

PT NEWS AND LATEST RESEARCH



TRIMMER BELLY AND BIGGER GUNS FOR INCREASED LONGEVITY

Recent UK research has shown that the size of a man's stomach and biceps as he gets older offer a more accurate picture of his physical health than does a Body Mass Index (BMI) measurement.

In the study of over 4,000 men aged between 60 and 79 years, Dr S Goya Wannamethee and colleagues from the Royal Free and University College Medical School in London found that those with above-average upper arm mass and waist measurements below 102 centimetres were less likely to die. BMI, however, was linked only to mortality in very thin men.

In a report in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* the researchers noted that as people age they gain fat and lose muscle mass, meaning that BMI may not present an

accurate image of obesity and overweight in older people.

'In older men especially, we should not just be measuring weight but also their waist circumference and their muscle mass as measured by mid-arm muscle circumference' Wannamethee said.

Men with waists over 102 centimetres and above average arm muscles were found to be 36 per cent more likely to die than those with trimmer waistlines and above average biceps. Those displaying the double-whammy of smaller muscle mass and larger belly were found to be 55 per cent more likely to die.

Wannamethee and his colleagues noted that in order to achieve the goals of a smaller waist and larger muscle mass, a prudent diet and regular physical activity is necessary; 'The key message is 'keep active' all the way to the end'. ■

Source: IHRSA

'CLEVER' GLOVES KEEP TRACK OF SETS

American researchers have created a new gadget that could take the effort out of keeping track of reps and sets when working out.

Keng-hao Chang, a computer science graduate student and colleagues from the University of California have developed a technique which uses gloves with embedded sensors and a waistband that recognise the type of exercise being done by an individual and that keeps track of the number of repetitions that have been performed.

The sensors are linked to an online system which records and tracks all results. Chang theorised that an online community of exercisers could be created, and that the technology could lead to a type of digital trainer able to give tips and advice on technique. 'People can use this to share their progress with others. They can share their

secret and how they do their exercise' said Chang. It is not clear whether Chang and his fellow researchers spent a great deal of time in the gym environment.

The sensors in the gloves are called 'accelerometers' and these track movement in three directions – up and down, front to back and side to side. The waistband also contains sensors which detect whether the exercise is being performed in a horizontal or vertical position. The data is transmitted to computer software which can tell a tricep kickback from a bicep curl.

Chang and his colleagues found the sensors to be between 85 and 95 per cent accurate in tests. They suggested that attaching radio frequency tags to weights could further improve results. Whether this could actually counteract the aim of the system, by increasing the effort involved in tracking exercises, was not commented on.

Commenting on Chang's system, Dr Jamie Ward, a researcher of human activity recognition at Lancaster University in the UK said 'The application itself is very interesting. I believe you could make a product out of it, [but] there are a number challenges to overcome first'. These challenges include harnessing the energy of the exercises to power the devices instead of using batteries, and ensuring the privacy of the information that is relayed by the device. ■

Source: ABC Online



PT NEWS AND LATEST RESEARCH

TOO MANY AUSSIES STILL IGNORING EXERCISE RECOMMENDATIONS

A new survey has shown that almost half of Australian's don't take enough exercise to remain healthy.

The 1,500 person survey, carried out by Sport Medicine Australia, also showed that 20 per cent of people do not manage to walk for even 10 minutes a week. 16 per cent of study participants were deemed 'completely sedentary'.

The researchers expressed concern at the alarmingly low rates of physical activity and noted that most inactive respondents had attributed their lack of exercise and movement to their working environment, their long commuting hours and the lack of fitness facilities within their workplace.

Sports Medicine Australia's spokeswoman for public health, Professor Wendy Brown from the University of Queensland, said that findings of the survey clearly indicated the need for workplaces to increase their role in the fitness of employees. 'And physical activity



has many benefits other than the prevention of obesity. We really need to start looking at ways of making it easier for workers to fit physical activity into their day. This is an issue which impacts various levels of government policy including transport, roads and housing'.

A large percentage of those surveyed

believed that only intense exercise that causes sweating and breathlessness could reap any physical benefits, despite the fact that government-endorsed exercise guidelines recommend just 30-minutes of moderate activity a day, such as a brisk walk. ■

Source: news.com.au

PAIN IN BACK NEEDN'T BE PAIN IN WALLET

New Australian research has found that the billion dollars that Australians spend annually on back treatments may not be money well spent.

The research, led by Mark Hancock from the Back Pain Research Group at Sydney University and published in British medical journal The Lancet, found that gentle exercise and paracetamol are just as effective as expensive therapies for treating lower back pain. Although not discrediting the benefits offered by chiropractors or physiotherapists, in recent times criticism has been levelled at the anti-inflammatory drugs that many back pain sufferers reach for when pain strikes.

This year one osteoarthritis drug, now de-registered in Australia, was linked to negative liver side effects, and concern has been voiced by gastroenterologists about damage caused to the stomach and bowel by anti-inflammatory drugs. It was these concerns that prompted Hancock to investigate whether such treatments were necessary.

