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MAY/JUNE 1983

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INCORPORATING
RACQUETBALL INDUSTRY

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LEOTARDS: NEW
LIFESTYLE LOOK
FITNESS FASHIONS
AEROBICS FOOTWEAR
FITNESS EQUIPMENT:
THE LADIES' ROOM

THE MAGAZINE
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MAY/JUNE 1983
VOL. 1, NO. 1
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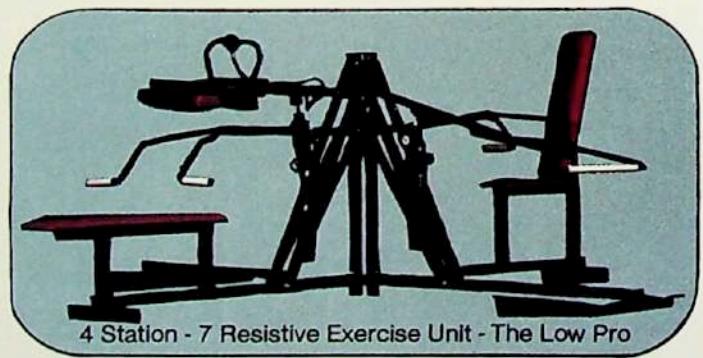


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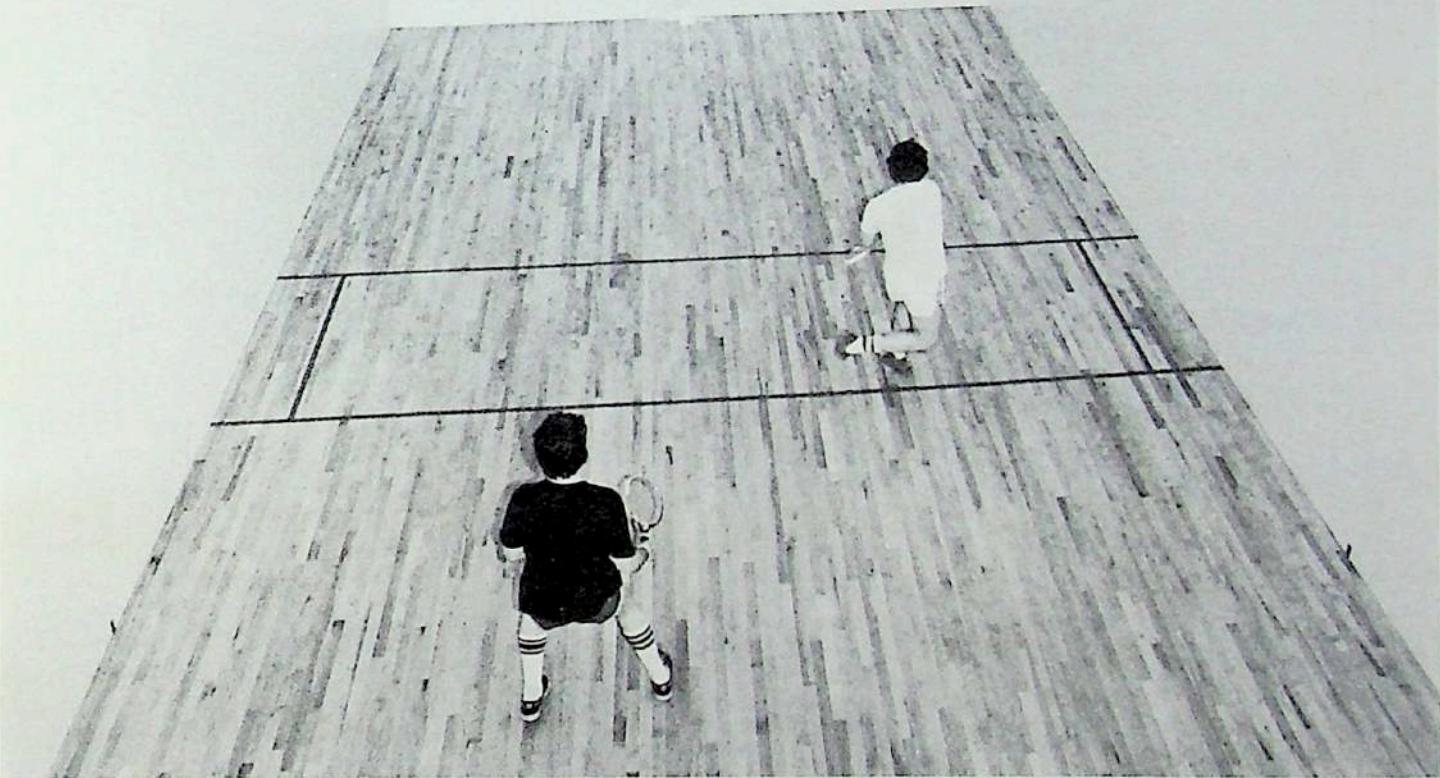
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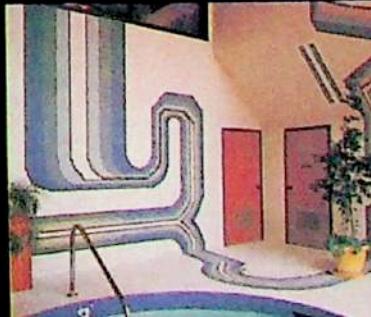
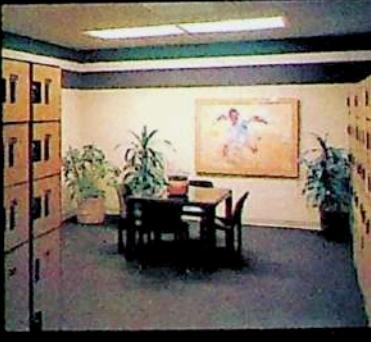
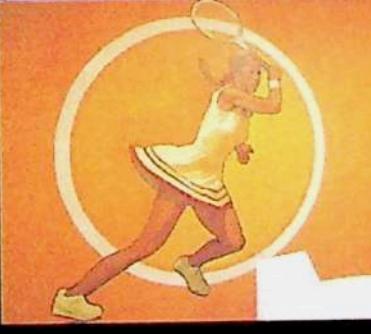
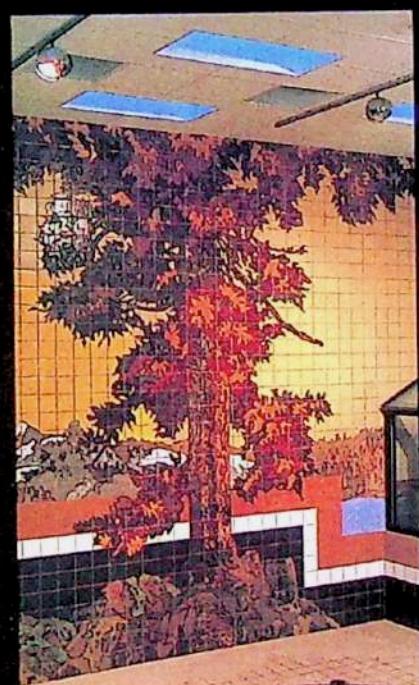
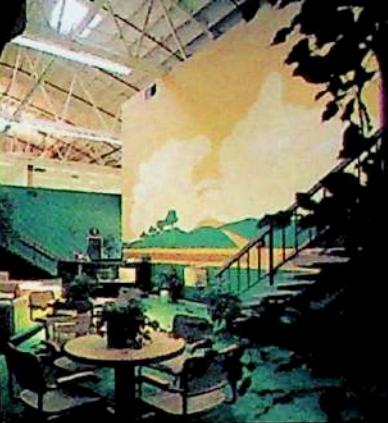
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Women in fitness have become a vital source of profits for the industry. We focus on apparel, footwear and equipment. Cover photo by Tom McCarthy. Cover props courtesy Sportsman's Paradise.

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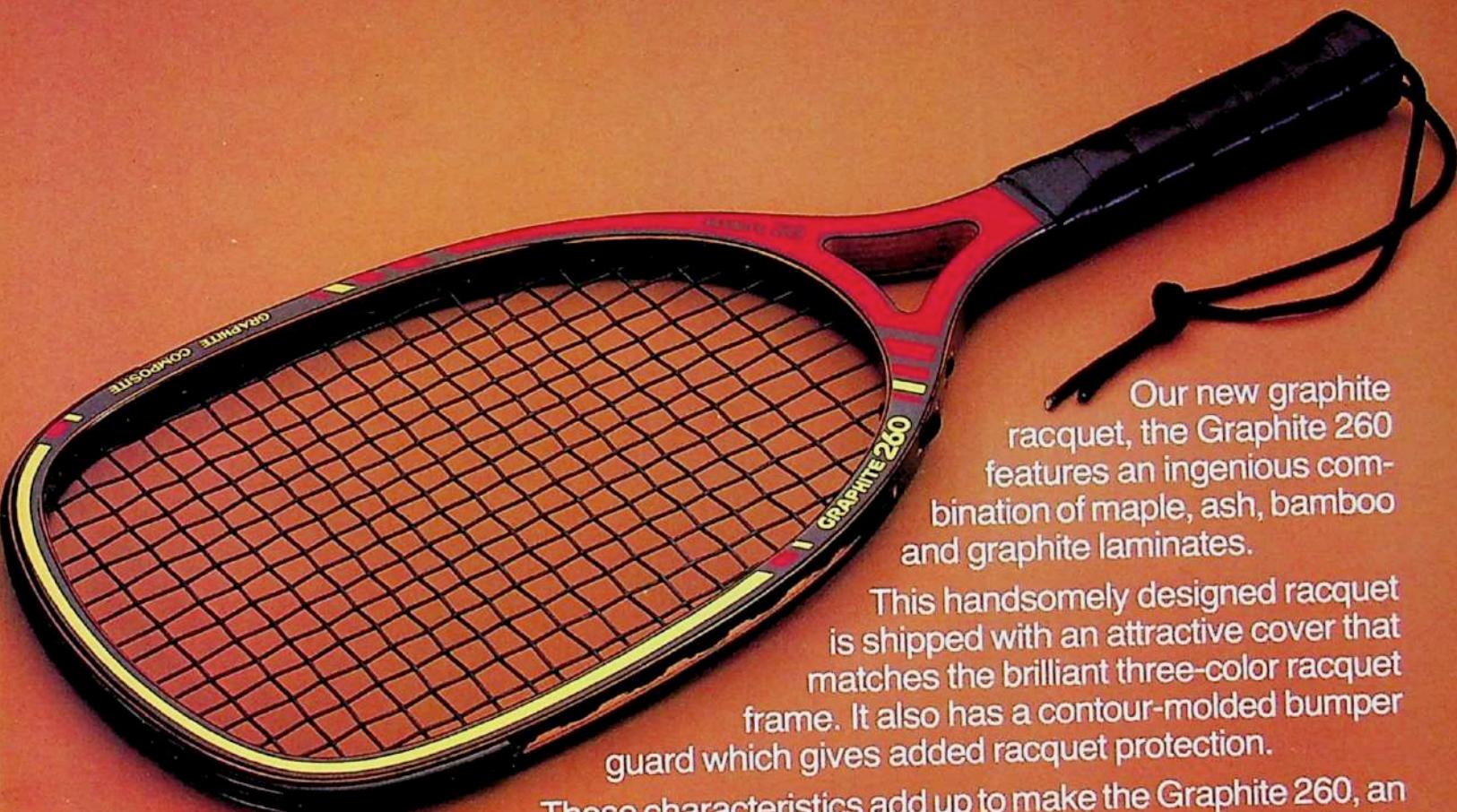
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dear readers

The Shape of Things to Come is here . . . with this, the premier issue of FITNESS INDUSTRY Magazine. Formerly RACQUETBALL INDUSTRY, we have expanded our editorial scope to include not only racquetball, but all the various segments of the fitness industry.

If you operate a racquetball club, by no means should you feel abandoned. Future issues of the magazine will see a regular column, "The Club Scene," devoted specifically to racquetball club operations.

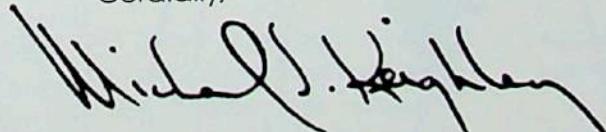
The fact is, however, that most successful racquetball clubs are—and have been for some time—multiservice facilities. In addition, the fitness market has evolved beyond even the club level to become an integral part of the American life style. To keep you abreast of trends, market developments, and ways to best capitalize on this vibrant life style, FITNESS INDUSTRY will address a number of diverse segments of the market.

This issue focuses on aerobics. More than a fad, aerobics is one of the most effective and popular means of cardiovascular conditioning being practiced. The renowned Gilda Marx, one of the most respected of all authorities on aerobics, discusses the profit potential of aerobic apparel and leotards in particular. Plus, we feature a look at aerobic shoes—the product and the most effective merchandising strategies at department stores, fitness stores, and fitness centers.

Where resistance training is concerned, you'll probably find no resistance in convincing women to train on equipment if you take the right approach. And we suggest some of those approaches in a special feature on women and fitness equipment.

We're certain you'll enjoy the new features of the magazine—from our glamorous fashion spreads to the nuts and bolts of increasing revenues. The broadened scope of FITNESS INDUSTRY should offer you new and diverse avenues for increasing profits. We'd also like to get your reactions on our new shape. Please send your comments and suggestions in care of FITNESS INDUSTRY.

Cordially,



Michael J. Keighley
Executive Editor

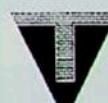
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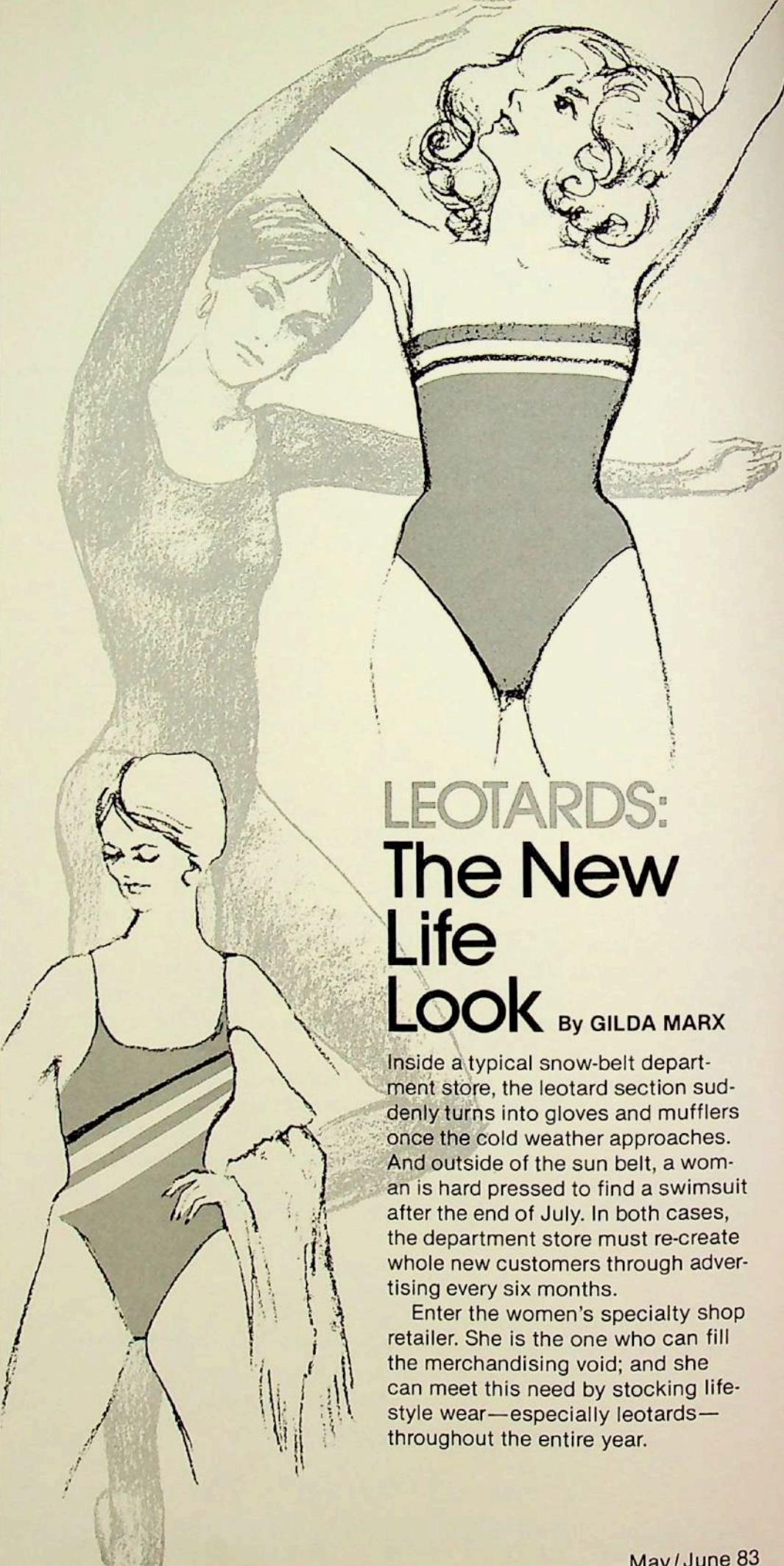
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LEOTARDS: The New Life Look

By GILDA MARX

Inside a typical snow-belt department store, the leotard section suddenly turns into gloves and mufflers once the cold weather approaches. And outside of the sun belt, a woman is hard pressed to find a swimsuit after the end of July. In both cases, the department store must re-create whole new customers through advertising every six months.

