

# The Fitness Chronicle

A NEWSLETTER FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE FITNESS COMPANY

Winter 1995



## Executive Fitness Center in New York Reopens

Twenty-two months after "the bombing of the World Trade Center," Executive Fitness Center reopened its doors on December 15, 1994.

Executive Fitness Center (EFC) was Steve Smith's first club. Located in the heart of New York's World Trade Center on the 22nd floor of the Vista

Hotel, it overlooks the Hudson River, Statue of Liberty, and World Financial Center. The club opened in September 1981 and sold out in its first year. Shortly after opening it was cited as "the most impressive corporate fitness facility in the country" by the Simon & Schuster Publishing Company.

During the 22 months it's been closed, EFC has undergone extensive renovation. The entire club has been re-painted, re-wallpapered, and re-carpeted. Both the mens and ladies locker rooms have been enlarged. The club's new exercise equipment will consist of 15 LifeStride 9100 HR treadmills, 5 StairMaster 4000 PT's, 5 Tectrix ClimbMax, 6 Lifecycle 9500 HR Recumbants, 4 Lifecycle 9500, 5 Tectrix BikeMax, 2 Tectrix Virtual Reality Bicycles, 2 Nordic Tracks, Cybex selectorized equipment, and Hammer plate loaded equipment.

Two new operating concepts being used at EFC will make it quicker and easier to check members into the club. All members' photographs will be stored in the reception desk computer instead of on the membership card through a process known as photo imaging. Members will also be able to choose the locker of their choice and open it with their membership card thereby eliminating the need to store and distribute keys from the reception desk.

EFC has enrolled over 800 new members during their October through December pre-opening period. Expectations are for the club to reach 2,000 members by December 1995. **Welcome back EFC!**

## Fitness Certification

The Fitness Company has always prided itself in requiring higher club standards than are normally expected in our industry. In keeping with this philosophy, TFC will expect all fitness counselors to become ACSM certified as Health Fitness Instructors beginning in 1995.

As TFC grows (49 clubs as of 12/31/94) it becomes increasingly important to our members and the company to be able to demonstrate a certain standard of fitness professionalism. Our members themselves have become very knowledgeable about exercise. We need to give them assurance that the fitness professionals at their club are knowledgeable about the latest developments in health and fitness.

ACSM has long been recognized as the leading certification organization in our industry. The fact that the ACSM certification process is more demanding than other certification programs makes it all the more worthwhile to strive for. Most of our competitors have opted for other certifications which are quicker and easier to get. If TFC is to remain a leader in the fitness industry, we must reach beyond the norm for higher standards.

The Fitness Company is currently petitioning ACSM to become a host site for certification in each region. For further information on ACSM certification please call Matt Carlen at (703) 416-4100 ext. 1934.



## Congratulations to...

**Matt Bradbury**, General Manager of the Crown Athletic Club, for being selected to speak at IHRSA's National Conference in San Francisco in March. The IHRSA Conference is the industry's largest and best attended show every year. Matt will be speaking on "How To Build A Team."

**Ken Kraft**, General Manager of the Fitness Club at Reston Town Center. The Fitness Club, which is part of the Hyatt Hotel, was the only department in the entire hotel to score 100% during a recent inspection by Hyatt's corporate office.

**The Chatham Club's** Head Squash Pro **Geoff Mitchell** for coaching 10 of this country's Top 25 ranked Junior Squash players.

**The Fitness Company** for being cited by one the speakers at IHRSA's recent Sales & Marketing Conference as "one of the three major players in the management business."



*Ken Kraft, General Manager of the Fitness Club at Reston Town Center, reviews the best and worst events of 1994 at a recent Mid-Atlantic G.M. meeting.*



## PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

**Anders Bjornson** becomes the General Manager of the Hanover Marriott Fitness Center. Anders takes over for **Mike Neff** who moves to Executive Fitness Center as Operations Director. **Georgette Russell**, former Sales Manger of the Ocean Fitness Center, was recently promoted to General Manager. **Geri Roden** moves from the Aspen Hill Club to the City Center Fitness Club to become General Manager. **Melissa Barish** becomes the Assistant General Manager at the Fitness Center at Franklin Square.

**Betsy Johnson** leaves the Aspen Hill Club to become acting General Manager of the Fitness Center at Franklin Square until Tracy Boyd returns from maternity leave.

**Bill Elkjer** is promoted to General Manager of the Fitness Center at Dulles Corner. Bill is taking over for **Mike DeFillipo**, who will become General Manager at the Mid-Atlantic Region's newest club, One Thomas Circle.

**Patrick J. Vital** has been promoted to the Sports and Fitness Director's position at the Palmetto Health and Pitness Center. Patrick started with PHFC in January 1994 as a college intern. Patrick has also recently passed his Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist exam given by the National Strength and Conditioning Association.

**Vince Gallucci** has been named Fitness Director at Gateway Health & Fitness Center. **Janice Kluxen**, formerly the Fitness Director, becomes the club's Sales Director.