Hancock's team studied 240 people with acute lower back pain, all of whom had been



prescribed paracetamol by their doctors. This group was then divided into four, with some being given placebo therapy and placebo drugs, others being given anti-inflammatory drugs or spinal manipulative therapy or both. The results of the study appeared to show that the group that received the anti-inflammatories and spinal manipulation didn't necessarily recover from their back pain any sooner than the other groups.

Hancock commented 'The main thing we're interested in looking at in this trial was if patients actually received care from their GP first, which is widely recommended of advice from paracetamol, do patients then gain additional benefit from receiving

spinal manipulative therapy or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs? And what we found was that they didn't. So, if they received the widely recommended care of regular paracetamol and advice, they gained no additional benefit from the other treatments... the advice has been shown over a period of time to be to actually stay active. So, for quite a while, patients thought that actually going to bed was the best thing for their back pain. But it's been clearly shown to be the opposite. So, within reason, staying reasonably active is actually good for acute lower back pain'. ■

Source: ABC Online

PT NEWS AND LATEST RESEARCH

FITNESS AND ENVIRONMENT KEY REASONS FOR TOUTED SYDNEY PUBLIC BIKE HIRE SCHEME

More than 80 per cent of people favour the introduction of a public bike hire scheme in the city of Sydney, and one in three people say they would definitely use it, independent research has revealed.

'Cycling is becoming increasingly popular in Sydney, with ABS figures showing a 37 per cent increase in the number of residents cycling to work in the past five years' said Lord Mayor Clover Moore MP.

'The City's Cycling Strategy is all about encouraging greater and safer use of bikes – to boost fitness but also to reduce car usage and subsequently pollution and congestion. Our priority is to provide a safe environment for cyclists. We plan to create a cycle-friendly city, via a network of attractive integrated cycleways, including innovative two-way lanes for safe passage and linkages across local government boundaries'.

Moore continued 'It makes sense that the city would seriously investigate whether a public hire scheme would work in Sydney. They are certainly booming in many other parts of the world. This latest research provides some comfort that there is a high

level of support for a potential scheme'.

The research showed a majority of people who would take advantage of a hire system would do so for fitness and recreational reasons and the bulk of people interviewed agreed that cost would not be an impediment to use of the system so long as the hire rate was reasonable.

The feasibility of introducing a hire service, initially for the CBD area but with an objective of it being part of a network across metropolitan Sydney is being investigated. Bike hire schemes have proven very successful in a number of European cities, including Paris, Barcelona and Berlin.

In Paris there are 20,600 bikes available at 1,451 hire stations. Trips on the bikes number around 250,000 daily, or 91 million in a year.

The research was conducted to establish potential demand levels for a public hire system, potential barriers to using the system and the best methods of implementing such a scheme. It comprised 618 interviews with people who live and work in the city as well as non-city residents who work in or visit the city. As well as 83 per cent of respondents indicating their support for the scheme, the survey found:

52 per cent said they would or might use

a system if hire stations were conveniently located;

- 66 per cent of people who expressed an interest in cycling said improved cycling facilities would boost their use of the service;
- 77 per cent of potential hire users said they would use the service for fitness and leisure, with half of potential users who reside in the City saying they would take advantage of a system to travel to and from work;
- 57 per cent said the greatest benefit of the service would be improved traffic and transport flows; 53 per cent pointed to increased health and wellbeing, and 45 per cent to the environmental benefits;

Physical constraints, safety and traffic infrastructure were cited as the major barriers to use of a hire system.

According to Australian Greenhouse Office data, a five kilometre ride to work on a bike, as an alternative to using a car, will save over one tonne of greenhouse gas emissions over a 12 month period. For more information, call 9265 9910 or e-mail llincoln@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au ■

Source: City of Sydney

GROUP EXERCISE & MIND BODY NEWS



KINZIE HO'S TOP TIPS!

HELLO TO ALL GROUP EX INSTRUCTORS!

Wow, it is hard to believe that Christmas is around the corner and soon it will be the new year. As I recall, this time last year we discussed various ways to plan and market theme classes that would tie into the Christmas and New Year holiday season. This year I am going to take the year end opportunity to consider what your plans are for 2008. Where will your fitness instructing take you, or where will you take your fitness instruction? What are your overall plans and goals for 2008? Whether you are a freelance instructor, or an owner of a private studio offering group fitness specialty classes, everyone benefits from planning ahead. Planning where you want to be in the following year and 'mapping' out your destination will help to grow your career and

your business. With the constant changes and trends prevalent in the fitness industry, setting goals and mapping your direction reduces the chances of you getting lost and wandering aimlessly in your career progress throughout the year.

- Possible goals for 2008
- organise some workshops for the community
- participate in charity work
- experience a convention overseas
- become a presenter
- launch a new class to a new market
- write for a magazine or newspaper column
- deliver a marketing campaign for your studio
- increase membership by 'X' % in your studio

- earn more income
- learn to teach a new program
- take up a course or attain a new qualification
- seek promotion within your club
- recruit additional instructors
- develop your own web site
- personal development

Set milestones along the way, and keep track of your progress throughout the year by physically looking at your plan from time to time. Develop a habit of assessing your plan and progress. Be flexible with your plan though, and build into your strategy the following essential pointers:

WHO - e.g. who is going to help me reach my goals? Business partners, strategic alliances, joint ventures, customer-partner support.

