



Milwaukee's Daryl Stuermer

real people real results

By Jeanette Hurt

To rock and jazz music fans, Daryl Stuermer needs no introduction. Stuermer, 53, boasts dual fan bases for his own albums and for his work with Phil Collins and Genesis, and he could easily be considered one of Milwaukee's favorite and most famous guitarists.

Although for years he's been able to withstand a grueling tour and recording schedule, Daryl found his energy lagging and at his wife's suggestion, he tried Fitness Together.

As this month's Fitness Together success story, we learned that Daryl gained more than just energy. Before heading to the studio recently to work on his latest jazz, rock and fusion album for Inside Out Music, which will be released later this year, Daryl sat down to discuss his experiences of working out with Fitness Together for the last three years.

How did you find out about Fitness Together?

"Fitness Together has a studio next to a Starbucks on Silver Spring, and I kept going into Starbucks to drink their chai tea lattes. I was wondering what it was like at Fitness Together, and I'm always thinking about what is the best way to work out. My wife decided to try it, and that got me interested."

Did you exercise much before you started with Fitness Together?

"I never had a trainer per say, but since I was a teenager, I liked doing things like yoga and martial arts. At one time,



This page, Daryl Stuermer performing with The Daryl Stuermer Band at the Sharon Lynne Wilson Center in August 2005. © Gene Steinman 2005. Opposite page, left, Daryl Stuermer, © Greg Gent Studios 2005; right, Daryl at work. Photo by Robert Fritsch. Following page, Daryl with his family at a Milwaukee performance, photo by Ray Jackson.

I got very involved with tae kwon do, and when I started going on the road more often, I found myself trying out the spas or health clubs that they had in hotels as I had to try to keep myself fit while touring. I also occasionally worked with a trainer at those clubs at the hotels. When I hit my mid-40s, I started gaining a little more weight and wasn't as active as I used to be so that's why I decided to give Fitness Together a try."

What was it like when you started working with them?

"The main thing is, they give you an assessment first, and they want to see where you're at physically. The one thing I realized as soon as I started was that my cardiovascular fitness was not good. My strength was fairly good, but I would get winded very quickly. When I started working with my trainer at Fitness Together, I found it easy to get along with him."

How did your fitness levels change as you worked with Fitness Together?

"Cardio was the first thing that became so much better. I just came off a tour last December that I was on for two months. We were playing in the former Eastern Bloc countries and places like Beirut and Tel Aviv, and noticed that my work on stage alone has gotten better. It's not as hard as it used to be to be up there for two and a half hours performing. About four or five years ago, before I started working with Fitness Together, I was much more tired and exhausted after performing. Now, my stamina is more than it used to be. The thing at Fitness Together is they occasionally do an assessment to test you on where you're at, and this year, I've either maintained my level of fitness, or I've gotten better. I know I'm stronger than I used to be. When I started there, I was using 25 pound weights, now I'm working with 40 pound weights."

How often do you work with Fitness Together?

"When I started, I was going three times a week. Lately, I've been going twice a week, on Mondays and Fridays, and on Wednesdays, I do things by myself at home. I have weights or I go for a long walk or something like that. When I was on tour, I worked out about four times a week."



Did your trainers at Fitness Together help you devise a workout for when you are touring?

"Generally, I just talked with my trainer about what he thought would be the best thing I could do. I did some basic things so that I wouldn't hurt myself. For example, instead of using 40 pound weights, I used 30 pound weights or 35 pound weights. I would get on the treadmill or the elliptical and warm up for 15 to 20 minutes, and then go into the basic training that I would do with my trainer. I'm pretty motivated when I am on the road, and I'm pretty disciplined then because I don't have any distractions, and the only thing I have to do is be down at the lobby at 4 or 5 o'clock. When I'm home, I'm busier so I almost need to go somewhere and have someone push me. When I'm on tour, I don't need anyone to push me."

What would you tell people who've never tried Fitness Together?

"At Fitness Together, you have your

own trainer. I don't like to go to workout places where there are a lot of people. At Fitness Together, you're not waiting for a machine to get on, and you're not working out in front of someone else. For me, I don't want to work out with four or five other people or 25 other people. It's just a nice environment for you to work out, and it's just you and the trainer."

Is there any area of fitness you particularly excel in?

"One of the things my trainers are usually kind of surprised at is that for someone my age—I'm 53—you can pretty much stretch me in different ways. All the years of yoga have helped me keep up that limberness. That's always been a good thing for me, and it's also very relaxing. Knock on wood, I also haven't been injured, and if you're working with weights, stretching is a good thing. I've always been involved in something physical, but I've never been into

team playing sports. But although I stretch and do yoga on my own, when I'm traveling, I always wish I had a trainer with me to help me stretch out. There's something about having someone else take your leg and push it a little bit further."

What are your least favorite exercises that your trainers make you do?

"Usually, your least favorite exercises are your most beneficial—just because they're so hard. I would say my least favorite is probably what they call lunges. It's dealing with your legs, and that's the biggest muscle you have. The lunges are hard enough already by themselves, but then they'll have you do military presses in between them."

What are your favorite exercises?

"My favorite things to do are anything on the bench. I like doing military presses on the bench, and I like doing other things on the bench. I just like most things that have to do with upper body strength." **FT**