



PRESS RELEASE: September 30 2009

## **RECORD NUMBER OF VISITORS AT LIW 2009**

Despite the economic downturn, Leisure Industry Week (LIW) 2009 attracted 13,102 individuals, a two per cent increase in footfall on last year (organiser's statement subject to ABC audit). The event offered a valuable mix of exhibition space and education seminars, making it the perfect destination for leisure professionals.

Celebrating its 21<sup>st</sup> birthday this year, the UK's largest out-of-home leisure exhibition took place at the Birmingham NEC and included: Health & Fitness, The Sport Show, Attractions Expo, Pool & Spa, Eat & Drink, Leisure Facilities and The Licensed Business Show.

Jonny Sullens, Event Director of LIW, says: "It is great to see that LIW still plays such an integral role within the leisure sector and visitors value the show as both a great networking and educational opportunity. The team achieved these record figures by focusing on attracting a wide range and high calibre of speakers to present the show seminars and by welcoming new and varied exhibitors, we created an event which offered exceptional interest and value to leisure professionals."

Health & Fitness had an increased number of demonstration areas, with focuses on pt and small group training and pole fitness. A much larger emphasis was placed on independent health club operators this year with over 500 taking part in Independent Operators Unite, which consisted of two days of seminars and networking events specific to their needs. The Health and Fitness Conference saw the results announced for the FIA's moreactive4life programme and also introduced Roger Black as a guest speaker. The Wright Foundation launched the results of their obesity study within their conference at the show.

Roger Black MBE, British Athlete and Fit For Sport representative, said "Supporting Fit For Sport & presenting their Fitter Schools UK Challenge trophies at LIW was fantastic. This Challenge really engages all school children across the UK in physical activity & I am proud to support it and be Fit For Sport's School Services ambassador."



Linda Forster, Marketing Coordinator at Pulse Fitness, said: "Leisure Industry week has once again surpassed our expectations and targets – 2008 was a huge success for Pulse in terms of generating good quality leads and raising the Pulse profile, we never expected that 2009 would be even better! The excitement, energy and ultimately attendance of key leisure operators to the show created the ideal platform for Pulse to launch its fantastic new products and services, the success of this year's show have already committed us to sign up to 2010."

Visitors to The Sport Show enjoyed meeting a huge range of sports NGBs, in the Sports Networking Village. Another first for LIW was the introduction of the Gatorade Sports Beach, where demonstrations took place, including Volleyball England and UK Footvolley. The British Gymnastics demonstration area showcased a wide range of talented athletes and visitors were lucky enough to meet Olympian, Louis Smith. The Sports Conference looked at innovation in sport and how leisure organisations can deliver the 2012 legacy for community sport.

Pool & Spa hosted demonstrations across the three days in its swimming pool, the Astral SkyPool. Olympian Karen Pickering presented for Zoggs and Duncan Goodhew spoke in SPATA's Pool Operator Seminars.

The 2009 event also celebrated its first outdoor exhibition area, which showcased a range of attractions too large to fit into the main arena. The Play Providers Association's Aspire Awards were held at LIW for a second year and the Attractions Theatre hosted seminars spanning across the three days. The BALPPA lounge proved to be a real hub for the attractions community.

The Licensed Business Show hosted the Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers (ALMR) seminars and debate and BII training workshops and seminars. The Vintellect wine theatre was well populated throughout the show for its education programmes.

The dates for next year's show are September 21, 22 and 23.

-Ends-

Words: 631

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