Enter the women's specialty shop retailer. She is the one who can fill the merchandising void; and she can meet this need by stocking life-style wear—especially leotards—throughout the entire year.



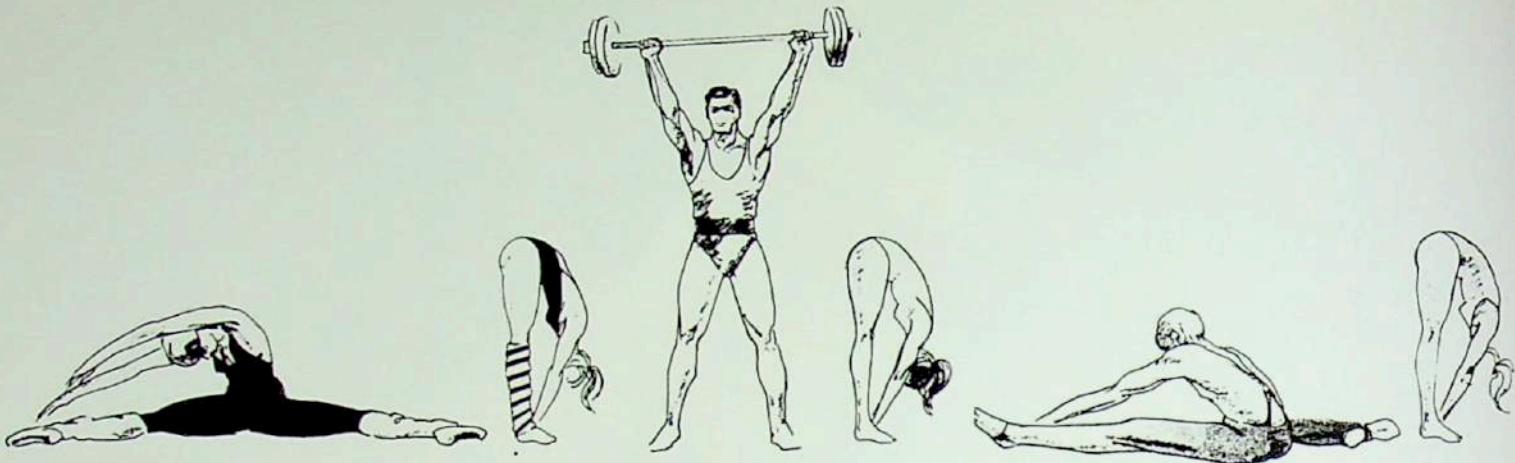
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The specialty shop I'm talking about would normally carry suits, coats, skirts, blouses, sweaters, and some accessory items. There, too, would be found a small number of swimwear selections. This is precisely the type of shop that can build a whole new area of business by expanding the swimwear department through the sale of leotards that "double-over" or combine both swimming and those other activities associated with the leotard.

This is what I call *life-style wear*, activewear that is no longer relegated

only to weekend activities. As a matter of fact, in a recent discussion I had with senior department store members, they loved the "life-style" concept and felt it should be a part of new department formulations.

Returning to the specialty shop, however, I believe that this retailer can create a new business, and a new customer. The specialty shop is not noted for this kind of activewear but this is the kind of shop that has the loyal customer, the customer who comes back again and again for fashion.

What has happened to the activewear market is that instead of staying basic, as it has in the past, it now has become fashion-oriented. And it changes every six weeks. That never happened before in leotards and leotard accoutrements. As a result, the fashion customer she has developed will go to her for this new type of product. But she's got to have the product available on a continual basis. By doing so, the specialty shop can create an on-going repeat customer because the leotard user, in particular, will buy

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anywhere from a dozen to 15 leotards over a two-year period.

And repeat business is multiple business, because then the specialty shop retailer can sell the shorts, the track suits, the matching cardigan sweaters, as well as tights. In fact, for every leotard you sell, you'll also sell three pairs of tights since tights don't last as long.

The customer is looking for fashion, for newness, and she's also looking for that special fit that is both supportive and attractive. When she puts on the leotard,

there's nothing else between her and the rest of the world. She's got to feel secure in it. And when she gets the fit that she feels makes her look her best, she'll go back to that product every time. Now you can take the same woman you used to offer a \$60 contact swimsuit, and instead offer her a \$30 double-over leotard that works both ways.

THREE LEOTARD LEVELS

Basically, there are three leotard levels. First is the practice garment—the 100 percent nylon leotard. This is the old workhorse, the one with

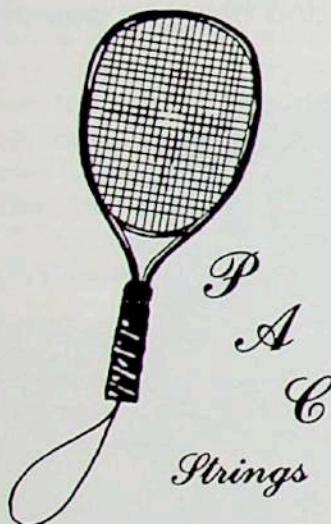
which most people are familiar. It's the high volume item that's also the least expensive. Traditionally black (some dance studios still allow only black), it also comes in chocolate, brown, and deep maroon.

The second level is the performance garment. This leotard is more supportive, and it makes the wearer look five pounds less. It has a high shine, classy look, and it can be worn with or without a bra.

The third level is the poly/cotton lycra garment, a leotard for women who want natural fiber, who feel cotton is cooler, and who seek the junior fashion look (regardless of actual age). This grouping has taken the industry by storm in the last year, and it's a part of the "six week" fashion phenomenon I alluded to earlier.

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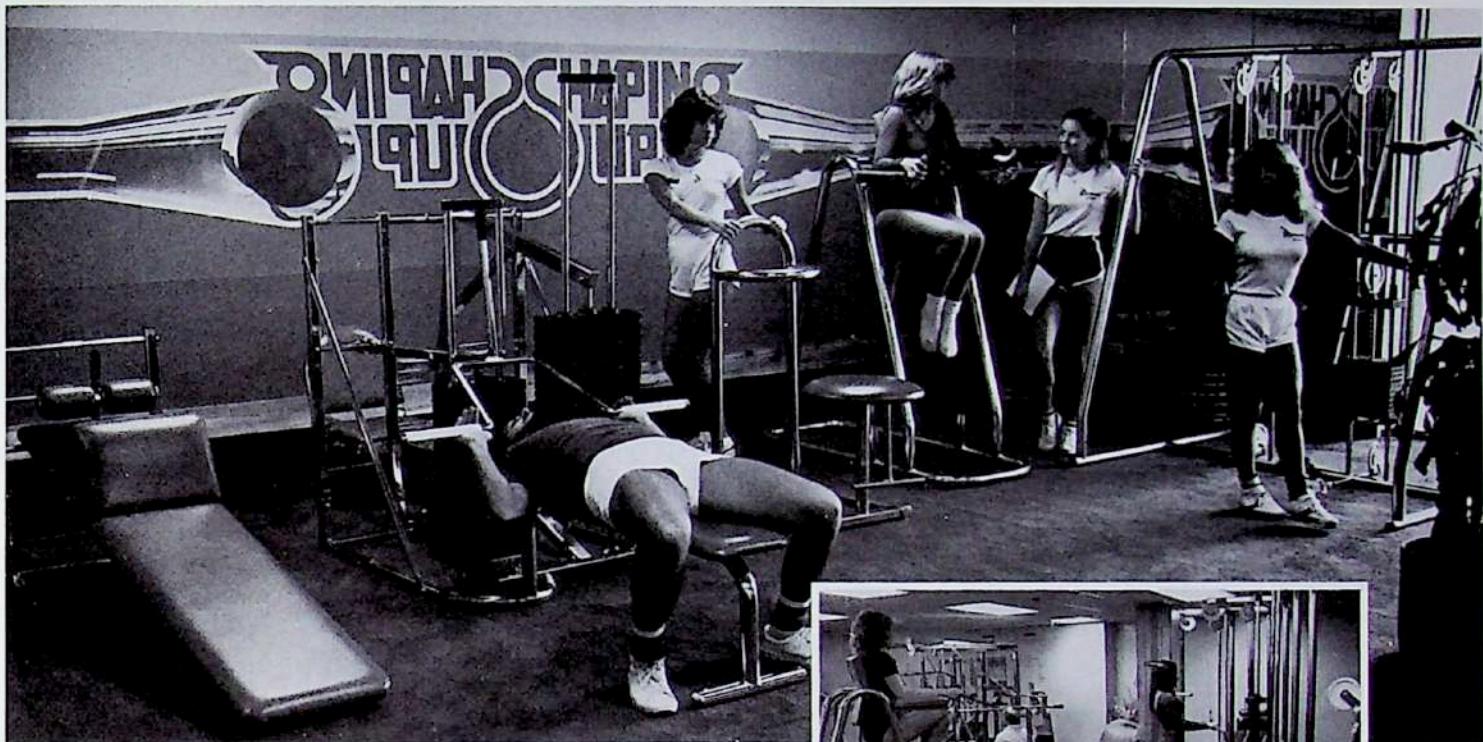
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"...repeat business is multiple business, ...the specialty shop retailer can sell the shorts, the track suits, the matching cardigan sweaters, as well as tights."

Unitards, by the way, are one-piece garments associated with dance. They are a leotard and tight all in one, and they are worn as an undergarment as well—with a see-through blouse, for example, or as an undergarment for skiing. (There are many leotards being sold in ski resorts, worn for going into the hot-tub after skiing.) This garment is not only functional, allowing free arm movement, but it also makes very soft and alluring loungewear. Cover-ups for unitards include skirts, shorts, sweaters, accessory items and coordinates.

A great many colors are available in the performance and poly/cotton garment levels. In addition, there is

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Sportrooms fitness facilities, Hialeah (above) and Coral Gables (inset).

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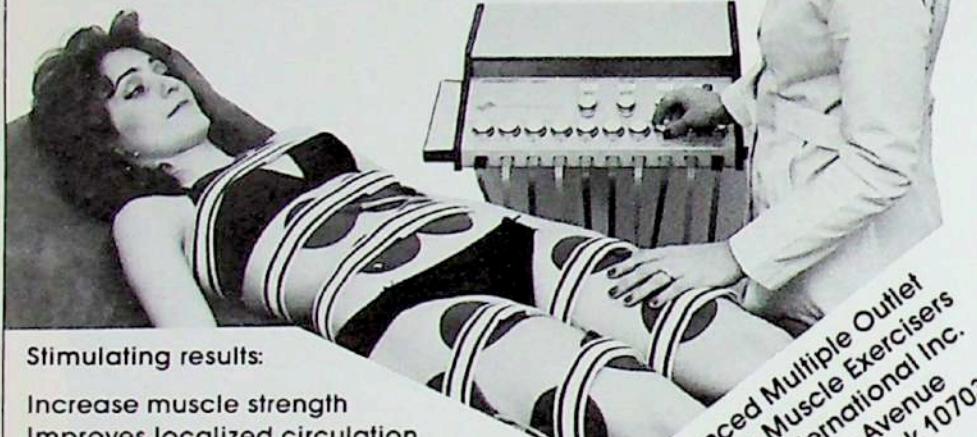
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some "color blocking" in the form of stripes, etc. Generally, when you're looking at a print you see swimwear, and solids when you see leotards.

GUIDELINES

Profit potential obviously is subject to the number of people you have as a market, the number of people you have developed out of that market as customers, and the number of people who fit into the demographics of those who would buy this kind of activewear. They run from teenagers to women in their early fifties, who participate in bike-riding, aerobics, and so forth. For example, we find in our own exercise studios we can do anywhere from one-quarter to one-third of our total business in life-style clothing, with the remaining percentage coming from the classes themselves.

"...exercise studios can do anywhere from one-quarter to one-third of our total business in life-style clothing."

If I were to recommend one basic guideline for the specialty shop retailer, it would be this: buy quality, and don't go for price. (For every dollar you put in, you end up with two; and since keystoneing is standard, it is far better to sell one quality leotard that has the same profit potential as two less-expensive models. In this way you avoid complaints and returns, and create a satisfied repeat customer at the same time.)

By quality, I mean a performance-oriented double-over leotard that won't run from a snag, won't fade, and will accept chlorine without bleaching out.

And by quality, I also mean a product that is stylish yet multi-functional, supportive and well-fitting as well as attractive and flattering when worn by the new life-style-wear woman. □

Featured is the Optical Illusion line designed by Gilda Marx™ for **FLEXATARD®** and available in polyester, cotton and lycra at better stores everywhere.

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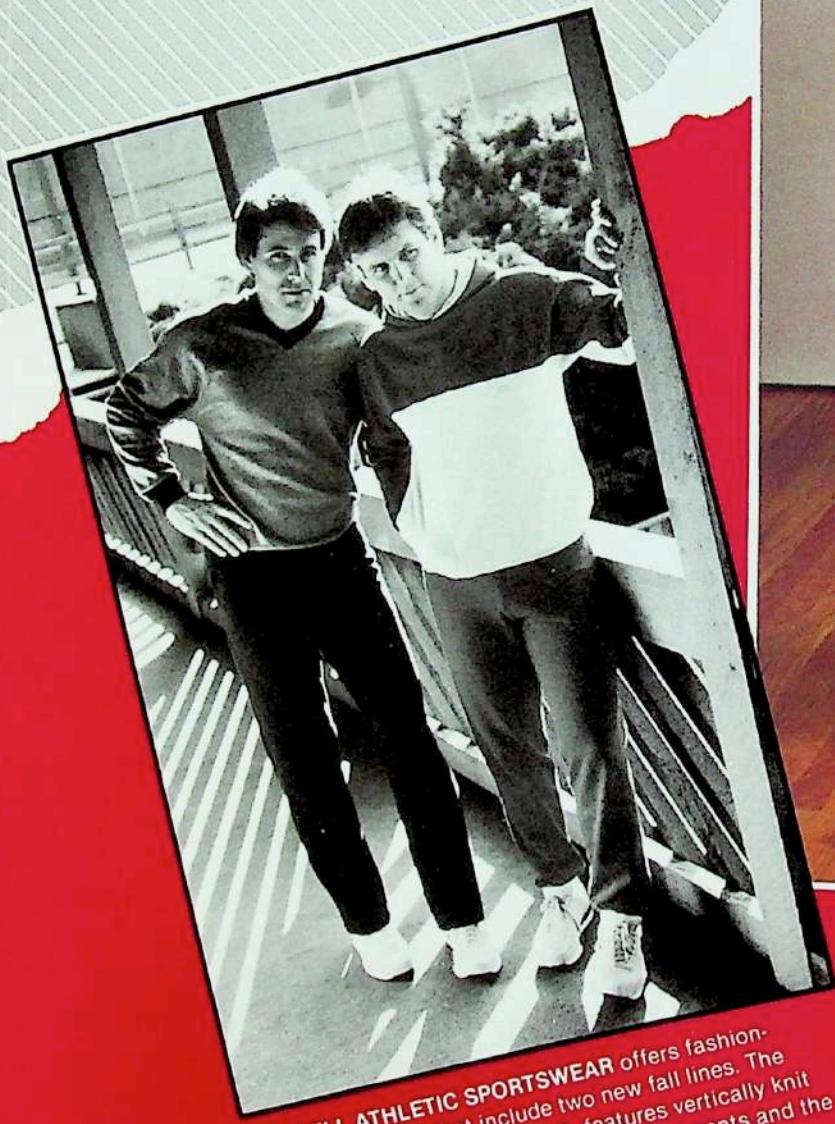
The fashionable **DEFENDER** line of solids contains 100% polyester in both shorts and matching singlets with mesh. Shorts and singlets in solid colors are available in girls' and women's sizes.

