoming plans

# peak performance

Located on the ninth and 10th floors of the Jumeirah Carlton Tower in London's Knightsbridge, The Peak Health Club & Spa first opened in 1982 as a small fitness facility – 10 pieces of Universal equipment at one end of a food and beverage area.

Over the next few years, guest attendance increased significantly and there was interest from local residents. The addition of a 20m indoor stainless steel swimming pool and a brand new spa facility in 1996 created one of the most comprehensive hotel health club and spa offerings in London, and the club is now home to 1,200 members with more than 30,000 hotel guest visits a year.

The latest refurbishment – of the gym and studio – took place over a period of four weeks in August 2008, and was the last stage of a programme of renovation work that has seen a complete overhaul of the club's changing and treatment rooms, clubroom lounge and swimming pool facilities.

## design focus

One of the unique selling points of the health club are the spectacular views over London from the double height atrium windows. "The city skyline is an incredible sight and one that we were very keen to capitalise on during the refurbishment," says Ian Richardson, club manager.

The constraints imposed by the club's elevated location meant no major structural work, with the focus of the refurbishment on the interior design and finish. The main aim was to significantly enhance the exercise environment by maximising the light from the huge glass atrium, creating an increased sense of space and sophistication.

A tender process was undertaken and Zynk Design was selected to oversee the project in terms of structure and design. "This was not the largest project in the world; the focus was on design and detail. Zynk Design demonstrated great attention to detail and our objectives were clearly reflected in the design proposal," says Richardson. "Jumeirah

**Before** **The Peak had last been refurbished in 2003 and was due a refresh**

### THE PEAK HEALTH CLUB & SPA FACILITIES

- **Gym:** 217sq m, equipped with Technogym resistance and CV, Life Fitness DAP and Cable Crossover, Precor AMT, Cybex Ad/Abductor
- **Aerobics studio:** 15m x 8m
- **Group cycling studio**
- **Changing:** Including heat experiences
- **Spa:** Seven treatment rooms and retail area
- **Indoor pool:** 20m x 8m, plus a spa pool
- **Golf simulator:** Incorporating Swing Factory Golf School
- **Restaurant:** Clubroom Restaurant and Lounge



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

**Room with a view** **One of the USPs of the Peak health club are the spectacular views over London from the double height atrium windows**

Hotels & Resorts are among the most luxurious in the world. It was essential that the refurbishment was in line with the company's branding and philosophy."

Once the final design had been approved, Zynk Design MD Stavros Theodoulou appointed the building contractors for the project – Vivid Interiors, who had previously completed renovation work on the swimming pool, changing rooms and spa treatment rooms.

The previous refurbishment had taken place in 2003, which meant the health club and spa were due a refresh – the carpet needed replacing, while the wall finishes had started to absorb rather than reflect the light. In addition, the existing resistance kit had served well but had been in use for 13 years, and it was felt the club needed to improve its functional training capabilities.

The existing Technogym CV kit was complemented with the company's Selection line of resistance equipment. The Life Fitness cable crossover was also replaced with the latest model and a new Dual Action Pulley added.

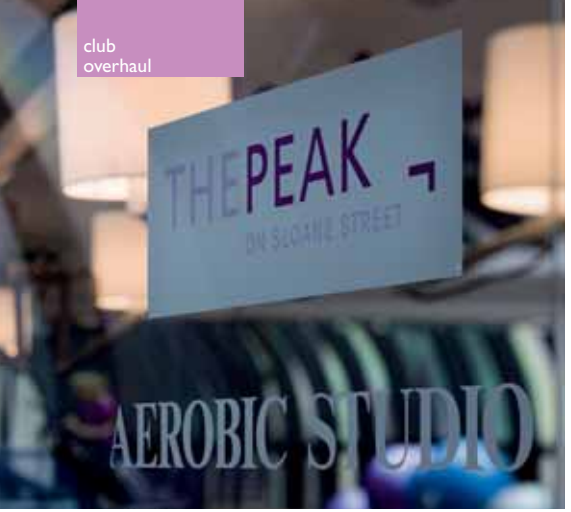
"Space planning was a vital part of the project, ensuring that we maximised every inch of space. For example, there are eight large columns standing in the centre of the gym, and we have successfully utilised the space around these curved surfaces," says Theodoulou. "All the manufacturers were hugely co-operative and were actively involved in creating the final layout."

## record results

Given that Peak Health Club & Spa serves both a large membership population and a significant number of hotel guests, operational continuity of the business was of vital importance.

"One of the benefits of operating within a large hotel is that we were able to negotiate the use of the hotel's ballroom for the duration of the work," says Richardson. "Although this was a significant upheaval for staff, members and guests, the fact that a health club facility was still available for all but five days of the four-week refurbishment programme was no small achievement ▸

**Oozing quality** **The aerobics studio and the 20m indoor stainless steel pool**




## JUMEIRAH GLASGOW

Jumeirah has signed a deal with Progress Property Developments for the first international luxury business hotel in Scotland.

The Jumeirah Glasgow Hotel, Jumeirah's fifth hotel to be signed in Europe, is scheduled to open in 2011. The 25-storey development, which will include 160 rooms and suites plus 85 Jumeirah Living serviced apartments for extended stays, will be situated in Glasgow's international financial services district.

Facilities will include a Talise Wellness spa, gym, infinity pool, rooftop cocktail lounge and several restaurants and bars. Business and conference amenities will be supplemented by a 630-seat ballroom and club lounge.

and hugely appreciated." For the five days when there was no health club facility, alternative arrangements were made at a nearby hotel.

