

20th April 2017

For the past 4 weeks Peter Hudson from Aqua Pro Fitness has provided us with a swim fast ergo machine. It has been utilized immediately in our physiotherapy practice for patients attending rehabilitation sessions in Clinical Pilates, Swimming Prehab and Physio Circuits. It's also been a specific tool for shoulder testing and surfers in terms of paddling.

Interestingly, we all ready had an old "swim trainer" in our rehab gym, used as an adjunct to our Pilates reformers and other rehab equipment. The idea was primarily for surfers to use it for paddling strength. It was further used by a group of young swimmers during their Prehab Pilates. Plus any patients coming back from shoulder injuries. The problem was it's very one dimensional, could only be used with both arms working bilaterally in one direction and not suitable for a number of patients.

Peter has provided an advanced machine that fits in with exactly what we had in mind. The Swim Fast ergo is way more functional from a swimming and surfing paddling based action. It has given us more focus on the specific action of paddling or swimming. It is directly involved with the assessment, technique, fitness and testing for either swimmers and surfers (paddling wise).

Being a surfer myself, and as a physiotherapist that treats a large population of surfers, it is no surprise I have invested in a Swim Fast Pro machine. Down South Physio & Sports Rehab is based in Dunsborough Western Australia, which is located in the middle of a major surfing region for the whole of Australia. Our focus has been to support the local community plus work with athletes including elite and recreational surfers.

In addition to the surfing population we are linked to Busselton Swimming Club. A Prehab Pilates session is conducted weekly for junior swimmers, five of which are currently competing at nationals. There are also numerous patients at the practice that are rehabilitating from shoulder surgery or have shoulder instability/pain. A number of these patients have been tested and assessed on the Swim Fast Pro machine.

From the physiotherapy perspective the machine is a relevant tool to what we are trying achieve. Physio is largely focused on 3 areas;

1. Diagnosis / Assessment
2. Manual therapy (hands on treatment)
3. Active rehabilitation (exercise therapy)

* Working with Peter we've realized the machine is suitable for our practice to help train surfers (paddling fitness), swimmers and patients with shoulder injuries. Furthermore patients with spinal or lower limb injuries can potentially maintain shoulder conditioning or paddling fitness.

Initial thoughts for practical use are;

1. Paddling fitness for the surfing population
2. Technique and shoulder assessment
3. Biomechanics of the shoulder or scapula stabilization
4. Observation of spinal posturing Cervico-thoracic and Lumbo-pelvic
5. Fitness Testing (surfers and swimmers)
6. Swimming Technique and scapula-shoulder-spinal assessment
7. Exercise rehab or strength and conditioning (post-operative, shoulder pain or other long term injuries).

Physiotherapists are well positioned to use this machine for shoulder assessment and rehabilitation. It can further be utilized to monitor lumbar spine extension positions, which plagues surfers. There is new ground that can be developed for the surfing population from a paddling, rehab, assessment and fitness perspective. Our practice is positioned to access the surfing population and all ready putting the machine to use with current patients. I'm excited at the prospective of how well we can integrate it into our local surfing and swimming community, as well as general patients.

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