GROUP EXERCISE & MIND BODY NEWS

WHAT - e.g. what format will my new campaign launch take - newsletter, media, web site?

WHERE - e.g. what country do I want to visit and participate in a fitness convention in?

HOW - e.g. how will I find new instructors: advertise? word of mouth?

WHEN - e.g. when is the education course commencing?

Whatever your goals may be, ensure you write them down and plan how you are going to reach them. Why? Because if you do, you will!

Until next E-News, stay healthy and happy to ya all GROOVY GROUP EX INSTRUCTORS!

Merry Christmas and a very Happy and Prosperous New Year! ■

Kinnie Ho Ho Ho!



VIGOROUS EXERCISE KEEPS PROSTATE CANCER AT BAY

A new study published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* has found that older men who undertake a high volume of vigorous exercise can slow the progression of prostate cancer.

Over a 14-year period, 47,000 men enrolled in the Health Professionals Follow-up Study were tracked by researchers. During the 14 year period 2,892 individuals were diagnosed with prostate cancer, of which nearly 10 per cent died.

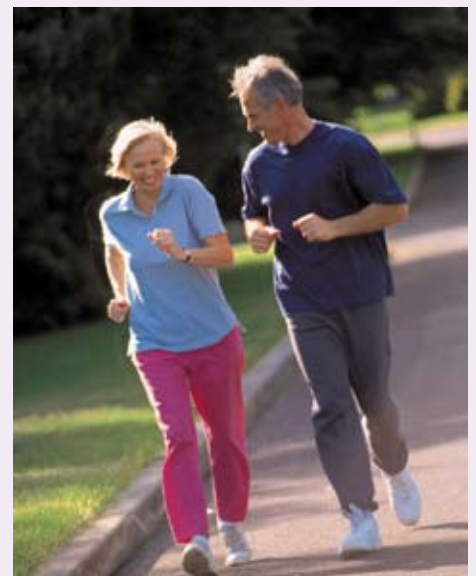
The participants recorded their weekly physical activity during the period of the study, rating it as vigorous (jogging, hiking, cycling, playing tennis or squash or swimming laps) or non-vigorous (walking, climbing stairs).

No link was found between rates of prostate cancer and overall exercise, but researchers did find an association between

vigorous activity rates in men over the age of 65 and reduced occurrence of prostate cancer. Men in this group who partook in over three hours a week of vigorous activity displayed a 67 per cent lower risk of being diagnosed with advanced prostate cancer and a 74 per cent lower risk of dying from the disease. This link was absent in younger men however.

The study authors noted 'Although the mechanisms are not yet understood, these findings suggest that regular vigorous activity could slow the progression of prostate cancer and might be recommended to reduce mortality from prostate cancer, particularly given the many other documented benefits of exercise'.

A recent study also found that the benefits of physical activity extend to colon cancer, with colon cancer patients who had undergone successful surgery and who went on to partake in regular exercise, revealing



themselves to be 35 per cent less likely to suffer a recurrence of their cancer than their non-exercising counterparts. ■

Source: IHRSA

EXERCISE GENE MAY ASSIST WITH DEPRESSION

An American study has found that increasing a gene in the brain that is linked to exercise has a strong anti-depressant effect in mice, and could lead to a depression treatment for humans.

Researchers from Yale School of Medicine suggested that the VGF exercise-related gene could lead to the development of better drugs to treat depression because unlike the chemicals found in current anti-depressants, the gene already exists in the brain.

In the report, published in *Nature Medicine*, professor of psychiatry and senior author of the study, Ronald Duman, acknowledged that the benefits to mental health and brain

function brought about by exercise are well known, but that the exact reasons for this were not. The long period of time that it takes for existing medication to affect mental health suggests that a degree of neuronal adaptation is needed, Duman said.

The researchers built a custom microarray designed to show small changes in gene expression, specifically in the hippocampus, a structure in the brain that is very sensitive to depression and stress hormones. The brain activity of sedentary mice was compared to that of mice which had been placed in an environment with running wheels. Within a week the mice with wheels were running over nine kilometres nightly. These mice displayed 33 hippocampal

exercise-regulated genes, most of which had not been previously identified.

The action of the VGF gene was found to be considerably increased by exercise and administering VGF acted like a strong anti-depressant. Correspondingly, blocking VGF suppressed the effects of physical activity, causing behaviour symptomatic of depression in the mice. 'Identification of VGF provides a mechanism by which exercise produces antidepressant effects. This information further supports the benefits of exercise and provides a novel target for the development of new antidepressants with a completely different mechanism of action than existing medications' Duman said. ■

Source: www.sciencedaily.com

NUTRITION NEWS

CANCER-FIGHTING VEGIES BEST RAW

Recent research from the US has indicated that broccoli sprouts, black raspberries and some raw vegetables can reduce the risk of bladder and oesophageal cancers.