As with any project, keeping to deadline and opening on time was vital. Challenges included creating a new dropped ceiling structure while at the same time replacing the floor and putting in a new lighting system – all to a very tight time scale. However, all parties agreed that, by having a number of meetings with designers, contractors and suppliers before the work began, a realistic time scale could be set.

The new facility opened on schedule and within budget on 3 September 2008. "The response from members has been universal in approval – people's jaws were dropping when they first came up the stairs and saw it all," says Richardson. "The gym has a new look and feel. Light is now maximised by the new wall finish during the day and the use of sleek lines and a sophisticated lighting system creates a more energising environment at night."

Theodoulou is thoroughly pleased with the result: "We wanted to ensure that members and hotel guests had a workout environment that was inspiring, stimulating and enjoyable at the same time. The new walnut floors, gloss lacquered timbers, soft lines and subtle lighting complement the purple and turquoise brand colours eloquently. The result is a stylish, sophisticated new environment that reflects the five-star elegance of the Jumeirah brand."

In a club where 80 per cent of members live within a 10-minute walk, news of the latest refurbishment travelled fast. "Like many clubs, our best source of new business is from member referrals and word of mouth," says Richardson. September proved to be the most successful month in the club's history for new memberships, including a record £40,000 in joining fees. Meanwhile the studio, which runs 40 classes a week, has seen class sizes grow by 15 per cent. There has also been very positive feedback from the hotel's guests, many of whom choose to stay because of The Peak's extensive facilities.

"We have a unique location that probably wasn't doing itself full justice. We are delighted with the results: it looks good, the members love it and it's selling well – what more could you ask for?" says Richardson.

## JUMEIRAH HOTELS & RESORTS – COMPANY BACKGROUND

Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts, the Dubai-based luxury international hotel management group, encompasses Burj Al Arab, Jumeirah Beach Hotel, Jumeirah Emirates Towers, Madinat Jumeirah and Jumeirah Bab Al Shams Desert Resort & Spa – all in Dubai. Also in the group are the Jumeirah Carlton Tower and Jumeirah Lowndes Hotel, both in London, and the Jumeirah Essex House in New York.

The Jumeirah Group's activities are, however, not restricted to hotel and resort management. Its portfolio also includes: Jumeirah Living, a luxury brand of serviced residences; global spa brand Talise Wellness; The Taste Department, the company's restaurant division; Wild Wadi water park; The Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management, the region's only fully accredited third-level academic institution delivering degree programmes in hospitality management; and Jumeirah Retail, with its 15 stores and luxury online store.

Jumeirah Group became a member of Dubai Holding in 2004, a collection of leading Dubai-based businesses and projects, initiating a new phase of growth and development for the group.

The Group now has extensive expansion plans to grow its portfolio of luxury hotels and resorts, and has several five-star properties under development in the UAE, Jordan, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, Kuwait, Maldives, Bali, Thailand, China, Argentina, Spain, England, Scotland (see information box above right) and the US Virgin Islands. In 2009, the Group is eagerly anticipating the grand opening of Jumeirah HanTang Xintiandi in Shanghai, Jumeirah's first hotel in the Asia Pacific region.

***kate selley, beth cooper pr***
*healthclub@leisuremedia.com*



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

copyright 2009

# DEVELOPMENT

## MAXIMIZE YOUR CLIENTS POTENTIAL AS WELL AS YOUR OWN PROFITIBILITY.

A great number of your clients may not be consuming sufficient protein and as a result may not be seeing the results they envisaged.

Whilst energy drinks have application, protein drinks can dramatically improve results in the gym. Whey Refresh is perfect for developing and maintaining lean muscle.

It couldn't be easier to understand as a product; 40 grams of protein in filtered water with great natural flavours.

It is ideal as a proven way of introducing new users to supplementation.

The sports cap and bottle makes this the most convenient and familiar format available for first time users.

From the gyms perspective, it is easy for staff to sell, vends and has a great profit margin. Free fridges are also available.

## FOR MUSCLES, FOR BUSINESS.

**RRP 500ml £2.99, 3 great flavours; orange burst, tropical punch and rhubarb.**

Call our sales team on 0870 757 3353 for details and **quote** HCM for free samples. **Free branded fridges available on first order of 60 bottles or more.**

reflex®
Tomorrow's Nutrition Today™

# research round-up

For the first time, researchers have looked at what type of activity, and how much of it, is best for improving mental health and reducing stress

# mind games

Working up a sweat while carrying out the housework can not only do wonders for the state of your home, but can also help to increase your mental wellbeing, a study in the *British Journal of Sports Medicine* has found.

In fact, the survey shows that as little as 20 minutes of any physical activity one to three times a week – whether it's gardening, walking the dog or going to the gym – may be enough to provide mental health benefits and reduce stress levels. It also suggests, however, that the more vigorous and frequent the exercise, the greater the effects are.

Although physical activity has been linked to lowering the risk of depression, dementia and cognitive decline in the past, the authors of the study say that, until now, the best type of activity and how much of it was needed remained unclear.

PICTURE: WWW.ISTOCK.COM/MATICKUDER

**Walking the dog for 20 minutes one to three times a week can reduce stress levels**

## gathering the data

Carried out by University College London, the study was based on a sample of 19,842 men and women from the Scottish Health Surveys of 2003, 1998 and 1995.

