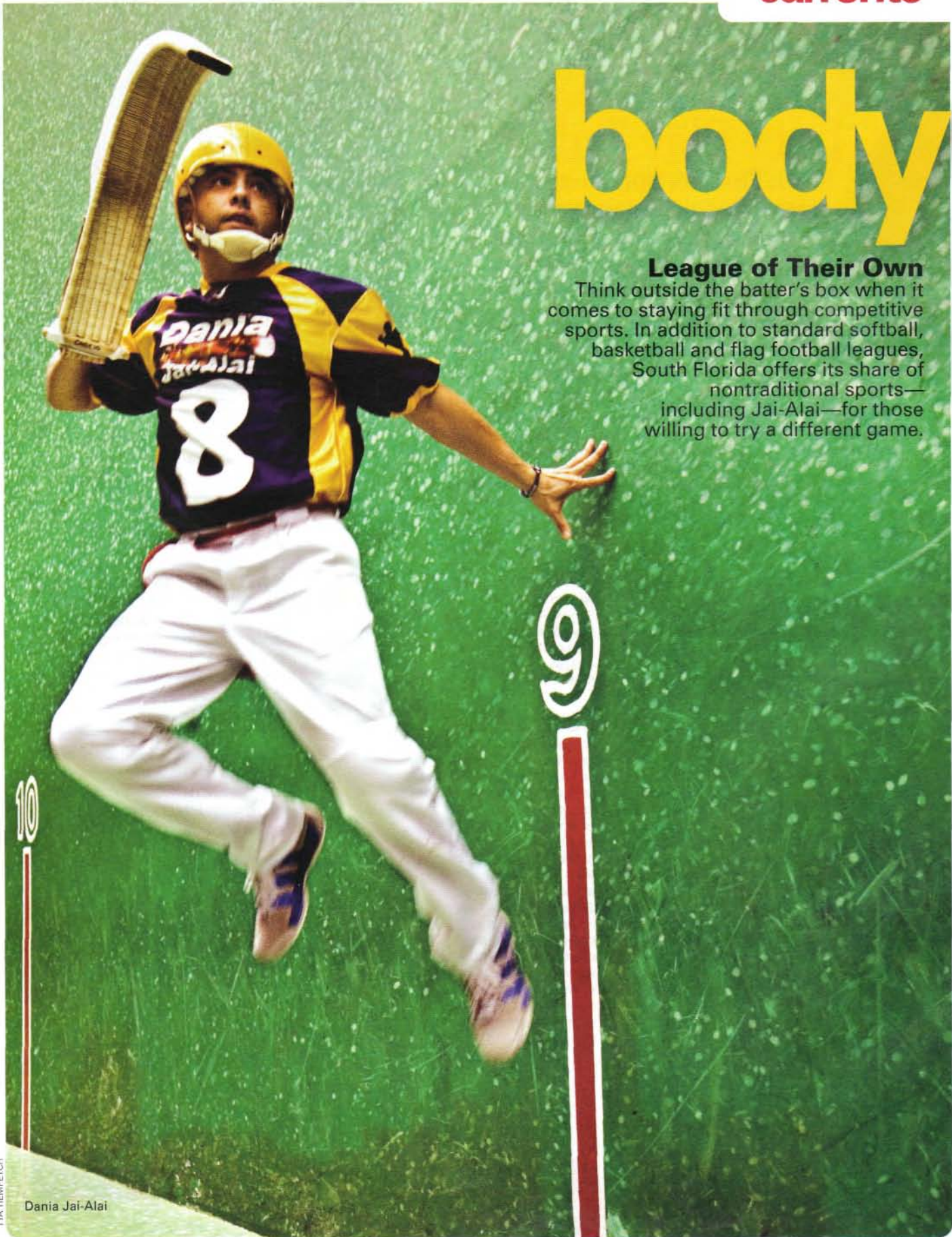


# body

## League of Their Own

Think outside the batter's box when it comes to staying fit through competitive sports. In addition to standard softball, basketball and flag football leagues, South Florida offers its share of nontraditional sports—including Jai-Alai—for those willing to try a different game.



TYA TIEMPECH

Dania Jai-Alai

## Let's Play Ball

South Florida's climate and international influence offer unique opportunities for those interested in staying active through competitive sports. Here are five such opportunities.

### JAI-ALAI

The "world's fastest sport" hails from the Basques in northern Spain and has rules similar to handball or racquetball. The pelota (ball) is hurled at high speeds and caught with a cesta (basket/glove). As far as exercise, Jai-Alai is a rich cardio and upper-body workout. It also helps with hand-eye coordination and reflexes. Dania Jai-Alai holds adult and youth clinics, amateur tournaments and offers court rentals and professional instruction. (301 E. Dania Beach Blvd., 954/927-2841 ext. 241)

### RUGBY

Popular in Europe, South Africa and Australia, this soccer/football hybrid is a full-contact team sport with a rough-and-tumble reputation. The sport is quite physical (with no padding in the uniforms) but offers a complete full-body workout. The Boca Raton Buccaneers Rugby Club welcomes new and veteran players to the sport. Teams accept first-time players who are willing to learn and practice the game. (bocaratonrugby.com, 561/451-3655)

