



The Wonder of Water

It's official – the weather is warming up and we're putting the dreary days of winter behind us. This is the perfect time of year to get familiar with aquatic exercise. The pool is an excellent place for cross-training, recovery or rehabilitation from an injury. Why not follow in the footsteps of professional tennis players who reap the rewards from the healing properties of water?

Advantage: Water

Because of its natural properties, water provides many advantages for exercise or rehabilitation.

- **Buoyancy:** When standing in chest-deep water, your body weight bears only 20% of normal due to the support of your body by water. Compressive forces in joints are significantly lessened because of decreased gravitational forces on the body while under water. Water is an excellent place for rehabilitation of joint injuries in lower extremities because these jarring forces are reduced.
- **Hydrostatic Pressure:** Circulation is improved due to the force of water on the body. This helps to decrease swelling in joints and tissues, helping to reduce pain levels.
- **Heat:** When exercising in a warm water pool, ideal water temperatures range from 31-33 °C. Heated water assists with muscle relaxation and flexibility.
- **Resistance:** You can control the amount and direction of resistance the water provides you, depending on the force and speed of the exercise.

Why should you try water as an alternative form of exercise?

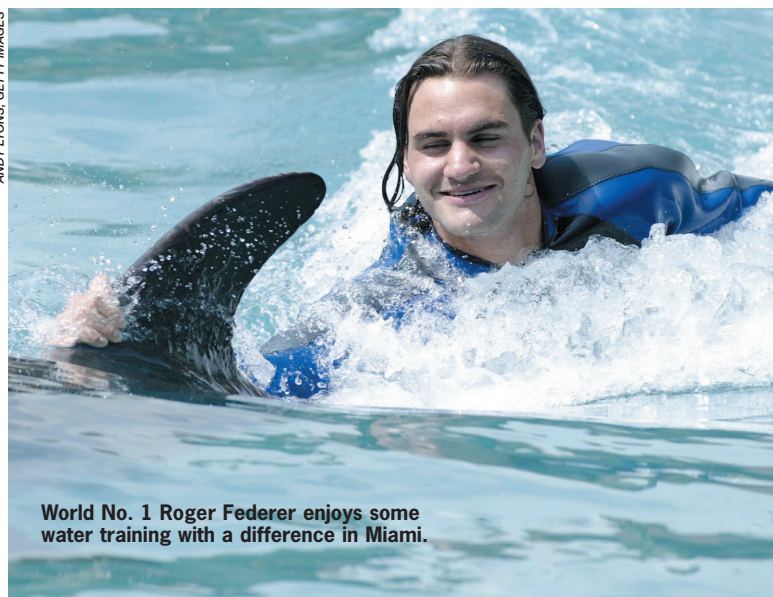
- Improved posture & increased body awareness
- Improved balance & coordination
- Increased strength & flexibility
- Decreased compressive & jarring forces on joints
- Decreased inflammation & pain
- Faster recovery from injuries
- Improved recovery time after matches
- It's fun!

Why the aquatic option?

Professionals do it. Cross-training is essential to challenge and strengthen different muscles that are used in tennis. It's a fantastic complement to your tennis training, while providing a low-impact, comfortable environment. Variation is the key. Water workouts will help to stimulate your body and mind, ultimately leading to an improvement in your game.

Give it a Try!

A terrific way to challenge your cardiovascular endurance is deep water jogging. Traditional jogging loads the joints due to high compressive forces. With deep water jogging, you can



World No. 1 Roger Federer enjoys some water training with a difference in Miami.

strengthen the arms and legs through water's resistance in an environment where there is less impact on your joints. The AquaJogger® is a great flotation belt which clips around the lower back, allowing your body to remain upright when jogging in the deep-end of the pool.

Rehab Potential

When taking time off due to an injury, the pool is an excellent alternative to land-based exercise. The un-weighting properties of water will allow you to start moving earlier which will get you back to your game faster. Aquatic therapy can be very effective for rehabilitation of muscle strains, ligament sprains, tendonitis, post-surgery, stress fractures or prolonged immobilization of a joint.

When injured and beginning a period of aquatic therapy/exercise, it's recommended you consult your physiotherapist so an individualized aquatic therapy program can be designed for you.

Tennis Under Water?

Yes, you read correctly! One great way to fine-tune your on-court game is to bring your racquet in the pool. (Don't bring your favorite racquet; rather grab hold of an old racquet which you don't mind taking for a swim!) Simulating your ground strokes in chest-deep water is a great addition to your on-court training routines. The resistance of the water provides an excellent challenge and will help to strengthen your arm muscles and core stability muscles of the trunk. Aqua shoes may help with your footing. In a later issue, we'll take a closer look at some specific strengthening and balance exercises that you can use in the pool. Until then, go ahead, dive in and get wet! ●