These surveys enquired about participation in physical activity in the four weeks prior (1998 and 2003 samples) or during a typical week (1995 sample). The frequency of participation (for at least 20 minutes each time) was measured according to three domains of activity: leisure time sports such as cycling, swimming, running, aerobics, dancing, tennis and ball sports; walking for any purpose; and domestic physical activity such as gardening, strenuous housework and DIY. The men and women were also asked whether taking part in sports made them feel sweaty or out of breath, to gauge the intensity.

The mental health of participants was assessed from a 12-item General Health Questionnaire (GHQ). The GHQ is a measure of psychological distress and looks at the general level of happiness, experience of depressive and anxiety symptoms, and sleep disturbance over the previous four weeks. Trained interviewers also took medical history and health behaviours into consideration.

## the results

In total, 3,200 participants were classified as having psychological distress, with 32 per cent of these people doing no exercise or only 20 minutes of physical activity a week outside of domestic activities.

Taking part in sports each week was the most effective in improving participants' mental health, lowering the risk of psychological distress by 33 per cent. But even domestic activity and walking led to an improvement, with the risk of psychological distress reduced by 13 and 20 per cent respectively.

Researchers report that participation in sports may have extra benefits through a "psychological component, such as fostering social support networks and developing mastery and better coping abilities."

Regarding the amount of exercise needed, just 20 minutes of domestic activity one to three times a week reduced the odds of psychological distress by 24 per cent. This improved steadily as exercise frequency increased; exercising every day of the week showed the highest risk reduction of 41 per cent.

From the results, the researchers believe that physical activity is linked to mental health improvements, regardless of potential confounding factors such as long-standing illness, obesity and smoking – although these factors could weaken the amount of good exercise does.

Researchers did, however, concede that those who suffer from mental health problems such as stress and anxiety may be less likely to take part physical activity in the first place. However, is hoped that the research can be used to provide proof to those suffering from mental pain that small, manageable steps can be taken to make improvements in their lives.



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

# lockers & changing rooms

fitness-kit.net PRODUCT FOCUS

**Wherever you are in the world, find the right products and services 24/7 by logging on to Health Club Management's free search engine, www.fitness-kit.net**

**If you're a supplier, sign up for your free listing now on www.fitness-kit.net**

## A BAG FIT FOR A KING

Kingswood Leisure supplies wet kit bags for changing rooms. Stored on wall-mounted dispensers, the degradable and recyclable bags come in three different styles to provide convenient, hygienic stowage of used sportswear. Said to be ideal for gyms and health clubs looking to provide a high level of customer service, the bags act as a 'finishing touch' to a customer's visit. Printed logo bags are also available for companies looking to further promote their brand name.

fitness-kit keywords: **kingswood leisure**

## AQUALISA UNVEILS DIGITAL RANGE

UK power shower manufacturer Aqualisa has unveiled its range of digital showers and baths. The company manufactures three main collections: Quartz Digital, HiQu Digital and ilux Digital, a design and functionality-led product aimed at the luxury and boutique market. All Aqualisa digital products feature one-touch control with a simple, 'start/stop' push button and an integrated LED display to indicate water temperature readiness. Displays flash while water is warming up and turn to steady once the water has reached the user's pre-set temperature. Also included is what's described as "thermostatic precision" – Aqualisa's digital processors blend hot and cold flows of water with extreme accuracy, resulting in thermostatically-controlled temperatures. One further option that's available is an 'eco setting'. This reduces flow to around eight litres of water a minute – excellent news for operators who want to be as green as possible.

fitness-kit keyword: **aqualisa**

## MAGMED'S INFRARED BALANCING ACT

Infrared (IR) therapy specialist MagMed has introduced a new addition to its IR therapy range – the Ergo Balance Infrared Therapy Cabin. Designed for use by anyone, from elite athletes to the over-50s, MagMed's Infrared range now carries enhanced functionality, with a new touchscreen control panel and a built-in MP3 player. There are also automatic audio instructions for usage when customers start their session, thus removing the need for individual instruction by staff members. Optional protective coverings for seats, floors, heater tops and exteriors – to enhance durability in heavy use areas – are also available.

fitness-kit keyword: **magmed**

fitness-kit.net

For more information, or to contact any of these companies, log on to www.fitness-kit.net and type the company name under 'keyword search'

POWERED BY
fitness-kit.net

For more information, or to contact any of these companies, log on to www.fitness-kit.net and type the company name under 'keyword search'

## OLYMPIC PROSPECTS

The Portland Sailing Centre in Weymouth — the first 2012 Olympic venue to open and the base for British sailing teams – has seen the installation of over £100,000-worth of Prospec Marathon cubicles and lockers. With the Marathon suspended system, which is designed for high usage, the changing cubicles are attached to a load-bearing head beam. Being suspended, it's also said to be easier to clean and maintain than traditional cubicle systems. With the rollout of the government's free swimming initiative and the run-up to the London Olympics, Prospec's Marathon range has also been installed in a variety of 50m swimming pool centres, such as the Cardiff International Pool (pictured), Stadium Park, Sunderland and Crawley Sports and Leisure Centre.

fitness-kit keywords: prospec lockers

## STAY-LOCKED & SAFE

Staylock Ltd has installed its custom-made lockers at the All England Lawn Tennis Club at Wimbledon and has been named as the club's official supplier. The unique design and construction of the lockers is intended to ensure the most secure locker available in the UK. Although originally aimed at the schools market, the company is extending its products towards leisure centres and health clubs due to what is described as their low maintenance and long lifespan. The lockers are supplied with a choice of locking mechanism to suit their intended use, while Staylock offers a full after-sales scheme for the replacement of keys and padlocks on top of its installation service. For aesthetic and branding purposes the lockers can be made according to any colour scheme.