### CRICKET

Although there are some similarities to baseball (it's a bat-and-ball game), the rules of this "gentleman's game" with English origins are much different. The South Florida Cricket Alliance (SFCA) has 27 member clubs participating in competitions throughout Broward, Miami-Dade, Palm Beach and St. Lucie counties. Amateurs, veterans and players of all ages are welcome. (southfloridacricket.com, 954/252-3728)

### KICKBALL

It's the same sport you remember from your elementary school days, including the big red ball. But this very adult league (ages 21 and older because each league is sponsored by a bar) is all about being social and having fun. The World Adult Kickball Association (WAKA) governs leagues throughout South Florida—including one in Boynton Beach with a fall term starting this month. (kickball.com/season/fireefsummer2010)

### BOCCE

Popular in Italy and in parks throughout Europe, bocce is played on soil or asphalt. A small ball is thrown into the court and becomes the target. Then each side tries to get their bocce balls closest to the small ball by "bowling" or underhand throwing. Jimbo's on Virginia Key in Miami promotes its bocce ball—along with cold beer, smoked fish and relaxing in the shade—and draws quite the weekend crowds. (Duck Lake Road, Virginia Key, jimbosplace.com, 305/361-7026)



Manny Cancio

TYA TIEMPEICH

## STAND UP AND PADDLE

If surfing seems too intense, stand-up paddle boarding is the perfect way to stay fit and have fun on the water. This ancient form of surfing comes from the Hawaiian Islands and is an intense core workout that focuses on balance and stability. SUP is for people of all ages and only takes a quick lesson to begin. Visit **Surf World** in Pompano Beach for more information (435 S. Federal Highway, Pompano Beach, surfworld.us, 954/545-7873)



# mind games

**DENISE SPARKS**, director of the Louis and Anne Green Memory and Wellness Center, part of the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing at Florida Atlantic University, discusses preventative measures for Alzheimer's disease with *Boca Raton*.

**THE USE OF MATH QUIZZES AND NINTENDO WII ARE AMONG THE BRAIN EXERCISES AND TECHNOLOGY CURRENTLY BEING TOUTED FOR ALZHEIMER'S PREVENTION. WHAT DO YOU RECOMMEND?**

There are no foolproof ways to prevent Alzheimer's disease for persons predisposed to have it. However, research is beginning to provide clues to lifestyle changes that may postpone or delay the onset of symptoms—buying time for the development of better preventative strategies and treatments.

**WHAT ARE THOSE LIFESTYLE CHANGES?**

Right now, we have the most evidence to suggest that exercise can play an important role in brain health—just as it does in heart health. Aerobic exercise that increases blood flow and oxygenation of the brain is likely the most important, though all forms of exercise may be helpful. Also, a lifetime of "cognitive stimulation" seems to create cognitive reserve, meaning a strong brain that is most resilient to disease and trauma: exercising the brain by exposing it to new and challenging tasks across the life span. Things like memorizing poetry, doing crossword puzzles, playing bridge, playing chess and reading can be helpful, but nothing is guaranteed to prevent a future problem. There also seems to be a relationship between depression and dementia that is not entirely understood. Starting in early adulthood to develop strategies and habits that help to manage stress and mood can be very important to mental functioning across the lifespan.

**HOW CAN YOU TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEMORY CHANGES OF NORMAL AGING**



**AND A MEMORY DISORDER LIKE ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE?**

In the very early stages of a disorder like Alzheimer's, it is very difficult to distinguish between it and the changes of normal aging. But with a comprehensive evaluation, Alzheimer's can be diagnosed with 90 to 95

percent accuracy. Early diagnosis allows for medical intervention that slows the progression of symptoms and allows lifestyle interventions that may enhance quality of life for the patient and family.

*For more information, call the Center at 561/297-0502.*

## iWorkouts

Apple's trifecta of "i" magic—iPod, iPhone and iPad—offers dozens of fitness apps that keep track of calories, monitor progress and record results. It's like having a personal trainer, nutritionist and record keeper all in your pocket. Here are some of our favorites:



» **IFITNESS** (\$1.99) offers more than 100 strength training and cardio exercises.

» **LOSE IT!** (free) monitors calorie intake and calories burned, plus it has a database of popular restaurants and foods to keep track of calories.

» **PAWTROTTER** (\$2.99) locates dog friendly parks, beaches, stores, vets, boarding and more whether you are at home or across the country.



### ONE DEVICE FOR ALL

Haier's Trainer is an MP3 player with a built-in pedometer, a calorie counter, FM tuner and stopwatch all in one. It's ultra compact (about the size of a matchbook), lightweight and comes with a built-in clip to attach to clothes. (\$60, haieramerica.com)

### GET IN THE GRUVE

Looking for that extra kick in the pants when it comes to staying fit? The Gruve (the brainchild of Dr. Jim Levine of the famed Mayo Clinic) lights up and buzzes when you aren't being active enough. The device is worn on the hip and keeps track of the calories you burn daily. (\$199.95, amazon.com)