Data from three separate studies was researched and the findings presented to the American Association for Cancer Research's Sixth Annual International Conference on Frontiers in Cancer Prevention.

The first study, carried out by a team at Ohio State University, found that black raspberries may reduce oxidative stress resulting from a precancerous condition called Barrett's oesophagus, which contributes to oesophageal cancer. Barrett's oesophagus patients are up to 40 times more likely to develop oesophageal cancer.

'Specifically in the case of Barrett's patients, reflux of the stomach and bile acid contribute to ongoing oxidative damage. Thus, our hypothesis is that feeding a food that is high in potential protective constituents, such as antioxidants, vitamins, minerals and other phytochemicals, may help restore the oxidative balance' said lead study researcher Laura Kresty.

Twenty patients with Barrett's oesophagus were given between 32 and 45 grams of black raspberries every day for six months. Blood, tissue and urine samples were analysed prior to, during and after the treatment and revealed lower levels of

certain chemical markers of oxidative stress after the six month course.

The other two studies, both conducted by teams at the Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo, New York, reported successes in fighting bladder cancer with the use of broccoli sprouts and cruciferous vegetables. One of the studies, led by oncology professor Dr Yuesheng Zhang, showed a broccoli sprout extract reducing bladder cancer in rats by 70 per cent. 'Our present study shows that broccoli sprout extracts fed to rats in the diet inhibits bladder cancer development induced by a carcinogen. We don't yet know if the extracts inhibit the growth of an existing bladder cancer' explained Zhang.

The second Roswell Park study, in which the diets and smoking habits of 275 bladder cancer patients and 825 healthy participants were analysed, found a bladder cancer reduction rate of 40 per cent in people who regularly ate three or more servings of raw cruciferous vegetables, such as broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower.

Stressing that the main benefits were derived from raw cruciferous rather than cooked cruciferous vegetables, lead researcher Li Tang said 'In our study, we do find intake of raw cruciferous vegetables showed risk reduction of bladder cancer in smokers, and even the heavier smokers'.

Director of nutrition and physical activity at the American Cancer Society, Colleen



Doyle, commented, 'This confirms that there are a variety of compounds within fruits and vegetables that contribute to reducing the risk of cancer. Research like these studies contribute to our knowledge about what the impact of specific nutrients may be on specific types of cancer. Cooking leaches out some nutrients but makes others more absorbable. Until we know more in this regard, the bottom-line message for consumers is eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables each day, raw and/or lightly cooked. Focus on those with the most colour, since, in general, fruit and vegetables with the most colour have the most cancer-fighting antioxidants and phytochemicals'.

'Surveys we've done indicate many people don't think they have control over their cancer risk, but studies clearly indicate they do. For the majority of people who don't smoke, watching their weight, being more active and eating a healthy diet are the most important ways to reduce cancer risk' Doyle concluded. ■

Source: HealthDay News

CANCER STUDY IMPLICATES RED MEAT

The Australian meat industry has dismissed claims by researchers who say that a diet high in red meat can contribute to cancer.

The World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) scientists collated findings from 7,000 previous studies into the effect of diet on cancer, many of which had drawn links between obesity and cancer. Jim Mann, Professor of Medicine and Human Nutrition at the University of Otago in New Zealand said of the findings, 'I think there's a story been around, that obesity is associated with some cancers, but the strength of the association with obesity has never been appreciated before. I mean, obesity is a convincing and important factor for two of the commonest cancers in Australia and New Zealand, and indeed worldwide, colorectal cancer, and post-menopausal breast cancer'.

The scientists gave various recommendations for reducing the risk of developing cancer, among which were advice to limit red meat and alcohol intake, to avoid weight gain and to take part in regular physical activity.

Mann continued; 'I think the other important thing is the important role of physical activity. I mean, physical activity, again, people think of in relation to heart disease, in relation to diabetes, but I don't think most people realise that physical activity is an important factor that protects against colorectal cancer, for example. So I think the very, very important role of physical activity is critical'.

The general manager of marketing at Meat and Livestock Australia, David Thomason, said that the recommendations simply did not make sense because as meat consumption in

Australia has declined by 20 per cent in the past 20 years, the rates of colorectal cancer have increased. Although renowned and well-respected, the scientists, said Thomason were expressing a view that is not supported by scientific findings within Australia.

Thomason agreed with the recommendations of the report to reduce the quantity of processed meat consumed, but said that such advice was not as relevant in Australia as it is in Europe, where more than twice the amount of processed meat is consumed; 'We eat most of our meat in fresh form, so, from an Australian perspective, we'd encourage people not to get spooked by this report. There is really nothing to worry about. Fresh red meat as part of a balanced diet, three to four times a week is a very healthy meal option' he said. ■

Source: ABC Online

NUTRITION NEWS

FRUIT AND VEGETABLES FOR HAPPY HEART

A recent Swedish study has supported previous findings which advocate a Mediterranean-style diet for heart health.

Analysing the dietary habits of 25,000 Swedish women, researchers at Karolinska Institutet discovered that a diet of fruit, vegetables, wholegrain, beans, fish and small quantities of alcohol can halve the risk of developing cardiovascular disease.