fitness-kit keyword: staylock

## UNDER LOCK AND KEY

The new Series 31 lock from Camlock Systems is designed to provide sports facilities with protection for personal lockers, equipment storage cabinets, first aid cabinets and other applications. Camlock Systems has designed the 10-disc double-entry camlock to provide 2,000 key combinations to ensure security and reduce the chance of 'key crossover' — when one key can operate two or more locks with different key combinations. A choice of key movements are available: 90° turn clockwise or anti-clockwise with key free in the locked position only, or 180° turn clockwise or anti-clockwise with key free when locked and unlocked. The first of these key movements traps the key when the lock is unlocked, requiring users to lock the locker or cabinet before leaving. The keys are said to be able to stand up to heavy usage, with both the lock face and the keys carrying the key identification number for the purposes of easy re-ordering.

fitness-kit keyword: camlock

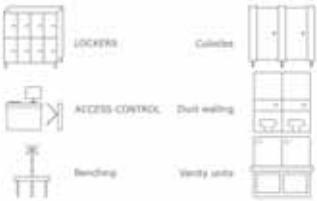
## CORBY, WEMBLEY AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN

LSA Projects has commenced work on the installation of changing facilities and access control at the new Corby East Midlands International Pool. Suppliers of Geschwender lockers and cubicle systems as well as Metra electronic access control systems, the company was able to provide the Corby site with wet and dry changing rooms, fitness suite changing facilities, toilets and turnstile access. Metra's system is based on a Mifare contactless chip, which can be incorporated into formats such as a wristband, card or key to gain entry to both the changing rooms and the lockers themselves. Other projects include the players' changing rooms at Wembley Stadium (pictured) and an installation at the Welsh National Pool.

fitness-kit keywords: lsa projects

## A Change for the Better

For over 30 years, the Geschwender Concept System has established an enviable pedigree for attractive and durable bespoke leisure fit-outs throughout Europe. The combination of traditional skills, enthusiasm and thirty years of experience working with High Pressure Laminate (HPL) results in projects that bear the hallmark of quality.
Now combined with Metra Electronic Locking Systems (ELS) and access control for fuller functionality.



UK and Ireland Partner

Metra

The Barn, White Horse Lane, Witham, Essex CM8 2BU
Phone: 01376 501199 Fax: 01376 502027
Email: sales@LSAprojects.co.uk
Web: www.LSAprojects.co.uk

LSA projects limited

# tommy matthews

The managing director of Optimal Life Fitness talks to Kath Hudson about kettlebells, finding a niche in education and the roll-out of 'real world' training courses

**Q When and by whom was Optimal Life Fitness formed?**

My business partner BJ Rule and I launched the company at LIW in September 2005. We had lots of kettlebells and demonstrations and people looked at them as if to say "what on earth is this?" Things have changed massively since then.

**Q What was the background?**

We'd been working together as personal trainers in a gym and we set up a company where we'd take clients outside to train using kettlebells. They absolutely loved it and the idea grew from there. We spent about a year developing the courses and designing our own brand of kettlebells – Extreme Kettlebells.

Both of us have sporting backgrounds. I've been involved in sport all my life, and personal training came on board after I finished university. I've always had an interest in coaching and teaching, which is where the educational side came in.

**Q Has the company evolved since you started?**

Absolutely, it's evolved and evolved. To be perfectly honest, it's only been the last six to nine months where we've got a clear definition of what we actually do. Before that, we were toying with ideas about whether our offering was product- or training-based. Basically we had two years of playing around, but in the last nine months we've really found our niche and what we believe to be the way forward. The time has been very much ploughed into developing the courses and the educational side of our offering.

**Q What courses do you offer now?**

There are four kettlebell courses, one boxing course – with an advanced boxing course due to be launched in April – and an Olympic weightlifting course. All of them offer CPD points and are accredited by REPs.

**Q Are you more focused on education than kit now?**

We are increasingly focusing on education, but at the same time we've learned that trainers like to go away with a tool, or a toy, to play with. So for example, with our one- and two-day instructor courses, attendees go away with kettlebells or the boxing equipment to use afterwards.

There are a lot of kettlebell suppliers out there now, but the people we work with understand the benefits of our product. It may look like a lump of metal, but there are a lot of things about it that make it what it is, including the dimensions and handle thickness.

The work we've done over the last four years has made a difference to what the general public and the industry think of kettlebells. We spent thousands of pounds over the first two years on marketing, promotion and PR.

It certainly helped when Geri Halliwell started using them too: in two days we sold out of all of our kettlebells in eight, 12 and 16 kilos. It made people realise that anyone can use them – that kettlebells aren't just iron balls for big, strong men.

**Q What's your company's mission statement?**

To develop and provide cutting-edge education to fitness professionals. One of the key things we maintain is that all of our courses will have real world application. The trainer will come out at the end of an Optimal Life Fitness course and feel they've gained something, rather than just sitting in a classroom collecting CPD points.