# Tectrix Fitness Equipment Proves Time Flies When You're Having Fun

Tectrix's VR Bike Marks The First Crossover of Virtual Reality Into The Health and Fitness Arena

Fitness technology has landed in another world — the world of virtual reality — with Tectrix's introduction of its VR Bike, the industry's first fully interactive aerobic fitness machine. The revolutionary VR Bike integrates a 20-inch color monitor, sophisticated VR software and a



recumbent exercise bike to give the cyclist a level of interactivity never before experienced in the fitness arena. The rider has the freedom to go in an infinite number of directions through the virtual world. Pedal along a country path; climb a grassy hill; join a challenging race; discover a country town; or take off to forge your own trail. Until now, workout variety was limited by the tiny number of options offered by typical aerobic fitness equipment.

"We have an on-going commitment to build our products with not only the highest available technology, but also an element of fun," said Tectrix President Mike Sweeney, "and we believe it is crucial that exercise be every bit as mentally engaging as it is physically strenuous." Sweeney adds that users can enjoy the benefits of a long challenging workout but, with the realistic and entertaining interactivity provided by the VR Bike, the rider feels that he or she spent much less time that he or she actually has. "We all know how important consistent cardiovascular workouts are to overall health and fitness. "But we've gone a step farther to create a workout that is as absorbing and interesting as possible, making it more likely that the person will stick to his or her exercise regimen.

The VR Bike's dramatic interactivity is derived from several different sensory sources. The rider is

able to move as one with the unit that combines the seat, the pedals and the handle bars, using his weight to lean and steer through the virtual reality world. A cool breeze blows by his face, increasing in intensity as his speed increases. And the pedaling resistance increases or decreases in response to the terrain he is exploring. To complete the exper-

ience, the backrest is equipped with stereo speakers for realistic sound effects and entertaining music that changes tempo with the pace of the exercise. One of its most amazing features is the ability to network groups of VR Bikes, made possible through the use of patented SmartLink communications. Riders can travel together casually through the virtual world or compete against one another in a challenging virtual race. The VR Bike's features are controlled by buttons on the handlebars which are mounted alongside the seat at waist level.

The rider can shift gears up and down, brake, and view his statistics, which include workout length, elapsed time, miles traveled and calories burned. He also can switch back and forth between a ground view and an aerial view of his route, which is especially useful on the race tracks to keep an eye on the other racers.

The BikeMax and VR Bike feature a quiet, direct-drive pedal mechanism (patent pending) which eliminates the operational problems inherent with old-style chain-drive equipment, and provides the reliability and durability demanded by health clubs. The sophisticated VR technology works in conjunction with an advanced Intel processor, a CD-ROM drive and a 20-inch CRT color monitor.

## Residential Fitness

Gail Hamilton is the Vice President of TFC's Residential Division which manages fitness centers in residential buildings in and around New York City. The recent addition of the Wyndam West Health Club in Garden City, Long Island, brings the total number of managed residential fitness centers to 16! Gail is currently involved in supervising facility improvements at 6 of the 16 clubs.

## Mid-Atlantic Tests Regional Advertising

TFC clubs in the Mid-Atlantic Region are pooling their advertising dollars to launch an advertising campaign in the most widely read Washington publications. A high profile advertising campaign is too expensive for any one club to do. A series of 3/4 page advertisements will run in the Weekend edition of the Washington Post. Another full-page advertisement will run in the monthly Washingtonian Magazine. The ads will emphasize benefits of belonging to the TFC Network. Each club location and phone number will be listed in the ads. The first advertisement is scheduled to run in the January 28 issue of the Washington Post and the February issue of the Washingtonian.

## OMNI Improves Customer Service

Jeff Linn, General Manager of the Omni Athletic Club in Long Island, thinks improving customer service is easy. All you have to do is 1) ask your members to rate the level of service they are receiving and 2) provide a financial incentive for the staff when certain levels of service are achieved.

Beginning with July, Jeff has surveyed 150 of his members every month using a slightly modified version of the TFC Club Membership Questionnaire. Members ratings are tabulated in the same way TFC tabulates results for their semi-annual surveys. The results have been astonishing. Omni's customer satisfaction rating went from 56 % in July to 63 % in August, 67 % in September, and 70% in October.



## TFC Develops Club Retail Programs

TFC has joined with LifeFitness and Stephen Wallace, LTD. to develop a retail sales program for its clubs. The Omni Athletic Club, Spa at Glenpointe, and Ocean Fitness Center will be test marketing the program beginning January.

LifeFitness has designed an 8'x 8' display wall to showcase fitness accessory items like jump ropes, pedometers, weight belts, dumbbells, walkmans, stretching mats, etc. Home exercise equipment will also be available for sale through the club.

Stephen Wallace, LTD., a clothing distributor from New York, has designed a retail clothing program which will feature high quality fitness clothing. Clothing will be available with or without the club logo. Clothing items will include polo shirts, t-shirts, exercise shorts, sweatpants, sweatshirts, warm-up suits, caps, etc.

## G.M.'s Prepare for Disney Seminar

TFC's semi-annual National General Managers Meeting will be held at the Contemporary Hotel in Disney World from January 18-20. The highlight of the meeting will be a full day "Quality Service" seminar conducted by Disney trainers. The seminar will run from 7:30AM to 5:00PM. It will include both classroom and field training on the grounds of Walt Disney World. The other two days will focus on 1) How to Reach Your Goals 2) Membership acquisition and 3) Membership Retention.

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Do you have news you want to share with other TFC clubs?

*Please send any written correspondence to:*

Bill Buckley, The Fitness Company  
Copper Gables Professional Building  
1001 Deal Road, Ocean, NJ 00712