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Fitness Fashion

Fitness Fashion

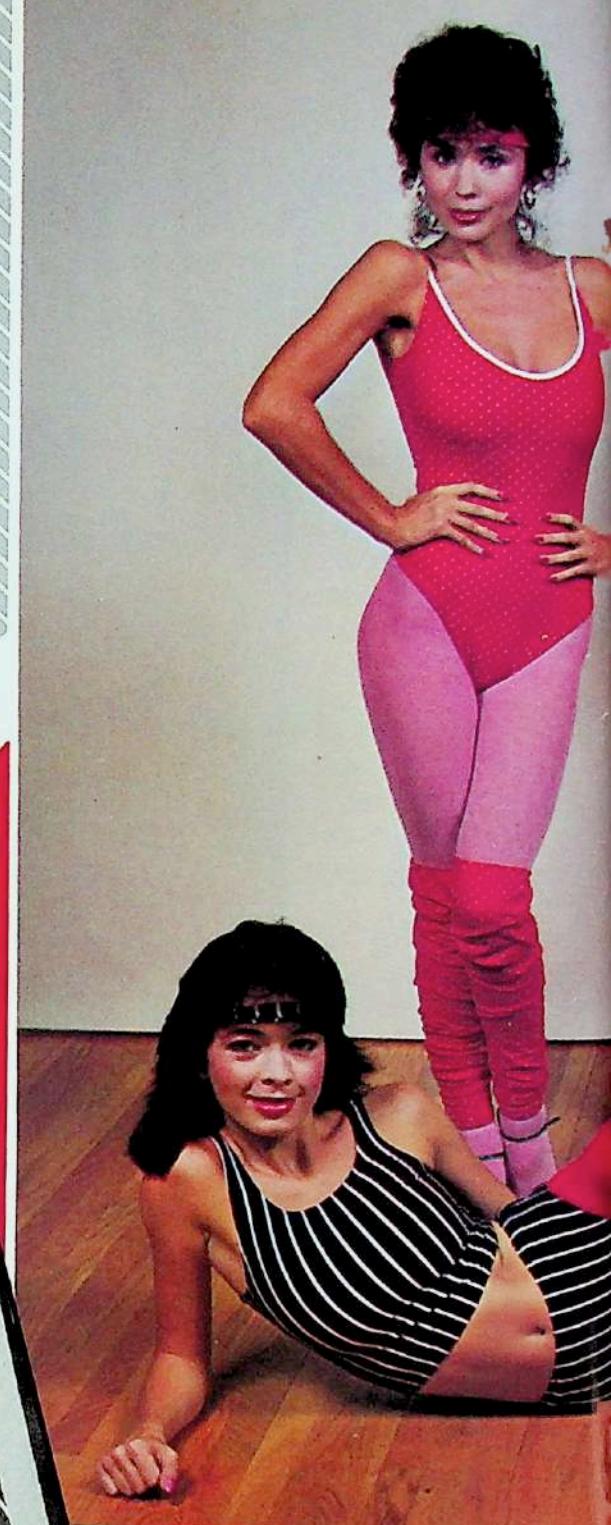


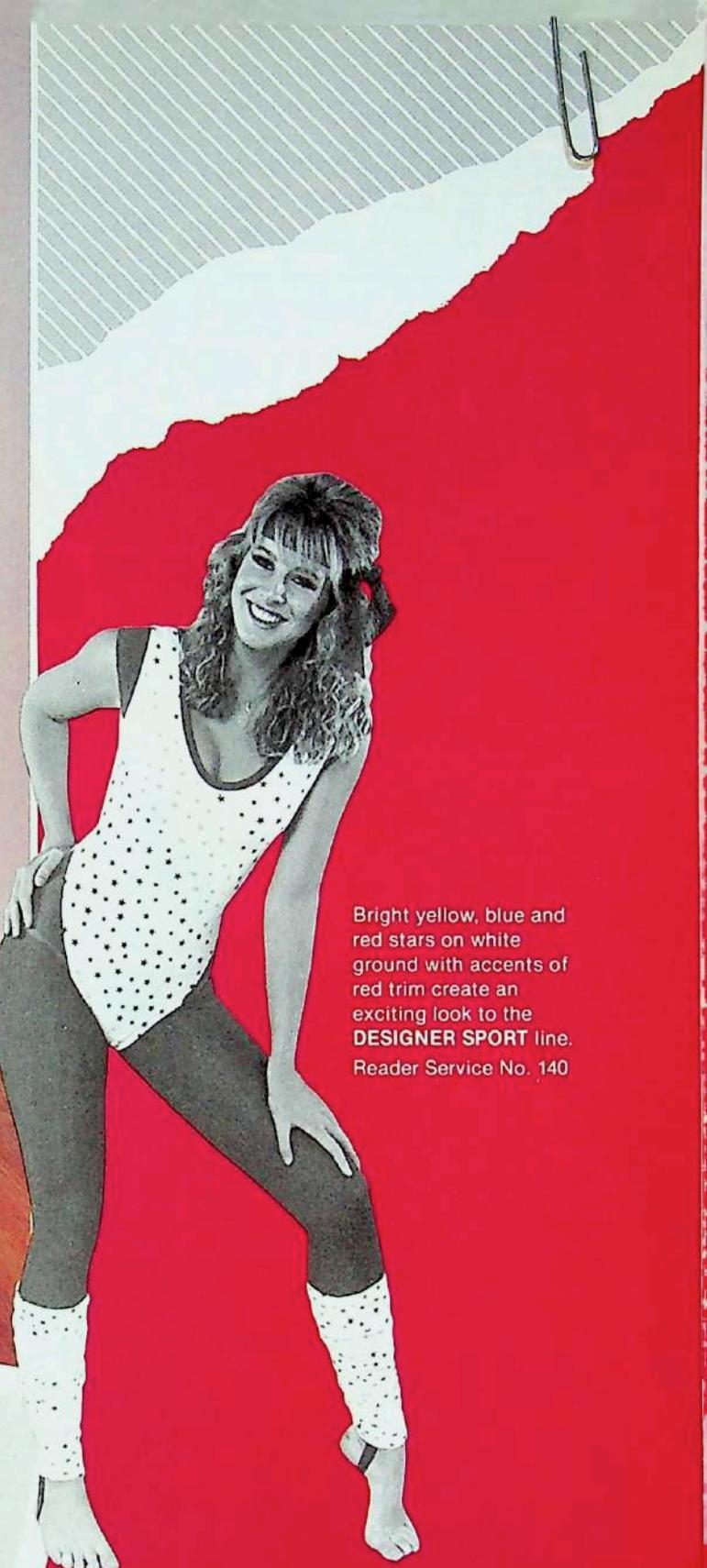
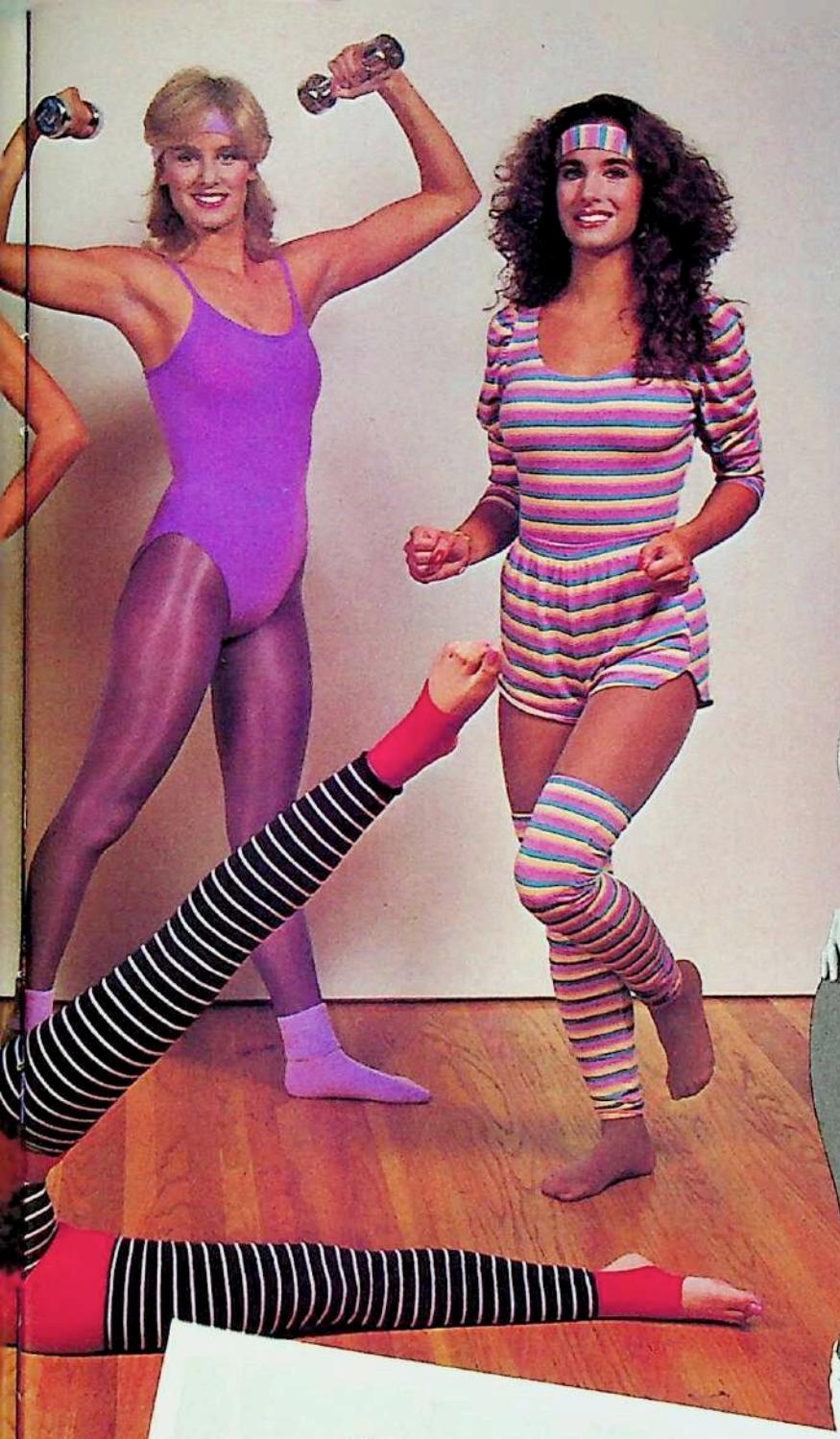
RUSSELL ATHLETIC SPORTSWEAR offers fashion-conscious styles that include two new fall lines. The Resort Collection, pictured left, features vertically knit pinstripe tops and contrasting solid color pants and the Rugby Collection features tops with contrasting color-blocking and new Superfleece™ solid color pants.

Reader Service No. 316

Warm up, work out or cool down in great looking SOFTOUCH fitnesswear that features coordinated leotards, shorts, tights, legwarmers, socks and headbands for today's spirited woman.

Reader Service No. 122





Bright yellow, blue and red stars on white ground with accents of red trim create an exciting look to the **DESIGNER SPORT** line. Reader Service No. 140



Designed to be worn on and off the courts, **EKTELON'S** new actionwear for women features separates in bright new pastel combinations of turquoise, coral and ever-popular icy grape. Reader Service No. 300

Fitness Fashion

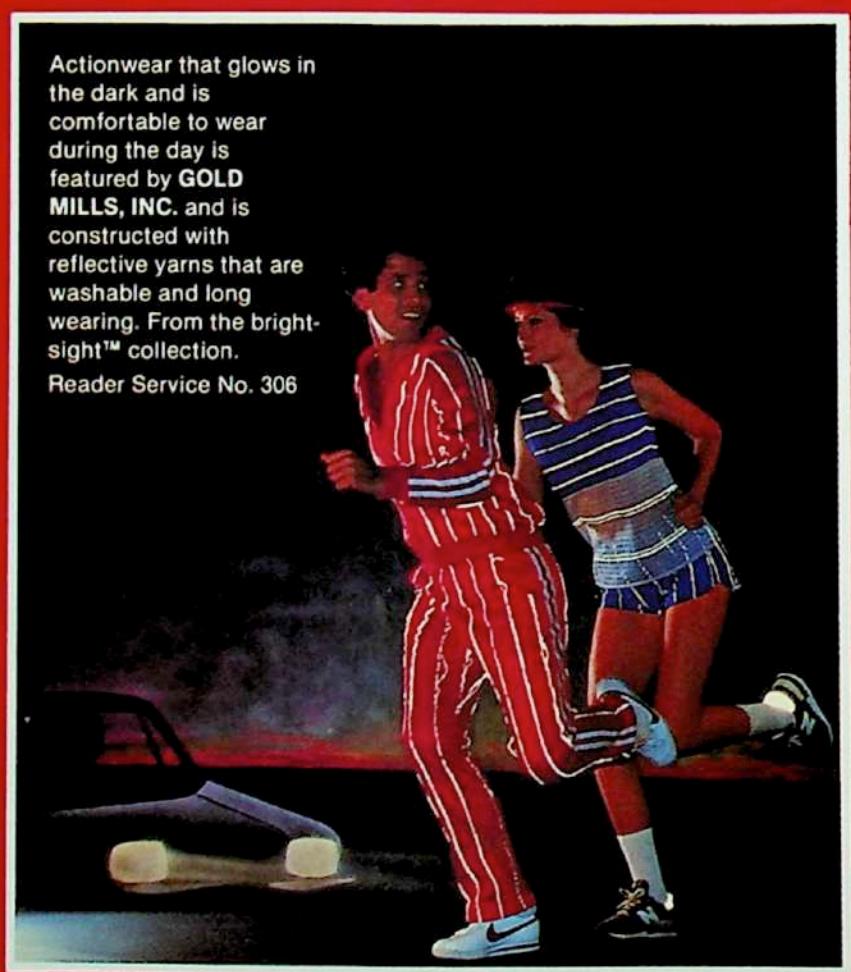
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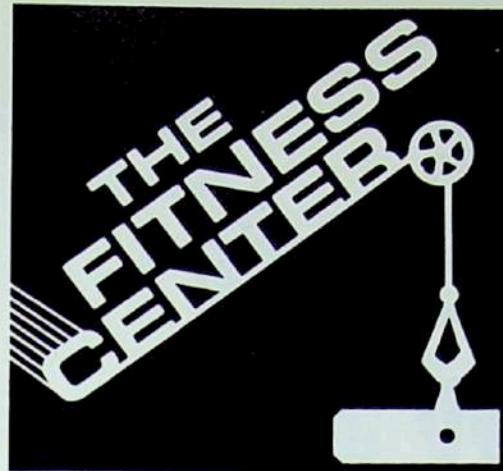
Reader Service No. 309



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Reader Service No. 306





By JOAN THORSON

HOW TO DETERMINE TARGET HEART RATE

To stay within safe limits and yet get the most from exercise, people often want to monitor their heart rate during a workout. Therefore, it is a good idea for every fitness center to have some type of pulse rate monitoring apparatus available.

But how does someone determine their ideal (or "target") exercise heart rate? It's actually simple to do, using this "Guide to Target Exercise Rate" chart and the following formulas:

Conservative Target Heart Rate for the Beginner: $(220 \text{ minus your age}) \times 60 \text{ percent}$. Example: $220 - 40 \text{ years old} = 180 \times 60 \text{ percent} = 108 \text{ target heart rate}$.

Intermediate Target Heart Rate: $(220 \text{ minus your age}) \times 70 \text{ percent}$.

Advanced Target Heart Rate for the Well-Conditioned Person: $(220 \text{ minus your age}) \times 80 \text{ percent}$.

WORDS OF CAUTION

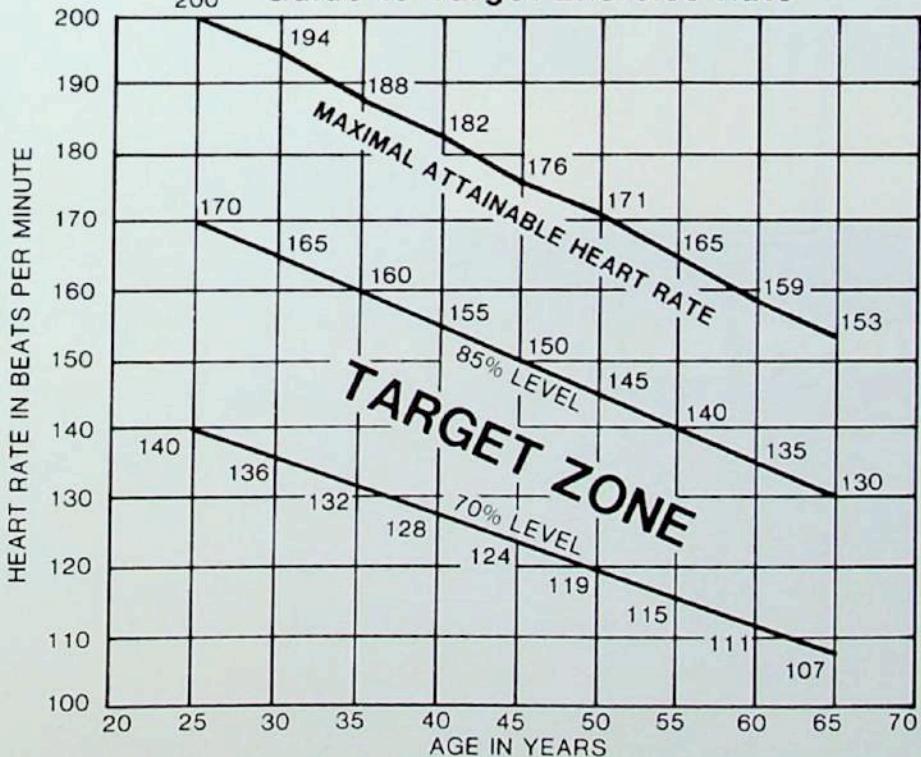
Always caution people to consult with a physician *before* engaging in any vigorous exercise, and to obtain prior approval of the planned exercise regimen.

