

→ MAY 2011

CLUB BUSINESS INTERNATIONAL

36 Mind/Body Exemplar

43 Partners for Progress

46 Fitness-Magic Forum

51 Core: Not a Chore

65 Heavyweight Appeal

A photograph of Tom Behan, an older man with short grey hair and a friendly expression, wearing a dark grey t-shirt and dark pants with a black belt. He is standing in a gym, leaning on a piece of exercise equipment. The background shows other gym equipment and people working out.

For Love and Money

**TOM BEHAN'S
TWO INDEPENDENT
CLUBS ARE MORE
PROFITABLE
DESPITE THE
GREAT RECESSION**



Tom Behan, Sr., r., with tennis pro Jason Walsh at Bay Tennis and Fitness

32

Features

32 Acing the Recession

Tom W. Behan, Sr., owns and operates Bay Tennis and Fitness and Petoskey Health and Fitness, two independent clubs in Michigan, an area that's been particularly hard-hit by the Great Recession. However, with the help of his reliable staff, consistently appealing offerings, clean facilities, and energizing new programming, he's defied the odds and *increased* his clubs' profitability.

36 Mind-Body Magic

Yoga's a powerful presence at Vail Athletic Club

43 Let's Move! IHRSA

The association teams up with the First Lady to combat childhood obesity

46 Studio Star Search

Finalists in Les Mills' competition exude group ex-celence

51 Functional Favorites

New products and programs are making functional training more fun



**Pete Holman
demonstrates
RIP-COREFX**

Taking the **By Jean Suffin**
Chore Out of
Core

**NEW PRODUCTS AND PROGRAMS ARE MAKING
FUNCTIONAL TRAINING MORE FUN**

Core training generally isn't regarded as being synonymous with *fun*.

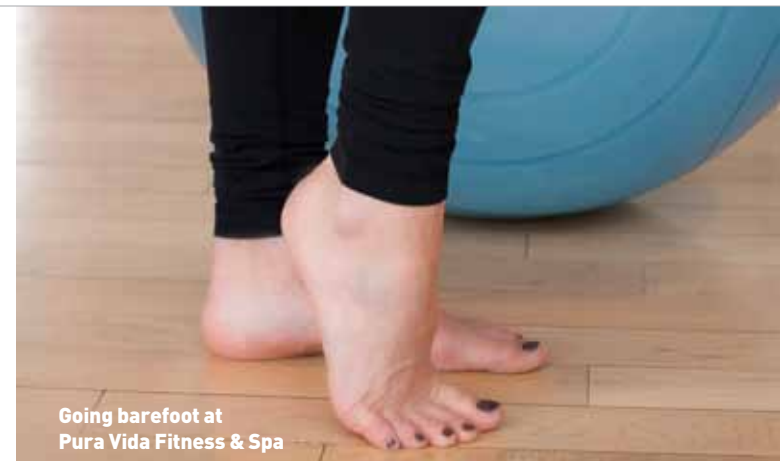
...But functional training, which often involves the core, is, by nature, fun, and the introduction of a wide range of imaginative new workout tools, along with the development of creative new programs, is changing the way members view this type of exercise.

Functional training (FT) is defined by most professionals as routines that engage the whole body in concurrent motion. In daily life, they emphasize, people move in three dimensions, so training should enhance their multidimensionality, not restrict it, as spot training or working isolated muscles can do. Core training concentrates, specifically, on the muscles of the abdomen, pelvis, and spine, which are critical to functionality. →

Taking the Chore Out of Core



Plyometrics at
Perform Better Summit



Going barefoot at
Pura Vida Fitness & Spa

FT focuses on the entire body, increasing awareness and making movement more fluid and graceful. For years, equipment manufacturers have produced machines or systems that facilitate effective FT, but, recently, approaches that rely on classes, dance, or relatively simple exercise accessories have made a real impact.

The benefits of FT are one of the reasons for the growing popularity of dance programs (e.g., Zumba, Batuka, and Les Mills International's new SH'BAM), core-specific workouts (Les Mills' brand-new CX30 program), and martial-arts offerings (e.g., the new UFC club chain). But the principal reason for their popularity is that they're *fun*.