**Q What's your USP?**

All of our courses go into the how and whys behind the training method, giving trainers the understanding they need to be able to go out and instantly pass on the information to their clients and members. The other key thing is that all our instructors can walk the walk and talk the talk – for example, one of our boxing instructors is a former boxing world champion. ▶

## COMPANY BY NUMBERS

**Head office**: London
**Other offices**: Holland
**Year-on-year growth**: First year 10 per cent, second year 15 per cent
**Number of employees**: Six full-time staff and five contractors

## WHO'S WHO?

**Managing director**: Tommy Matthews
**Educational director**: BJ Rule
**Head trainer**: Andy Phillips



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

Instructors attending Optimal Life Fitness' boxing courses will go away with boxing equipment to experiment with afterwards

**Understanding of kettlebells among the public and the industry has come a long way since Optimal was launched in 2005, says Matthews**

**Q Who are your customers?**
Mainly personal trainers, either self-employed or from gyms. We work with Fitness First Europe and occasionally with Esporta, and we're approaching other health club chains at the moment. One of the things we're looking at doing is designing a complete course package so we can say to a gym: "This is all you need for your further development courses."

**Q What courses will be new for this year?**
Over the next 12 months, we're launching a series of workshops in a four-hour format. Over the last three months, there's been a downturn in the number of trainers buying courses and we think this is because they're scared of spending money, not because they're losing clients and don't have the money to spend. The key thing is to make it easy for trainers. With our workshops, they can come in for an afternoon, get their CPD points, learn something interesting and new, and go and use it straight away – and it only costs around £50–£75.

We're looking to develop 10 of these courses, which will support our three major areas of education – kettlebells, boxing and Olympic weightlifting.

**Q What will the four-hour workshops cover?**
They're in a number of different areas, such as advanced dumbbell training and dynamic warm-ups. They give little tools and tricks and bits of information that trainers can use to boost their understanding and knowledge, as well as giving them a few more exercises.

**Q How do you put together a course?**
BJ and I use our own philosophies, knowledge and education to create the content and then see where we need to bring in outside expertise. We put the boxing course together with one of the top Australian coaches and we've got an ex-professional teaching it. We worked with Commonwealth weightlifters to create the Olympic weightlifting course.

**Q Why did you create a course on Olympic lifting?**
We're trying to show that, although it's an Olympic sport, it can be beneficial to anyone and everyone. We're one of the first to be pushing it towards the industry, especially at the in-depth level we're working to. A lot of people will be put off by the name, but if you go into a gym and look at any personal trainer, they'll be teaching people to dead lift, squat, clean and possibly even how to snatch. Nine times out of 10 it will be taught wrong, and possibly to the detriment of the client.

The major focus is to make trainers understand how to do the moves safely and get the results out of clients. It's good for numerous reasons – posture, range of motion across joints, strength, power and speed.

**Q Do you think boxing and weightlifting will appeal to women?**
Definitely the boxing – every client loves to box. You stick a pair of gloves on them and they love to hit something. It's a great stress-reliever, it's fun, exciting and hard work. Taught properly and done properly, it's a great tool. Done badly, it's dangerous and ineffective. That's one of the reasons we put this course together – there's a lot of bad stuff out there.

The market for Olympic lifting is strength and conditioning. What we're really trying to do is teach people how to lift correctly. People are still scared of free weights when they shouldn't be: picking something off the floor is what the body is designed to do. We're working on getting someone from the sports world to come and teach the course.

**Q Will you be launching any new products this year?**
The main thing we're working on this year is a range of boxing equipment to support the performance boxing course.

**Q What trends do you predict for 2009?**
For us, kettlebells will carry on growing, but boxing will be the big one. Across the industry, I don't think there's really much more that people can invent. I believe the best way forward is therefore to go back to basics and learn how to do things properly. The industry has been flooded with ideas and fads, but I think you'll see more people going back to the basics of getting the body moving properly and forgetting about the technology.

Get it right Most PTs teach the basics of Olympic lifting, says Matthews – but most currently get it wrong

**Q Where would you like Optimal Life Fitness to be in five years' time?**
The aim is to be Europe's most successful CPD provider, with a full range of accredited qualifications and workshops, and to continue providing real world courses across all areas of fitness.

**Q What's the best piece of advice that you've ever received?**
Spend 80 per cent of your time on the top 20 per cent of things you have to do.

***kath hudson***
*healthclub@leisuremedia.com*

## FAVOURITES

**Book**: *Notes from a Small Island* by Bill Bryson
**Film**: *Last of the Mohicans*
**Music**: The Killers
**Place**: Northumberland (where I was brought up)
**Food**: Roast dinner
**Season**: Summer
**Leisure activity**: Rugby and golf



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

# Keep up to date with the health & fitness market by reading the leading title for the industry

## subscribe today

**SPECIAL OFFER**
**Add Leisure Opportunities to your subscription for only £10**
(UK only)

**ADD THE FOLLOWING TO YOUR SUBSCRIPTION…**

### spa business

Read about the innovators shaping the global spa market from curative and thermal to resort, day and destination spas

### sports management

For managers and policy makers in the sports market who want to keep ahead of the game

### leisure management

The magazine for professionals and senior policy-makers. Leisure Management looks at the latest trends and developments from across all leisure markets

### leisure opportunities

Fortnightly leisure recruitment, training, property and news publication which gets you the right job or the perfect candidate for your vacancy

### attractions management

Everything you want to know about the visitor attractions market. From theme parks and museums to science centres, zoos and corporate brandlands

### spa opportunities – for free!

Fortnightly international spa recruitment, training and news publication
**For your FREE copy visit www.spaopportunities.com**

# subscribe online: www.leisuresubs.com

Alternatively please call our subsline +44 (0)1462 471912 or fill out the form below and fax back to +44 (0)1462 433909

**PLEASE SEND ME THE FOLLOWING MAGAZINES:**

| Attractions Management ☐ | Leisure Management ☐ | Health Club Management ☐ | Leisure Opportunities ☐ | Spa Business ☐ | Sports Management ☐ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UK £34, EU £45, Int £65, Student £17 | UK £38, EU £49, Int £69, Student £19 | UK £41, EU £52, Int £73, Student £20 | UK £10 (*standalone subscription £31), EU £41, Int £62, Student £16 | UK £28, EU £38, Int £38, US/Canada £28 Student £18 | UK £27, EU £37, Int £58, Student £13 |

**Total subscription cost: £** ..... **I wish to pay by:** ☐ Visa, ☐ Mastercard, ☐ Maestro, ☐ AMEX, ☐ Invoice – purchase order No .....