Rather than starting the study with the kind of food they wanted to investigate already in mind, the researchers extensively mapped out the women's eating habits. Two dietary patterns emerged as being particularly strongly linked to a healthy heart.

Study researcher Agneta Akesson said; 'The first was characterised by a high consumption of vegetables and fruit, and the second by the moderate consumption of alcohol; we're talking about the equivalent of four vegetables and two pieces of fruit a day and half a glass of wine'.

One in three women who took part in the survey exhibited this behaviour of healthier eating, and were found to have a 57 per cent lower risk of myocardial infarction than the women with diets low in these foods.

After establishing these results, the researchers looked at whether the women had healthy body weight, abstained from smoking and partook in regular exercise (40 minutes moderate each day, and one



day intense). Only five per cent of the study participants ticked all of these boxes, but their clean-living lifestyles were rewarded with the finding that they were 92 per cent less likely to suffer a heart attack than their overweight, sedentary and smoking study counterparts. ■

Source: IHRSA

CLUB CORNER

NEWS NATIONAL RECIPROCAL FITNESS PROGRAM

Club Network members who have opted to be part of the Network National Reciprocal Fitness Program are nearly ready to be unveiled. Visit www.fitnessnetwork.com.au/membership/reciprocal for full details or for your club to become involved – remember, it's all FREE as part of your Club Network membership! You'd be crazy NOT to join up! ■

NOMINATIONS FOR FITNESS FACILITY OF THE YEAR

Is your fitness facility a shining example of what the Australian fitness industry is all about? Do you think that your team, facilities, programs and your outstanding customer service deserve formal nationwide recognition? If not, then why not?! And if so, then read on!

Fitness Australia is now responsible for selecting the national Fitness Facility of the Year winner, which will be announced

at the 2008 Australian Fitness Industry Awards. Applicants have to 'compete' in their local state, with the individual state winners going on to be considered for the national accolade. It is this winner who will be awarded the title at the awards ceremony conducted during the FILEX weekend of 18 to 20 April 2008. To find out more about this award category speak with your local Fitness Australia state body.

Good luck! ■

RETAIN MEMBERS WITH SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

A recent industry survey carried out by the International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association (IHRSA) found that 18 per cent of fitness facilities in the US now offer some form of 'social programming'. This may take the form of specialist group exercise classes, marathon or event training groups or out-of-facility socialising such as wine tastings.

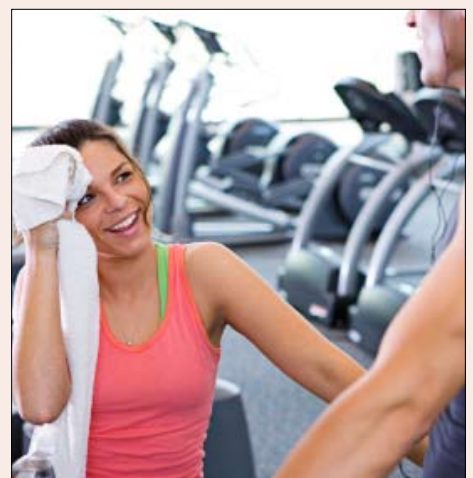
Sandy Coffman, an industry lecturer and consultant from Florida, said 'Increasingly the social atmosphere of a club is what drives business. People don't quit clubs because they've got too many friends. People will quit clubs if they're exercising on a lonely basis and they're not having a good time'.

She advocates the idea of developing a 'club within a club'. When members know each other they are more likely to attend

the facility, support each other, stick to their programs and ultimately retain their membership – a fact long-understood by group fitness managers.

At Atlantic Coast Athletic Clubs in Virginia, holiday parties are organised, book clubs for members established, social events for new-members held, and monthly talks given by health and wellness professionals. At high-end clubs such as the The Sportsclub/LA, which feature restaurants, spas and child care services, it's not unheard of for members to stay all day. And any individual that displays such fondness for your facility is highly likely to remain a member.

Kelly McGonigal, a Stanford University psychologist said 'Social connection amplifies the health benefits of exercise. It strengthens the immune system, protects the cardiovascular system, improves mood



and makes you more resilient to stress. Social connection boosts motivation to work out and makes the experience more fun'.

Source: IHRSA

CLUB CORNER

FITNESS FIRST SET TO OPEN BAHRAIN CLUB

Fitness First's expansion into the Middle Eastern fitness market continues apace with news that it is set to open a prestigious 2,600 metre squared facility in the Bahrain World Trade Centre (BWTC).

The BWTC's leasing agent, Claire Hughes, said 'The letting to Fitness First compliments the BWTC's ethos, borne in its design, of creating a healthier environment for its tenants. Securing an international health

club operator was also an important element of our client's core objective of providing multiple on-site services from which our tenants can benefit and to elevate visitor levels to BWTC as a whole'.

Opening imminently, in addition to the usual resistance and cardio equipment the facility will also feature an outdoor swimming pool and relaxation area overlooking the Arabian Gulf, a group exercise program of over 100 weekly classes and a women only private workout zone.

