

Scuba Fitness:

THE WATERMAN'S WORKOUT

Multi-set circuit training is a great way to stay fit for the water

By Gretchen M. Ashton, CFT, NBFEE

The spirit of the Waterman is best captured by Pablo Neruda: "I need the sea because it teaches me." The energy of the sea touches us spiritually and physically. John Wagner, competitive body surfer and scuba diver, also found that the sea offered him camaraderie, business success, inspiration, and motivation for his fitness lifestyle.

Whether he is *cabalgar sobre las olas* (riding the waves) in Puerto Escondido, Mexico, *he'e umauma* (sliding with the chest) at the Hawaiian pipeline, or *Spermin* (catching the wave from behind and under then breaking through the face of the wave) at his favorite spot, Boomers in La Jolla, John is most comfortable in the water.



Gretchen M. Ashton is registered with the National Board of Fitness Examiners. An advanced diver, personal trainer, fitness therapist, and world champion athlete, Gretchen developed the comprehensive FitDiver® program and is the owner of ScubaFit®. Gretchen is a contributing writer for California Diver Magazine and an Expert Speaker for the Los Angeles County Scuba Advanced Diver Program and Underwater Instructor Certification Course. She has been published in Alert Diver (United States) and Alert Diver (Asia-Pacific), is a Scuba Fitness Examiner at Examiner.com, contributes to Divetime.com, has presented at the Scuba Show and on Scuba Radio.*



“**L**ike scuba divers, watermen are a diverse group. One of the best things about bodysurfing and diving are the people I’ve come to know,” says John. John (top left), with fellow Bonzai Pipeline competitors, Durdam Rocherolle, Decathlete and Extreme Endurance Athlete; Aaron Piersol, Olympic gold Medalist Backstroke Swimmer; Jeff Mitchell, National Masters Swimmer; Fred David, French

Bodysurfer, Lifeguard and Model; Thomas Van Mellum, Wedge Bodysurfer and Collegiate Basketball Player; Don Fells, Triathlete and Fitness Trainer.

John enjoys technical and wreck diving. He holds three patents, numerous awards and developed a popular dive fin, all inspired by the “thrill of bodysurfing, and the suspense and freedom of diving.” →

I need the sea because it teaches me. I don’t know if I learn music or awareness, if it’s a single wave or its vast existence, or only its harsh voice or its shining suggestions of fishes and ships. The fact is that until I fall asleep, in some magnetic way I move in the university of the waves. It’s not simply the shells crunched as if some shivering planet were giving signs of its gradual death; no, I reconstruct the day out of a fragment, the stalactite from a sliver of salt, and the great god out of a spoonful. What it taught me before, I keep. Its air ceaseless wind, water and sand.

—Pablo Neruda



Photo by Durdam Rocherolle, with permission.



John is performing leg extensions to strengthen the muscles on the top of the thigh, known as the quadriceps. During this exercise, the quadriceps are strengthened for the purpose of extending the knee joint, which straightens the leg. Balanced strength in the leg muscles is important to efficient fin-kick swimming.

Multi-Set Circuit Training

John's workout of choice is circuit training. Circuit training of any type is an excellent workout for divers. The concept is to quickly move from one exercise to the next, without any rest, for a series of exercises. A circuit may consist of any number of exercises. John practices excellent

fitness principles and understands the importance of establishing balanced strength and endurance for water sports. He prefers resistance machines. He trains his entire body in every workout, and changes the routine every few months. He completes two to three sets, as low as eight to

fifteen repetitions to as high as thirty repetitions per set, with adaptable weights. His workout varies from forty-five minutes to one hour and fifteen minutes. Prior to competition, John follows his circuit training with swimming, and combines all-out speed laps, followed by distance work.

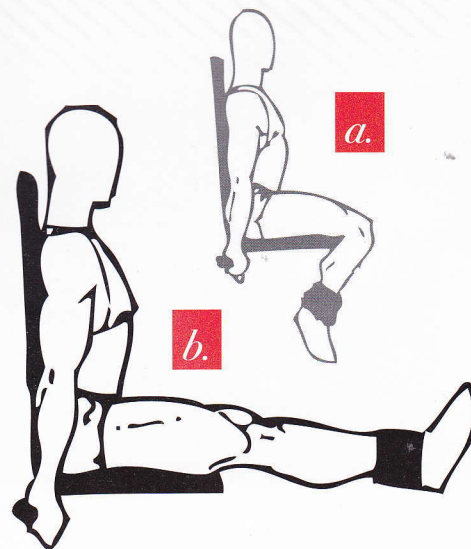
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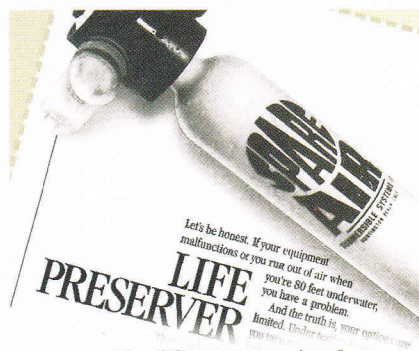
TIPS FOR USING RESISTANCE MACHINES

- Use only well-maintained equipment.
- Adjust all possible settings—such as the seat bottom, seat back and other moveable pads—to best fit the body. Never force the body to accommodate a machine that is not the correct size or design.
- Read the directions and illustrations on the machine for additional information on proper use.
- Ask for assistance from fitness staff for machines you are unfamiliar with.
- Never overload the machine or attempt to lift excessive weight. Resistance machines isolate muscle groups. They place different load on joints than free weights and functional exercises do.
- Resistance machines are a great alternative for individuals that are not able to perform certain free-weight and functional exercises.

John Wagner

John began diving in the 1970s and filed his first patent in 1993. John designed and developed the Universal Fin Strap and the APS Mantaray dive fin, which has recently been sold to Hollis Gear. John's designs are recognized by the 2005 Testers Choice, 2006 Travel, and Universal Strap Review Awards. The APS Mantaray dive fin was chosen to be exhibited at the Inventors' Expo, sponsored by the U.S. Patent Office at Disney World's Epcot Center, on two separate occasions. John gives back to the dive community in many ways. One of his favorite ways has been as a volunteer for the 3R's: Rocks, Rips, and Reefs, where he conducted tours of popular dive sites to educate and orient divers and snorkelers to the surf, swell, and tides on underwater rocks and reefs. 

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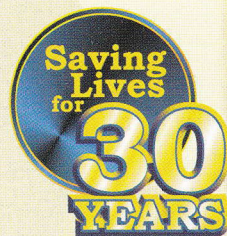


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