

Reporter overcomes jokes by trying test

By Peter Mills
On and on it went. "One... two... on... e... two..." "Up... down... u... p... down..." "Left... right... l... eft... right..."

Those were the longest two minutes of my life and I spent them stepping on and off of a darn chair.

The results, though, were gratifying. Despite my rather abundant paunch, which is often the butt of semi-funny remarks at the office, I am close to being physically fit.

So there! But don't take my word for it, the results are in black and white as the result of a fitness test I took at Milton YMCA.

Well, I had help. That fellow in the office next to mine said we really should do a story on Fitness Week.

I just knew he meant me. I have never seen such a smug grin on anyone before.

When I arrived at the Y, director Brenda Coburn put me through the paces.

The first experience was the easiest. Lie on the floor and take your pulse.

No problem... 80 beats per minute. Then it got harder. I had to stand up and take my pulse.

Still 80 beats per minute. That's good. Usually, the pulse rate increases when one stands up after lying down for a while.

Encouraging, but then the fun began. Lying on my back and knees lifted off the floor slightly, I had to raise my back slightly off the floor and hold it there for as long as I could.

Five minutes later, I set my back down on the floor.

"Whaddaya mean 45 seconds? It was five minutes!" "It was 45 seconds, Peter. Here's the watch. It only seemed like five minutes," said Brenda.

That set the tone for the rest of the activity. Groan.

The next one was easy. Running on the spot. The trick was to bring my knees up to waist level, and hit a book Brenda was holding. The number of times my knees hit the book in a 10-second span governed my score.

I hit the book 36 times. Awright!

The next exercise, I concluded, was designed for neanderthals and orangutans. Not for humans.

Squatting on the floor with elbows inside knees, I had to put my fists on the floor immediately in front of my toes and rock back so my heels touched the floor.

Then, I was told to stand up so my knees were totally rigid. Impossible.

"Move your hands three inches in front of your toes and try it," says Brenda.

I did. I won't tell you what I told her.

"Then try six inches," she said. If I could have seen her face, she probably would have been grinning.

"Try nine inches. We'll keep doing it until you get it," she threatened.

Eventually I made it. The next exercise was the standing broad jump.

Most people should be able to jump their height. I'm 6'1", so a mark was placed that far away from the starting point. If I jumped that far, I got 10 points. Points were added or taken away depending on how far past or short of the mark I landed... without falling over. I had to stand right after landing.

My jump measured at 6'4". No pratfall for me, thank you very much.

As the name implies, the next exercise, "the stork stand" involves closing your eyes and moving your body into unnatural positions without falling over.

With hands on hips, I had to lift my left knee slowly as high as I could, hold it, put it slowly back down on the floor and repeat the process with the right knee.

With eyes open, it's easy. With eyes closed, it's tougher. But I did it. The next exercise tested my reaction time.

A ruler was dropped from waist level. I had to catch it before it hit the ground. This was done twice with the left hand, twice with the right and twice with both hands.

The trick, I found, is to keep your hand as close to the ruler as possible. The only specification is that the hand must be above the ruler. No restrictions are made on how far above.

The next four exercises were the toughest of the lot. Knowing that didn't make me feel very good, since I had expended most of my energy on the previous seven tests.

Brenda explained how I was to do the next test. "Would you mind repeating that?", I asked. She did.

"Come again", I said. Again she told me. "Now do you understand how it's done?" she asked.

"I understood you the first time. I just didn't believe you. You have to be joking. That's the kind of activity usually under-

taken by a wounded armadillo!" My sarcasm went for naught. I had to do it anyway.

Three rolled up newspapers were placed on the floor several feet apart. The first was in the shape of a cone 20 inches high. The second cone was 15 inches high and the third 10 inches high.

My job was to stand on one foot, grasp the other foot behind my back with both hands, and pick up the cones with my teeth and put them back down again.

Fun? Wow! The trick is to not fall over. Brilliant deduction. After hopping about like a flamingo in heat, I finally picked up the first cone.

The second cone was tougher. Every time I bent down, some unseen person tried to push me over. I never saw him, but he must have been there, mustn't he.

"Forget it," says I. "Let's move onto the next exercise. It'll be easier".

Wrong. "The next test is called push-up hold," said Brenda.

"Oh, God, no," I said, not quietly. "It's not that bad. All you have to do is hold yourself in a push-up position, with your elbows at right angles, for as long as you can."

So down I went onto the floor. I went up in push-up style, and went half-way down.

And I held. And held. And held. My knuckles were white and my face was red. The veins in my neck stood out and I could hear the blood pounding in my ear.

Still I held. Five minutes later, down I came with a crash that probably registered on the Richter scale.

"Whaddaya mean it wasn't five minutes?", I asked. "Oh, well. For the first minute, it was easy. It was a little later that I wondered why in the world my running shoes had lead soles instead of rubber soles. I saw Brenda carrying a stack of books.

"Now what is she up to?", I asked myself. "The next test, in case you're wondering..." she said.

Now, how did she know? "... is called the agility jump", she con-

tinued, placing a six-inch-high stack of books on the floor.

All I had to do was stand beside the books, jump sideways over them, and jump back. My score was determined by the number of times I could do it in 10 seconds.

Sounds easy enough, if only I could get out of the chair.

To make a long story short, I figured if a cow can jump over the moon, I could jump over a lousy stack of books.

So I did. Eighteen times. That's slightly better than average.

It was tricky. Those books had a habit of moving around and jumping up to try and fool you.

The next test was called the diver's hold. It is not a wrestling manoeuvre, but a balance test.

"Close your eyes," Brenda said, "bring your arms out in front of you and stand on your toes just like you were standing on the three-metre board".

