

# 5TH ANNUAL miami fitness festival

MARCH 27-30, 2003

By: Diane McCabbe

photos by: Skip Faulkner and

Any excuse to hit Miami Beach is not hard to find. BUT, the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Miami Fitness Festival made it irresistible! The previous years' Festivals drew tremendous interest from the fitness industry as well as fitness aficionados. This year was no different! Many fitness projects would begin and finish here.

And why not? Hot weather, blue ocean, yellow-white sand and hot bods scattering the view. It was the perfect backdrop for any fitness-related project.

Explained Media Relations coordinator Cece Feinberg, "The Miami Beach Fitness Festival brings together the world of fitness, fashion and fun. It is a combination that appeals to both the sports enthusiasts and to the general public. This event takes place on the beach and offers a breathtaking view of the Atlantic Ocean, while showcasing new products, new fitness equipment, new aerobic classes, and new fitness activities to beautiful body-conscious attendees. It's an event filled with great eye candy, and I think that's one of the reasons that we get such an amazing response from producers and networks."

Sound like a wildly overstated advertisement? Not at all!

There were a few departures from the previous year's format that the promoters had to implement:

**First:** It was moved from its usual spot on Ocean Drive.

**Second:** It went from free to \$12.00 entrance fee.

**Third:** For the first time, all of the exhibitor booths were partitioned off within 16,000 square meters.

These changes could have marred this year's success and turn off the attendees, but they didn't. Over the March 27 — March 30 weekend, an estimated 100,000 attendees passed through the entrance.

There's no denying that there were plenty of attractions. The three-day Festival boasted a total of 147 planned activities. There were more than 60 exhibitor booths hosting the events that enticed the attendees with new exercise gadgets and nutritional supplement staples such as Met Rx, Zoic and Sobe.

Some of the more unusual sights included bikini-clad boxing girls, Crunch's hip-shaking Zumba girls with their brightly colored yellow-feathered headgear, and the presence of Nutella chocolate spread (trying hard to lure a few fitties over to the dark side).

Of course there were plenty of competitions to watch, including Muscle Mania's South Beach Championships, the Treadmill Races, the Soccer Penalty Kick Challenge, the Beach Volleyball Challenge, the Adventure Fitness Challenge, the Soccer Cage Tournament, the Martial Art Village, the Viking Strong Man Challenge, the National Aerobic Championships, the Fitness America South Beach Pageant, and the Ocean Drive 5K Run. Many events allowed and even inspired the less than ardent competitor to give it a go.

Prizes and freebies were plentiful and it was not unusual to see people getting a good workout from drag-

ging their bags chock full of free stuff.

The Festival was teaming with film crews who took advantage of the perfect backdrop. They descended into the compound in droves hoping to catch some interesting footage for their network. Some of the media included Discover Channel's "Ten Years Younger", Telemundo "Despierta America", Telefuturo "El Escandalo", WSVN "Deco Drive", Channel 10 News, Channel 6 News, Telemundo News, Univision "Primer Impacto", Telemundo "Ritmo Deportiva", and ESPN International.

Explaining the advantages of the Fitness Festival's trendy location, Tina Kissavos, Producer of a new Oxygen Magazine Pilot said, "To begin with, the Miami fitness festival attracts thousands of people each year and you can be sure the majority of them will be some of the fittest bodies in the world. It also serves as a great inspiration to get or keep fit; surrounded by anything and everything that has to do with health - be it through exercise or eating well to the latest fitness gear to make you look good and feel good about yourself."

