

LES MILLS
CEREMONY
H Y R O X

**HOW FITNESS + LIFESTYLE GROUP
IS INSPIRING NEW AUDIENCES
WITH GROUP TRAINING**

Combining innovative programming with strategic execution, Fitness & Lifestyle Group's adoption of CEREMONY HYROX has been a game-changer. National Group Fitness Manager Nicole Grainger explains how the Australian operator is strengthening its position as a market leader by engaging new audiences with group training.



LM: Hi Nicole, can you tell us about your background?

NG: I've been an Instructor for over 30 years, having first been shoulder-tapped as a front row class participant, and at that time I was at university and looking to earn some extra money on the side. I joined Fitness First Australia when they launched 25 years ago in a Group Fitness Manager role and I've been with the company ever since in a variety of different roles - I think I'm the fourth longest-serving employee now! As we came out of the pandemic I took up my current role, which is National Group Fitness Manager for Fitness First (50 clubs) and Goodlife Health Clubs Australia (95 clubs) under the Fitness & Lifestyle Group umbrella of club brands. The two chains are similar in the sense that they're typically full-service with memberships starting at around AU\$21 per week, but Fitness First has more premium tiers and each brand has its own distinct character. The clubs range in size depending on location with our largest being in the range of 7,000 to 8,000 members and the smallest at the 2,000 member mark.

LM: What role does group training play across your clubs?

NG: Group fitness is central to what we do. On average, 36% of our members participate in group training classes, spanning our standard timetable and our specialist programs, which include our reformer Pilates program Reform (Fitness First and Goodlife), a HIIT class called Arena (Goodlife) and the newest addition to our premium offering, CEREMONY HYROX.

Group fitness brings a strong sense of community to our clubs, and the variety we offer helps us cater to a wide range of fitness goals and preferences. Les Mills plays a significant role in this success, providing world-class programs,



training for our Instructors, and ongoing support to ensure our offerings remain cutting-edge and impactful across the entire estate. Les Mills classes make up 60% of the timetable at Fitness First and 50% at Goodlife, with clubs typically offering 7-10 Les Mills programs, but we're looking to increase this across our top three tiers of clubs to give ourselves great flexibility.



LM: How did the idea for launching CEREMONY HYROX come about?

NG: It started during a visit to Les Mills' flagship club in New Zealand. I experienced CEREMONY HYROX firsthand and was blown away by its unique mix of high-energy circuit training and immersive coaching. The format's ability to build community and motivate members in a non-traditional group fitness setting was exactly what I felt we needed. CEREMONY HYROX offered something different - a chance to bridge the gap between the gym floor and group fitness studios while targeting a younger, competitive demographic. You could see the impact it was having in New Zealand and I knew right away it would help us raise the bar as well.

LM: What did the launch of CEREMONY HYROX look like for you?

NG: The journey took careful planning and collaboration. We brought key stakeholders, including senior leadership and our marketing team on the journey to experience the program and fully understand how we maximize its potential. Securing their buy-in was crucial. Once the decision was made, we worked closely with Ryan Hogan and the Les Mills team to design the right training spaces and

optimize our rollout plan. Les Mills has been an incredible partner and really hands-on throughout the process - from training our Head Coaches to hosting information sessions for our sales and marketing teams. Their guidance in designing the studios has been invaluable. For our Balaclava location, we replaced traditional group fitness studios with “athletic studios” featuring black walls, industrial-style lighting, and open training zones.

LM: How did you recruit instructors for CEREMONY HYROX and set them up for success?

NG: Recruiting the right instructors was key to the program’s success. We took a deliberate approach, handpicking younger, highly skilled instructors who could reflect CEREMONY HYROX’s dynamic energy and style. Prospective coaches were required to attend at least four classes before being considered for training to ensure they really understood the program. We also focused on increasing male representation to ensure diversity and resonance with CEREMONY HYROX’s demographic. After training, instructors shadowed four classes to refine their skills before teaching independently. This support system helped them transition into CEREMONY HYROX’s immersive coaching style, which emphasizes being on the floor with participants instead of on a podium.

LM: How have members responded to the program?

NG: The response has been overwhelmingly positive. At Richmond, CEREMONY HYROX classes are averaging 71% capacity, well above the regional group fitness average of 55%. At Balaclava, which opened just last week, attendance is already at 53% despite the proximity to the holiday season. Members love CEREMONY HYROX’S community vibe, the challenge it offers, and the unique coaching style that creates a more immersive and inclusive experience.

