

INTRODUCING STAR WARS' BODY SQUAD

Santa Monica's Chris and Paul Vincent got Han, Rey, Finn and Leia into fighting form as loyal sports and Hollywood clients praise their holistic, personalized training and 'confidentiality factor'

By Paul von Zielbauer

WHEN DAISY Ridley was cast as the heroine in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, she underwent a transformation from lifelong nonathlete to onscreen badass through a program of twice-daily workouts ("Basically, J.J. Abrams wanted me to look stronger," she says. "There was a lot of emphasis on 'getting guns.'"). And when an ankle injury threatened to hobble Harrison Ford's Han Solo, a regime of soft-tissue massage and joint-mobilization exercises literally kept him running and performing.

The Force, as it were, was with both actors — and the rest of the cast — in the form of Altus Sports Institute, a Santa Monica wellness center founded in 2010 by brothers Chris Vincent and Paul Vincent, who quietly have risen to cult popularity among pro athletes including David Beckham and such Hollywood insiders as Marvel Studios president Kevin Feige and co-president Louis D'Esposito, publicist Ina Treციokas and *Ray Donovan* star Liev Schreiber. "You come here and you don't get a trainer, you get the whole team," says Paul, citing a roster of chiropractic, massage therapy and nutrition experts who work together on each Altus client. Adds Chris, a licensed chiropractor: "What makes us different is a collaborative approach. We can get an athlete back on the court faster than any other program because we combine training, acupuncture and nutrition." Altus workouts are "the best I've ever had," says Chauncey Billups, who played in the NBA for 17 seasons. "I just wish I did these kinds of things when I was a 21-year-old rookie."

The Vincents' secret ingredient is their highly personalized and

comprehensive program. "Having the physical, nutritional and rehabilitative aspects covered under one roof really helps when you have a busy schedule," says Schreiber. "For me, there is something about the professionalism and teamlike atmosphere that feels familiar and productive."

Bad Robot COO Tommy Harper has recruited the brothers for several *Mission: Impossible*, *Star Trek* and now *Star Wars* films, trusting them to prepare castmembers for grueling all-day action. "I don't worry about that when I'm on set," says Harper. "It's just done — handled." Another Altus asset, he notes (particularly key for the *Star Wars* cast), is "their confidentiality factor. I never have to worry about anyone in the training room talking." Lucasfilm president Kathleen Kennedy lauds the brothers' "exceptional results"; they trained the cast for stunts and overall fitness, "as well as identifying special training requirements for specific demands of the script," she says. The Vincents helped Carrie Fisher drop 30 pounds for the shoot (though that didn't protect her from social media body shaming that the actress parried with sharp tweets: "My body is my brain bag" and "Blow us"). And Altus not only got Ford back on his feet after an ankle break (with on-set rehab every two hours) but also put him through "gait training" that helped him walk without a sign of injury until he healed.

Growing up in Portugal with English parents (mom was an actress, dad a singer) who ran a guesthouse, the brothers say client service comes as naturally to them as fitness.



Ridley Harper Kennedy Schreiber



"As athletes, we have credibility. Our clients know that we really care because we know what that feels like," says Chris Vincent (left, with brother Paul). They were photographed Jan. 5 at Altus Sports Institute on 14th Street in Santa Monica.

Paul, 38, competed for years as an Ironman triathlete and adventure racer, and Chris, 46, earned a track scholarship to UCLA, where he washed cars on weekends for extra money. One of those cars belonged to former ABC Entertainment co-chair Stu Bloomberg, who became one of their first clients. "Paul and Chris changed my life physically," says Bloomberg, 67. "I no longer have back issues. I'm in much better shape than most people my age, and it's because of these guys."

After chiropractic college, Chris volunteered at the UCLA track, offering his services to elite athletes using the facility — even after school officials chased him away. "I used to hide under the bleachers, sneak people under there and treat them," he recalls. One day, when sprinter Maurice Greene, a former 100-meter world-record holder, fell to the track with a strained hamstring, Chris was there. Greene later brought Chris with him to the 2004 Athens Olympics.

Altus now manages about 200 clients in L.A. (fees range from \$150 an hour for training to \$100,000 a year for the unlimited-access executive plan).

Treციokas recovered from a painful shoulder injury without surgery under the Vincents' guidance, and D'Esposito says they helped him heal shoulder and foot injuries from working out too hard on his own. "I've never had an experience like that where they incorporate everything: diet, exercise, chiropractor, massage," he says. Altus also offers a type of perk Hollywood has come to expect: concierge services from London and other cities worldwide. "When I'm traveling is the hardest time to stay on track," says Arianna Huffington. "Whether I'm going to be in Munich or Sydney, I can call Altus and they will have a trainer and, if I want, a massage therapist available when I land." Altus-certified teams also can be on call for film shoots anywhere in the world. It's more expensive than hiring a local fitness guru, says Harper, but always worth it. On set and off, the Vincents see a common drive among their acolytes. "There's a dedication that makes them good at what they do," says Chris. "Actors, musicians, executives — they have very similar personalities to superstar athletes." **THR**



Ridley, with co-star John Boyega in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, told THR about her grueling regimen: "Five hours a day ... an hour of fitness and then four hours of stunt stuff."

