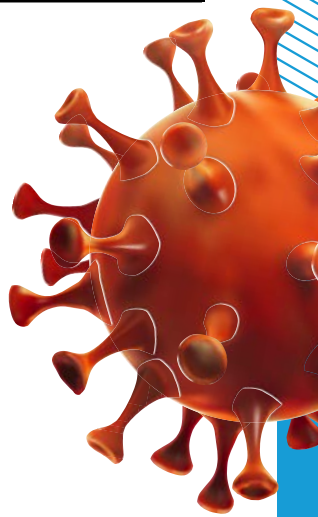
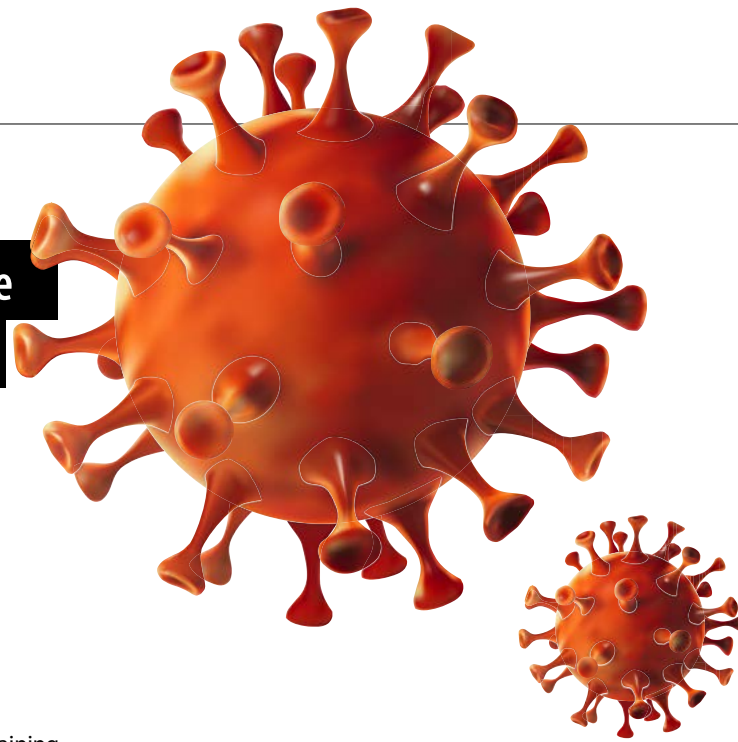




We caught up with two **FITREC FitPros** to explore the impact of the COVID-19 situation and how they've dealt with the situation.



## HANNAH ALTMAN

Queensland-based Hannah is a kayaker, swimmer and national record holder in powerlifting. She specialises in rehabilitation and has more than seven years' industry experience.

my international clients saw what could be done, I received further referrals from them for consults, also via Zoom. Effectively, I've been able to develop a whole new thriving area for my business. I also used this time to upgrade my skillset, so I'm currently in the process of finishing my qualification as a Nutrition Coach through Precision Nutrition. I also started running again, which helps me feel like a better role model for my clients, and I learned as much as I could about good social distancing practice management for my business. All in all, I was lucky not to be negatively impacted by the crisis. I saw the writing on the wall and prepared the business and my clients in advance, so that when the announcement was made we all went straight to Plan B.

sometimes even increasing their training volume! I had clients who needed to take a break so I respected this but I continue to check in with them, and I know they will come back when they can. The key is to treat people how you want to be treated – that's my only survival tip. Yes, this is a business but it's a business where you are dealing with people and their emotions. In these difficult and scary times, you need to first and foremost have empathy.

*"I've started my PhD and work as an exercise scientist and strength coach at Brisbane's original powerlifting gym."*

### Q How has COVID-19 impacted you?

I'm not going to lie to you, COVID-19 seems surreal and the first day was very hard. I think I consumed my weight in Ben and Jerry's icecream to cope! That being said, I knew it was coming and I had a plan in place so I didn't drop off very many clients. I was able to use the Zoom platform, and this helped me strengthen my rapport with my clients – both those who are continuing to train with me through the crisis as well as the ones who took a break due to the tough times. I was also able to actually grow my business through international referrals. And once

### Q What is your best tip for survival during this pandemic?

Obviously coaching is a business, but we need to remember that we are dealing with real people who might be struggling. I am operating now how I have always operated. In the past, this approach has resulted in a falling out with some male trainers who saw me as a push-over. But, I let my clients make the decision that best suited them, and I empowered them to decide whether or not they wanted to continue to train or take a break. Clients appreciate when they are treated this way, and they reciprocate with referrals and

### Q What lessons will you take into the future?

To be honest I'd made a lot of changes over the past seven months since I started my business and moved it into Iron Underground. So for me, how I handled the impact of COVID-19 was a product of this journey. I added a greater personal focus on best practice and safety during the pandemic. This is what I'll carry into the future. My experience during the crisis has reinforced my belief that you need to be transparent, and provide clients with total control over their journey. As a professional, we need to ensure we're in business with like-minded professionals who put their clients first; and ensure you're at the right gym working with the right people, that is the lesson I'll take away from this experience. ♦

**MORE ABOUT HANNAH**



## GREG JACOBS

Victorian-based Greg Jacobs specialises in strength and injury prevention. He is a PT, strength and conditioning coach, Pilates instructor and the owner of Stable Base Personal Training where he uses different training methods to help people achieve the best possible outcomes.

### Q How has COVID-19 impacted you?

Shutting down your business is pretty hard to take and I was like a deer in headlights for a couple of days. But I'm now training people outdoors and via FaceTime. These are both new formats to me, so I have needed to adapt quickly. It's been a blow financially, but I am lucky to have a very loyal clientele and because none of us are rushing off to anything else, I've been able to get to know them better. I am working less hours, which has given me the chance to catch up on reading, and I'm actually learning to play the didgeridoo! I'm also putting together a professional development workshop for PTs and allied health professionals, which I've wanted to do for years.

### Q What is your best tip for survival during this pandemic?

Be careful about listening to people who think they know more than the experts. Revisit why you do what you do, then put your focus and energy into the things you CAN do.

### Q What lessons will you take into the future?

Being 'lean' has made it easier to move, so I will continue the process of consolidating things on a regular basis. I'll continue to do some outdoor sessions for people who want them. I'll dedicate time and resources to training trainers, and I won't restart the classes I wasn't enjoying and instead, I'll use that time for personal development. ♦

*"I initially trained as a strength and conditioning coach in order to help my own athletic endeavours. After 20+ years of gaining knowledge and experience in the fields of Pilates, personal training and strength and conditioning, I opened my own studio."*

**MORE ABOUT GREG**