CORE VALUE OF FUN-CTIONAL PROGRAMS

"Dance classes are a great option, as are boot camps, and I also like stability-ball and Cardio Tennis classes, and small-group-training classes with the TRX," reports Jonathan Ross, the personal training director for Sport Fit Total Fitness Club in Bowie, Maryland, author of *Abs Revealed*, and ACE's FT instructor.

Straps, stability balls, medicine balls, and BOSU units are also being used to keep club members engaged.

"Most people would love it if their exercise routines, in addition to improving appearance, also produced more effortless, fluid movement," he suggests. And, he points out, nearly *anything* can be used for FT. What creates the fun, he explains, is members seeing and experiencing progression, and what keeps them engaged is getting *results*.

"Any class that poses a challenge for people, but leaves them feeling energized, not beat-up, when the class is over; gets them involved with each other; and stimulates both their body and mind—

that's going to be a *great* experience for members," says Ross. "Recent findings in neuroscience confirm that the more ways we stimulate the senses during an activity, the more engaging and memorable that experience will be."

Mike Wunsch, the director of training and program design at Results Fitness, in Newhall, California, a functional-training facility, recommends changing programs every four to six weeks to keep members stimulated. "We consider all of our training to be functional," he notes. "That is, we do all three planes of movement and utilize total-body moves."

Chris Poirier, the general manager of Perform Better, a division of M-F Athletic, in Cranston, Rhode Island, sells virtually every type of FT accessory imaginable, but acknowledges that the body, itself, is the most effective piece of equipment. "We have this thing called gravity that your body fights against every single day," he explains. "In everything that you do, your body is performing functionally." Therefore, he observes, the most effective and enjoyable classes are ones that use the body as the primary prop.

Employing the body for resistance also allows everyone to participate in classes.

Interval training, suggests Poirier, is probably the most enjoyable for participants because they're constantly moving and switching to new activities. The variety ensures that they won't become bored, and the props keep them entertained with tactile stimulation. "An interval workout is so much more fun than just standing or sitting in one position, working one muscle at a time," he says. "It offers variety, progression, and props, all of which make the activity more fun."

Involving the body and the senses fully is the idea behind barefoot training. Pura Vida Fitness and Spa, in Denver, Colorado, has positioned several of their classes as "barefoot-encouraged,"



RIP-COREFX does group ex outdoors

meaning that they're modes of FT best experienced without shoes. Taking note of the growing popularity of barefoot running, and understanding that feet are central to all movement, Pura Vida introduced barefoot training. An awareness of how the feet move, and a focus on strengthening them, improves balance, posture, strength, and grace. "Functional training should challenge your mind, as well as your body," insists Heather Bahlman, the club's fitness director. "It's fun because it's sensory and because it makes people *think*. They're not bored and they tend to forget about their everyday worries.

"Barefoot training challenges your body and balance and, in doing so, also challenges your core, so you've really got to be involved."

pole that accommodates up to 10 users simultaneously. The latter employs four Olympic weight plates to provide stability, and can be wheeled away for storage.

"Fun is all about success, empowerment, and growing within a group," Holman contends. "Our experience has shown that, when people join a RIP-COREFX class, they feel empowered because of the freedom of motion it offers and the challenge it provides the core muscles. Members get hooked, see results, and make friends—what's not fun about that?"

"Our members have been taking RIP-COREFX classes, and they love them," attests Pete Stipher, the CEO of Impact Fitness Nashville in Tennessee. "The variety, challenge, and camaraderie really get them enthusiastic, and they have a blast!" Stipher is now introducing RIP-COREFX to his second club in Illinois.

