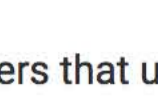
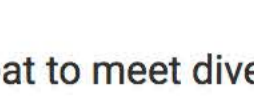


Taking A New Spin in Diving Fitness: AQUACYCLING

CALIFORNIA DIVER – APRIL 29, 2017

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It's always great to meet divers, instructors and dive center owners that understand and embrace the importance of physical fitness for diving. Jeffrey Davis at [Aqua Hut in Toledo, Ohio](#) "gets it". Aqua Hut is a full-service PADI and SSI dive center focused on all aspects of the diving lifestyle including education, safety, travel, fitness and family. In addition to swimming lessons and physical therapy in the dive training pool, Jeff is offering AQUACYCLING for his diving clients, instructors and the surrounding community. The concept of placing fitness equipment in the pool is not a new one, but periodically gains renewed attention.



Aquacycling at Aqua Hut

Diver and AQUACYCLING participant Simony Silva learned about Aqua Hut on Facebook through a friend and fell in love with the idea of diving and traveling with her children. Simony shared with AQUACYCLING she can exercise without hurting her body. "It's fun! The workout gives me energy for the rest of the day. I noticed that my energy level has increased and my body feels more relaxed at bedtime."

Story by Gretchen M. Ashton, CFT, SFT, SFN, NBF

Jeff learned about AQUACYCLING in 2013 and with good research and a timely social media contact started the program in just a few months. He purchased 17 POOLBIKES from the POOLBIKE company that also makes underwater treadmills in Barcelona, Spain. The bikes are placed in the pool and pedaling is performed underwater using the water for resistance. Riders sit on the bikes in 88-degree water up to the waist. Two to five 45-minute AQUACYCLING classes are offered every day of the week at Aqua Hut. Class participants average around nine, and are mostly non-divers ranging in age from 25 to 70 years. Jeff uses a scheduling application on his website for registration and payment for the classes which are taught by a team of nearly 10 fitness instructors, with five more instructors on a waiting list to teach. Special rates are offered as an incentive for new clients starting at six sessions for \$55.00, drop-ins are welcome at \$15.00 a session, and regulars can purchase a 10-pack and get a free 11th class for \$150.00. Jeff is now a POOLBIKE distributor and already working on additional pool classes such as TRX. Jeff has been a diver and shop owner for nearly 40 years and his enthusiasm is contagious.



Jeff Davis at Aqua Hut

Owning and operating a dive center means you are living and breathing scuba diving. How did you discover diving?

I took a basic scuba class at Bowling Green State University in the 70's. After the class I was hooked and decided I wanted to pursue scuba as a career.

How did you become involved in the business of diving?

I was teaching school and the local store owner wanted to know if I'd like to buy his business. Right place right time.

You host an extensive dive travel schedule and travel a lot yourself. What is your key to a successful dive travel business?

It's simple. From that first phone call inquiry about scuba classes we talk about three things. The need to dive actively. The importance of owning your own equipment and supporting your local store. Travel is good for the soul but allows you to see different cultures. Plus, we tell them they need to put a trip on their schedule or they will never go. We run about six trips a year and take anywhere from 18 divers (full live-aboard) up to 75 divers to Cozumel. Most trips book within a month but my exotic trips normally book in 24 hours.

Your new AQUACYCLING classes bring physical fitness into your dive center. What inspired the idea?

I've known about AQUACYCLING for three years and wanted to make more money, find more potential scuba clients and offer fitness to my scuba clients.

How did you go about deciding on what type of exercise, finding an instructor and selecting the equipment?

I looked at potential for more divers, aqua cycling just worked. I found the instructor through a mutual friend on Facebook

What brand of cycle are you using?

We chose POOLBIKE from Spain. The model we have will work for 90% of the population.

Do you remove the bikes from the pool between classes or are they permanently attached to the pool?

Bikes are removed after each class and put under a fan.

Do you or the instructor use a method to help clients track health and fitness progress?

They are all certified personal trainers and come up with their own program.

How has the class been received by your diving clients?

Fantastic, we've only had to cancel one class so far.

Do you have non-divers coming to class?

Yes, it's mostly non-divers who we hope will become divers.

Is there anything else you'd like to share?

Dive store owners need to think out of the box, we are always trying to be creative.

On the [Aqua Hut website](#), Jeff and the AQUACYCLING team explain the top 10 reasons to give it a try:

1. You can burn up to 800 kcal per hour while cycling in the water. Thanks to the support and the pressure provided by the water, blood circulation is sped up and fat elimination is facilitated. Our pool is a comfortable 88 degrees.
2. Water friction acts as a massage for the legs, multiplying by two the stimulation and action on the cellulite, helping to eliminate it. Studies show the connection between the deep leg muscles – called postural muscles – and the lymphatic system. Water resistance and movement impact on both agonist and antagonist muscles and generate a natural massage that clearly improves the skin aspects and cellulite by draining the entire lymphatic system. The AQUACYCLING workout becomes an active draining massage, highly effective.
3. The hydrostatic pressure of water combined with cycling movement considerably increases your blood flow and circulation, energizing your muscles, and reducing the symptoms of tired legs. Water pressure compensates the arterial pressure and improves circulation. If your blood circulates well, your legs feel lighter.
4. Whether you are an athlete in recovery, an active pregnant woman or you simply want to preserve the most precious thing you own, your body, the AQUACYCLING workout will please you. Water's zero-gravity-feeling is perfect for people with muscular, joints or overweight problems. The water support your body weight. The AQUACYCLING workout is fun and challenging impact-free workout.
5. When you cycle in the water, don't be surprised if, the next day, you do not feel any pain. While in the water, you are preventing your body from any injuries or micro-trauma. Your muscles are working out nicely but efficiently.
6. When you usually feel sore after a land-based workout, you created micro damage in the muscle fibers and connective tissue. In the water, there is no impact your joints, muscles and bones and you are much less likely to cause any micro-trauma to your body.
7. Stress is reduced and sleep is improved. Posture, muscle relaxation and flexibility are improved.
8. While in the water, your heartbeat frequency is 10% lower than on land. You work at a higher intensity with a lower heart rate which helps improve your endurance.
9. Breathing well is the key to a good workout. The air stimulates the blood flow and brings oxygen to your muscles which help them work better and get an efficient workout. In the water, you don't feel out of breath. You increase your capacity in a gentle way.
10. The buoyancy of water allows you to move your joints in a wider range of motion than you could on land. The AQUACYCLING workout is also a very good recovery workout after a Marathon or any race, or intense land base work-out. It allows you to recover better and faster.
10. Cycling under water is a revolution in Europe and has already proven its numerous benefits on both health and beauty. Thanks to its positive impact on people's lives, 'aquabiking' has turned into a massive trend all over Europe. All media are relaying this extraordinary phenomenon and many sports clubs are now offering 'aquabiking' classes, transforming this physical therapy activity into a real group fitness work-out. Inspired by the concept of 'aquabiking', Aqua Hut is Toledo's first AQUACYCLING facility.

Story by Gretchen M. Ashton, CFT, SFT, SFN, NBF

Read more of Gretchen's diving fitness articles by [clicking here](#).