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LISA RINNA
TEACHES YOU ALL
THE RIGHT MOVES
FOR A KILLER BOD

HOW PILATES
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WOMAN LOSE
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FROM THE
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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
+ STUDENTS' FAVE
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CONTEST
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PROP PROFESSOR
MICHAEL + TON TAKE
YOU TO SCHOOL WITH
A FEW HANDY TOOLS

- PLUS:**
- BEST NEW SPORTS BRAS
 - SWEATPROOF MAKEUP
 - SOME 'WICKED' MOVES

OCTOBER 2008

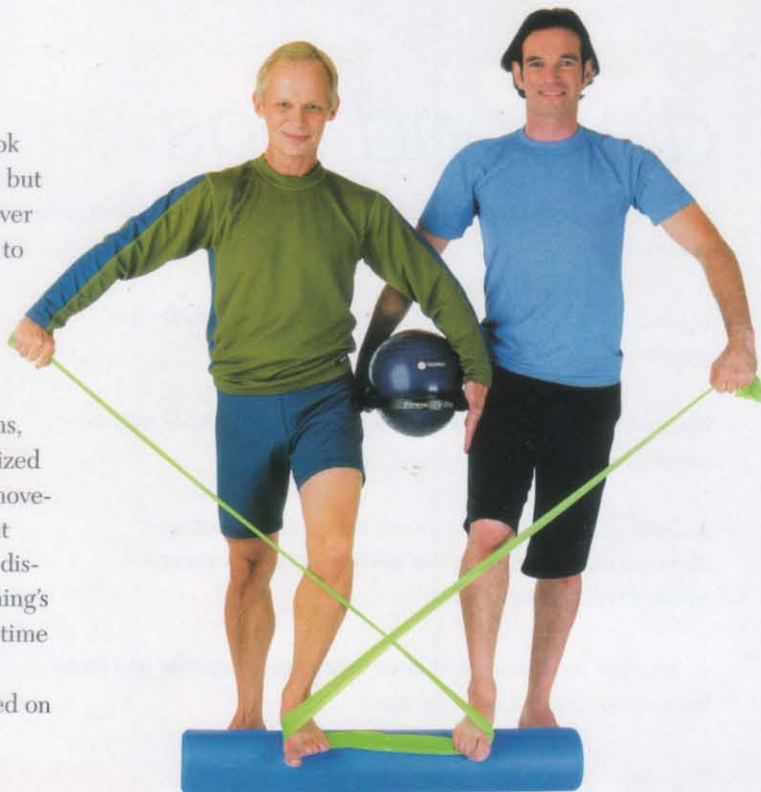
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teachers: Ever see your client with a blank look that seems to say, "I see your mouth moving, but all I hear is blah, blah, blah..."? Students: Ever wonder why your instructor repeats the same directions to you over and over again? No matter which side of the dialogue you're on, let's face it, sometimes the message just isn't clear. Instead of shooting the messenger, however, let's help him out a bit. As instructors for 15 years, we've come to discover that our fabulous directions, witty comments and priceless tips are not always recognized or understood. Of course, there are many reasons why movement input (instruction) doesn't match movement output (execution): word choices, client's attention span, studio distractions or just a funky day for either of you. But one thing's for sure: If you or your client isn't getting it, it might be time to add a prop.

To us, Pilates is a full mind-body experience that's based on



Professor Prop

team up with a silent partner that'll make your workout a winner

BY MICHAEL FRITZKE & TON VOOGT

a philosophy, principles and specific exercises. Joseph Pilates once said, "The exercises will teach you the method." With that in mind, he created specific equipment to enhance matwork, which was designed for you to work on your weak points or, as we prefer to call them, your challenges.

We realize that not everyone has access to the larger equipment. And even if you do, it's nice to have additional tools to help with those challenges. That's when we reach out to our "silent instructors": props. Small, portable props communicate with a client the way a teacher would. (It's like having two teachers for the price of one!) Without uttering a word, they quickly and correctly deliver a clear message.

Now, if your face just got that aforementioned blank look, allow us to explain. Props work by offering intrinsic feedback, which is when your body—specifically your muscles, joints and balance—tell you how to move. Props "teach"

your body by making it feel the dynamic of a specific exercise. They signal specific muscles by emphasizing the need to contract or correct instability. Your body responds instinctively.