☐ Cheque *(in £ sterling – please make payable to the Leisure Media Company Limited and post to the following address: Subscriptions, The Leisure Media Company Limited, Portmill House, Portmill Lane, Hitchin, Herts SG5 1DJ)*

Card No: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Expiry date: Issue No:

Name: Position: Signature:

Company: Main business of organisation:

Address:

Postcode:

Tel: Fax: Email:

# health club management DIRECTORY

For just over £20 per issue you can access over 10,000 motivated leisure professionals committed to the industry.
To book your space call the sales team on Tel: +44 (0)1462 431385 Fax: +44 (0)1462 433909

## architects/designers

To book your advert call the sales team on +44 (0)1462 431385

## AV/sound

## clothing & merchandise

To book your advert call

John +44 (0)1582 607970
Nadeem +44 (0)1462 471902
Julie +44 (0)1462 471919
Jan +44 (0)1462 471909
Tessa +44 (0)1462 471903

## clothing & merchandise

## club operation support

RCS

DO YOU HAVE UNPAID MEMBERSHIP FEES?

Consult the Industry Specialists

REVENUE COLLECTION SERVICES

'Professional Experts' in the collection of irregular payments
Proven success at over 75%

CONTACT US NOW TO DISCUSS OUR **'FREE SERVICE'**

e-mail: info@rcs.uk.net
Tel: Stuart Robinson 01932 753219

To book your advert call the sales team on +44 (0)1462 431385

## computer membership software


brightlime

T 0844 800 8350

Legend
Club Management Systems
THE DEFINITIVE SOLUTION
• The definitive set of club management software modules
• Fully integrated CRM
• Tried and tested solutions
• No upfront investment
0800 389 2069
www.legendsware.co.uk

CheckFree Compete
Membership Management Software
www.checkfreecompete.co.uk

.ez systems
INTELLIGENT MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE
maximise your yield and retain more members
• 'Intelligent' membership
• 'Intelligent' spa
• Online prospecting
• Online bookings with SMS and email confirmation
• Online CRM
make life .ez
T. + 44 (0) 207 449 4999
E. info@ezsystems.uk.com
www.ezsystems.uk.com

XN LEISURE
for all your leisure management IT needs
www.xnleisure.com
+44 (0)870 80 30 700

See more of your members
Sales Prospecting · Bookings
Member management · CRM
Access Control · Retention
BACSTEL-IP Billing
sda solutions
sdasolutions.com
+44 (0)870 607 1966

LEISUREMOST
Software for the Leisure Industry
Membership · Bookings
Visit Recording · Point of Sale
Card Production · Back Office
Image Capture · Courses
Access Control · Web Bookings
Text Messaging · Single/Multi Site
0113 2370688
www.leisuremost.com

ClubRunner
..software that puts you in control
Cost effective, simple and stress free solutions for Prospecting, EPOS Reporting, CRM Membership Security Bookings Billing
T 0844 8475827 www.clubrunner.co.uk
E sales@clubrunner.co.uk


## computer software


SOFTWARE SPECIALISTS FOR THE HEALTH AND FITNESS INDUSTRY
Website design • E-commerce solutions • CRM systems
Desktop software • Business solutions • Bespoke solutions
www.optimumfitness.biz
info@optimumfitness.biz
01634 883 444
optimumfitness


## direct debit collection


Direct Debit Solutions
Tailor Made for YOU
Bespoke Direct Debit Solutions from
Debit Finance Collections
E: sales@debitfinance.co.uk
W: www.debitfinance.co.uk
FASTDD ON LINE DIRECT DEBIT
dfc Debit Finance Collections PLC
Part of The Leisure Finance Group

Flexible Direct Debit Solutions
hg
• Professional collection on contracted or non contracted memberships
• High Collection Rates
• BACS BUREAU for existing Originators
• Online Direct Debit with our SNAP sales portal
• Development Loans
• We can ALSO collect your debts FREE OF CHARGE?
t: 0845 230 1636 e: sales@harlandsgroup.co.uk
www.harlandsgroup.co.uk

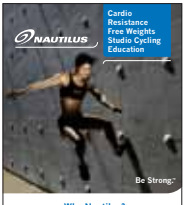
To book your advert call the sales team on
+44 (0)1462 431385

belmont leisure solutions
➢ Membership Fee Collection
➢ Facility Management Software
➢ Marketing Sales and Retention
➢ Direct Debit Collection
➢ Flexible Credit Control
➢ Free Debt Collection
➢ Call Centre Facility
No 1 IN FLEXIBLE MEMBERSHIP COLLECTIONS
Email: sharon@belmont-finance.co.uk
www.belmontleisuresolutions.co.uk
Tel: +44 (0) 1932 753213


## exercise equipment


free weights, flooring & studio equipment

jordan
Tel: +44 (0)1945 880257
www.jordanfitness.co.uk




Why Nautilus?
35 years ago, Nautilus practically invented fitness equipment. We've been reinventing it ever since.
NAUTILUS
"Changing the game in health and fitness"
For further information contact Nautilus on 01908 267 345 or enquiries@nautilus.com
www.nautilus.com

## exercise equipment

To book your advert call the sales team on +44 (0)1462 431385

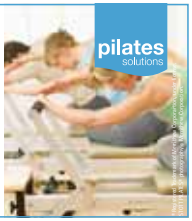
STOTT PILATES® has earned an international reputation as the world's most respected Pilates brand.

