

Arthur Jones Day

The I.A.R.T. education institute has declared November 30 as the official Arthur Jones Day. On this day, in 1970, Mr. Jones sold the first commercial Nautilus machine. The contributions of Mr. Jones cannot be denied, from revolutionizing the fitness industry with Nautilus, to his educational writings and his work with MedX to discover the necessary elements to test strength and, consequently, proper exercise application. What follows are comments from some of the people who know Arthur, who have worked with him, or who simply acknowledge his priceless contributions.

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Recognizing the Man

by John Turner

Arthur Jones is a man so great, Joe Weider would have to stand on his brother's shoulders in order to kiss Arthur's butt. Known as the founder of Nautilus Sports/Medical industries and MedX Corporation, he is much more than that. A perfectionist, a critical thinker, a genius, one of a kind. He is an amalgam of Vince Lombardi, Howard Hughes and Indiana Jones. No greater intellect has ever been brought to bear on the field of resistance training.

Thirty years of research resulted in the publication of Nautilus Training Principles in 1970. Founded on logic and physics, it gave readers the first intelligent training system that made all other programs seem like child's play. True believers communicated in Nautilus speak, using the terms "training to failure, recovery ability, indirect effect, full range, moment arm, cam action, and intensity of effort."

The sale of the first Nautilus machine, a plate loading Pullover, in 1970 gave trainees the first exercise tool providing the requirements for full range exercise. Resistance that was rotary, direct, automatically variable, balanced, provided stretching, provided both negative and positive work and provided resistance in the fully contracted position.

With Jones at the helm, Nautilus quickly became the undisputed industry leader. In the first ten years, over 10,000 medical, educational and sports institutions worldwide purchased Nautilus equipment. In 1980 there were over 1,300 fitness centers using Nautilus; by 1985 the number exceeded 5,000.

During this period, Jones continually broke new ground. He pioneered the use of negative exercise, negative-accentuated exercise, hyper exercise, infimetric exercise and akinetic exercise. He exposed the myths of isokinetics, the false claims concerning measurements, spot reduction and specificity. He campaigned against the use of growth drugs. Nautilus speak now included "aspect ratio, negative cam, inroad, G types, S types and the AE factor."

In June of 1986, Arthur Jones sold Nautilus and launched MedX, introducing the first machines capable of accurately measuring changes in strength, muscular endurance and range of motion. Taking pride of place is the MedX Lumbar Extension machine, the sovereign remedy for the prevention and rehabilitation of low back pain - a medical complaint second only to the common cold or headache.

His research identified four risk factors for spinal injury; inadequate structural strength resulting from chronic disuse atrophy, fast-twitch fiber type, limited range of motion and specific response to exercise.

MedX exercise machines followed in 1990. Arguably superior to Nautilus, these machines have less friction as a result of having fewer moving parts. The weight stacks have shorter strokes and therefore have the potential to have less kinetic energy. They offer more levels of resistance than most competing machines, enabling users to "fine tune" exercises.

The Arthur Jones Collection

He continued to confront what he deemed to be "outrages." Cybex, plyometrics, scientists and the peer review system. Jones has since sold MedX and now serves in an advisory capacity. His greatest contribution to the science of exercise? Not including his \$8.47 million endowment to the University of Florida, there are several contenders.

First, the cam - it started everything. Second, the Rolls Royce of Nautilus machines, the Duo Squat - the single most productive exercise known to man, improved thanks to the negative cam. Third, the MedX Lumbar Extension machine - Jones called this "a partial solution for the forty billion dollar annual problem for industry, insurance and government." Fourth, the Nautilus neck machines - prior to 1975 no neck machines existed. How many catastrophic spinal chord injuries were prevented due to the proper use of these machines? How do you put a price on that?

His training philosophy can be distilled down to three immutable laws.