To give your body that immediate feedback, we've designed a fun routine with our four fave props: the Triadball, Foam Roller, Magic Circle and Thera-band. As you perform the exercises, really tune in to how your body is feeling and how it automatically adjusts. For instance, watch yourself during Criss-Cross to make sure you're not lowering your shoulders onto the mat. If you anchor the Triadball between your thighs and your elbows (see photo on next page), your cheatin' days will be history. Do you struggle to connect your powerhouse during the Hundred? Do it on the Foam Roller and you'll feel it big-time. The lesson here: Use the right props, and you'll be amazed how much your body can learn.

Criss-Cross

prop: Triadball

prop purpose: requires you to keep your shoulders off the mat during the exercise and creates resistance during the twist as you squeeze it between your thighs and elbows

muscles targeted: abdominals, especially the obliques

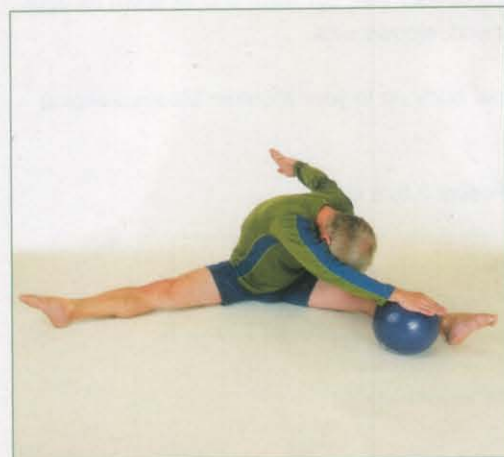
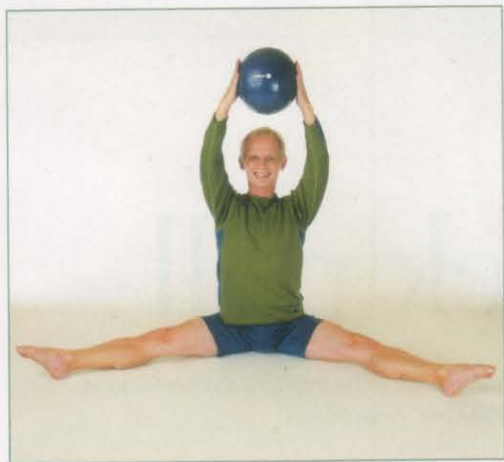
1. Lie down on your back, legs together. Bend your knees in line with your hips, feet relaxed and in line with your knees. Place the ball on your thighs, just above the knees, with your elbows against the ball, hands behind your head for light support.

2. Keeping your right elbow on the ball, twist your torso to the left as you take your left elbow off the ball and extend your right leg. Squeeze the ball between your right elbow and left knee. Return your elbow and leg back to start position. Repeat 6 to 8 times, alternating sides.



tips: Relax your head and neck, using your abdominals to lift your upper body. Avoid rocking from side to side.

modification: Twist your upper body and just change elbows toward the center of the ball, keeping your hips and legs still.



saw

prop: Triadball

prop purpose: helps less-flexible students perform the exercise more easily

muscles targeted: hamstrings, lats and back are stretched; obliques, shoulders and arms are strengthened

1. Sit up with your legs as wide apart as possible, feet relaxed, arms straight overhead holding the ball. Keep your shoulders back and down, and your back straight, lifting out of your waist.

2. Twist your upper body toward your left leg. Take the ball in your right hand and place it on the floor inside your left thigh.

3. With your fingers, roll the ball along the inside of your thigh down toward your left ankle, extending your left arm behind you, pinkie finger pointed toward the ceiling, back rounded.

4. Roll the ball back to center, circling your left arm down and lifting the ball with both hands above your head as you return your torso to start position. Repeat 6 times, alternating sides.

tips: Keep hips square on the mat and twist from your waist; exhale as much as possible as you stretch forward.

modification: If you feel tension in your legs or hips or you can't sit with a straight back, soften your knees, let your legs naturally rotate out from your hips and narrow your straddle.