Insist that people begin each exercise period with a warmup and stretching routine. The heart needs to be warmed up prior to exertion just as the muscles do.

While exercising, it is recommended that people maintain their heart rates within a target zone to improve cardiovascular/cardiorespiratory conditioning. The formulas given above can establish approximate target heart rates to guide people as they exercise. Caution them to stay within safe limits and not to extend themselves over the average maximal heart rates shown on the chart.

Establishing each person's target heart rate is a good, sound practice. But it's also an opportunity to give the personalized attention people like to receive. People feel better about fitness center staff that is both knowledgeable and concerned. □

Guide to Target Exercise Rate*



*According to the principles of exercise programming set forth by the American Heart Association and the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.

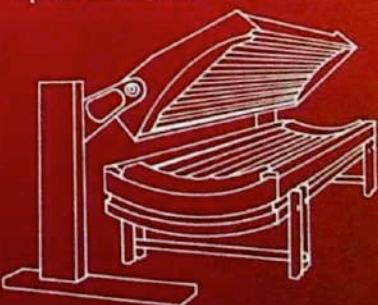
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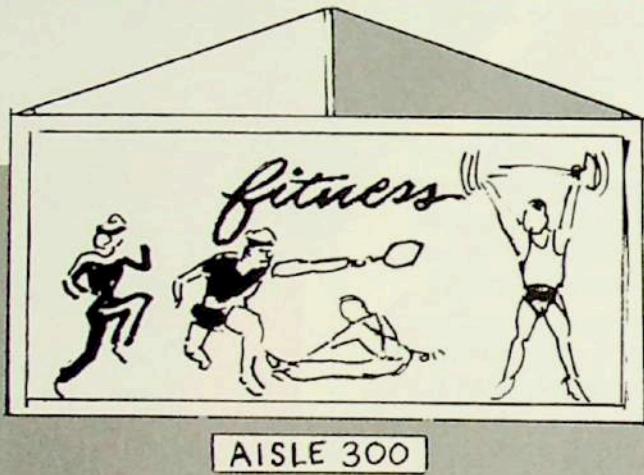
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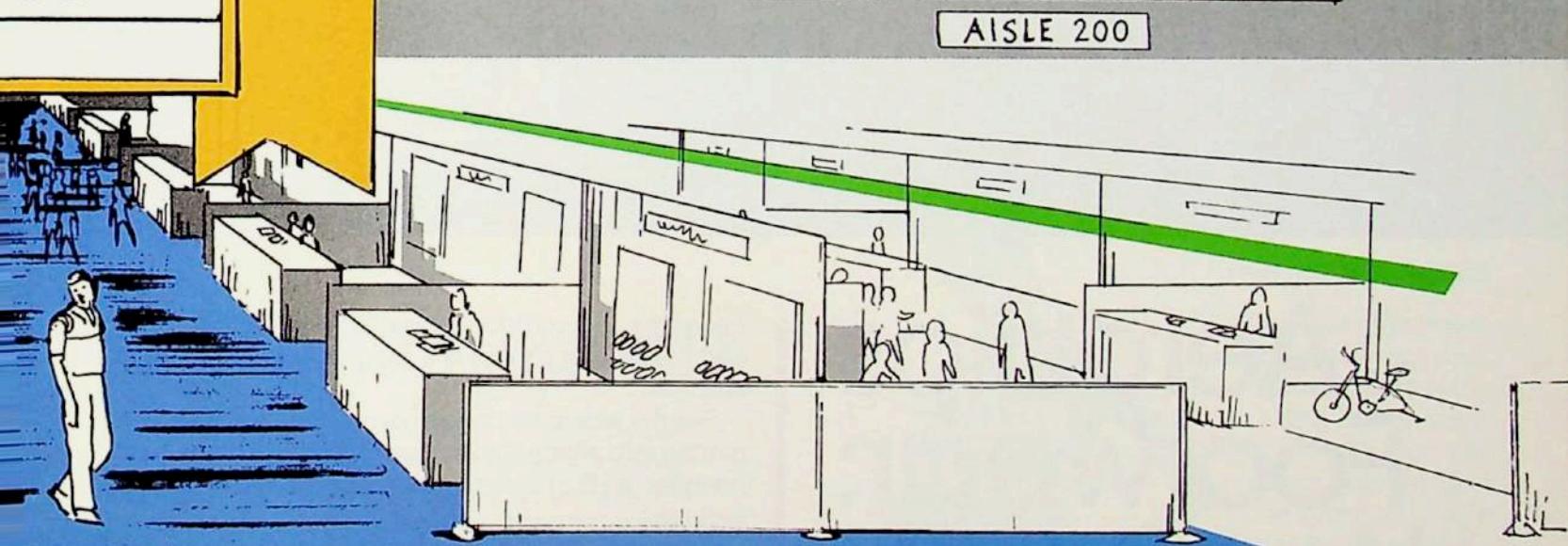
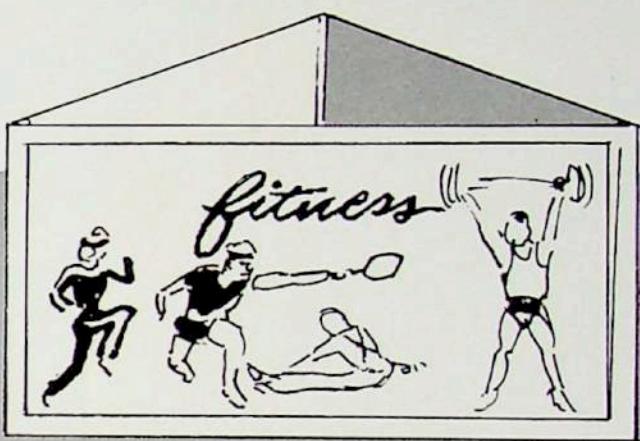
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Aerobics Footwear: Heart and Sole

For some, the corridor between the whirlpool room and the aerobics room is a purgatory between heaven and hell.

But the aches and pains normally associated with getting into shape through aerobics needn't be compounded all the more by inappropriate or inferior footwear.

Enter the Guardian Angel of Aerobics: the expert fitness industry retailer. In this article, the first in a series devoted to specific performance footwear categories, we will focus exclusively on shoes designed and marketed for those dance and exercise activities called aerobics.

- Who are your prospective customers, and what are they looking for in aerobics footwear?
- What role will men play in the aerobics footwear marketplace?
- What are the biomechanic/podiatric factors that shape the design and construction of aerobics shoes?
- What's been done to accommodate the different floor surfaces on which aerobics is performed?
- How important are cosmetics, color, fashion styling?

An in-depth look at stocking, selling and showcasing this hot new category

• What are some of the outstanding merchandising strategies that best sell aerobic footwear in various types of fitness industry retail outlets?

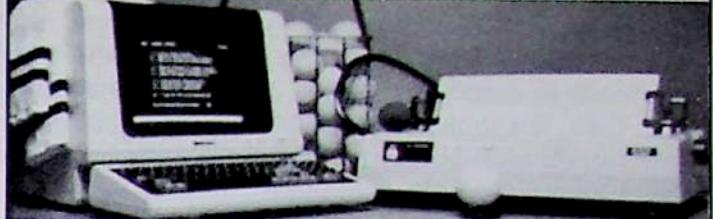
These are the kind of product knowledge, profit-oriented questions we believe you want answered.

And these are the kind of questions we will continue to ask on your behalf during FITNESS INDUSTRY Magazine's performance footwear series.

THE AMERICAN AEROBICS ASSOCIATION

... is an independent, non-profit organization that tests aerobics-related items exclusively. According to Director Dr. Gean Rosenbaum of Durango, Colorado: "By aerobics-related, I mean aerobics dance only. There are close to 35 million women in the United States doing aerobics dance, with an increasing number of men as well, so we felt it important to limit our research to the dance aspects of aerobics. This testing is totally free of charge, so as to avoid conflict-of-interest situations. We're totally independent. In fact, some of the shoes we get are so bad we don't even put them on somebody's feet."

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Dr. Rosenbaum explained that "there are stresses in aerobics dance that do not occur in other types of aerobics exercising. The chief needs in aerobics dance shoes, then, are those related to medial-lateral arch support. The average athletic shoe is designed for a foot and ankle that is moving on an anterior-posterior axis—that is, forward and back. The running shoe, for example, is curled up at the toe and rounded at the heel. And for a running shoe, that's ideal because that's the direction in which the runner is moving."

"But this is the worst possible design for an aerobics dance shoe. In this activity a good 25 percent of the movement is lateral. Wearing a running shoe for jumping jacks, a common aerobics dance exercise, could well cause the ankle to buckle, snap. There've been a large number of injuries in aerobics dance due to shoes. Proper footwear is critical."

Dr. Rosenbaum went on to say that "you need a built-in arch that supports the ankle in lateral move-

ment. Many of those 35 million people have weak ligaments and joints, and some have weight problems. Any extra weight added to the ankles and knees can be excessive and potentially dangerous."

"...floor exercise and ballet shoes, or slippers, which are sometimes passed off as aerobics dance shoes, are totally inadequate."

"Aerobics dance is performed on many different surfaces. Sometimes that surface may be concrete. This is why heel and toe cushioning with emphasis on the outsole wrap is important. You need protective cushioning against high impact. And this is why floor exercise and ballet shoes or slippers, which are sometimes passed off as aerobics dance shoes, are totally inadequate. They have nothing to do with the high im-

pact involved in aerobics dance."

MEDIAL AND LATERAL ARCH SUPPORT

...is the single-most significant factor when judging the quality of an aerobics dance shoe model. However, there are other vital considerations. They include:

- Lightweight yet supportive upper
- Outside heel and toe wrap for protection
- Shock-absorbing midsole
- Innersole allowing flex at natural break of foot
- High abrasion, non-marking outsole for quick stops and starts
- Toe guard for side to side support
- Firm heel counter
- Sock and collar liners for comfort and sweat absorption

In general terms, these are the attributes that should characterize all your aerobics dance shoe selections. There is more. But anything less would jeopardize the health of your customers, and injure (perhaps beyond repair) the reputation you want to achieve as the finest aerobics

HEALTH

How Tough are Your Eyes?

Not tough enough. Laboratory tests show that some eyeguards will allow a racquetball to contact the eyeball even when properly worn.

Chairman of the Canadian Standards Association Committee on Eye Protection, Dr. Easterbrook talked with NR.



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• National Racquetball May '82

protection. They're even better than industrial safety thickness plastic (known as CR-39). Street wear plastic, as normal glasses, does break," says Easterbrook.

In his opinion, "Anybody who plays racquetball without eyeguards is nuts. To put it another way, there is more energy in a racquetball traveling at high speed than there is in a bullet."

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footwear retailer in your market area.

The manufacturers interviewed for this article have met the biomechanic/podiatric mandate inherent in quality-performance aerobics dance shoes. But not only do they provide important information about their own shoe models in relation to the design and construction characteristics listed above, they also offer some insights about the future role of aerobics for both women and men. In addition, they address the question of cosmetics and color coordination, as well as suggest some ways in which to display, merchandise and promote aerobics footwear most effectively and profitably at the retail level.

AEROBICS DANCE COULD BE AS BIG AS RUNNING

... in the next few years, according to Paul Fireman, President of Reebok U.S.A. Limited Inc. "Initially, it was all women," he remarked. "At the moment, however, there is strong evidence that men are getting very much into it. In California, for example, there is 30-40 percent male participation. Professional baseball

and professional football teams are hiring aerobics experts during pre-season training. Once we cross the masculine/feminine border, we'll see more and more men involved. Professional team involvement is already serving as a transition."

Among the features Fireman felt you should be looking for in aerobics footwear are medial and lateral suede arch support for lateral movement stability, heel and toe wrap, high abrasion gum rubber outsole, variable lacing, firm pre-molded nylon heel counter, terry lined sock and collar liners, a well-cushioned and lightweight midsole, an innersole board with forepart slit for natural foot break, and perforated arch, tongue and toes areas for breathability.

IN SELLING, COSMETICS IS SIGNIFICANT

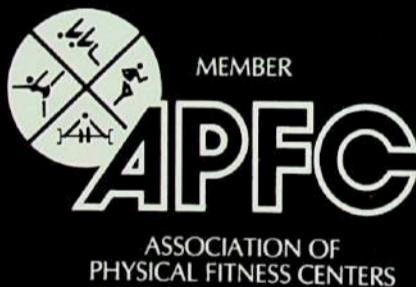
... noted Fireman. In fact, he felt that color coordination and styling is more important in aerobics shoes than in running footwear. "This is why we're introducing the colors blue and pink."

"I believe the best way to display aerobics footwear is in conjunction with other aerobics products such as leotards. Specifically, the retailer should make a presentation, perhaps by taking a large cardboard-type sign announcing that aerobics shoes, clothing and accessories are now available. It must be clearly delineated, because most customers are not yet aware of these products as a distinct category. After all, aerobics shoes are generally white, and they have an athletic look. Therefore, you can't disguise them."

AN AMALGAM OF A RUNNING AND A COURT SHOE

... is how Mike Featherston, Marketing Director for Brooks Shoe Co. describes the aerobics shoe. "The critical biomechanical aspect of an aerobics shoe," he said, "is that it should be cushiony and flexible, primarily in the forefoot area. At the same time you need lateral stability in the forefoot and rear foot areas."

Featherston felt the features you should be seeking in aerobics shoes are "a full EVA wedge midsole; per-



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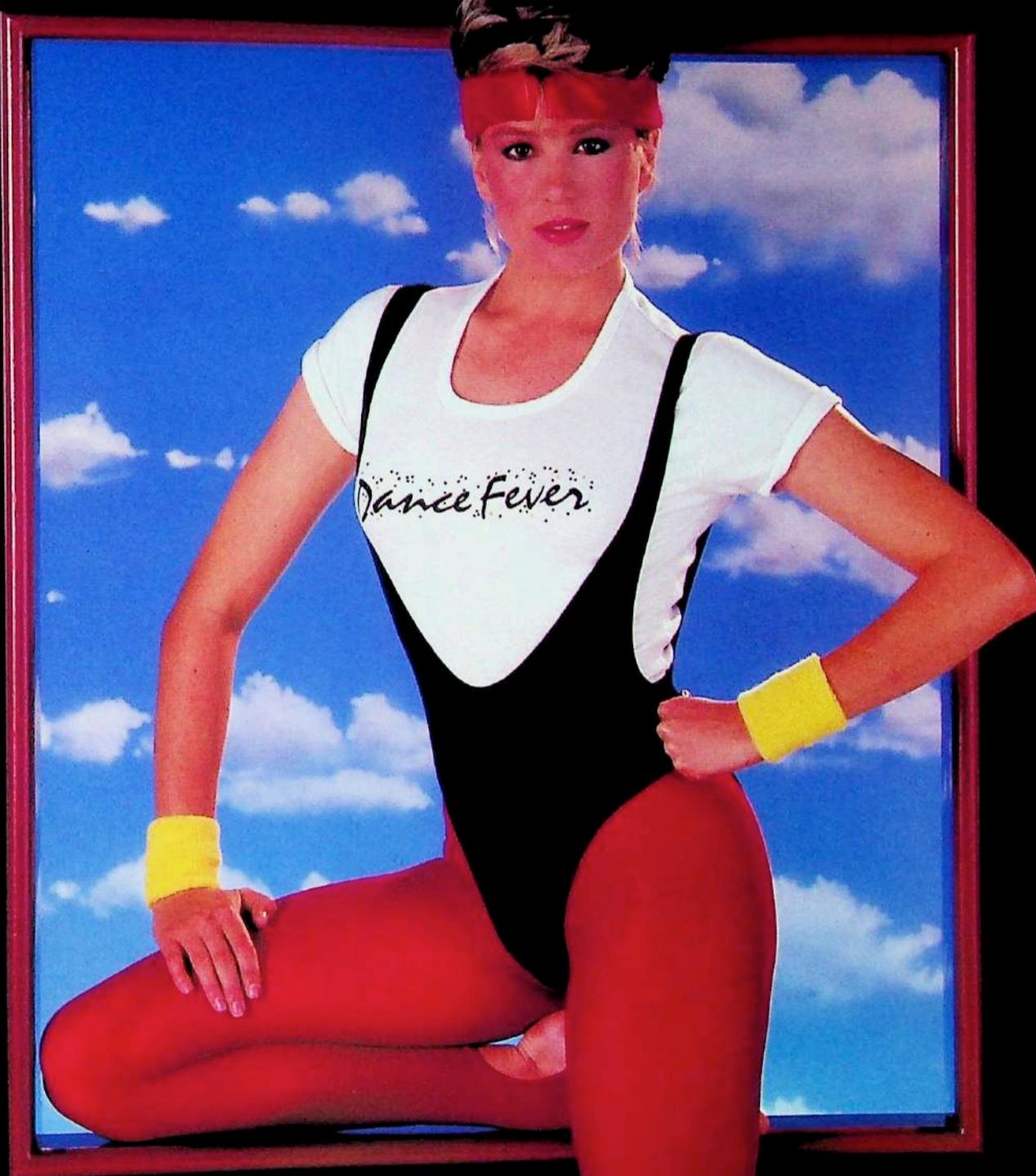

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Reader Service No. 153

forated forefoot for flexibility; a wrap feature in the front and heel that comes up around the side of the shoe for lateral stability; a pillared non-marking herringbone outsole that accommodates all surfaces for good traction; an upper made of lightweight nylon mesh and leather for good support; a firm heel counter, and models with lacing and velcro straps for ease and speed in taking off and putting on the shoe."