Jones' first law: train harder. A properly concluded set "should leave you feeling like you just climbed a tall building with your car tied to your back - you should be breathing very hard, your pulse should be very rapid, you should be sweating freely, and you should find it necessary to sit down for a moment after the set is finished; if you merely "feel like" sitting down, then the set wasn't hard enough - you should have to sit down to avoid falling down."

Jones' second law: train briefly. "You can sprint 100 yards or you can jog 10 miles. Try sprinting 10 miles and see how far you get."

Jones' third law: train slowly. "The next time somebody tells you to move quickly during exercise, to produce a sudden or jerky movement against resistance... smile and walk away, you are talking to a fool."

I never had the honor of meeting Mr. Jones. I have had the privilege of speaking with him many times and corresponding with him. He has had a major impact on my life. I no longer blindly accept anything I'm told or read. I've learned there are big rewards for contrarian thinking. That is a gift beyond measure. Thank you Arthur.

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THE MAN SPEAKS IN CAPITAL LETTERS.

As I think back on my 30 years of involvement with Arthur Jones, the thing I remember most is his voice – his authoritative, commanding, and powerful voice. He is by far the best speaker and storyteller that I've ever heard. And no one can tell a joke like Arthur.

Anyone who has read my exercise books knows that Arthur Jones has had a tremendous influence on my beliefs, practices, and writings. There is no way I could condense his impact to several paragraphs.

I'd like to say, simply . . . Thank you, Arthur, for living life in CAPITAL LETTERS!

Ellington Darden, Ph.D.

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In March 1980, I was working as a part-time trainer at a health club in Forty Fort, Pennsylvania. The club's general manager, Tom Laputka, told me stories about how he and a bodybuilder named Casey Viator were once trained by someone named Arthur Jones. That was the first time that I had ever heard about

Arthur. I recall actually meeting him on four different occasions (all in Florida): December 1984 in DeLand; May 1986 in Ocala; August 1986 in DeLand; and November 1994 in Ocala.

The Arthur Jones Collection

Arthur is legendary for being opinionated, abrasive, rude, boisterous and other assorted adjectives -- many of which are unprintable in most mainstream publications. In retrospect, his unique personality -- which has spawned several copycat wannabes looking to become the "heir apparent" -- was actually perfect for propelling his ideas about proper exercise to the forefront of the strength training community. Let's face it, weight training was deeply rooted in tradition in the 1970s -- probably even more than it is today. Back then, there were far fewer nonconformists and antagonists than there are nowadays. Arthur spoke the only language that hardhead partyliners understood.

Arthur has probably had more detractors over the years than anyone. Yet, it's difficult to name someone else who has had such a profound impact on strength training -- and equipment design -- during the past 30 years. Indeed, his revolutionary opinions about exercise have affected training protocols even to this day. He changed the industry forever. Plain and simple. Years ahead of his time, he advanced the theories of what has become known as HIT. If not for Arthur Jones, all of us would probably still be consumed with training in the traditional fashion.

Matt Brzycki

Approximately thirty years ago I met Arthur Jones in York Pa. We met at the "Teen Mr. America" contest. I was twenty-three years old at the time. I had already been training for about ten years. I had been competing in Olympic lifting, Power lifting and Bodybuilding. I also had been taking steroids. Arthur, in a matter of three hours had blown away almost everything I had believed about training. He also persuaded me to quit taking steroids. (Several month's later training under Arthur and I was stronger than I had ever been while doing steroids) My first meeting with Arthur was a lesson, best schooling I ever had!

After getting with Arthur for regular training (2-3 days a week) I started thinking differently. I decided to quit training for competition and train for health, with emphasis on strength. Arthur has a reputation for being blunt, and he can be. After dealing with as many idiots as he's had to, most people would be blunt too! There are scores of people that have tried to steal ideas, equipment, and his reputation. Some of them I was an eye witness to. What most people don't know is that he has gone FAR, FAR out of his way to help people. He always made time for me and the people I brought up. I have also seen him give his time to strangers that turned up at Nautilus looking for answers. (When it was obvious to me that these people were "plants" from another exercise company) He would help them, but I'm sure that his patience ran out completely over the years. Some of them I felt needed a gun put to their head and shot immediately (and called a mercy killing) WHOA! Where did that come from? Ha! Anyway, the point is he didn't have to waste his time but he tried to help anyway. Many of Arthur's detractors have never met him but repeat bullshit anyway. "That's life." He'd say, but I knew it bothered him.