- The BallBike Pro S 700, created by Fit One, LLC, in Canton, Ohio, is the world's first combination of a stationary recumbent bike and a core stability ball and provides a totally new cardio experience. Sitting on the ball, more comfortable than normal bike seats, the user engages in "active sitting" as they pedal. The ball is nestled between two side handles, safely facilitating side-to-side movement, bouncing, and front-to-back motion. Cycling increases muscle activity, and, depending on whether or not the user grips the handles, their core is engaged in different ways. The resulting cardio/core workout is suitable for most popula-

"Any class that poses a challenge for people, but leaves them feeling energized, not beat-up, when the class is over; gets them involved with each other; and stimulates both their body and mind—that's going to be a *great* experience for members."

FULLY FUNCTIONAL EXERCISE ACCESSORIES

In addition to the FT equipment produced by many of the industry's leading manufacturers, there are also a growing number of new core-centric and/or functionally-friendly products, designed and marketed by a variety of suppliers, that are proving popular in clubs. Among them are the following:

- Pete Holman, the owner and president of Aspen Core Fitness, in Aspen, Colorado, produces the RIP-COREFX, a 43" bar with a sport cord attached to one side, and the RIP Group Ex Station, a vertical

tions; can be modified, in terms of intensity, from easy to intense; is very time-efficient; and, attests Rick Suarez, Fit One's CEO, is guaranteed to be *fun*.

- The Ugi Ball (pronounced yoo-gee), from Ugi Fitness, Inc., in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, is 15" in diameter, is "squishy" like a beanbag, and provides the bounce-back of a stress ball. It can be utilized in virtually any group-exercise setting and for a variety of exercises, including agility, plyometrics, and sport-specific classes, such as Ugi Golf and Ugi Volleyball; there's also Ugi Flow, a yoga/Pilates-inspired stretch and strength routine. →

Taking the Chore Out of Core



CrossCore's War Machine pulley trainer



Core Energy Fitness' suspension system

"It's a soft, squishy, beautiful ball!" enthuses Ugi cofounder Sara Shears. "It comes in fun colors, such as pink, purple, steel, and blue. It's not intimidating, and users at every level can take advantage of it. The workouts are fun because they're constantly varied."

- **Core-Tex, by Performance Dynamics, LLC, in San Diego, California, consists of a flat platform with a convex bottom, which sits on a concave base supported by three balls, allowing the platform to move along three axes. This facilitates a simultaneous tilt, slide, and rotation of the platform over 360 degrees. As the platform moves, the user's body responds to control the motion. "The constant interaction between the user and the Core-Tex makes it highly engaging and entertaining," reports Anthony Carey, the CEO of Performance Dynamics. "The unpredictability keeps the body and brain working constantly."**

- The War Machine, by CrossCore Training Systems, Inc., in Duarte, California, is a suspended pulley trainer. Any kind of weights can be attached to it to provide resistance. When a magnetic pin is locked, it stabilizes the pulley, but, when the pin is removed, the pulley rotates freely, raising the level of training. "It's fun to challenge your imagination to see what type of exercise you can come up with next," observes Brendan Cosso, CrossCore's president. "With hundreds and hundreds of possibilities, your workouts stay fresh and new!"

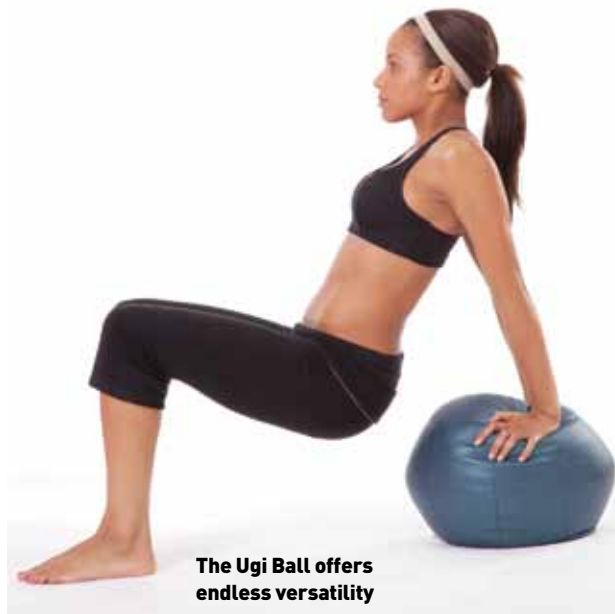
- The Kamagon Ball, by Kamagon Fitness, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, employs the weight of water to vary workouts. The ball has two handles and a knob and, without water, weighs five pounds; with water, it weighs from 15 to 45 pounds. During a workout, hydro inertia and the motion of water within the ball force the user to engage stabilizing muscles with each movement. "Kamagon classes are fun because members get to experience a whole

new type of stability training that isn't available with any other type of equipment or class," says Brenton Robinson, the company's director of sales.