THE "AEROBICS BOUTIQUE" CONCEPT

... is one that Featherston believes

more retailers should adopt. "Athletic shoes, in general, have become very prominent fashion/casual items. Aerobics footwear is just another extension of that phenomenon. The fashionable aerobics shoe that is also 'apres-aerobics' in application can be a popular seller, a shoe with a color story tied to seasonal colorations."

"The successful retailer will be one who makes a statement, who lets customers know an aerobics package is available. The key is to delineate it within the store, to

merchandise aerobics footwear with aerobics clothing and accessories, and to have salespeople who are capable of explaining the products to customers."

TRACTION AND DENSITY OF OUTSOLE

... are two factors stressed by Paul Kasimatis, Marketing Director for Foot-Joy. "The retailer should be looking for an aerobics shoe that is lightweight, fits as precisely as possible, provides proper heel cushioning because of the jumping involved, provides enough rear foot control and overall lateral support—a shoe with an outsole sufficiently dense for long durability that is also not too hard or too soft. For the slippery surfaces common to aerobics, the durameter of the sole is very important. I would look for more traction rather than too little. I would also ask about the in-step. This is a very sensitive area, and unless it's built up just right, it could do more harm than good."

Kasimatis also emphasized the importance of fit, and the need for the retailer to have aerobic shoe models that can accommodate the narrow foot.

Incidentally, the company has introduced an aerobic shoe model for men, further evidence that some manufacturers anticipate growing male participation in this specialized activity.

A GRAINY OUTSOLE

... is one feature that John Tieman, Vice President of Marketing for Adidas recommended retailers look for in an aerobics shoe. Other aspects include "leather in stress areas around the toe; heel and eyelets for support and stability. In addition, the shoe should have a very soft, cushiony polyethylene inlay sole for comfort, which acts almost like a foot-bed for support, cradling the foot so as to prevent sliding. The rubber outsole shouldn't be entirely smooth; instead, it should be a little grainy so that the foot can slide just a little but still grip the carpet."

WATCHING WHAT THE FOOT DOES

... during aerobics is how Etonic first approached aerobics footwear design and construction, explained

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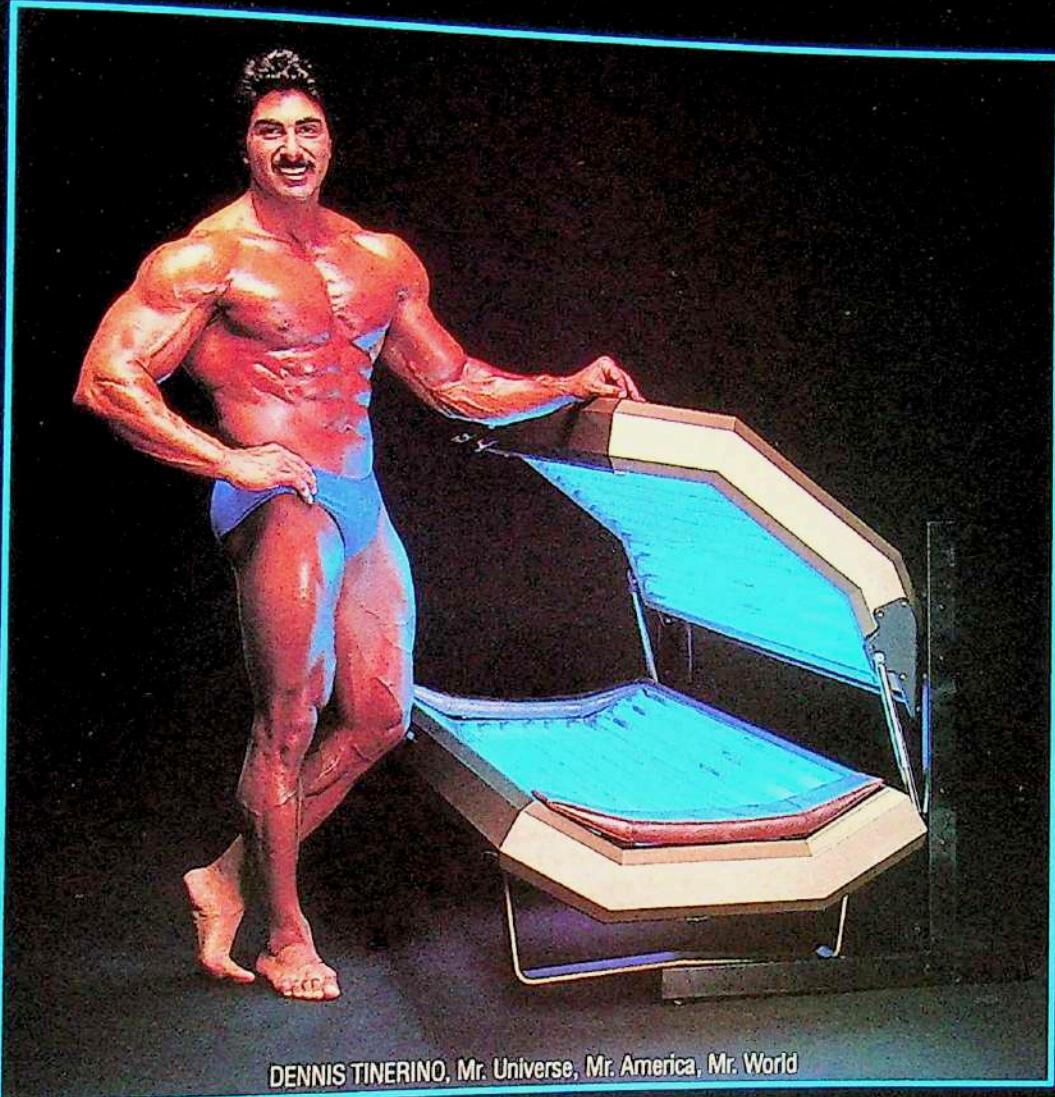
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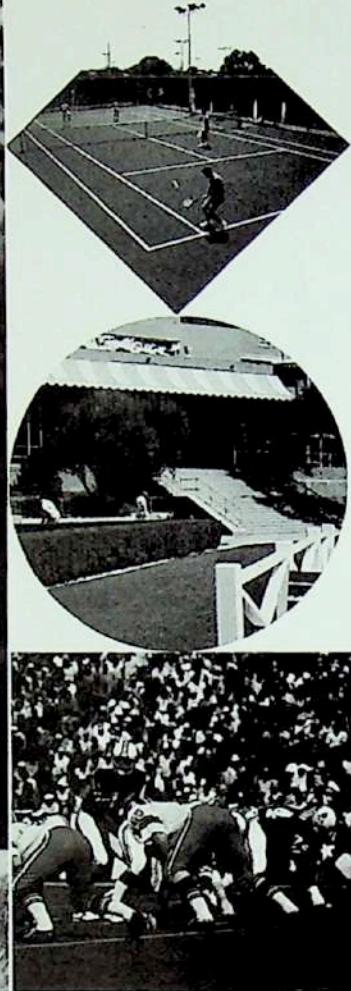
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Product Manager Bob Seiler. "We attended aerobics sessions, as well as instructor training courses. We discovered that there are three vital aspects when it comes to a quality aerobics shoe: exceptional forefoot cushioning, because most aerobics movements are on the forefoot; exceptional rear foot stability for quick movement and to protect the ankle; and light weight. In fact, this is what instructors told us their students were looking for in aerobics shoes. In the past, both running and court shoes have been worn for this activity, and among their other inadequacies, they're too heavy for aerobics. Customers are looking for a lightweight shoe."

Seiler also noted that cosmetics is a significant selling factor, particularly in that the shoe should be appealing and capable of integrating with as many aerobics outfits and colors as possible. However, he cautioned the retailer not to select shoes that sacrifice function and performance in order to satisfy cosmetics or styling concerns.

For his own part, Seiler expressed the opinion that men will not become an important part of the aerobics shoe market, and that aerobics in general will remain a predominantly female activity.

OUTLET-ORIENTED MERCHANTISING STRATEGIES

... are next on the aerobics footwear agenda. What follows are recommendations and insights, distilled from comments made by manufacturers and retailers alike, that you may find useful in the selling of aerobics shoes.

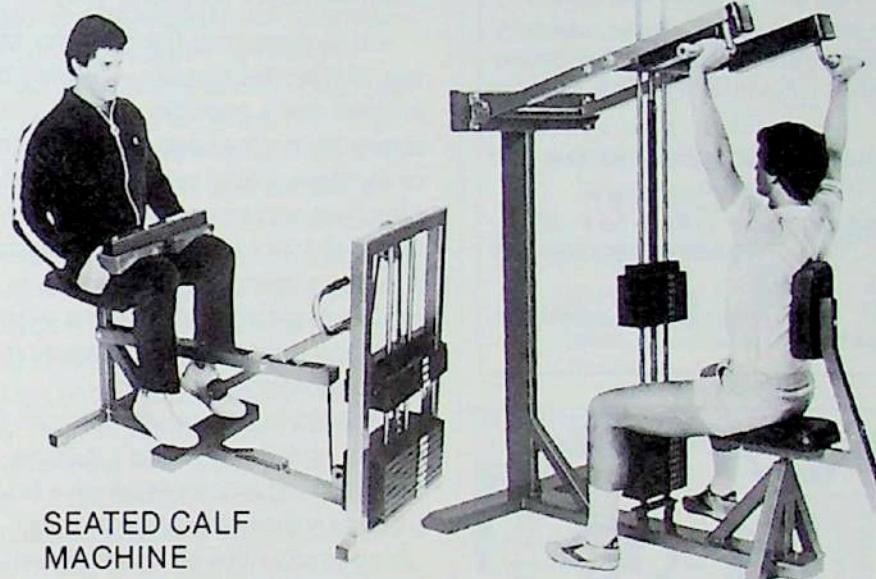
This section is broken down by channel of distribution: the department store, the fitness center (affiliated with an aerobics facility and program), and the free-standing independent fitness store.

While we urge you to read the pages devoted to your specific type of retail outlet, we also suggest that you study this section in its entirety. There are themes that are common to all three channels of distribution, and you may want to adopt certain ideas and approaches, and vary them to fit your own aerobics footwear merchandising needs.

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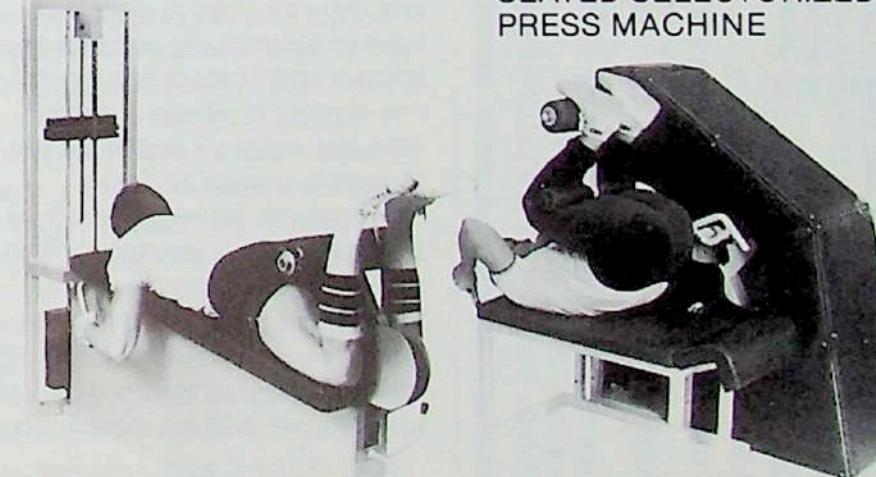
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MERCHANDISING AEROBICS SHOES: THE DEPARTMENT STORE

Perhaps nowhere is the Aerobics Boutique concept more appropriate (and profitable) than in the department store environment. Why?

- It is there that the need for striking, distinctive display—display that singles out a specific product category from other seemingly related or similar-looking merchandise, display that makes a definitive statement, display that serves to declare a serious commitment—is paramount in a large retail arena where so many products are competing for the customer's attention.

- It is there that customers can find a wide array of aerobics products, thus making a comprehensive boutique or merchandise section not only possible but sensible as well.

- The potential for tie-in, add-on and impulse sales is greatly enhanced by grouping aerobics shoes, apparel and accessories together in one display, boutique or product area that makes it easier for customers to browse and buy.

- Products expressly designed and marketed for aerobics activities are relatively new to the market. Many eager prospective customers may not even be aware of their existence. This makes the need for a special statement all the more important.

Obviously, aerobics footwear should be featured as prominently as possible in your athletic shoe department. Often manufacturers and distributors will provide you the kind of product knowledge and display support you have used in the past.

However, there still exists the likelihood that aerobic shoe models will get lost in the maze of athletic shoes

made for any number of other sports and activities. And there may be inadequate space to spotlight aerobics shoes for maximum exposure.

This is why the total aerobics concept must be conveyed in relation to the sale of individual aerobics products such as shoes. And because the equipment, apparel and accessory needs are fairly elementary, the opportunity to create a select and uncluttered aerobics boutique or aerobics merchandise display area is one that shouldn't be ignored.

Before starting, however, remember that aerobics dance is *not* traditional dance or ballet. Expressly designed aerobics shoes, therefore, should not be merchandised alongside such footwear as dance or floor exercise slippers. Consolidation has its virtues, but not when it may cause confusion, possible injury, and damage to your retail image of excellence.

Specific display possibilities are many. One strategy is to portray an aerobics dance environment through use of action mannequins, carpeting and, perhaps, music.

Another display option is to dramatize the fashion-oriented or apres-aerobics appeal of aerobics footwear in conjunction with assorted apparel and accessory selections. Here an emphatically social setting, rather than an athletic one, would be appropriate.

The point is that the department store has sufficient floor space and resources to feature this type of performance footwear within a fully-conceived and dynamic aerobics, apres-aerobics or social context. □

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MERCHANDISING AEROBICS SHOES: THE FITNESS CENTER

Because the fitness center with which you are affiliated is likely to have a built-in, on-premises and serious-minded aerobics clientele, the merchandising of footwear is closely linked to the aerobics instructor's commitment to your model or models of aerobic shoes.

In this environment, promotional coordination between retailer and instructor is a key ingredient for sales success.

However, it is not enough that the instructor simply wear your aerobics shoe selection. Alone it is not sufficiently comprehensive to generate the kind of turnover you're seeking.

The effort, in fact, should begin before the first aerobics class gets under way. During the registration or introductory session process, a list of recommended footwear models should be provided. This list might also include a brief biomechanic/podiatric explanation as to why this shoe or shoes are recommended. Naturally, these are the aerobics shoes you currently stock in depth, and in order to bring home this fact you may want to initiate a registrant-only discount or total aerobics shoe/apparel/accessory package discount.

It is possible that display/signage options can be extended beyond the confines of the retail outlet itself. In effect, you may be able to hang posters or disseminate product knowledge/promotional materials within the athletic/exercise facilities of the fitness center.

In-store display will depend on a number of factors, not the least of which is space availability, display resources, aerobics merchandise variety, and your commitment to aerobics in general.

As far as footwear is concerned, the very least that should be done is

to feature or highlight one or two models in such a way that customers become immediately aware that this shoe is expressly designed and marketed for aerobics, and not some other sport or activity. In this regard, manufacturers and distributors can provide you necessary product knowledge and display support, often at no expense.

At the other extreme is a distinctive, fully-conceived and comparatively elaborate aerobics boutique or special products display section where select samples of all your aerobics merchandise is coordinated and dramatically portrayed through use of mannequins, fixtures, special lighting, and perhaps realistic materials (such as carpeting or floor paneling) associated with aerobics dance and exercise.