single-leg circle

prop: Magic Circle

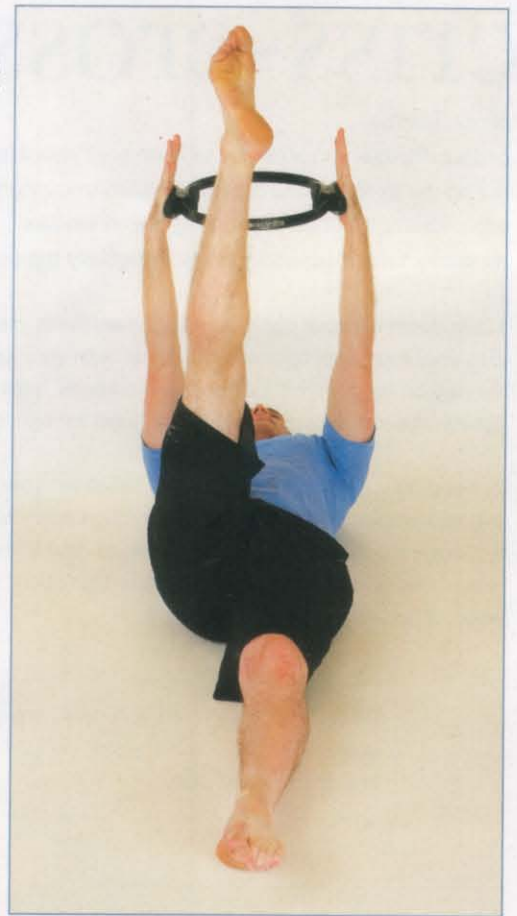
prop purpose: emphasizes the upper-body connection to help stabilize and gives visual cues—if the Circle moves, your body is not stable

muscles targeted: glutes, hamstrings, inner thighs, arms, lats and shoulder connection into your core

1. Lie down on your back. Hold the Circle overhead and squeeze it between your palms. Lift your right leg over your hip, bringing it as close as you can to the Circle.
2. Keeping an even squeeze on the Circle, cross your right leg over your body as far as possible while keeping your right hip and Circle still. Circle your leg down toward your ankle and continue back to start position, no more than shoulder-width across.
3. Repeat 5 times in this counterclockwise direction, then 5 times clockwise. Switch legs and repeat.

tips: Always cross the leg over your body first. Keep the same natural rotation in both legs and an even squeeze on the Circle throughout the exercise.

modification: To help stabilize your body, bend your bottom leg and place your foot on the floor.



half neck pull

prop: Magic Circle

prop purpose: emphasizes the connection from the legs into the powerhouse

muscles targeted: abdominals, pelvic floor, inner thighs

1. Place the circle between the insteps of your feet, flex them and lie down on your back. Place your hands behind your head, elbows wide.
2. Squeezing the circle, roll your upper body up to your shoulder blades, keeping your lower back on the mat.
3. Roll back down to start position. Repeat 3 to 5 times.

tips: Don't pull on your head or tuck your tailbone off the mat, and keep constant pressure on the Magic Circle.

modification: If you can't keep your lower back on the mat, soften your knees.

spine stretch forward

prop: Thera-band

prop purpose: helps to engage and lift the powerhouse; emphasizes the total-body connection during the stretch

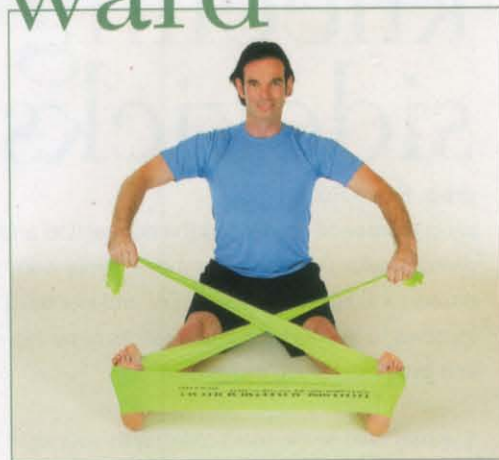
muscles targeted: hamstrings and back stretched; shoulders, back and powerhouse connection strengthened

1. Sit with your legs shoulder-width apart, feet flexed. Wrap the band under both arches, then cross it in front of you and hold the ends in each hand. Bend your elbows wide to the sides.