- Core Energy Fitness, in Gardena, California, offers resistance-band training stations and programs. Its product line consists of three wall-mounted, modular hooking systems with anchoring points that range, in position, from ankle-height to above one's head. "The key for us is versatility," explains Oscar Perez, the firm's general manager. "In addition to employing a wide range of exercise tools, we work very hard to change 20%-30% of the exercises used in our programs on a weekly basis. We also like to introduce a new 'toy' on a regular basis. It makes our work fun, and club members love it."

And *fun*, after all, is what *functional* training is all about, isn't it? —

— Jean Suffin, jean@fit-etc.com



The Ugi Ball offers endless versatility

What's so much fun about functional training? Just ask these IHRSA associate-member companies. They understand the importance of engaging the whole body, or targeting specific areas, to enhance multidimensionality—essential to functioning in day-to-day life. There's a wealth of classes, tools, products, and accessories out there that add excitement to seemingly ordinary routines. No matter what your members want, you'll find everything that you need right here.

PRODUCT SHOWCASE



CORE-TEX

The patented design of the Core-Tex allows the base to move like no other training apparatus. The Core-Tex is the only device on the market that allows for movement in all three planes of motion and whose base translates

at the same time. This allows for an almost infinite number of combination movements that can functionally challenge the body for strength, stability, mobility, and balance. The body reacts and responds for an amazing workout that's always engaging and never the same.

Contact: 619-285-9218, www.functionfirst.com. Please see our ad on page 78. —

HOIST FITNESS

The HOIST ROC-IT Selectorized Ab Machine offers a new way to enhance members' core-training program. Fully unrestricted joint movement is essential to an efficient core workout—the core-activating benefits of this machine, along with the entire ROC-IT product line, engage a user's core throughout their entire exercise range-of-motion. The ROC-IT product line makes exercise fun, as well as biomechanically correct.



Contact: 800-548-5438, www.hoistfitness.com. Please see our ad on page 25. —



LES MILLS INTERNATIONAL

Formulated with a carefully structured, scientific approach and unforgiving intensity, Les Mills' CX30 program will tighten and tone the abs and butt, improve functional strength, and assist in injury-prevention. This intensely challenging 30-minute workout is the ideal "express" class that will strengthen clubs' group fitness timetable, increase

participation, and attract members. As with all Les Mills programs, comprehensive group fitness management support is ongoing, and new music and choreography are released every three months.

Contact: 888-669-8876, www.lesmills.com. Please see our ad on page 21. —



KAMAGON FITNESS, LLC

Increase revenue with the Kamagon Ball and Kamagon group exercise programming: Kamagon Kore, Kamagon Sculpt, and Kamagon Kombat. Kamagon's group exercise programming has superior class timetables of 30 minutes for each class. These timetables help clubs maximize the amount of time members spend in group classes; reduce downtime and overly long classes; increase member interest and participation; and maximize clubs' profits from ancillary revenues.

Contact: 877-933-1005, www.kamagonball.com. Please see our ad on page 58. —



CROSSCORE, INC.

The CrossCore180 "Turn Your Game Around" is a breakthrough in bodyweight training for sports and fitness conditioning. The patent-pending suspended pulley adds improved balance through imbalance to any sports-specific exercise. The pulley can also be locked in place via a magnetic pin for improved stability when needed. Attach gymnastics rings, resistance bands, and even kettlebells for added versatility. The CrossCore180 can be used at home, at the gym, or out in the field and fits conveniently into a small carry-along bag.

Contact: 800-288-3047, www.crosscore-usa.com. Please see our ad on page 57. —