



Timely Information for Personal Success

What's Hot This Summer?

By Aaron J. Allie

The fitness industry seems to cycle in new philosophies and recycle old ones every 20-25 years. In 1989, exercise enthusiasts were perfecting their “Buns of Steel” or “Sweatin’ To The Oldies” via VHS. Fast forward to today and people are recovering from the DVD workout boom of P-90xs and Insanity-style boot camps. But exercise infomercials still sell products and talk shows always include a fitness segment. *What’s on the horizon for the latter half of this decade?*

Trends are clearly Emerging

Don’t tell Venice Beach, but spandex and bodybuilding are being replaced by functional fitness and 5K t-shirts. As commutes and schedules become hectic, there isn’t much time to waste on excessive exercise. Gym-goers train the muscles they need for weekend pursuits or grab some quick stress relief, then get back to daily living.

One aspect of health and fitness that continues to crest alongside technology involves creating camaraderie or fun, feedback-rich environments. You see more group workouts like Crossfit, mud or color runs for both sexes. Clubs conjure up incentive-based, fat-fighting challenges and bring in media-friendly equipment that track people’s progress.

Anytime Fitness Franchise Manager James Moyer says, “We are exploring new ways to make

our environment more personable.” Anytime Fitness created a new staff position, the member experience manager, as another resource for member outreach. “The MXM leverages why people joined the gym, creates a personal map to success and holds them accountable while keeping them connected,” adds Moyer.

As club members’ needs change from getting big muscles to getting a stronger midsection, finishing a charity race or rehabbing injuries, so has the stereotypical, muscle bound personal trainer. Moyer says, “Trainers used to be more freelance individuals with a by-the-numbers approach. Now the best trainers are more approachable, outgoing and better educated on functional activities.”

New Equipment Trends

Pushing past the staleness of barbells and dumbbells, new fitness equipment focuses on core strength, sports-specific movements and stability.



Ready...Set...Train

Competitive sports like football, volleyball, hockey and others share a lot of the same body positions, moving muscles and movement angles. So a base-level training program for a hiker, spiker or slapper resemble each other more than you think. With a little summer discipline and basic equipment, you can really open some eyes this fall.

Sports Training Basics:

- Agility drills using cones, small hurdles, ladders and resistance bands
- Bodyweight exercises like pull-ups, push-ups, leaping and lunging
- Hopscotch patterns on sidewalk cracks or painted lines
- Playing other sports for cross training
- Reaction drills using playing cards, tennis or racquetballs
- Sprinting or jump rope intervals
- Most importantly, abdominal exercises like planks ■

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Questions and Answers

Caffeine and Workouts

Q: *I love my morning coffee, but will it help or hurt my workouts?*

A: The fact that the International Olympic Committee and others have monitored, studied and set legal limits for caffeine tells you that something is up. Indeed: Studies have shown that runners and bikers have noticed increases in performance.

A moderate dose of Joe, 30-45 minutes before an activity, has noted an increase in energy-sustaining fatty acids throughout the blood and increased ventilation. But there isn't much evidence that it will help your bench press. When tested with resistance training, subjects reported more subjective feedback, like feeling more motivated. As a coffee drinker, exerciser and personal trainer, my advice is the side effects and dependency of caffeine won't outweigh the slight performance benefits.

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The Surge is a long cylinder with handles filled with water. When lifted it requires constant stimulation from the core and central nervous system as the water sloshes from end to end. Other innovations like TRX's Suspension Trainer and RIP Trainer are portable and come with the catch phrase: "All core, all the time."

Summary

Getting back to Venice's Muscle Beach, modern exercisers thirst for the Vitamin D-rich outdoors. You see elliptical trainers with wheels and gears on the streets. Families have turned weekend hikes into Geocaching missions, and others have found balance and a great full body workout on Stand-Up Paddleboards.

Maybe the newest soon-to-be outdoor phenomenon is slacklining. Participants link springy, nylon webbing between two stationary objects like trees and then try to balance, walk or perform any number of slackline tricks. Who knows, your local park may soon be covered with tight rope walkers. One thing's for sure: the resourcefulness and creativity of the fitness industry has created a higher level of fun. ■

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