2. Draw in your abdominals and pull out the band as you lift up your torso and round your spine forward. Roll back up to start position as you release the band. Repeat 5 times.

tips: Don't roll your legs inward as you pull the band. Keep your shoulders down, elbows soft and movement smooth. Allow your breath to set the exercise rhythm.

modification: If you can't sit up with a straight back, soften your knees or sit on a pillow or folded towel.



push-up

prop: Thera-band

prop purpose: adds resistance

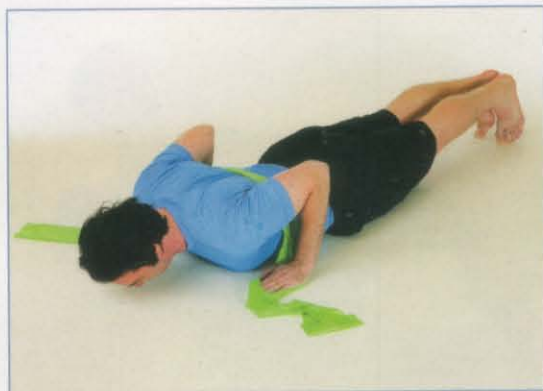
muscles targeted: chest, triceps, shoulders, abdominals

1. Lie facedown and wrap the band behind your shoulder blades and under each arm, securing it underneath your palms, which should be below your shoulders.

2. Push your body up to plank position, toes curled under. Lower your body to the floor. Repeat 3 to 8 times.

tips: The tighter you pull the band across your back, the harder the exercise will be; the looser the band, the easier it will be.

modification: Push your body up with your knees still on the floor.



kneeling sidekicks

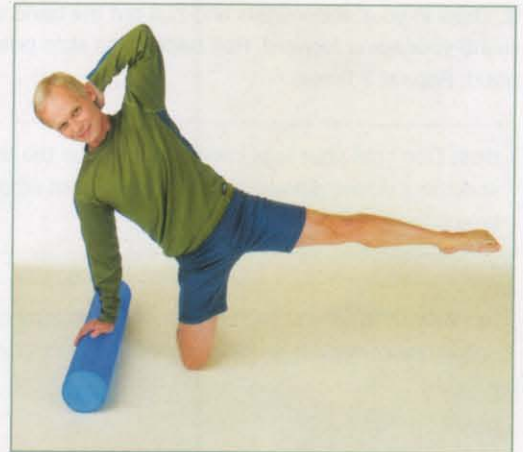
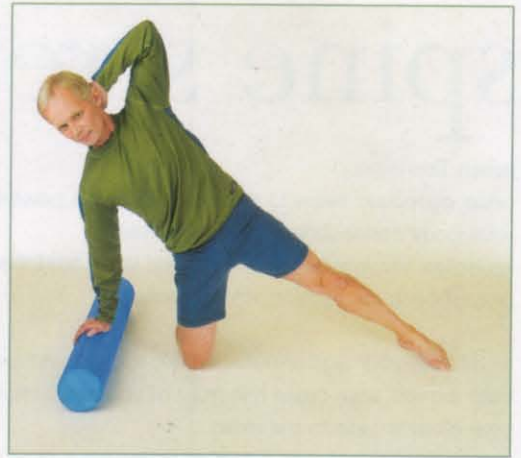
prop: Foam Roller

prop purpose: challenges the connection and control of your upper body by giving feedback; if the roller moves, your body isn't stable

muscles targeted: abdominals and low back to stabilize the trunk; shoulder muscles to support the stabilization; outer hip muscles, hamstrings, inner thighs and buttocks for leg movement

1. Kneel next to the foam roller. With your right knee under your right hip, place your right hand on top of the roller, directly under your shoulder, and extend your left leg out to the side. Place your left hand on the side your head, elbow bent.

2. Raise your left leg out to the side as high as possible, toes pointed. Kick your leg to the front and kick it to the back. Repeat 4 to 8 times, return it to the side and lower to the floor. Switch sides and repeat.



tips: Keep the roller and your body still. Keep the leg on the same level throughout the exercise.

hundred

prop: Foam Roller

prop purpose: challenges core stability

muscles targeted: abdominals, pelvic floor, shoulder stabilizers

1. Lie down lengthwise with your tailbone on the roller, knees bent and hip-width apart, feet on the floor, and your head resting just above the roller's edge.

2. Draw in your abdominals and raise your head, rolling up to your shoulder blades. Extend your arms along the sides of your body parallel to the floor, palms facing down.

3. Inhale and pump your arms up and down five times, exhale and pump five times, until you reach a total of 100.



tips: If you feel neck strain, rest your head on the roller. Keep your lower back imprinted into the roller. Don't tuck your pelvis; keep your spine long.

modification: If 100 pumps are too much, do whatever you can, rest, and then do another set until you reach 100.