Distributed in the UK by Pilates Solutions, we can work with you on space planning, sourcing instructors or training existing staff, marketing and finance options to create a profitable Pilates studio for your facility.

**0800 434 6110**

**www.pilatessolutions.co.uk**

UK Distributor of STOTT PILATES® Equipment




**PHYSICAL COMPANY**

**functional, results driven, innovative equipment for fitness, sports and rehabilitation**

- Over 18 years experience providing Local Governments, Schools, Colleges, Universities, Sports Centres and Personal Trainers.
- Extensive range of high quality low cost health and fitness products and equipment.
- Full & comprehensive fitness assessment and child fitness product ranges.
- Helpful and efficient sales team.
- Speedy delivery

Email **sales@physicalcompany.co.uk**
Web **www.physicalcompany.co.uk**
Tel **01494 769 222** Fax **01494 769 333**

## finance

**Looking for finance?**

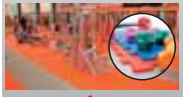
CMF provide competitive & flexible finance options for any type of equipment

Call Chris Bulbuk now for a quote and further information
**01928 739 712** or click
**chris@cmf-ltd.co.uk**
**www.cmf-ltd.co.uk**

terms & conditions apply

## flooring

*flooring solutions for the fitness industry*



Jordan

Tel: +44 (0)1945 880257
www.easylockflooring.co.uk

## hairdryers

## insurance

Bespoke Insurance Solutions

fml

**GYM INSURANCE**

**Individual Approach**
**Individual Advice**
**Individual Premiums**

**Tel: 01702 437800**
**Fax: 01702 437788**

**Email: tomfrisby@fmlinsurance.com**
**Web: www.fmlinsurance.com**

## insurance

**Health and Fitness Clubs, Gyms & Leisure Centres...**
**Use the Market Leader**

**THE Fitness Industry Combined Insurance Scheme**

**Specialist cover for all your business requirements. FIA Discounts**

John Ansell & Partners Ltd

## lighting

**lightmasters uk ltd.**

Wireless Cardio Cinema
Wireless Audio for Spin Classes
Full PA & AV Systems
LED & Fibre Optic Lighting Systems

**01480 407727**

Finance Package Available

## lockers/changing rooms

## lockers/changing rooms


CQL

*For a Great Changing Room Experience*

*Style*

*Design*

*Innovation*

*Craftsman Quality Lockers*
*Allington Road*
*St Neots*
*Little Barford*
*Cambs*
*PE19 6WE*

*Tel: 01480 405396*
*Fax: 01480 470196*
*Email: johng@cqlockers.co.uk*
*Website: www.cqlockers.co.uk*

SAFE SPACE

Safe Space Lockers Ltd
Locker House,
7 Barrow Hill Close,
Worcester Park,
Surrey KT4 7PT
T: 0870 990 7989
F: 0871 431 0452
E: info@safespacelockers.co.uk

Please call 0870 990 7989 for more details

FITLOCKERS
Quality Affordable Timber Lockers
T: 01923 770435 sales@fitlockers.co.uk www.fitlockers.co.uk


## sales & marketing


www.creativefitness.net
Need to increase your memberships?
We can H.E.L.P!
CALL:0870-270-6667

The Worldwide Leader in Health Club Promotions
CREATIVE FITNESS MARKETING
IHRSA

To book your advert call the sales team on
+44 (0)1462 431385


## spas saunas sunbeds


Viking Saunas and Steam Rooms
Specialists in new build, replacements & refurbishment.
VIKING
tel 01257 427019
www.viking-saunas.co.uk

HELO
saunas · steam rooms
quality design



**To book your advert call**

**Tessa** +44 (0)1462 471903
**John** +44 (0)1582 607970
**Nadeem** +44 (0)1462 471902
**Julie** +44 (0)1462 471919
**Jan** +44 (0)1462 471909


## sports towels

## training


lifetime
outstanding training
lifetimehf.co.uk 0870 702 7273

**COPYRIGHT NOTICE**

To subscribe to Health Club Management, log on to www.leisuresubs.com, email: subs@leisuremedia.com, tel +44 (0)1462 471913, fax +44 (0)1462 433909. Annual subscription rates: UK £41, Europe £52, rest of world £72.50 and students UK £20.

Health Club Management is published 11 times a year by The Leisure Media Company Limited, Portmill House, Portmill Lane, Hitchin, Herts, SG5 1DJ, UK, and is distributed in the USA by SPP, 75 Aberdeen Road, Emigsville, PA 17318-0437. Periodicals postage paid @ Manchester, PA. POSTMASTER Send US address changes to Health Club Management, c/o PO Box 437, Emigsville, PA 17318-0437.


The views expressed in print are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the publisher The Leisure Media Company Limited. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recorded or otherwise without the prior permission of the copyright holder. Printed by Warners Midland.