I held that position for 45 seconds, better than average.

Now came the test I dreaded most of all. I looked for a means of escape. There was only one... through the window.

After a minute's rest, my pulse was taken again. The smaller the difference between the before and after readings the better.

The reading showed 136 beats per minute. That's slightly worse than average.

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SETTING THE MARK and beating it in the standing broad jump. In the top photo, Peter Mills and YMCA director Brenda Coburn set the objective for the jump—six feet, one inch—Mills' height. In the bottom photo, he exceeds the mark by about three inches.

Health test fails to give full picture

By Peter Mills
Anyone thinking of taking the test similar to the one I took should be forewarned. It is far from being a precise indicator of a person's fitness.

"This is a test for a person to do at home," said Brenda Coburn, director of Milton YMCA. "It will give the person a rough idea of how fit they are."

"It's not a precise measure. It won't give you an exact picture of your personal fitness, but it will give you a good idea of where you stand."

This test may not be exact, but it covers a lot of ground.

"Each test you did, tests a different fitness category. You see, fitness is all the different components, not just cardiorespiratory or flexibility or strength or balance or agility or body fat content or motor efficiency. It's all of them."

"Someone who is very fit in terms of his cardiorespiratory system may

score poorly in flexibility unless he has done flexibility exercises." She gave a personal example of what she meant.

"I run a lot and after a while, I found the muscles in my thighs and the backs of my legs were shortened because of all the running motion. When I did leg lifts and leg exercises, I couldn't straighten my knee as straight as I should. So I had to do a lot of flexibility exercises."

A poor score on some items is not as important as a poor score on another.

"Fitness-wise, if you're slow in reaction time, say, it's not going to hurt you as much as having a poor score in cardiorespiratory or body fat content."

"Often, if you're scoring poorly in one item, say abdominal fat and you work at exercises for that... in other words, you get rid of that pot belly... you'll find your score in other areas will improve also. An

example would be flexibility. "All these items are mixed. You can't really isolate any one of them," she said.

So how does this particular test show whether or not a person is fit?

"There are degrees of fitness. In some tests, there are standards you can judge yourself by."

"What I mean is there is a set score. If you score such-and-such, you are considered not fit. If you score a higher mark, you aren't too bad. If you score higher, you're in good shape and if you score another mark, you are considered very fit."

"There are no such standards in this test. It isn't that precise, but for these purposes, the test can be done at home and it is more than adequate."

"The objective is to increase your rating in each category by as much as you can." With a little imagination, the fitness test can be turned into a great party game, she said.

Auxiliary fashions

Twelve local stores are co-operating with Milton District Hospital Auxiliary in presenting a fashion show in the Lions Club Hall at Milton Memorial Arena Thursday, Oct. 18 at 8 p.m.

Auxiliary organizers report they hope to make a good sum of money from the event, to be used to sponsor the group's work at Milton District Hospital. Tickets are \$5 and available at the gift shop in the hospital and at participating stores around town.

The fashions will come from Maria's, Darby's, Flora Shoppe, The Villa, Peggy's, Open Gate, Reitmans, Corbett's, Milton Sports, Sports Stuff, Robert Newman Shoes, Selecta Footwear and the hospital's gift shop. Wine and cheese will be served.

October 21st* is the light bulb's 100th birthday. Why not give it the day off.

ontario hydro

*On October 21, 1879, Thomas Edison invented the light bulb.

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EVERYONE IS INVITED TO

MILTON MALL'S

3rd BIRTHDAY PARTY

4 BIG DAYS OF SPECIAL MERCHANDISE VALUES
OVER 50 PRIZES TO BE GIVEN AWAY
WED., THURS., FRI., SAT. OCT. 17th, 18th, 19th & 20th. ANNIVERSARY DISPLAYS AND SPECIAL ENTERTAINMENT.

★ ★ ★ Grand Prize Draw ★ ★ ★
ONE - 20 cubic ft. Home Freezer. PLUS A HIND OF BEEF to be drawn Sat. Oct. 20/79 at 4 p.m.
BALLOTS AVAILABLE FROM ALL MERCHANTS

★ Schedule of Events ★

OCT. 18th THURSDAY

- DAILY PRIZE DRAWS
- BALLOTS AVAILABLE FROM ALL MERCHANTS
- SCOTCH BLOCK SQUARES, SQUARE DANCE DEMONSTRATION - 7:00 P.M.

OCT. 19th FRIDAY

- DAILY PRIZE DRAWS
- SPECIAL APPEARANCE BY THE MILTON SENIOR CITIZENS ORCHESTRA AT 7:30 P.M.

OCT. 20th SATURDAY

- DAILY PRIZE DRAWS
- MAKE US A CAKE CONTEST 1 P.M. WINNERS AWARDED
- FREE MILTON MALL BIRTHDAY CAKE 3 P.M. (WHILE IT LASTS)
- GRAND PRIZE DRAW AWARDED AT 4:00 P.M.
- BE SURE AND SEE THE NEW COMPUTER PORTRAIT SERVICE
- MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT BY A NEW TEENAGE GROUP
- Persons employed by Milton Mall and members of their immediate families are not eligible for any prizes.

MAKE US A CAKE AND YOU COULD WIN! VALUABLE PRIZES.

Be sure to enter our 'Make Us A Cake' contest. Just put your creative talents to work. Cakes should be highly decorated and will be judged on appearance only. You could win merchandise certificates valued at \$75 First prize, \$50 Second prize, \$25 Third prize. Cakes should be submitted to the Milton Mall Administration office no later than 10 a.m. Sat., October 20th. All cakes become the property of Milton Mall.

MILTON MALL Shopping Centre
55 Ontario St. South

ACRES AND ACRES OF FREE PARKING