

# STREET SCENE

Inside **S<sup>2</sup>**  
America's Cup

All eyes are on San Diego, Calif., as Dennis Connor begins his defense of his 1987 America's Cup victory. The challengers are from New Zealand, and to borrow a phrase from a sports-minded TV station, Street Scene is getting up close and personal with this island country. See Page 6D.

Monday, September 5, 1988 O&E

The Observer & Eccentric Newspapers

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## Leotards, tank tops: High-tech 'marriage'

By Judith Doner Berne  
staff writer

The slim, leotard-clad females file in through the south door. The muscled, tank-topped males move in through the north entrance.

It's the newest marriage in town as the body-builders of Powerhouse Gym and the aerobic exercisers from Fitness are now side-by-side in a new, high tech, mirrored and upbeat storefront in Hunter's Square, Orchard Lake Road south of 14 Mile in Farmington Hills.

But each partner — as in many modern marriages — is retaining his/her maiden names and economic independence. And, at least so far, the "families" that each has brought to the marriage are eyeing each other with caution.

"WE PEAKED in our gym. I've always loved aerobics," said Jill Ansel, who with her husband Larry has operated the Powerhouse franchise for a year. So they recently moved to the larger quarters from another Orchard Lake Road shopping center, two miles south. She took classes at all the local studios and health clubs offering aerobics, "shopping" for the one she wanted to be her next door neighbor.

"By going in together, they'd get more people and we'd get more people," said Helaine Keller, who owns Fitness with partner Andrea Bernstein. Fitness abandoned its smaller studio on Northwestern Highway earlier this month to expand its space and share quarters — and hopefully clientele — with Powerhouse.

HOWEVER THE separate doors are symbolic of the fact they are "two separate businesses in the same space," Keller, a Birmingham resident, said. "We are not affiliated."

Fitness, which also has a studio in Birmingham's 555 building, counts females as 80 percent of its clientele. Coincidentally, about 80 percent of Powerhouse's members are male.

"We've wanted more men," Keller says, and the newest Fitness routines have reflected more intensely and power movements. They have also actively sought more male instructors.

"We've made our aerobic workouts a little more masculine, cut out the fluff, getting to things that really work," adds Bernstein, a Southfield resident. "They're a little more resistance oriented."

AS FOR ANSEL, who lives in Farmington Hills, "We wanted to give the opportunity for our customers to have something else to do."

Owners of both businesses are out to dispel some myths. They hope that through education and proximity more body builders will incorporate aerobics and more aerobic exercisers will take up weights.

"In terms of physiology, aside from socially and psychologically, they go hand in hand," Keller says. Women "are afraid they'll bulk up," Keller said. They won't — they don't have the physiology. At the same time, body builders are afraid they'll lose their bulk. They won't — they'll gain agility and muscle flexibility and lose fat."

ALTHOUGH THE exposure to more members of the opposite sex while exercising will appeal to some, owners of both businesses are adamant that heavy-duty, no-frills exercise is the main reason for coming to Fitness/Powerhouse, that those who are more social may be happier at the health clubs.

"I wanted a place for people to come to work out and not feel they have to wear makeup," said Ansel.

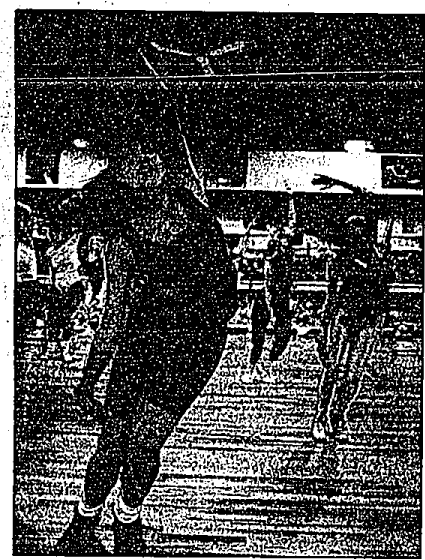
"We're exercise — no frills, a hard sophisticated workout," Keller agreed. "We're all here for the same reason. There is more of that social opportunity, but it's not blatant."