Fitness First's Middle Eastern CEO, Gary Knill, said 'Fitness First now operates over 500 health clubs worldwide and we are entering into our third year of expansion in the Middle East. With the addition of this exceptional site in Bahrain we now have ten clubs in Dubai, Jordan and Lebanon with new facilities opening in Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Qatar in 2008. We are extremely proud to locate our first Bahrain club in the Bahrain World Trade Centre.' ■

Source: IHRSA

UK FITNESS CHAIN SOLD TO HOSPITALS GROUP

Cannons, the chain of UK health and fitness clubs has been sold to one of the country's biggest private healthcare operators for AUS\$390million.

Nuffield Hospitals purchased Cannons' parent company, the Health Club Investment

Group, from the Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS) and PPM Capital. Chief executive David Mobbs, said the deal would help the group to diversify into a 'broad-based health group able to serve a wide range of the public's health needs'. 'The potential benefits of bringing health and fitness services and more traditional healthcare services closer together are enormous' Mobbs added.

The acquisition nets Nuffield 52 Cannons Health & Fitness clubs and a division that manages 15 other facilities trading under a different brand name. The group's combined turnover is almost AUS\$1,380 million. ■

Source: www.timesonline.co.uk

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FITNESS AUSTRALIA AND YOGA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA PARTNER TO REGULATE YOGA STANDARDS

In a significant move to set minimum standards for training and qualifications of their practitioners, Fitness Australia and Yoga Teachers Association of Australia (YTAA) have agreed to work together on a range of areas affecting yoga in the fitness industry.

'We hope the agreement will lead to a greater understanding, cooperation and acceptance of the similarities and differences between the fitness industry and the yoga world' said Fitness Australia's President, Susan Kingsmill.

'Fitness Australia is working towards introducing a new registration category called 'Yoga Instructor' in early 2008. It is likely that registration within this category will require a minimum Certificate III in Fitness plus evidence of having completed a yoga training course approved by YTAA' Kingsmill said.

'Fitness instructors are highly trained exercise professionals, but YTAA approached Fitness Australia because we wanted them to have the same training in yoga as YTAA accredited teachers before teaching yoga

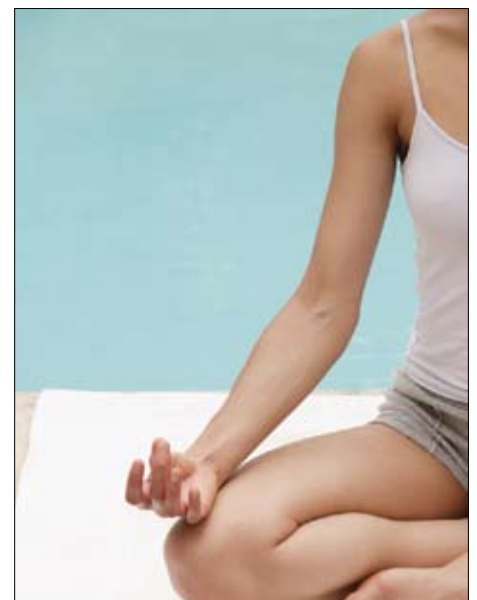
in a fitness setting' said YTAA President, Stephen Penman; 'This will give fitness instructors a better understanding of the philosophy and physiology of yoga, and the full range of practices that give yoga its special appeal' he added.

Fitness Australia will encourage fitness professionals who are interested in delivering yoga-based programs in fitness facilities access to the highest quality training through the YTAA.

The objectives of the agreement between the parties include:

- appropriate policies, guidelines, procedures and information that recognise differences between yoga teaching and fitness teaching
- setting minimum standards of training for Fitness Professionals delivering yoga-based classes in fitness centres
- Importantly, Fitness Australia and YTAA have agreed to provide ongoing advice and assistance to each other in relation to their fields of expertise.

'This unprecedented agreement promises a future in which yoga and fitness work together for the benefit of everyone who practices yoga' Penman said.



'Negotiations are continuing between Fitness Australia and YTAA for the benefit of all Australians, the fitness industry and the yoga world' Kingsmill added.

For updates and more information, visit the Fitness Australia and YTAA web sites at www.fitness.org.au and www.yogateachers.asn.au ■

Source: Fitness Australia

BOOK REVIEW

As it's Christmas we've got a super-sized double book review for you this month – some perfect pressies for fitness-loving friends, or for yourself.

Book title: Facilitated Stretching 3rd edition

Authors: Robert McAtee, Jeff Charland

Reviewed by: Peter Lawler

RRP: \$43.95. Network members: \$39.60 (if purchased online at <http://www.fitnessnetworkcentre.com/products/showproduct.cfm?isbn=0736062483>)

This good value package of book and DVD is well worth the expenditure. The 3rd Edition of *Facilitated Stretching* offers more than 80 stretches, 350 demonstrative photographs and a comprehensive 90 minute DVD that contains seemingly millions of PNF (proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation) stretches.

