



November 14th, 2007
6 PM Boot Camp Class

YMCA Fairless Hills CHALLENGES PhillyFIT Magazine's CHALLENGE TEAM!



PhillyFit Challenge Attendees: Claudine Ascher, Joanna Chodorowska, Janine Definis and Michele Boyle



The YMCA class participants were so excited that the PhillyFIT Team was coming to their challenge, we actually felt like celebrities when we came into the facility. It was an awesome feeling! Ironically, we were the ones being tested to see if we could survive with the regular members in the hour long Boot Camp class. The class is every Wednesday night from 6-7 pm at the YMCA in Fairless Hills.

Boot Camp is a group class which includes all different fitness levels and utilizes individual and team efforts as part of the charm and draw. No one was left on his or her own in the class and everyone was constantly encouraged by the other participants (and instructor Cathy) to do their best in all activities.

We started the class with a warm up consisting of a few jogs around the perimeter of the gym. Next we did a circuit of jumping up and down a sequence of steppers of differing heights (similar to an obstacle course), followed by shuffle side-ways, then shuffle thru the rings with high knees, then side-ways side steps, and repeated the whole thing over again. We traveled the width of the gym doing squats and kicks (simultaneously which takes a lot of coordination), side lunges, walking lunges-

all part of increasing the cardio workout before the hardwork began.

Next we broke into groups of two person teams with eight stations of 'stuff' to do. The 'stuff' consisted of stations which combined strength and cardio: ab crunches with ankles-locked while passing the weighted ball, squat jumps (we added a hi-five for incentive), side twists with the ball, planks, basic push-ups (as many as you can do in forty five seconds) and more. We did core work as teams - passing the ball sideways, overhead and thru the legs (you really have to trust your partner). We did some relays in teams of two, collecting Dixie cups, but you had to run across the gym to collect your cup while your partner was holding a squat. Before you picked up the cup, you had to do three push-ups. You hustled back, tagged your partner, and they went and picked up the cup (and push ups) while you squatted. You raced against the other five teams on your side of the gym. Claudine and I came in last (barely), but we did stack the cups, rather than scatter them across the back wall (that does take more time you know).

During our next segment, we did something called 8 Count Body Builders - a series of eight moves starting from a standing position, squat, kick legs out (into push up position), legs move out and then in (two

moves holding the push up, then a real push up, feet back in, then a jump).

We did it ten times - ouch! No grace here - or coordination.

We definitely were not able to follow the exact sequence.

Finally, we ended with 10-15 minutes of core work. Oh, I so could not hold a side-plank with lifts (well, we did recognize our weaknesses in the class). We had lots of water breaks and tons of fun. It was a well-rounded workout that challenged your endurance, cardio, and strength and put it in a fun format to make us want to come back (if only we lived five miles away instead of twenty five).

Cathy, our instructor, was very energetic, passionate and really had some great ideas to keep the class interesting and motivating. She also got her sons involved to keep the YMCA spirit alive with, 'We build strong families'. They were really helpful in demonstrating what we had to do. The instructors and participants were all so supportive of us as well as each other. If we lived in the vicinity we would come every week! It was really a blast and they really made us feel like we were part of their family, even if for just the one hour that night. It was not just a great workout, but a great source of new friends. Laughing and sweating - how bad can it really be??