Don Frazier helps novice weight lifter Honora Levy of Bloomfield Hills with her weight training program. Frazier operates a service called Body By You out of the Powerhouse Gym. photos by RANDY BORST/staff photographer



Mike Aho of Farmington Hills grimaces during his workout at the Powerhouse Gym.



Helaine Keller, co-owner of Fitness, pulls her class through a tough aerobic workout.

## Look before you stretch

"Body building is coming out of the closet now," said Jill Ansel, of Powerhouse Gym.

"Everything will peak, but aerobics are here to stay," said Andrea Bernstein of Fitness.

For the newcomer to body building, most area gyms offer weight and streamlining machines, exercise cycles, moving stairs — and supervision on how to use the equipment according to your ambition and physique. And new machines are coming out all the time.

As for aerobics, classes vary from the original jumping-style aerobics

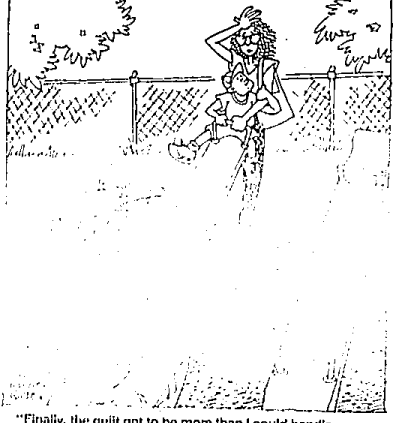
to low-impact to what some believe are "the aerobics of the future" — hi/lo — which combines the two. As for stretching and toning your body, classes may give an overall workout or be devoted to lower body or abdominals (abics).

Body building and aerobics are offered throughout the Observer & Eccentric communities at gymnasiums and studios, private sports and health clubs, Y's and community education programs.

Whatever you do, Bernstein advised, "Find out what you like to do and stick with it."

## R.U. Syrius

Karlos Barney



"Finally, the guilt got to be more than I could handle — I had to join a support group, 'Parents Without Computers'"

## Almost heaven and white water rafting

By Casey Hane  
staff writer

I was sure.

The rubber raft slid from under me and was headed down the Gauley River toward the next foamy, rocky dropoff of white water.

We were bucking our way through Pillow Rock, the second major white-water rapid, and I was already a statistic. This two-day overnight river trip had just begun, and I was not going to live to see the rest of it.

I was sure.

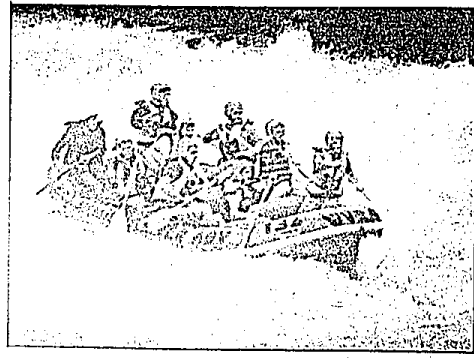
"Everyone OK?" I heard our guide inquire with a laugh. I realized it was almost heaven, but I was still in West Virginia. Much to my surprise, and delight, no one had fallen out.

Our raft, carrying eight, was on its way to a bouncing, wet, wild ride down the Gauley River, which is in the mountains just east of Charleston.

The Gauley is one of the few rivers outfitters schedule for fall white-water trips, because that's when the U.S. Corps of Engineers lets water out of the dam. We were there in early October, just before the colors changed but in time for a couple of cold, snappy nights in a tent.

Fall rafters appear to be in uniform, as everyone dons wetsuits, wool sweaters and helmets for the trip.

The Gauley River covers 28 miles of sandstone cliffs and forests of poplar, mountain ash, conifers, hemlock, red oak and white pine.



A group of rafters take on the Gauley River in West Virginia, one of the more rocky and technical rivers to navigate. photo courtesy of NORTH AMERICAN RIVER RUNNERS INC.

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