Treadmills Are Making a Comeback

by Rachel Zabonick-Chonko — December 11, 2014 in Club News, The Pulse 1

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Treadmills are a gym staple, a piece of equipment almost every gym has. But very few members actually like using them, until now. Treadmills are making a comeback.

Debora Warner

Gyms such as Crunch and Equinox have incorporated treadmill-training classes into their group exercise programming, and fitness studios dedicated to the treadmill are starting to gain popularity.

In November, one of the first treadmill running studios — Mile High Run Club — opened its doors in New York City. The studio's founder, Debora Warner, started her fitness career as a trainer for Equinox, where she began coaching runners. "I was the only trainer with endurance experience on staff because of my triathlon background, so my manager gave me all the marathon runners," recalled Warner. "I developed a niche my first year in fitness working with runners. We did everything from injury prevention and rehab to strength and interval training on the treadmill. I became very intrigued with the mind of the runner and what motivates them."

After struggling with training groups of runners, all with different fitness levels, Warner came up with the idea of the Mile High Run Club. "At one point I just thought, wouldn't it be great if we could get everyone in a room and they can work at their own pace and no one would get left behind?" asked Warner.

So how does Warner make running on a treadmill appealing to clients? The first step was the equipment. Her treadmill of choice is the Woodway treadmill. "I call it the runner's treadmill," said Warner. "I probably wouldn't do this gym without this treadmill, because there is nothing exciting about a room full of the treadmills that you typically find in gyms. The Woodway is special. It really mimics the feeling of running on a trail."

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Warner also relies on expert coaching to make the workout engaging. According to Warner, one of the many reasons people don't practice speed and interval training on their own is because they are unaware of how to structure the intervals. Many of the coaches at Mile High Run Club are elite

runners themselves; they are able to guide clients through an effective workout. “The reason people dislike the treadmill is because they are not necessarily embracing the best use for it,” added Warner.

Mile High Run Club offers two classes — Dash 28 and The Distance. Dash 28 is a foundation building class. Warner explained the class kicks off with an active, dynamic warm up, followed by a 26- to 28-minute run, 10 minutes of strength and power training with kettlebells. It ends with one minute of core work. Runners will cover between two to three miles in the class.

The Distance class is a 60-minute class composed of only running. The entire class takes place on the treadmill. Runners in this class will cover between five to seven miles. “The goal of these classes is really intensity, not distance, even though it is called the distance class,” said Warner. “It is speed training.”

Need one last reason your gym and members should embrace the treadmill? Running and interval training results in numerous health benefits. The emphasis of the treadmill running classes is to increase endurance and power. “I think running is the best form of cardio,” said Warner. “It pushes the lactate threshold back. A runner might get tired going a certain distance at a certain pace, but interval training helps to push that wall back so they can go longer and faster.”

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Kevin Wilson 9 years ago

Great article! So glad treadmills are making a strong comeback. I wanted to let you know about a new HIIT app called Persii that I just released for the treadmill. I hope you check us out, thanks!

http://www.persiit.com

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