Chapter one deals with the basics of stretching; types of contraction, the myotatic stretch reflex, reciprocal innervation, types of stretching and safety guidelines. The debate on the value of stretching continues, with this text supporting the 'no pain while stretching' philosophy and swaying towards the opinion that stretching is valuable for injury prevention. The authors do acknowledge that science is uncertain at this point, and await 'elucidation', as indeed do we all. And you no doubt await elucidation as to what exactly facilitated stretching is. Well, it's a branch of the now familiar PNF. The initial version of PNF required the stretchee to exert maximum force against an isometric impasse imposed by the stretcher. In facilitated stretching, it is the reverse – a subtle change!

It is important to understand the parameters of stretching. The authors are anxious for the reader to understand that PNF is based upon spiral-diagonal patterns

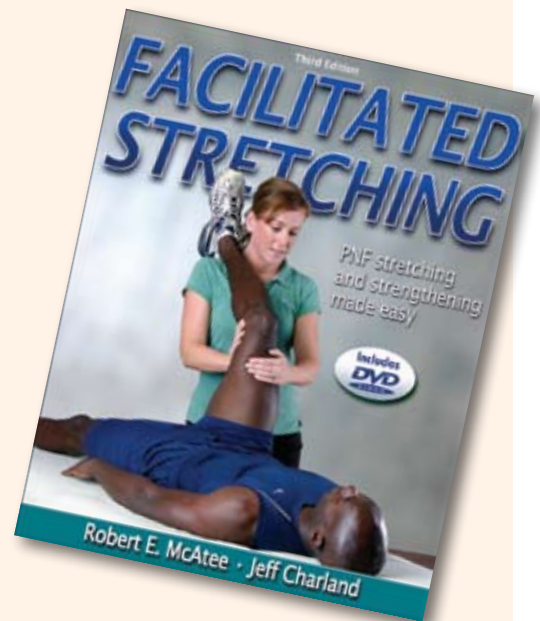
of movement arising from the skeletal system and the placement of muscles upon it. The muscles spiral around the bones from their point of origin to insertion, and therefore, when they contract, they tend to create that spiral in action (page 19).

I am relieved that is now crystal clear... Moving on, the book, essentially is all about flexion and extension.

The goal of this book is to demonstrate how to stretch each major muscle in the body through its entire range of motion (page 35). Now that's ambition. Chapters 4 to 7 offer a plenitude of stretches for the upper extremities, the lower extremities, then the neck and the torso. The stretches offered have variable mechanics – some completed independently. Many require a knowledgeable partner or professional practitioner to complete. This text offers, via the explicit instructions, a thorough explanation of how to perform the assorted stretches and references, where available, the visual demonstrations provided on the accompanying DVD.

Entitled 'Beyond the Basics', the excellent Part III of the book enters the world of 'advanced material' (page 129). Chapter 7 is devoted to stretching muscle affected by injurious scar tissue or fibrotic tissue; PNF used in conjunction with soft tissue therapy has a good record of restoration. Chapter 8 offers stretching routines for specific activities. These are basic subsistent stretches, easily executed for running, throwing, racket sports, cycling, golf and swimming. Nothing flash here, just simple, solid and stolid stuff.

Finally, the glorious sunset – Chapter 9 'Routines for Common Soft Tissue Injuries'



appears in the twilight of this text. This is physio country, offering self-help remedies to alleviate the nagging conditions many of us just learn to live with. But how is this nagging alleviated? Why, with the easy-to-follow exercise programs you can attack painful trigger points in the neck, tendonitis in the shoulder, tennis elbow, piriformis syndrome, patella tendonitis, achilles tendonitis and planter fasciitis. This is an excellent chapter which offers plenty of independent stretches with minimal equipment required and comprehensive instructions to guide you through your pain. This is a no fuss text that makes no outrageous claims as to how far it can stretch the truth. ■

OUTSTANDING BOOK – STRONGLY RECOMMENDED

Book title: Athletic development

Author: Vern Gambetta

Reviewed by: Peter Lawler

RRP: \$34.95. Network members: \$31.90 (if purchased online at <http://www.fitnessnetworkcentre.com/PRODUCTS/SHOWPRODUCT.CFM?ISBN=9780736051002>)

You may well be familiar with the name Vern Gambetta. Vern is the Director of Gambetta Sports Training Systems and has

previously been involved with countless track and field events and sporting teams ranging from the New York Mets to the Canadian Olympic basketball teams and the US World Cup Soccer teams – he is an exhausted legend. I hope many of you had the opportunity to attend his clinics during his recent Australian visit.

Track and field coaches should be advised that in Gambetta's text 'athletic' is a generic term pertaining to all sports. This book is sub-titled: 'The Art and Science of Functional Sports Conditioning'.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that coaches, sports scientists and authors are in earnest pursuit of athleticism; recent publications *Athletic Body in Balance* by Gray Cook, *Functional Training for Sports* by Michael Boyle, and *Training for Speed, Agility, Quickness* by Lee Brown and Vance Ferrigno are testament to that observation. What Gambetta offers to this stable is the commonality of movement. He has looked beyond the specific skills of specific sports and located Functional Training (FT) which he struggles mightily to define. FT is movement

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of multiple parts in multiple planes. Movement is beauty, flow and rhythm. For true athletic development, Gambetta believes we have over-emphasised specific sports skills due to premature specialisation at the expense of the components of athleticism. FT should train all the components required in a sport within the capabilities of the individual. Having espoused his eclectic philosophy, Gambetta embarks on the factors of athletic movement – muscle movement, planes and overcoming gravity. He discusses specific sports analysis and athletic component testing, and provides some interesting stats. For example, in a game of basketball, the dominant activity is shuffling, which occupies 11 minutes! Jumping occupies 41 seconds and walking or standing occupies 4 minutes.

