

# HOW'S MY FORM?

FEEDBACK TRAINING COMBINES TECHNOLOGY AND FITNESS FOR A MORE ACCURATE WORKOUT EVALUATION.

BY LISA PAYNE

**W**e no longer exercise alone. From shoe sensors tracking our running distance to armbands recording our daily calorie expenditure, we've become a society of exercising gadget fanatics. We want to see our results quantified, qualified and electronically sent to our computer or phone to chart our training progress. Whether you bike, run, swim or are a novice or tri-athlete, training programs should be fun and efficient. Luckily, fitness companies are bringing training equipment up-to-date with new technology that will allow us to more easily hit our personal best.

If you're a cyclist, you probably know if you need a road or mountain bike. But you may not know what's kinesthetically delaying you from gaining better power and speed. The Computrainer helps you increase your power by 20-30 percent and your speed by 2-4 miles an hour. It also allows you to monitor how each individual foot presses on the pedal with a program called the SpinScan Pedal Stroke Analyzer. A screen displays your power output, speed, heart rate and your SpinScan results. You can also download different trails and terrain, including real bike routes like Ironman, so that you can feel like you're really there – intensity and all. "It's like a video game," explains Emily Hutchins, part owner of On Your Mark Training (OYM). "You put in your name and password and play the game." OYM has four Computrainers, along with 16 CycleOps spin bikes.

Some days, going for a run can come easy. You've created a new rockin' playlist on your iPod, maybe you got new workout shoes or maybe you've found a new treadmill. Life Fitness has over 400 pieces of fitness equipment you can find in health clubs and homes around the globe, including the F1 Smart Home Treadmill. Complete with an iPod charger, the F1 Smart treadmill (pictured right) is foldable to save room at home and uses the FlexDeck Shock Absorption System to ab-

sorb user impact by 30 percent compared to that of running on hard surfaces. But one of the most unique aspects of this treadmill is the Life Fitness Virtual Trainer, which offers more than just "Manual" and "Cardio" programs. You can create and download workout programs through the Life Fitness Virtual Trainer website and upload them through a USB port. If you're working out with friends, you can also compare your results to theirs in real time. Need more motivation? The Virtual Trainer now has Facebook compatibility where you can post your results to all your friends.

Dry land not your thing? The Endless Pool is different than your average swimming or lap pool.

This often 7" x 14" pool mimics a river current with an adjustable dual propulsion system that can take you from a leisurely swim to a hundred-yard swim pace. In the Chicago Blue Dolphins training facility, they've installed under and above water cameras to video record and play back your swim in order to evaluate and make small adjustments to your form. They also have mirrors so you can watch your stroke. The Endless Pool "forces you to pay attention to what you're doing," notes Blue Dolphins head coach and owner John Fitzpatrick, adding that it's great for taking strokes out for a test drive.

Charting your progress through fitness equipment with feedback capability is a growing trend, allowing us to hold ourselves accountable for our individual shortcomings. From there, we can make even the most minor of adjustments to better customize our workouts and help us achieve our personal best. ■