Along with the media's taking advantage of the Festival, there were umpteen opportunities for spectators and fitness enthusiasts who wanted to find out what gym equipment was hot, what new supplements were on the market, or which trendy fitness class would storm their hometown gyms in the near future. Crunch Fit-



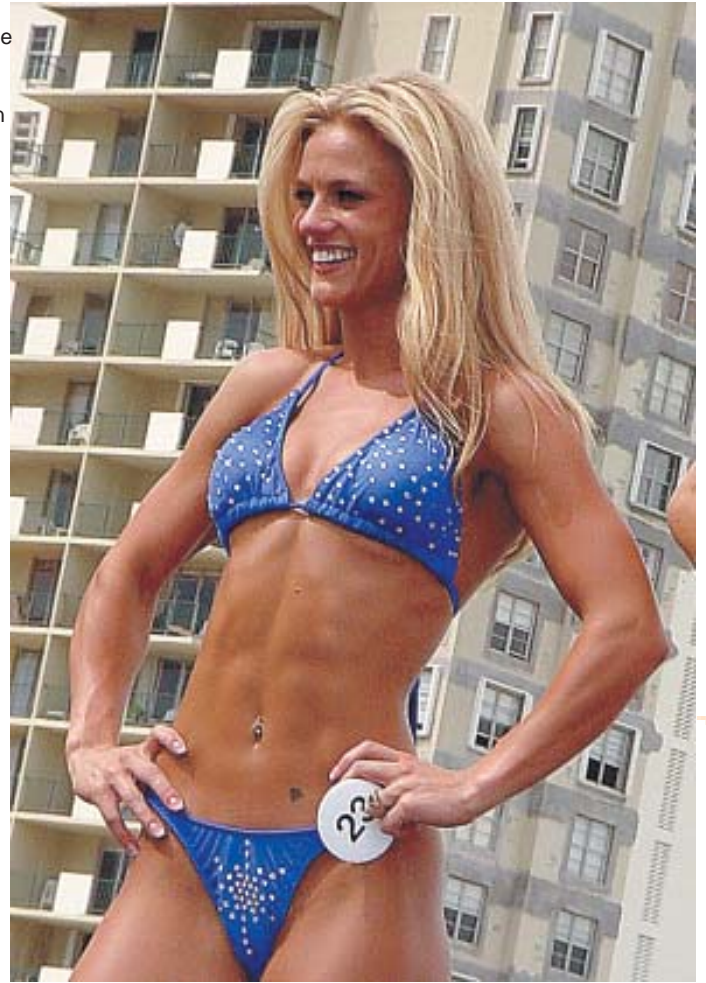
ness dominated the weekend with a fully packed schedule of classes for anyone to jump in, elbow someone aside, and jig. The Sport and Fitness Games, the Fitness Triathlon, the Aerobic Fiesta, Spinning classes, Aquagym, Muscle Beach Gym, and the Wellness Cardiofit Club presented other events.

Reminding everyone of the more serious issues afoot overseas, the US Marines were staked out with their bright red Hummer — the same one the Strongmen would drag (plus a Pull-Up station) — which served as a competition for visitors to rep on. The prize was a hot item — a black t-shirt with "Pain is Weakness Leaving the Body" printed on it. After signing autographs and posing for photos with Sgt Edwards, Mocha Lee said, "I felt a true sense of patriotism hanging out with the Marines."

See you all next year at the **6th Annual Miami Beach Fitness Festival MARCH 25-28, 2004 — same place** — on the Beach behind Collins Park between 21st and 22nd Streets, Miami Beach.  
([www.miamifitnessfestival.com](http://www.miamifitnessfestival.com))



Kim Hill, promoter of the Nova competitions and writer, Diane McCabe checked out profile..on Diane McCabe!



Tina Rigdon was shining as bright as the South Beach sun in the Ms. Bikini competition. Over 50 girls came out to compete in this event and the Fitness America competition.



Sylvia and Gus Fernandez are proud of their client, Rosie, who is "already tearing up the course!"

Aerobics moves into the boudoir with cardio striptease, one of many classes offered at Crunch Fitness in South Beach.



Viking Strong Man Challenge..ARRRGH!!

No fitness event would be complete without a US Marine workout!



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Now THAT'S a great workout!



Funny man Tim Wilkins yucks it up with ZUMBA creator, Beto.

Zumba is a one-of-a-kind combination of dance and aerobics, designed to put "FUN" back into fitness!



NM writer, Ian Mathews stays in good shape year-round. Check out his article on page 38.