But more than anything else, an explicit association between retailer expertise and the professionalism of the aerobics instructor is one that all registrants must make at once—before the first jumping jack or stretching of the legs. In the minds of participants there must never appear any confusion or contradiction; and even apparent cross-purposes will surely result in the loss of potential aerobics footwear sales.

And not only should the instructor be wearing your aerobics shoe selection; every member of your sales staff should be wearing them as well. Moreover, your salespeople must know what they're talking about when it comes to aerobics footwear. Long before class registration begins, they need to get together with you, the instructor and shoe manufacturer representatives to find out all they can about the model or models you've so wisely selected. □

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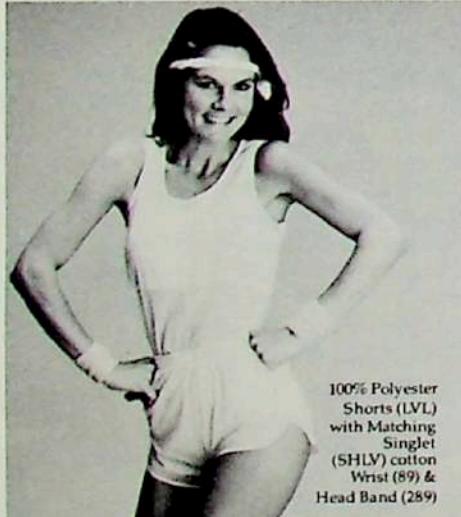
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MERCHANDISING AEROBICS SHOES: THE FITNESS STORE

Assuming you have decided to stock the kind of performance-oriented, biomechanically-designed aerobics shoes described in this issue, your next logical step is to seek out and bring into your store the people now in the market for these specialized shoe models. And since you may not be associated with a specific aerobics program wherein a natural clientele is already assembled, you must go out into your local market area, make contact with aerobics instructors, and provide their students with all the right reasons why they should buy their aerobics shoes from you and not someone else.

The first step is to identify not only all aerobics classes currently being conducted, but also all those classes that are in the process of being formulated.

The next step is presentation—presentation of your specific aerobics shoe models, as well as your overall product knowledge expertise and commitment—to as many aerobics instructors as possible. We recommend that you meet with these instructors one-on-one. They know the aerobics footwear market; they know the kind of shoes that are best for their students and they'll tell you whether or not you can provide them the product they can sincerely recommend and endorse. If there should be any doubts, ask that the instructor wear the model herself. Because your shoe selection was a wise one, this should help turn the tide in your favor.

What happens next is problematical.

- You may be able to obtain from the instructor a mailing list of current or pre-registered aerobics students.
- You may convince the instructor to recommend your store as the place to buy the best in aerobics footwear.

- You may be allowed to disseminate or post your product knowledge and promotional materials where classes are conducted

- You may be asked to appear before an introductory class and inform students about aerobics footwear in general, and your select models in particular

This is a sound, sensible approach. And if you succeed in achieving one or more of these particulars, you'll be well on your way toward becoming the foremost aerobics footwear retailer in your market area.

Obviously, in-store display should not be overlooked. At the very least you want to feature or highlight your aerobics model or models in a distinctive, well-delineated manner; a way in which customers come to realize at once that this shoe is specifically designed and marketed for those activities associated with aerobics dance and exercising. Manufacturers and distributors can assist you by providing expense-free product knowledge and display support. How extensive and elaborate the display will depend on such factors as space availability, the variety of aerobics products you happen to merchandise and, ultimately, the degree of commitment to aerobics as a whole. If this commitment is relatively intense, a separate aerobics section, display area or boutique may not be out of the question.

But the single-most vital point we want to make is that you must establish an endorsement linkage between you and the aerobics instructors in your area. In the beginning at least, these instructors are the people aerobics initiates and enthusiasts will be listening to in earnest. And instructors are your liaisons between you and your eager prospective customers of quality-performance aerobics shoes. □

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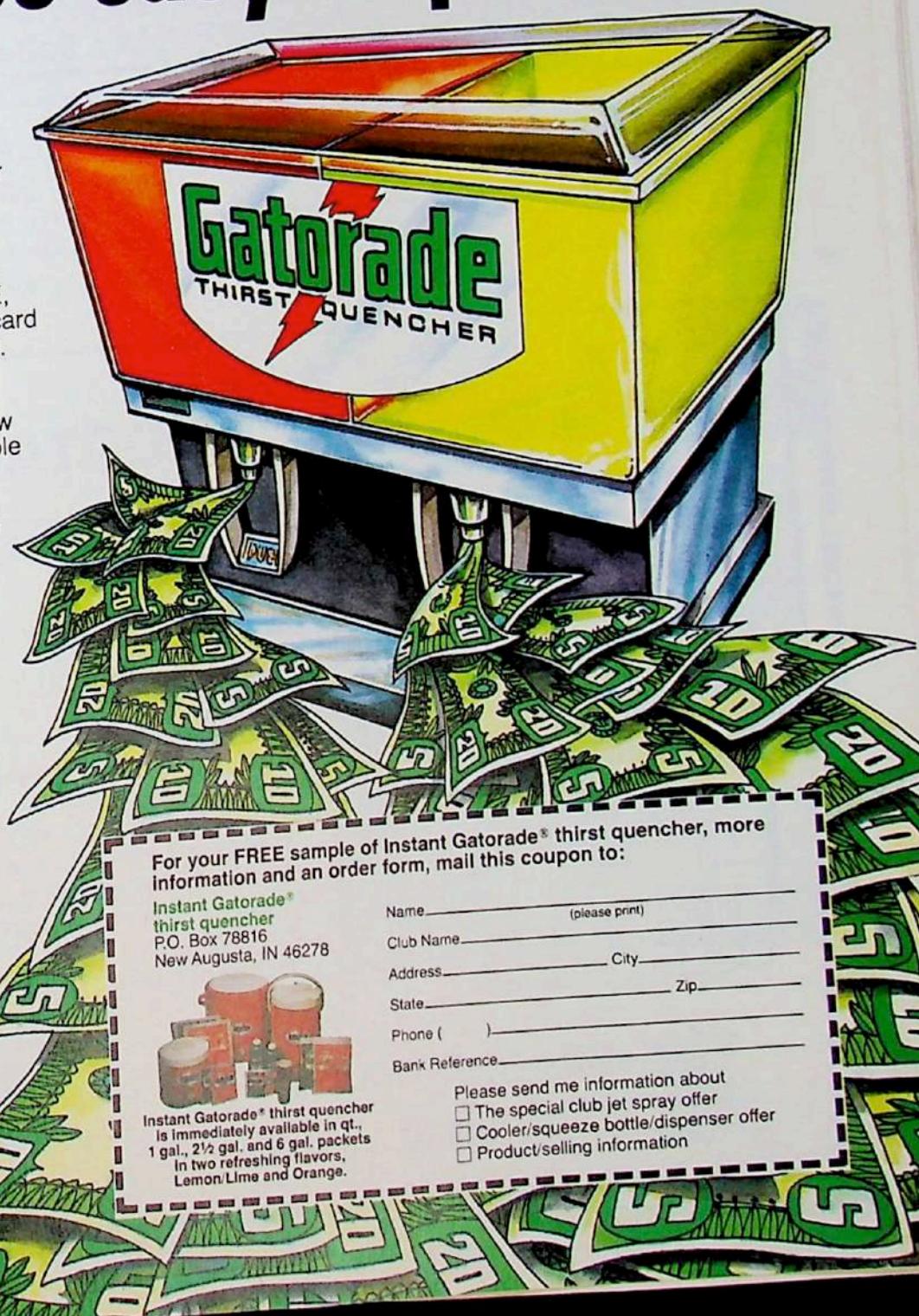
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Superturf Develops New Jogging Surface

SuperTurf Products, Inc., a subsidiary of SuperTurf, Inc. has developed a shock absorbing surface for jogging which has been used at university clubs in Dallas. This new surface is permanently fused to a solid urethane backing which resists fungus, mold, mildew and insects.

Chemspa Announces Health Spa Products

Jerry Rudy, founder of Chemspa Industries, Inc., has developed a line of health spa cleaners to deodorize

steam rooms, saunas and locker rooms that includes Sauna Scents, Sauna Kleena and Karpet Kare. Chem-Spa also manufactures and distributes a toiletries line for the fitness industry that includes Sauna Crema to restore the body's skin moisture and oils lost in steam rooms and Applaud Liquid Soap Concentrate available in a variety of fragrances.

New How-To Manual For Nautilus Center Owners

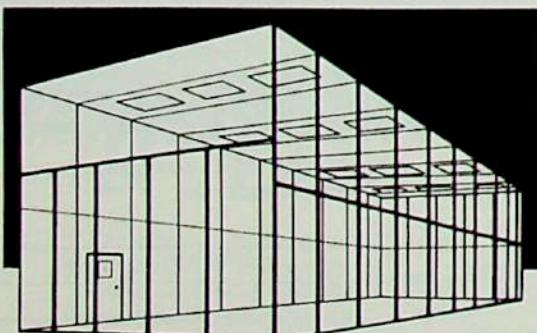
Joe Mullen, fitness expert and former New England's Strongest Man titleholder, has written the NAUTILUS FITNESS CENTER MANAGEMENT MANUAL available in spiral bound for \$19.95 plus \$2.00 postage and handling. His book provides step-by-step tips on how to handle free trial workouts; organizing men's, women's and children's exercise programs, telephone tactics and how to hire instructors.

New West Coast Warehouse For M.J. Soffe Company

A new warehouse in Los Angeles, California has been added to the national warehouse network of M.J. Soffe Co., manufacturer and distributor of a full line of athletic wear and accessories. The new facility will be managed by Paul Possemato of All Star Lettering and will provide inventory selection, screen printing and athletic lettering on Soffe garments.

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Gravity Guidance, Inc. Appoints National Sales Manager

Gravity Guidance, Inc. has appointed Marc Drucker as National Sales Manager to be responsible for the growing number of sales representatives domestically and abroad. Drucker said, "It's an excellent opportunity for me, and for that matter, everyone in the organization." President Bryce Martin added, "The demands of this key position made it imperative that we find a person with Marc's background. We're looking forward to record sales in 1983."

Drucker previously served as vice president with Crown Global Corp. and prior to that with Alpert and Associates who currently represent Gravity Guidance in the Southwest.

First Court Construction Standard Approved

The Association of RacquetSports Manufacturers and Suppliers (ARMS) has announced the first court construction specification standards for wall and floor systems, lighting, doors and transparent viewing panels. Ronald J. Haber, President of ARMS said, "The standard specification is further evidence of ARMS' commitment to proper installation of quality products."

Ektelon Selects Two New Northeastern Rep Groups

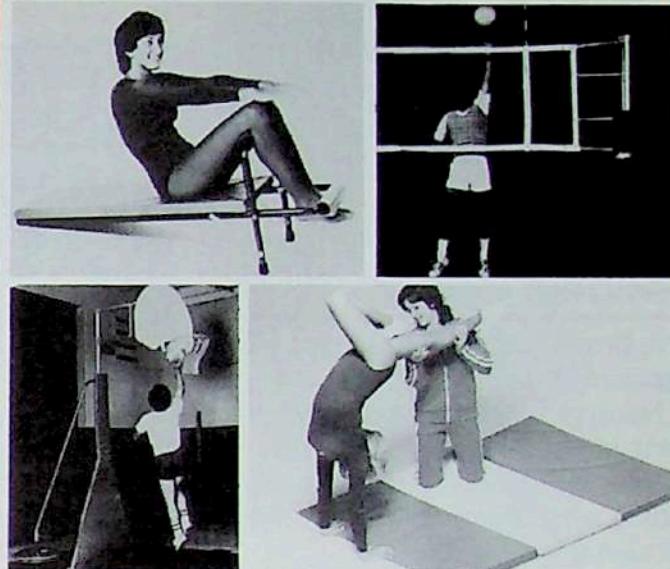
Active Sports Marketing, Ltd. and John Mallon and Associates were selected to split northeastern sales responsibilities for Ektelon, the San Diego-based manufacturer of racquetball equipment and accessories.

Barry Shain and Jerry Kessler of Active Sports Marketing will take over sales in such states as Delaware, Maryland and New York Metro. Paul Krawczyk and Steve Polansky of John Mallon and Associates will be responsible for sales in seven states that include Connecticut, Massachusetts and Vermont.

Reese Announces Portable Racquetball/Squash Courts

Reese Industries has announced the design by Al Reese of a fully portable court composed of approximately 105 sections complete with side and back wall made of Lucite SAR acrylic for clear viewing and an 8' x 20' ceiling section for TV camera exposure. These portable courts can be sold or rented.

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Industry NEWS

Nautilus Apparel Announces New Vice President

John Urmston has been named Vice President of Marketing and Sales for Nautilus Apparel. He will be responsible for managing and coordinating all marketing activities including advertising, merchandising and sales.

Urmston started with Nautilus Apparel in 1982 as a marketing and sales consultant. Prior to that he served as Vice President of Marketing and Sales for Quality Mills in North Carolina.

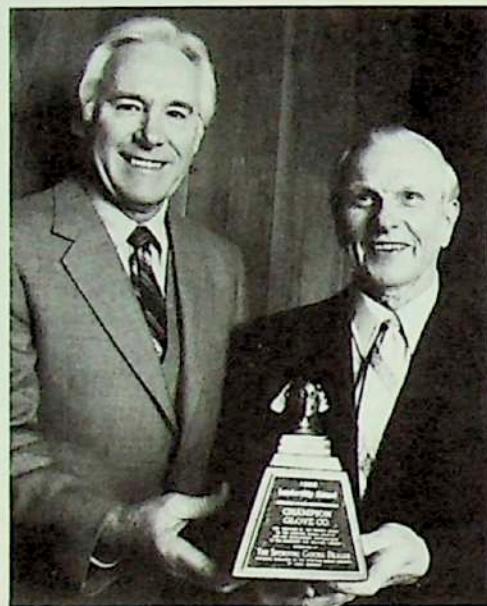
New AMF Head Distributor Announced

Court Products, Inc. of Highland Park, Illinois has been selected as distributor of AMF Head racquetball products. It will carry a full inventory

of AMF Head racquetball equipment.

John S. Wineman, Jr., President of Court Products, Inc. said, "We are delighted to have been selected as a distributor and will be able to offer immediate delivery from our warehouse inventory."

Manufacturer Leadership Award Goes To Champion Glove

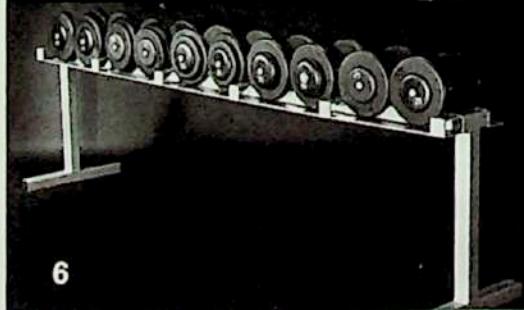
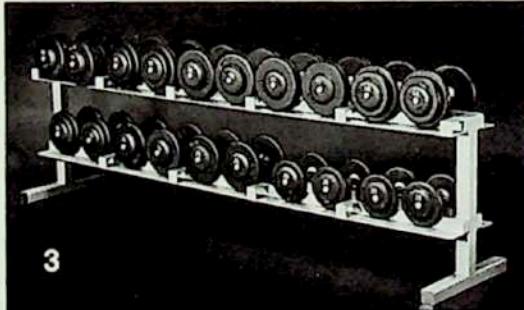
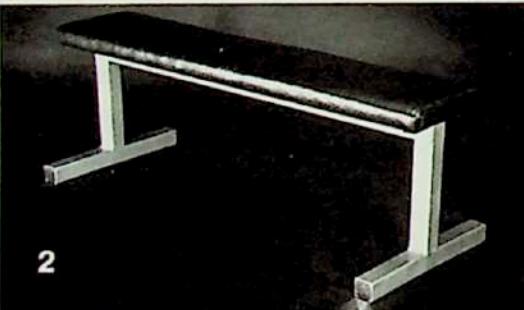


Champion Glove Manufacturing Co. of Des Moines, Iowa received the 1982 Athletic Goods Manufacturer Leadership Award determined by nominations, supporting statements and comments from every segment of the sporting goods industry.

Champion makes a full line of gloves for baseball, softball, golf, racquetball and other sports.

Said Lee Nylen, President of Champion, "We are very proud to receive this leadership award, especially to be included with other winners over the years such as Wilson Sporting Goods; MacGregor; A.G. Spalding and Bros., Inc.; Nike/BRS, Inc. and Converse Rubber Company."

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Le Coq Sportif: tomorrow is already here.

Le Coq Sportif is undoubtedly ahead of its time. Its styles and colours stand out as a look of the future and the footwear and rackets a giant technological advancement.