© Cybertrek Ltd 2009 ISSN 1361/351


**Book your advert on our website and be seen by over 15,000 buyers every month from as little as £250.**

CALL THE SALES TEAM TODAY TO DISCUSS YOUR BOOKING

**01462 431385**

www.healthclubmanagement.co.uk


# R.E.D.

## REFURBISHED | EQUIPMENT | DIRECTORY

Sell you refurbished equipment fast by advertising your refurbished kit in the new directory. Book your space now by calling the display sales team on *01462 431385*, or e-mail your request to *displaysales@leisuremedia.com*


**5 Reasons to buy from Amazon Leisure (UK) Ltd**

1) UK's largest supplier of refurbished gym equipment
2) Refurbishment levels to suit all budgets
3) Extensive warranties & service contracts available
4) UK's leading installers of commercial gym equipment
5) Over 18 years of trading

**Call us now**

**Tel: 01953 498098**

Web: www.amazon-leisure.co.uk
Email: sales@amazon-leisure.co.uk

Amazon Leisure

servicesport

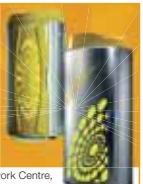
Service and sales of equipment

- Fitness Equipment Servicing
- Sportshall Servicing
- Equipment Sales
- Parts Sales

Call: 0845 402 2456 www.servicesport.co.uk

**Reconditioned sunbeds**

- Flexible leasing options
- Fully factory reconditioned.
- Ergoline specialists.
- Service/repairs to all makes.



Sundbed & Leisure Systems (UK) Ltd, Unit 8, Network Centre, Midland Way, Barlborough, Chesterfield, S43 4WW
www.sunbedandleisure.co.uk Tel 0845 241 4555


Sell you refurbished equipment fast by advertising your refurbished kit in the new directory. Book your space now by calling the display sales team on *01462 431385*, or e-mail your request to *displaysales@leisuremedia.com*

# lightweights

## RUMPOLOGY, THE ART OF READING BOTTOMS

The bottom is the most hated part of the body for females across the UK, according to a YouGov survey in which 57 per cent of women said they would prefer a smaller derrière.

But would they still feel the same if they knew that a round behind denotes traits of truthfulness and faithfulness? Rumpology is the art of reading the buttocks – a similar practice to palm reading – and involves studying the crevices, dimples, moles, lines and folds on the bottom to reveal a person's characteristics, fate or future.

The left and right butt cheeks show details about a person's past and future, respectively. An apple-shaped, muscular rear-end indicates someone who is charismatic, dynamic, confident and often creative, while a pear-shaped bottom suggests someone is patient and down-to-earth.

Some even believe rump reading was practised in ancient Babylon, India, Greece and Rome.

## BOXING THEMED SALON IS A BIG HIT WITH MEN

A sports-themed men's salon franchise, Knockouts Haircuts for Men, is to undergo a large brand expansion across the US.

Each Knockouts salon features a staff of 'Knockouts Girls' in boxing uniforms and offers haircuts and colouring, as well as manicures, pedicures, hair waxing and massages.

Not only do stylists cut hair inside boxing rings, but all cable and sports channels are available on flatscreen TVs with individual remotes and free beverages.

There are 14 sites already open and 300 franchises have been sold in the US. The aim is to launch 1,000.

## spa builds enema monument

Many spas are decorated with works of art, from Buddha statues and water fountains to paintings and photographs which capture peaceful images.

A Russian health spa, however, has turned to its treatment menu – and a less conventional muse – and created an enema-dedicated monument as the focal point of its facility.

The 1.5m-high bronze statue shows three cherubs proudly holding an enema utensil aloft. It was designed by a local artist, cost around a million roubles (£20,700), and was inspired by the 15th century Renaissance artist Botticelli and his classic Venus and Mars painting.

The head of the sanatorium, which specialises in treating digestive illnesses, told news agent Reuters: "We administer enemas nearly every day, so I thought why not use our sense of humour and give it a monument."

MAIN PICTURE WWW.ISTOCK.COM/LEY DOLGATSHOV. PICTURE (RIGHT) MARK KOSHTICH

## SNAKE VENOM IS LATEST WRINKLE ANTIDOTE

Women with wrinkles are the latest victims to fall prey to snake venom, as the poisonous substance provides the inspiration for a new anti-ageing face cream sold in Selfridges department store in London.

The cream, which contains a synthetic version of the poison from a Temple Viper (a common Thai snake), is said to 'stun' skin much the same as a snake bite would. It's claimed to keep the skin smooth and give "Botox-like results" without needles.

The daily moisturiser costs £60 for a 30ml jar and has been manufactured by beauty company Planet Skincare. The pot should last users for about a month.



february 2009 © cybertrek 2009

# Makes perfect business sense.

KINESIS™

ONE

## KINESIS ONE generates REVENUES

Kinesis ONE, is a stand alone version of Technogym's highly innovative Kinesis technology. Designed to provide a gym floor solution to engage members & generate Personal Training Revenue.

Kinesis ONE : Maximise your investment through income generation with Kinesis:

**Business Models**

**Member Programmes**

**PT Education**

**Marketing Support**

**Layout & design**

**Accessories**

Learn more about the Kinesis family and discover the benefits awaiting you if you choose Kinesis ONE for business at

www.technogym.com/kinesisone

UK_info@technogym.com or call 01344 300236

TECHNOGYM

The Wellness Company™