Arthur Jones brought weight training into the 20th century. Without him there would be few if any advancements in equipment or ideas. Even the people that said he was full of shit are now using his ideas and producing equipment modeled after the Nautilus design. Of course, "they discovered the ideas and equipment themselves!" His contributions to the field of exercise are immeasurable. On a regular basis someone has a "breakthrough" and comes up with some very important information. Everybody gets excited and pats him or her on the back but finds out Arthur came up with it thirty or more years ago. The point is..... and listen up! There is ONLY ONE Arthur Jones and NO ONE can take away his accomplishments! The man is without a doubt the most important person in modern exercise. For anyone to try and nay say this would be "Criminally Negligent" and in need of "Mercy killing" Ha! Where did that come from? The man is without a peer when it comes to contributions toward Strength Training. I'll be forever indebted to him.

Jim Bryan

The Arthur Jones Collection

The first time I heard of Mr. Jones I was in the office of my chiropractor. I had injured my neck doing squats in my attic - without a power rack or a spotter. I was following a routine from a Weider magazine. Having told the chiropractor how I hurt myself, he launched into a passion-filled talk about how 'that kind' of training was outdated for at least 25 years. He told me about Arthur Jones and a few other names who were involved in HIT, explaining how only one set was all I needed. For the first time I began to make progress, using the Jones' principles.

After stumbling upon Arthur's writings in Ironman, and on the internet, I absorbed everything I could. His straight forward ways of explaining concepts was one of the things that kept me interested in his writings. I could relate to this, because that describes myself -- cut through the BS and make your point. After all, sometimes a kick in the butt can do more than a pat on the back!

Having been set in the proper direction with High Intensity Training, I would be interested in what Mr. Jones' thoughts would be on present day application of repetition speed, training routines, number of exercises per routine, how often one should train, etc.

The influence Arthur has had on me is definitely positive. I recently bought an old nautilus compound leg machine, and I was impressed on how well it was constructed. Thanks Mr. Jones.

Dave Shoffler, Gordon, PA

Few people have had an impact in my life. Arthur Jones is one of those people. With the exception of one other, Ayn Rand, all others who influenced me were, in turn, influenced by Arthur Jones. As Dr. Robert Kudlak, MD, stated, "*Arthur Jones taught me to think*", and I share that sentiment. It was only seven years ago that I followed the blind dogma of volume training as promoted in the muscle magazines. At that time everything hit a pinnacle -- I became certified with the ISSA and reached one level in qualifications below Masters. Regardless, after I took their certification I was more confused than ever. Nothing connected. Nothing made sense, and there were numerous contradictions. There had to be a better way.

Also at that time, I was employed by Dr. Kudlak at Ontario's only MedX clinic (although I was exposed to the technology, I was still influenced by a decade of muscle rag nonsense). One day I began to speak of speed strength, starting strength, explosive strength, anaerobic strength, aerobic strength, etc., and I thought that those concepts could be valuable aspects in exercise. Dr. Kudlak looked at me dumbfounded, he began question me on their validity, and I quickly realized how little I (and the ISSA certification company) knew. At that point I started to investigate physical laws and the writings of Arthur Jones. Since then, nothing has been the same. Consequently, it is in large part to Jones that the I.A.R.T. established itself in 1995. It is also in large part to Jones that I finally made good progress in my exercise. The avoidance of multiple sets, several days a week allowed me more time to invest in other interests. How you can you put a price on that?

Brian D. Johnston
President, I.A.R.T.