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Nothing is too good for Le Coq Sportif. Just look at the 1983 collection: to the quality of the materials selected, to the way the garment has been cut with its intended use very much in mind, Le Coq Sportif adds an original touch which makes all the difference. In the field of ready-to-wear clothes Le Coq Sportif displays all along the line that inimitable touch of invention and seduction that is the hallmark of French fashions.

The revolution is called Dynatec:

Picture men in white coats in an ultramodern Swiss laboratory, they are bio-technicians, orthopaedic specialists and Le Coq Sportif engineers, and they have just created a shoe, based on the scientific study of the jogger's stride, which an American specialist magazine has already described as "the most revolutionary on the market". Its name: Dynatec. Its concept: the closest thing to running bare foot with maximum stability, maximum comfort. For in order to preserve the natural movement of the running foot, these researchers have produced innovations that are exclusive to Le Coq Sportif.

260 grammes of technological innovation.

A rigid support surrounds the back of the Dynatec - When the outside touches



41

the ground the foot is held perfectly straight. The impact absorbed by the increasingly dense layers of the sole and the concave profile of the tread. Ideally guided straight ahead, the foot is then helped by an arch support fitted on the outside of the shoe. It has exactly the comfortable support it needs.

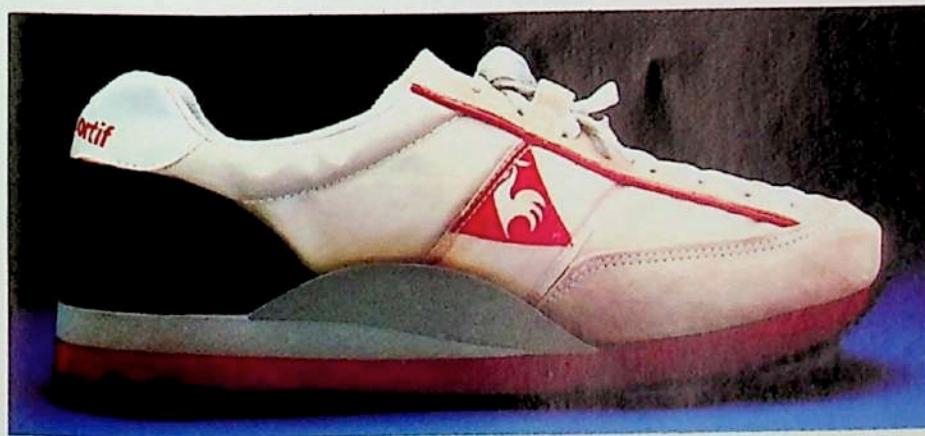
The Dynatec laces right up to the toes, holding the shoe securely but comfortably. The "velcro" strap that keeps the laces in place is also worth noting. Yet another exclusive feature of Le Coq

Sportif. The sole profile has been redesigned to follow the exact contours of the foot. More room for the foot and better take off position.

Additional support in the arch area and greater stability at the heel.

Constructed like a moccasin, the Dynatec is truly a slipper attached to a sole. It is exceptionally light and supple. And the inside sole cushions the shocks at heel-level and disperses any moisture at the front of the foot.

There you have the Dynatec. A shoe scientifically designed down to the last detail. Around 260 grammes of technological innovation give you today what many jogging shoes may give you... In ten years time. Advanced in terms of fashion. Advanced in terms of technology.



FITNESS EQUIPMENT:

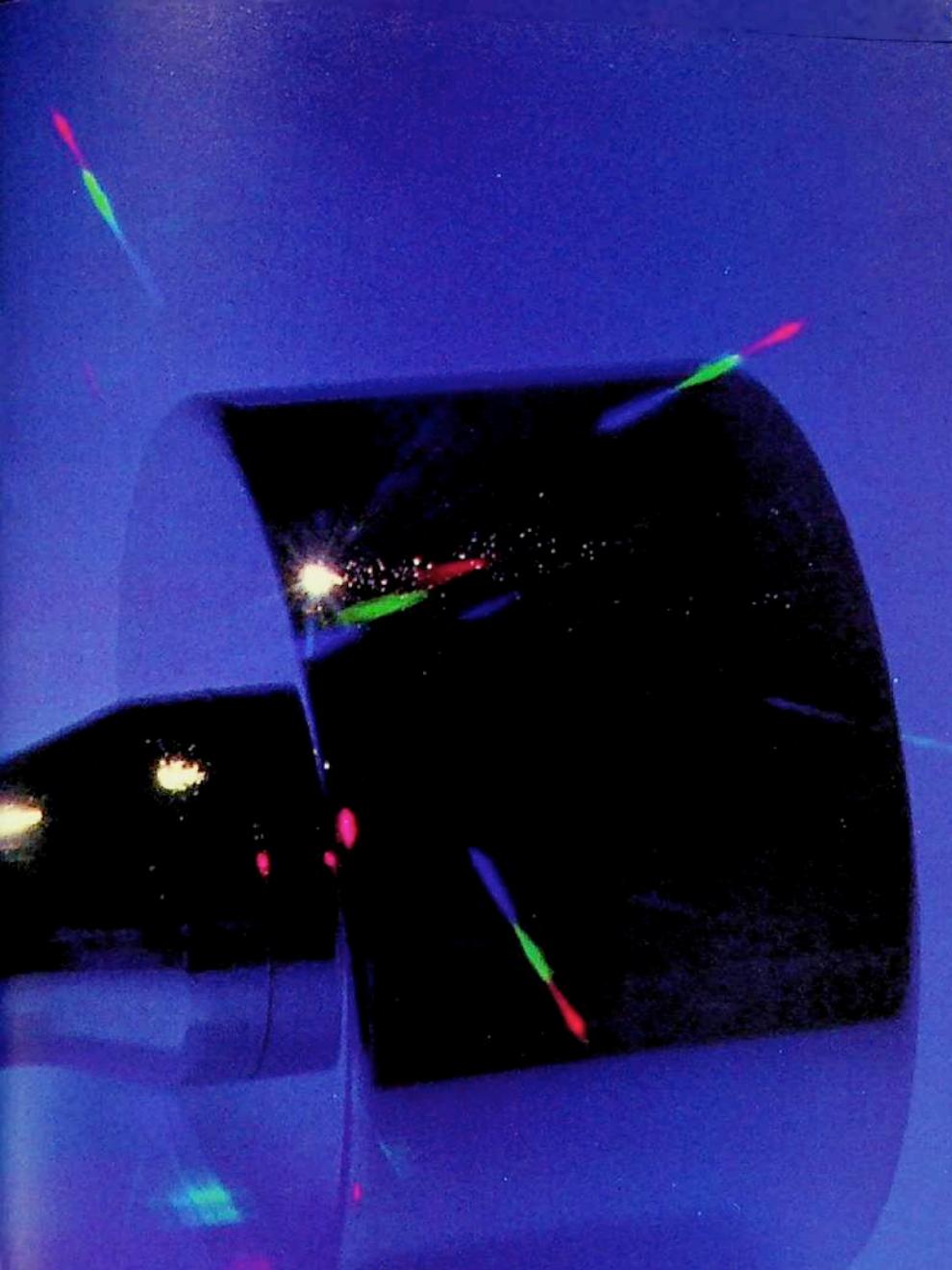
The Ladies' Room

It's hard to pinpoint just when it began, but without question the fitness movement is composed of more women than ever before. Aerobics, while it actually originated years ago as part of U.S. military training and testing, is largely a female occupation at health and fitness clubs. Jazzercise, from an evening session at a local health club to cable network programming, is primarily—almost exclusively—women. And certainly the reception of Jane Fonda's bestselling book and her programming for conditioning is another strong indication of the popularity of the women's fitness movement.

Yet, it hardly seems necessary to justify focusing your marketing and

promotional efforts on women in fitness. The general consensus among industry authorities is that women comprise as much as 60% of the total, present-day fitness movement. So, if you aren't directing a concerted marketing effort to this large potential market, you simply are losing money. In fact, Jim Flanagan, General Manager of Nautilus Sports/Medical Industries, believes that "in the next few years you'll see fitness centers that are predominantly women. The fitness movement will be around for a long time; it's an important part of life style, a major contribution to the quality of life."

One qualification is in order here, however. The percentage of women



involved in aerobic fitness is, in general, much higher than those involved in resistance training. Without question, there are more and more women working out with equipment, but men still make up the majority where resistance training is concerned.

Jerry Brentham, President and Founder of Hydra-Fitness, explains the range of fitness exercise and the corresponding involvement of men and women: "You have two extremes. At one end you have aerobic fitness training, and at the other extreme body building. Between these extremes are other types of fitness training including aerobic and strength development and training for body composition—for ap-

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Reader Service No. 118

pearance and posture."

It should not be surprising that women are least involved with body building. It's almost a physiological impossibility for women to build bulky muscles in the first place (without the use of steroids, anyhow), and in the second place, body building is extremely low on a list of priorities, especially for women, but for men, as well. Where other types of fitness development and resistance training are concerned, Brentham sees a trend to more women working out on the fitness equipment.

Consequently, with this general trend of women involved with resistance training, you need to consider matters of staffing, programming, equipment, and promotion to make your facility as professional as possible and to derive the maximum profits available.

EQUIPMENT

The general consensus is that there is little difference between the resistance training equipment required for men and that required for women. There are, however, two considerations very important to the success of your program:

- Minimum resistance levels of the equipment should be adequately low to accommodate women, particularly if they are only beginning fitness training.
- The design of the equipment should be able to accommodate a woman's frame.

If you have equipment where minimum resistance levels exceed the equivalent of 40 pounds, then you are excluding a great number of women (men, too, for that matter) who would otherwise like to participate in your program.

Lest this appear too chauvinistic a point of view, it is possible to say that women, in general, have smaller frames than men. The fact that many men have equally small frames should also be an incentive to have equipment with proper design features.

Dennis Keiser, President of Keiser Sports Health Equipment, explains: "The size of the machine is important. Traditionally everyone built machines for men, and if you're not

careful, you can almost design women right out of them."

While the tendency in the past was to have separate training rooms for men and women, "there aren't as many separate facilities as there used to be. Women seem much less reluctant to work out with the men," notes Keiser.

If you do have separate facilities for men and women, then you obviously don't have as great a concern about finding equipment suited to both men and women. As Ray Boudreux, General Manager of Body

Masters, summarizes: "If you have two exercise areas, then your primary consideration is budget. If you have a single exercise area, then you have to consider women's requirements strongly. You can't plan an area strictly for men."

Boudreux also reminds us that women will tend to work certain muscle groups more than men will. Leg muscles, backs of legs, abdomen and pectoral muscles are typically emphasized by women, and you should take this into account when you plan your equipment



45

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needs. While there really is no reason that all of the equipment used by men can't be used by women, Boudreax recommends that "at least 60% of the equipment you buy be suitable for ladies' use as well as men."

Manufacturers enable you to achieve this by designing machines that are fitted to both men and women or by scaling down a design with women particularly in mind.

PROGRAMMING

Programs designed for women should be particularly successful for

a number of reasons. Obviously there is demand but, in addition, as Flanagan notes, "women are finding that they can do many of the same exercises as men. And because frequently they have never exercised with an overload before, they find that their bodies respond very quickly. And the quick results make them happy."

Some of the main elements of programming to consider include:

- time schedules,
- types of exercises, and
- emphasis on aerobics.

Should you plan separate workout times for men and women, or should you arrange coed workouts? Probably both. Basically you need to plan separate times—particular evenings for men, other evenings for women; or particular hours of the day for women, other hours for men. One of your objects is to fill non-prime time hours. Most likely a program for women during the day will be appropriate, in this case. Of course, there are more working women than ever, so you definitely need to schedule hours in the evening for women, as well.

It's generally also recommended that you allow certain open times where both men and women can workout simultaneously. Of course, the times you schedule for resistance training workouts will also be dependent on the amount and availability of equipment at your facility, so plan your scheduling accordingly.

As previously mentioned, women will tend to emphasize some body parts, men others. In addition, Keiser observes another distinction: "Men will tend to work out in one, two or three sets of eight to ten repetitions per set. They'll work heavy so that they're just about fatigued on that last repetition. Women tend to do more repetitions with less resistance at a much higher speed. Women will more often do 15-20 repetitions, for example."

The higher repetitions at greater speeds is generally recommended for aerobic training on fitness equipment, and at this point your programming and promotion are closely linked. If women are primarily involved with aerobic training at the health club, then a natural transition to resistance training is through aerobic training on the equipment. That's the point that Norman Barnes, Director of Advertising at Universal Gym Equipment, makes when he remarks: "Circuit weight training is designed for total body conditioning. You work all the major muscle groups, plus you train in aerobics. The aerobic aspect should certainly enter into the training to strengthen the cardiovascular system."

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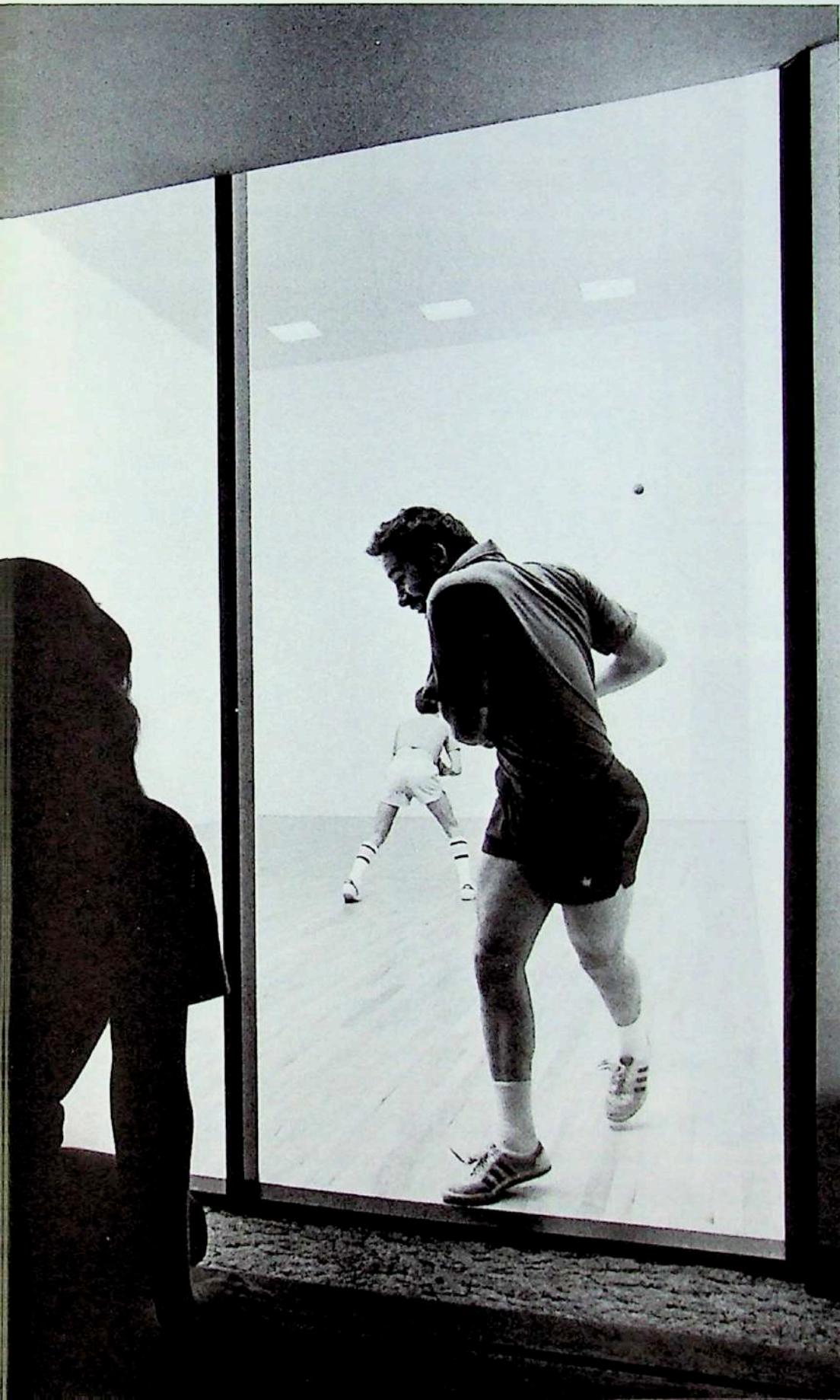
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Reader Service No. 140

May/June 83

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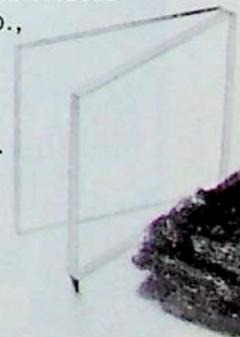
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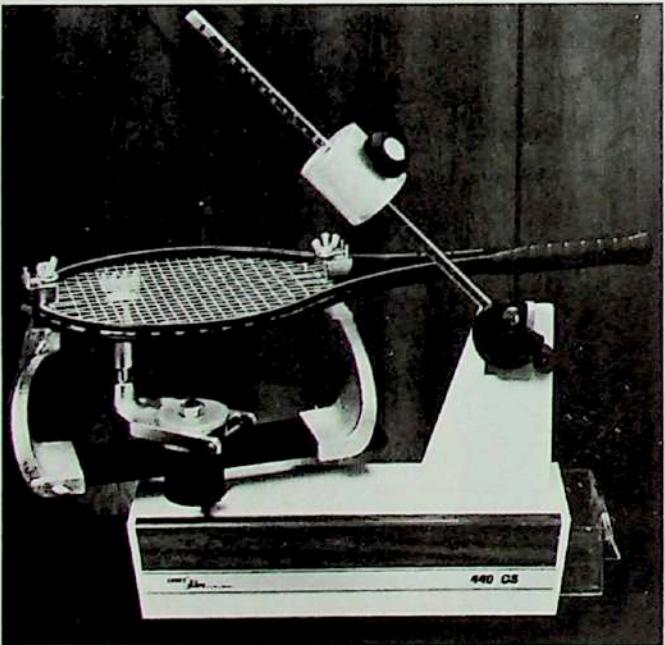
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regular contributor to that magazine and now to **FITNESS INDUSTRY**, detailed an aerobic/weight training circuit. Essentially the system alternates upper and lower body exercises, followed by jogging in place, riding an exercise bike, or running on a treadmill, to maintain a high heart rate during the entire program. There are no rest intervals. For example, the club member performs the first exercise on equipment, follows that with jogging in place for 30 seconds or riding an exercise bike, continues immediately to the next piece of equipment, followed again by rope skipping or some similar exercise.

