

HE STRIPS CLASSES OF DULLNESS

Kendell Hogan

Age: 40

Occupation: Regional group fitness director for Crunch gym in Los Angeles

Why he matters: His crazy, creative classes have helped make the fitness world more fun.

THE fitness landscape is littered with classes, with most gyms offering only the usual suspects: group cycling, core strengthening, cardio kickboxing. But step into Crunch in Los Angeles, and the class roster is a little . . . different, with names such as Cardio Striptease, Recess and Lethal Weapon Boxing.

Hogan creates and vets much of the class roster for the L.A. gym. By tapping into the city's wackier side, he's been instrumental in cementing the city's reputation for fostering innovative, creative classes.

Hogan began working at Crunch about a decade ago as an instructor teaching step, which shaped his efforts to make group exercise classes less tedious and more enjoyable. "I thought you could take all of this talent," he says, referring to the instructors, "and that fun, crazy creativity — and put it into a class."

Cardio striptease was inspired by a step class student who, Hogan noticed, had some moves that might translate to something more exotic. After coming up with a concept, he found a teacher who could make his vision reality. And Janet Jackson videos gave him the idea for a class called Videography, featuring hip-hop, Latin and jazz moves with easy choreography.

"I see people laughing and smiling in classes, and I think, thank God that's back," he says. "We're not doing brain surgery here."

— JEANNINE STEIN

