

in brief...

dance mat first for aura

Aura Tullamore Leisure Centre in County Offaly has teamed with ZigZag to launch Ireland's first fitness-related dance mat classes.

The site, run by Tullamore Town Council and Aura Sport and Leisure Management, has invested in ZigZag's five-step dance mats – said to be the first dance mats in the health club sector in Eire – for use in its dedicated children's fitness room, as well as at external events.

"You can't just add an activity to the timetable and expect people to come," says Stuart Martin, Aura's group fitness and retention manager. "The taster events have demonstrated what fun the dance mats can be, and the proof is in the number of people now coming to the centre specifically to use them."

The centre currently runs only kids' dance mat classes, but has been doing taster sessions with adults, including older adults, and plans to introduce classes for these audiences too.

escape appointments

Escape Fitness has strengthened its team in continental Europe following continued growth across the region. Raimo Treffers joins from Life Fitness, as trade sales account and distribution business manager, while Katrin Jaernecke is the new national key account manager for Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

club med 30th birthday

Club Med, the fitness chain in Paris, will be celebrating its 30th birthday in September with an open-door event in five of its 22 clubs.

Members and non-members will be able to come along to try out activities at the clubs, with a different theme in each of the five locations: Zen, techno, fitness, sport and wellness. The sessions will take place across the whole day, until 1am, with Zumba sessions – the Latin-inspired rhythm and movement classes – playing a role throughout. Members can bring a friend to the sessions.

turkey's hilton dalaman opens

The Hilton Dalaman Golf Resort & Spa officially opened on 19 June. Operated under a franchise licence agreement with Gocay Tourism, Management, Investment, Transportation & Trade Inc, the resort is Hilton Hotel Corporation's ninth property in Turkey.



Spa offers 18 treatment rooms as well as four VIP treatment rooms

The new 410-room resort has its own private kilometre-long beach and a range of leisure facilities, including a 6,000sq m health club and spa.

The Precor-equipped gym offers CV and resistance equipment, an indoor jogging circuit and a studio for meditation, yoga and pilates classes. Facilities are currently only available to guests, but memberships will be sold from next year.

The spa is one of the region's largest holistic themed spas, with 18 treatment rooms, four VIP treatment rooms, 10 spa suites, two Turkish baths, four saunas, a steamroom and a spa pool.

There are also seven outdoor and three indoor swimming pools and two tennis courts, while an 18-hole golf course and nine-hole golf academy facility are scheduled to open in 2010.

vivafit hits 100 clubs in portugal

The opening of Vivafit's latest club in Lisbon has taken the franchise to the 100-site milestone in Portugal.

A further 21 locations are set to open by the end of the year – 19 in Portugal and two in Spain – representing an investment of €3m and an annual growth rate of 23 per cent year-on-year.

CEO Pedro Ruiz says: "Reaching the one hundred milestone, without any stores closing in the last six years, is a clear indicator that our brand and franchising system are secure investments."

"Portugal is still a growing market: penetration rates are lower than average in the EU, which means that we still have a large, untapped market to conquer."



Vivafit, the women-only franchise, offers pilates classes to its members

positive results in australian member survey

Sixty per cent of Australian gym-goers are either satisfied or very satisfied with their gym, according to the 2009 Australian Fitness Industry Survey (AFIS), conducted among 7,000 members by direct debit service provider Ezypay.

Based on the survey, 64 per cent of members are female, with 31 per cent aged between 26 and 35.

Ten per cent said the cost of the membership was not as important as the benefits received, and 39 per cent said clubs were in general value for

money. Members claim to visit between two and three times a week, mostly to do a cardio and weights workout (67 per cent) or a group fitness class (34 per cent). Many employ the services of a personal trainer (17 per cent), but 51 per cent say they reached their goals due to advice given by the club, as opposed to having to pay for PT.

The survey also reported a very competitive local market: 20 per cent of clubs have 10 or more local competitors within a 10-minute drive time.