As Thorson did, we also encourage a caution: current levels of fitness determine present capabilities. People who have not been training are encouraged to have a physical examination, and they should progress through the circuit slowly under the supervision of qualified personnel.

For reasons of health it is certainly wise to monitor your members' progress. But it is also advisable to monitor their development in order to adjust their programs accordingly. You provide an incentive to stay active in the program by showing clearly the results of a workout over a period of time, plus you ensure that the program you design maintains and improves their level of fitness.

One of the ways of monitoring is to establish a benchmark—a certain weight or amount of resistance at which a member begins exercising—and then measuring progress against that benchmark. There are also electronic devices, often attached to the individual during the exercise, that also establish benchmarks for the individual, measure heart rate and other physiological functions during exercise, and help in providing progress reports.

Probably one of the first pieces of equipment that you would start a member on, particularly where you are emphasizing aerobic training, is an exercise bike. Where this is a computerized bike, you can easily establish those benchmarks and determine the effect of the workout. Augie Nieto, Sales Manager of Lifecycle, explains that "women are looking for particular items in their workout: calories burnt, aerobic conditioning, motivation to continue working out, and the ability to work particular muscle groups, particularly the upper legs and buttocks."

By being able to meet these specific needs you can generally appeal to and maintain your target market.

STAFF

Staff requirements differ very little for men and women. Should your fitness trainer or fitness manager be male or female? Probably it doesn't matter, according to most authorities, but you would want to study your own particular market needs. More than likely, however, women will be receptive to either a male or female trainer, whereas men would be less receptive to a female trainer or manager. Regardless of which you choose, they should be knowledgeable and reflect their own seriousness about the importance of fitness and conditioning by being fit themselves.



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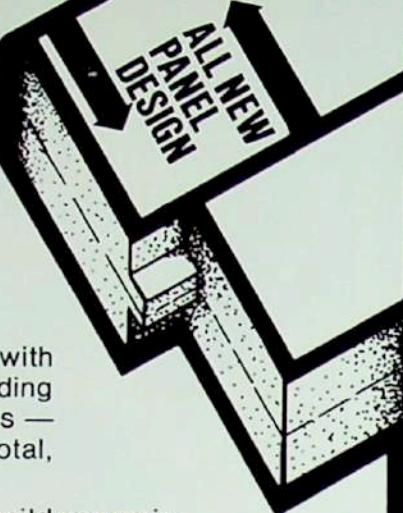
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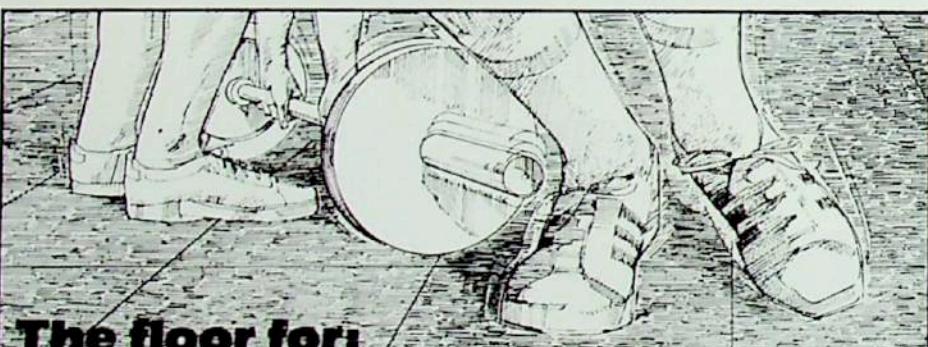


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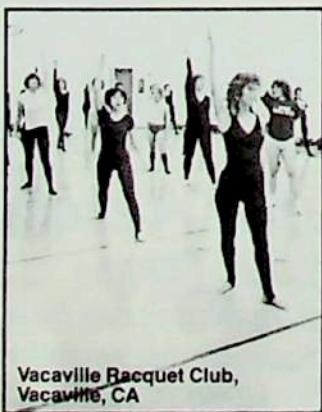
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PROMOTION

Word of mouth advertising always has been and will continue to be the best form of publicity for your fitness center. If you have satisfied members, and if they express their satisfaction to others, then you will inevitably benefit. The opposite, unfortunately, is true as well. One dissatisfied member can result in the loss of an unknown number of new potential members.

Given this, you still want it known that you are offering fitness for women. We suggest an open house. If there are women's clubs or organizations that are predominantly women, contact their chairperson and arrange an open house, entertainment—a comfortable social setting where you have an opportunity to introduce your facilities and to let them try your equipment.

A radio or newspaper advertisement publicizing "Women's Day" in one fashion or another, where you offer special incentives for women to visit your center is another possibility.

Nieto recommends offering free fitness tests "as a lead-in item. You provide the means to get someone started into an exercise program who is not initially motivated."

Otherwise, you need to publicize your program, whether it be through advertising or open house. Keep in mind that women don't want to be muscle-bound. They will be interested in improving body composition, looking trim and fit, improving strength, and becoming more fit through aerobic conditioning, but they aren't looking to become muscle-bound.

You also want to emphasize aerobic conditioning as a transition from a danceercise type of fitness to working with the equipment. And finally you need to provide progress reports on their development. By then, ideally, word-of-mouth publicity will ensue.

If you feel that you haven't tapped this very significant market, then you need to begin your marketing efforts as soon as possible. If 60% of the fitness movement is, indeed, female, then you don't want to risk sacrificing this potential membership. □

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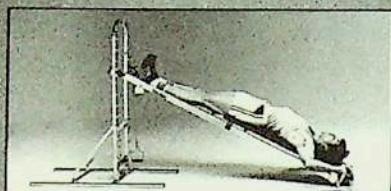


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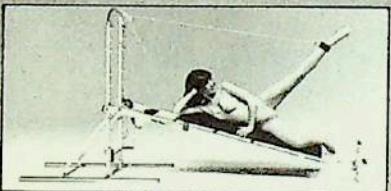
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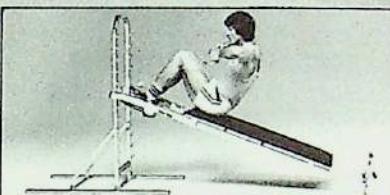


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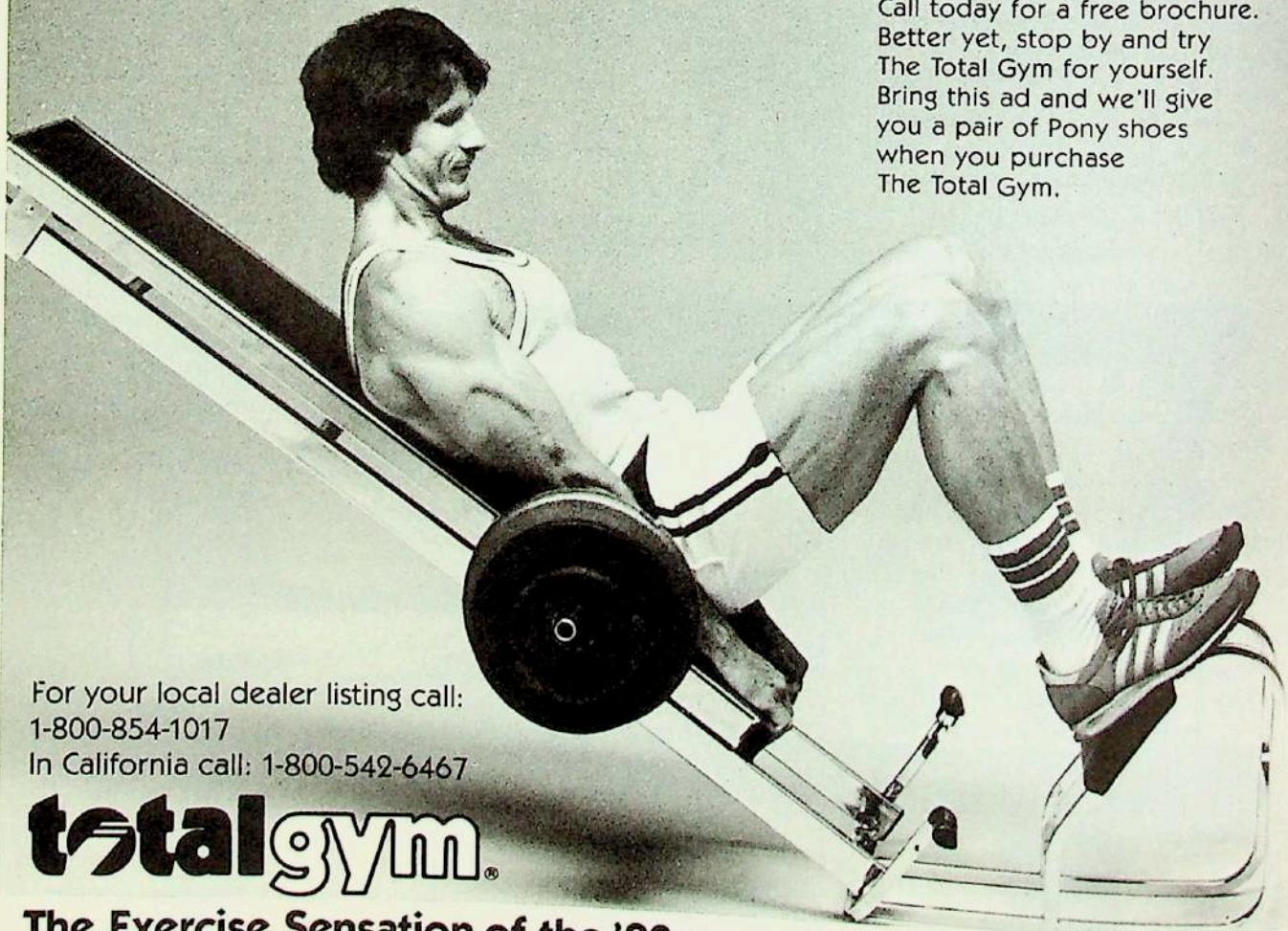
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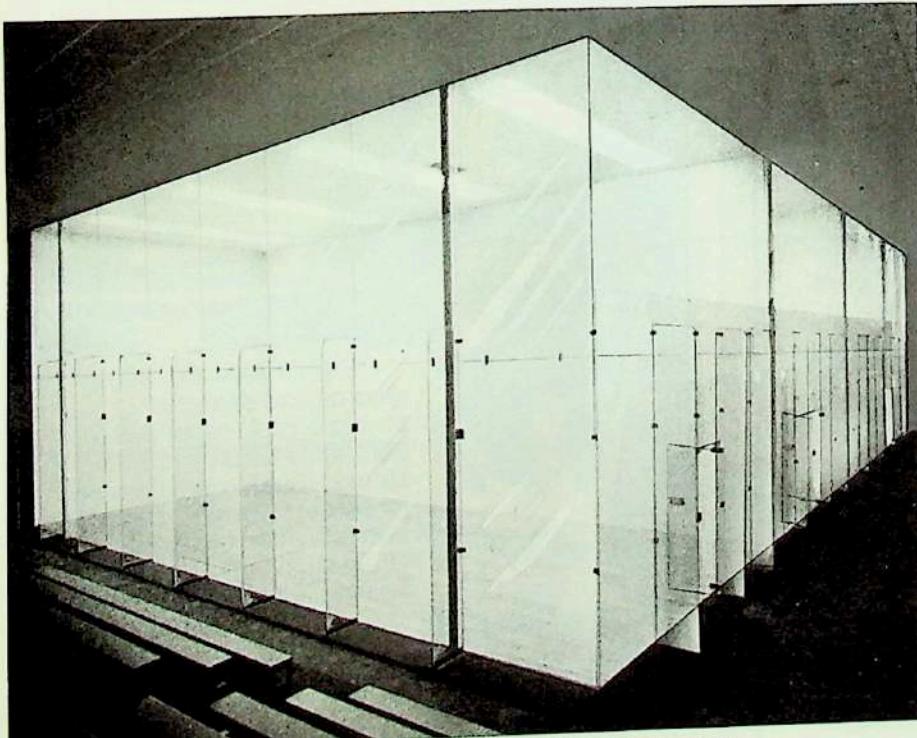


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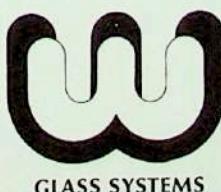
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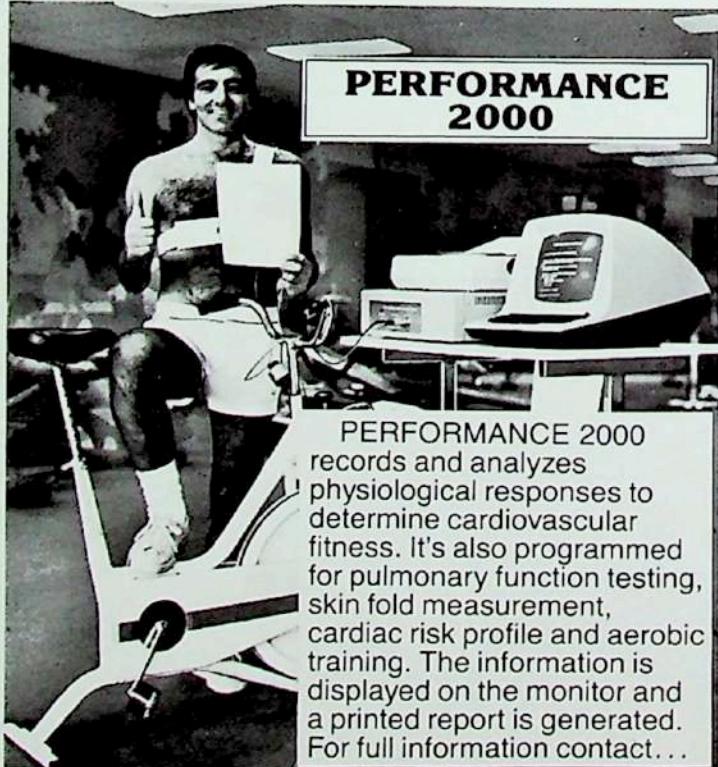


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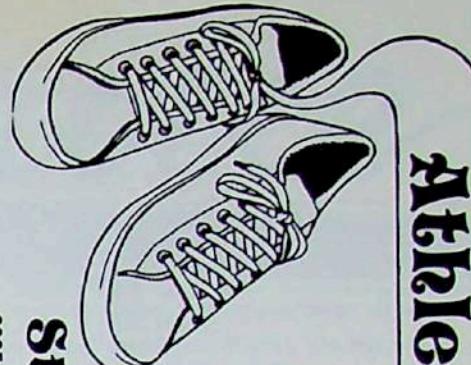
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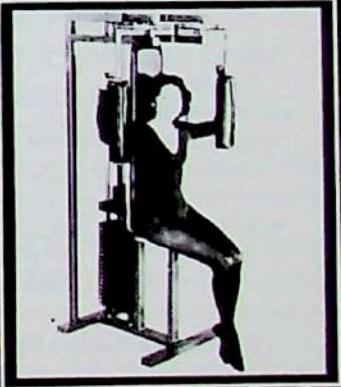
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