To be honest, a lot of Gambetta's discussion is fairly floss, thoughts bouncing off the walls. It takes a while for substance to form, but it's worth the wait. He wants to remove the word 'periodisation' from the training lexicon and replace it with Planned Performance Training – PPT. His argument is sound; periodisation is a concept not a strict model, an educated attempt to predict future performance based on evaluation of past competitions and training results. Planning, he says, is essential, but the traditional focus has been on the long term; 'It has been my experience that the longer the period of the plan, the less applicable the plan will be' he opines (page 68).

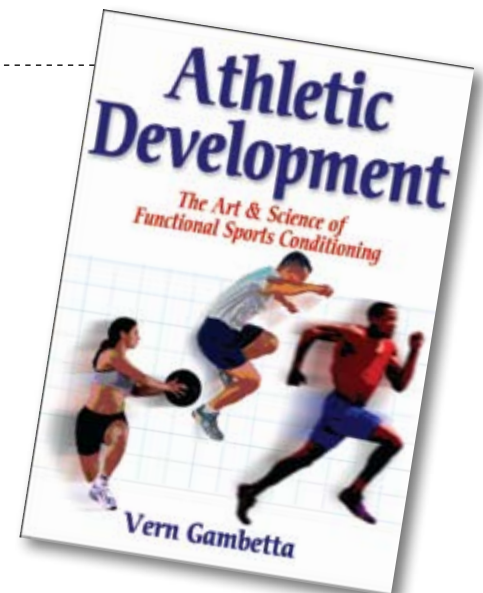
Gambetta wants a system that is flexible, based on individual adaptation. The clever coach has to ascertain optimal workout in preference to maximal. Optimal loading is knowing the individual's stimulus threshold. If this is worked and not flogged, there will be a positive cumulative adaptive response (page 79).

This book is written for all sports. Coaches of track and field may be frustrated by the scarcity of specific reference to their sport. This is not to say the text does not have merit, it does proffer such gems as 'The ideal time frame for developing physical qualities

to their fullest is six weeks. At the end of the six, the emphasis must change to ensure continued adaptation' (page 85); 'Tapering is about getting an athlete to feel good. It is not a time to improve fitness; it is a time to stabilise, sharpen and fine tune. It is not a linear process but a step taper strategy' (page 102); 'the actual process of planning is straightforward... The divisions of time are not arbitrary; they are based on the type of work that is the focus for that period and the time needed to adapt to that kind of work' (page 117).

Eight chapters constitute Part II – 'Physical Contributors to Performance.' Within this hefty section, Gambetta excels. He is very good at general sports principles, the first being work capacity. Three pillars create capacity – tolerance to a workload, recovery capacity and resistance to fatigue. This discussion leads to the aerobic specifics – energy systems and work methods, of which there are many. From here, Gambetta motors on to Chapter 8: 'Movement Aptitude and Balance'. Movement skills have three categories – locomotive, stability and manipulative. I mention this chapter specifically because of its surprising inclusion of crawling. The author raves about it: 'Crawling should be part of each day's workout... crawling is the basis of reciprocal movement that underlies most sports movements' (page 146). Who would have thought?

Also included is thoughtful prose about balance and posture... to quote again: 'The body is fundamentally asymmetric. It is unrealistic to think of muscular balance as right to left or front to back. We must think of proportionality and get away from the idea of ideal posture.' And again; 'The mature athlete tends to have a posture which is related to his particular sport if he has trained for years to become expert at his specific position or event. The reason for this phenomenon is the fact that the body tends to adjust or adapt to the various



stresses or demands imposed upon it as a result of prolonged muscular activity. Lance Armstrong evolved a position of the bike far from perfect... should his position have been changed? His chiropractor responded – 'It's an imbalance, yes, but it's also Lance Armstrong' (149).

The remaining chapters of Part II discuss the critical body core, strength, integrated power training, speed (both linear and multidimensional), performance preparation, recovery and regeneration. Through the decades of pages, Gambetta has constructed a multifarious bounty of advice drawn from prolonged sports involvement, profuse sport-specific sample programs, how-to-do photographs that demonstrate plyometrics, med ball work, speed drills and dynamic warm-up work. It is good stuff full of good substance, and is good value to boot.

If Gambetta is right about developing athletic traits before specific sports skills then this book will become an epistle, an anthem, the clarion call for coaches to imbibe. It is an outstanding book up there with the work of Gray Cook and Michael Boyle – a formidable stable of experts pursuing the same goal – athleticism. ■

**RECOMMENDED WITHOUT RESERVATION
TO ALL COACHES OF ALL SPORTS**