The format has strengthened our appeal to younger members and men, two demographics that can be harder to attract to traditional group fitness. At Richmond, 65% of

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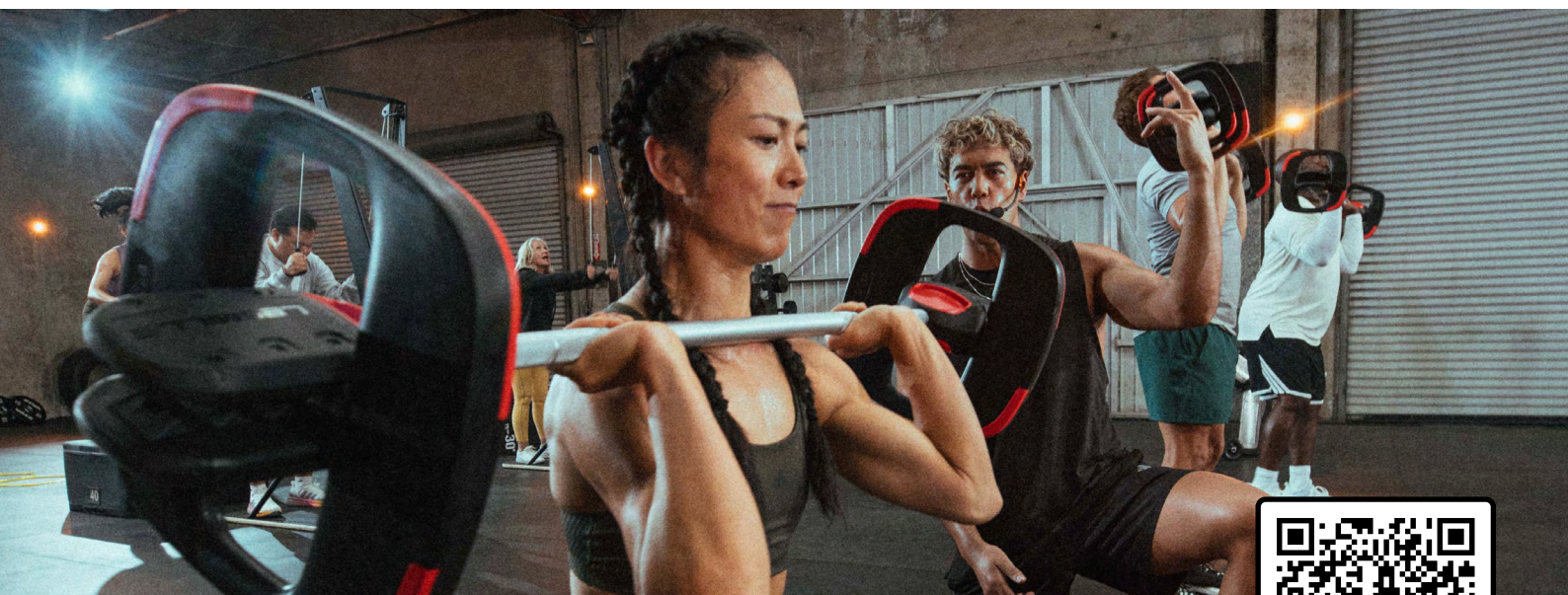
CEREMONY HYROX attendees are men, and the average participant age is 34, which is significantly younger than the rest of our classes. By integrating CEREMONY HYROX into our Platinum Plus membership tier, we’ve also driven uptake of higher-tier premium membership packages. The program’s unique positioning as a hybrid of group fitness and gym-floor training has enhanced our reputation for innovation and quality.

LM: What are your future plans for CEREMONY HYROX?

NG: We’re looking to expand CEREMONY HYROX into more locations by converting existing group fitness studios or repurposing gym-floor space. We’re also gathering member feedback through surveys early next year to refine and grow the program. Ultimately, we want CEREMONY HYROX to become a signature offering that differentiates our clubs and keeps members coming back for more.

LM: What advice would you give to other operators considering CEREMONY HYROX?

NG: First, you need to experience CEREMONY HYROX to understand its potential. It’s an investment, but the results speak for themselves. Second, ensure cross-functional alignment between your operations, sales, and marketing teams. Everyone needs to understand and support the product. Lastly, recruit the best coaches you can find. Their ability to create an engaging and motivating experience is critical to CEREMONY HYROX’s success.



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