PHOTOGRAPHY: JAMES VON FOR MACGONIGLES AND GIBBE; HAIR: FRANK SIBEL FOR KRONFELT LANGO; MAKEUP: COURTNEY DE BARNETT; STYLING: DAVID BENNETT; TRAINING: CHRIS AND PAUL VINCENT; STAR WARS: COURTESY OF EQUINOX; COURTESY OF SUBJECT TO US; IERLANDO; VENTURELLE; TTY IMAGES FOR PHILIP



Left: Equinox weight room; right: a whirlpool at the West L.A. location.

How Hollywood Execs Get in Top Fighting Shape

NOT ONLY A GYM BUT ALSO A hangout for the high-powered industry enclave of Century City, where three major talent agencies are based, Equinox recently expanded its most exclusive T4 program — named for its top tier of level 4 trainers — to its second L.A. location at 1835 S. Sepulveda Blvd., servicing Santa Monica and Silicon Beach. (In 2017, the Century City location will relocate to nearby Avenue of the Stars during the \$2.5 billion renovation of its neighbor, the Century Plaza Hotel.) With T4, Hollywood's power players get the professional-athlete treatment, including a "head coach" and a team of as many as eight fitness specialists who hold advanced degrees in sports medicine, physiology and chemistry. "We're not trainers; we don't say, 'Go drink more water.' We're coaches," says New York-based national T4 director Alex Zimmerman. (Bicoastal moguls can check out the T4 program at Equinox's Columbus Circle location in Manhattan, which debuted in 2015.)

Genetics testing and blood analysis contribute to the design of a microtargeted program, down to DNA findings like possession of the "sprinter" gene affecting the number of sets and reps.



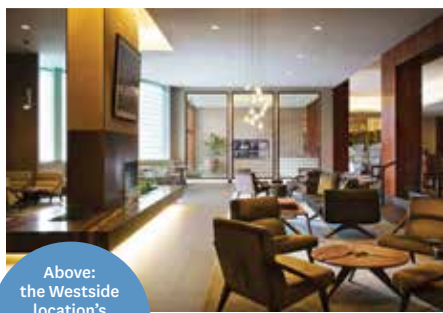
Sutherland

"It takes any guesswork out of it," says Jackie Casado, who works with CAA agent Roeg Sutherland as well as several prominent film execs, entertainment lawyers and producers.

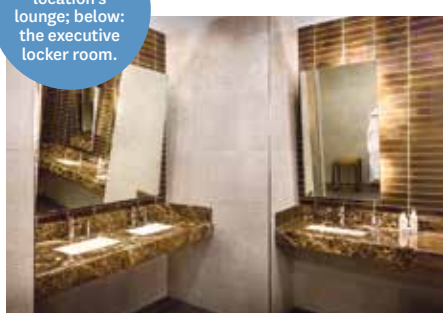
With training sessions running more than \$150 an hour on top of executive membership, annual costs can rack up to \$25,000. Commensurate perks apply: valet parking, retina-scanned entry to elite locker rooms-within-locker rooms; laundering of gym togs that are folded and placed in lockers; and, perhaps the greatest luxury, complete adaptability to clients' lightning-fast schedules — changes with no penalties.

"It's next-level for me because I can access the program when I want and never have to think about it," says Sutherland.

A two-hour initial assessment incorporates physical tests measuring oxygen and hydration, metabolism, muscle symmetry, body mass index, body fat composition, photo and video analysis of posture and a battery of movements that generate data. Constant therapeutic adjustments round out the laser-focus attention. "Jackie is the only trainer I have never gotten injured with," says Sutherland, adding that after a recent knee surgery, "the T4 program



Above: the Westside location's lounge; below: the executive locker room.



and Jackie's knowledge of rehab allowed me to recover a lot quicker than my doctor ever thought I could." For executives, says Zimmerman, the program is "a tool that preserves cognitive prowess and maintains energy for a fast-paced, demanding lifestyle. The average sedentary person can't handle that lifestyle. When was the last time you saw an obese executive jet-setting across the country?" — VINCENT BOUCHER

Hollywood's Burgeoning Bro Yoga ('Broga') Trend

CALL IT THE REVENGE OF THE DESK jockeys. When Charlie Gogolak, exec producer on the upcoming Tina Fey starrer *Whiskey Tango Foxtrot* and the Amazon series *Patriot*, had back problems, he turned to yoga — specifically, his future wife's Silver Lake studio Rise Hot Yoga. "I thought I was in pretty good shape, but after sitting at a desk for years, any structural issues showed up more," he says. "Yoga stretches things back out." The number of men doing

yoga, or "broga," has exploded during the past five years — to nearly a third of the 15 million practicing U.S. adults, says the L.A.-based Statistic Brain Research Institute — partly as a necessary digital-age corrective. "We stare down at our cellphones, iPads or a script all the time, and that has an effect," says Gogolak. Adds Aimee Garvey, a Hancock Park-based yoga instructor, "Often wives bring men in." For dudes, who tend to be less flexible in their hips and shoulders,

classes like Stiff Guy Yoga at Equinox are gaining popularity, according to WeHo yogini Brent Laffoon. "Yoga's not really about being flexible," he says. "It's about finding your edge and learning to work there." Garvey adds that type As are drawn to the physical side but eventually find the mental aspect more challenging. "They have to learn to sit still, which can be hard, and to disengage from media," she says. "You can't look at your smartphone in downward dog." — v.b.

